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The meaning of teaching history



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Monographic section

The meaning of teaching history

El sentido de enseñar historia

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History has been a principal component of school curriculum. Historically, the main mission of school History was to provide an epic account of a community struggling for its existence since the dawn of time. It thus responded to the nationalising aim of the 19th century national education systems and their desire to create Frenchmen, Italians or Spanish people. Each student received in the school a geographical imaginary construct delimited by political borders, a collective path that gave meaning to the political community, and one language and literature. A territory, a language and a past were the pillars on which the nation was built upon the school.

The evolution of historiography and the societies that produce it have changed the position and function of History in the school curriculum. On the one hand, History has lost at least part of its influence in schools with the strengthening of states and the consolidation of their borders, which have been central to the promotion of globalisation and supranational organisations where former enemies became partners with common interests. We will see whether the various factions of reactionary populisms and nationalisms and the economic oligarchies that are taking power will resurrect national histories or choose to bury History as a critical and multidimensional instrument. In this special issue, the article by Sébastien Ledoux's presents the nationalist reaction to the cosmopolitan memory of the Holocaust proposed by the European Union as a basis for building a pan-European citizenship based on human rights and

respect for minorities.

On the other hand, the way of doing History that underlay school political History was questioned from the mid- twentieth century onwards and was finally displaced from the disciplinary field by Social History. The arrival of Social History in schools would have pushed aside the old political History of foreign grievances and great men, their successions, laws, and battles, in favour of an approach centred on the social structure. The extent to which this shift has been implemented, needs to be assessed. Even in those countries where a progressive history based on social problems and linked to the social sciences was articulately proposed, as in the United States of the interwar period, it seems that it never reached the classroom or was displaced by other social knowledge, as Daniel Berman shows in his article. Two problems are intermingled here; on the one hand, as we know from Antonio Viñao or Agustín Escolano, school culture maintains an inertia that makes it quite resistant to the transformation of curriculum and of teaching practices. On the other hand, the degree of simplification and modelling required by school history seem to be at odds with the complexity of historiographical debates, sources, methods and products of Social History. This resistance to the transformation of contents and practices explains the interest of Jorge Ortuño, Ilaria Bellatti and Sebastián Molina, in teacher's and trainee teachers' representations that mould the contents and ways of dealing with the subject studied.

However, before Social History had time to move into the school, the postmodern challenge shook the foundations of the discipline itself. New voices from new collectives now make up a challenging polyphony of accounts of the past which, far removed from the unidirectional order of the national epic, is emerging as an evanescent mass of confusing profiles in continuous transformation. This plurality of voices in the social debate on History and Memory makes it difficult to establish academic agreements to guide History in schools and hinders a desirable synthesis of Social and Cultural History. This lack of agreement and intellectual direction could have resulted in a reinforcement of the more traditional forms of school History based on political History.

The third element that explains the precarious position of History is that Memory seems to have taken over much of the vindicatory, critical and citizenship-building role traditionally assigned to History. Although Memory, because of its high emotionality, might influence students more deeply than History, it is not exempt from the problems of routinisation when used in school or social education programmes, as the recent electoral results in Germany reveal, while it is more prone to manipulation, as shown for instance by the

Hungarian case. David Rieff, Michal Bodeman and Pankaj Mishra warns that memory can become as complicated to handle with, counterproductive and concealing as History.

These transformations raise the question of the reasons for teaching History in our schools. Does History still play a role in shaping our societies and the way they function? Are we going to replace the old contested national narrative with an axiological archaeology that guarantees the moral solvency of those people or collectives that we consider worthy of being included in the Olympus of Memory? Does it still make any sense to transmit a vision of the past based on grey social processes that have led to the present? Would it not be more democratic and plural to provide the new generations with rhetorical resources to challenge and participate on equal terms in the battle for the narration of a *felt* past in accordance with their political agenda at any given moment? This special issue aims to offer a range of positions on all these questions.

Agustí García Larios, Andrea Tappi and Javier Tébar address the relationship between History as a discipline and the teaching of History from the premise that a disciplinary renewal is necessary to respond to the demands of society. They start, therefore, from a crisis of History, illustrate the social changes that have led to the expiry of a way of working with the past and explore the, in Fontana's terms, needed 'repairs' that the discipline should carry on. They point out that, paradoxically, social interest in the past has not diminished. But this interest is being satisfied by untrained people that produce and disseminate masses of uncontrolled information on social networks, carpet-bombing politically biased messages without academic validation. The authors' proposal is to recompose the link between History, political planning and public debate about the future basing upon a Global History that goes beyond Comparative History. These repositions foreground questioning, criticising and reasoning. The prioritisation of these skills leads to a proposal for teaching History that combines factual knowledge with cognitive strategies, along the lines of authors such as Lévesque, Seixas and Morton. They thus conclude a journey from the discipline to its didactics.

The vindication of the didactics of History is precisely the main conclusion of the article by Elena Riva. Riva maintains that didactics of History is barely developed in Italy, despite the recent inclusion of new requirements in teacher recruitment processes. The author takes as starting point the challenge that the Internet and social networks has posed to the humanities. The proliferation of unverified information, also discussed in the previous article, leads Riva to defend the training of digital humanists,

capable of developing the potential of the networks while preserving the rigour and epistemological status of the humanities, including History. This line of reflection leads her to advocate the training of a new teaching staff that faces the challenge of overcoming ethnocentrism. The role of the new teaching staff would also include producing new digital narratives on heritage, including new historical agents, and moderating social demands on knowledge, as in the case of the culture of cancellation. All of this brings us back to the didactics of History.

The article by Antonio Fco. Canales develops the idea of preserving rigour and epistemological status to make a sharp distinction between the teaching of History as a discipline and its applications for the formation of citizenship. For doing so, he makes an objectivist and realist characterisation of the discipline based on the academic established craft's operations. This restricted conception allows him to distinguish History from other discourses and forms of knowledge of the past and from its uses, including historical memory. From this perspective, he argues that the purpose of school History is to develop the historian's gaze, and the type of knowledge associated with it, namely historical thought. In this way he positions himself along the proposals of the authors of the first article, and he considers that the insistence on the purpose of forming citizens is nothing more than a reminiscence of the old History lessons, paradoxically rejected from the outset by all the authors. The author maintains that the formation of citizens is a collective educational mission and, if we insist on a disciplinary affiliation, it should be assigned rather to Philosophy.

The text by Sébastien Ledoux, as indicated above, goes fully into this mission of citizenship education by History and gives an overview of the evolution of the prevailing approaches over the last four decades. He notes the emergence in the eighties of a new educational project centred on the memory of crimes and victims of the past as the basis for an education for tolerance and democracy. In Western Europe, this approach involved placing the victims of the Holocaust in the foreground. The model included an emotional dimension for which visits to memorial sites were key. The author argues that this model based on multiperspectivity and interactivity was extended in the nineties to post-communists Eastern European countries. Ultimately, it was an attempt to address the conflictive and traumatic relations between states and between states and their minorities in a new educational grammar that focused on recognising and overcoming these conflicts in a reconciliatory perspective. However, this model was soon challenged. In 21rst century, dissatisfaction grew towards these narratives that broke with temporal horizons centred on progress putting

contingency and uncertainty instead. Nationalistic forces considered that these narratives were running against national building. The author shows these changes in different settings as Japan, Russia, Poland. For France, he studies the 2005 law that proposed the recognition of the contribution to the nation of French settlers in colonial Algeria.

Nurit Peled-Elhanan brings together in her work both this dual dimension of nationalisation and concern for the victims. Specifically, she develops an analysis of the representation of the victims of the Holocaust in Israeli textbooks, based on an analysis of social semiotics. The author argues that the role of these victims in the construction of the Israeli identity was not central until the setback of the 1973 war, after which the Holocaust became one of those 'chosen traumas' that shape the identity of a community. From this perspective, the author analyses the selection of photographs in the textbooks and their meanings. She criticises their decontextualization and cropping to produce highly loaded emotional icons. She examines dehumanised narratives pretending to be historically objective and illustrates them in the analysis of the phases that led from gun execution to mass gassing. Finally, the article moves on to the second key element in the shaping of Israeli identity, which is based on a stereotypically racist representation of Palestinians that promotes their dehumanisation, objectification and Nazification with a clear political intentionality. In general, the author underlines the victimisation that underlies Israeli identity in the face of other political and ideological components of Israeli society such as Zionism. Peled-Elhanan stresses the impossibility for the Israeli society to reach the political maturity of a truly democratic citizenship because of a mental and emotional training to live in fear.

The article by Daniel Berman introduces a welcome twist, exploring how History can shed light on itself by examining the teaching of History from a historical point of view, specifically in the interwar period in the United States. The author explores the common dissatisfaction with the way History was taught in the rapidly expanding new High Schools and the wide-ranging debate that ensued. His article shows that the questions we are asking today are not, in fact, new. But it also points to a second, much more worrying feature, if parallels can be drawn with the present times: the limited impact of this wide-ranging debate on teaching practice. All this discussion turned out to be tangential because History continued to be taught as a succession of political events to be memorised from textbooks. In his attempt to explain this sterility, the author considers two issues that hindered change, the lack of disciplinary training for teachers, which made them dependent on textbooks, and the ideological or cultural battles over the contents. The article constitutes

a warning for of the current renovation.

Finally, the issue includes two empirical studies on didactics of History in Spanish schools. If, as Daniel Berman points out in the previous article, teacher training was one of the obstacles for implementing the social History proposed by the progressive movement into the classroom, it is necessary to analyse, for critically reviewing them, the social representations of teachers. This is what Jorge Ortuño, Ilaria Bellatti and Sebastián Molina do in their article, in which they study the social representation that future primary school teachers have of events and historical characters for identifying their emotions and values. As the main result of their research, the authors point out the maintenance of the traditional androcentric, political, and socio-centric view of the past among training teachers. To change this situation, the authors propose rethinking strategies for the teaching of History by emphasising multiple perspectives, the contextualisation of historical characters and events, and the inclusion of traditionally silenced characters.

Enrique Javier Díez and Mauro Rafael Jarquín conducted a study on secondary school students' knowledge of the Civil War, Franco's repression and the anti-Franco struggle. Questioning the forgetting policies of the Spanish Transición, the authors empirically illustrate the existence of a broad ignorance of these issues among students, either because these issues are placed at the end of the syllabus and there is no time left to teach them or, rather, because of the position of teachers regarding these traumatic events. The authors add that teachers share an equidistant and equalising view of the Spanish Civil War, the best known of the three above mentioned issues. In line with the didactic memorialist movement, the authors call for the recovery of historical memory to counteract a distorted narrative and, furthermore, to transmit a collective imaginary in defence of truth, justice, and reparation as the basis of democracy.

All these critical approaches and perspectives are difficult to synthesise. It is even more difficult to offer answers for the questions posed by the articles. In general, the articles share the idea that historians must address the crisis of History as discipline before discussing its teaching. There seems to be a consensus on the need to give a voice to traditionally silenced groups, to overcome the ethnocentric character of traditional History, and to address the great challenge posed by the Internet and social networks. Facing these issues, authors tend to opt for the rigour in the treatment of information guaranteed by the discipline. It is not surprising, then, that the three articles by García Larios, Tappi and Tébar, Canales and Ortuño, Bellatti and Molina explicitly opt for the didactic proposal of teaching how to think historically, a position in which Elena Riva also finds herself. All of them seem reluctant to abandon

disciplinary values, while Diaz and Jarquín, on the other hand, seem to align themselves explicitly with the openly formative positions of citizenship, a position shared also by Ledoux. All authors call for putting attention to the training of future History teachers.

If there does not seem to be a consensus on the discipline, it is even less likely that any significant progress will be made in answering the questions initially raised. Rather than answers, the articles raise new questions. The way out of the History crisis seems to be Social History, but to what extent does this mean ignoring other more political, social or emotional proposals and failing to assess their impact on the teaching of History? In the same vein, let us give voice, no doubt, to the silenced collectives, but what role do we give to the once abominable anachronism? In other words, how can we teach how to think historically from premises previously considered an attack on the discipline itself? Finally, what is the ultimate meaning of the unanimously claimed overcoming of ethnocentrism? Are we defending a global vision of World History with the consequent shift of its leadership, or is it a matter of democratically giving everyone a stake even though they play no significant role? Why is it important for a Spanish student of Senegalese origin to include Senegal in this global vision if his or her conditions of existence no longer depend on what happens or has happened in that country? And worse, to what extent does this good intention of inclusion not imply the crudest exclusion by making it clear that, regardless documents and citizenships, he or she is *not from here*? Ultimately, are we not writing the death of the nation-state too soon, when in practice it remains the determining agent for people's life or death, prosperity or ruin, happiness or misfortune?

Regardless of the relevance we bestow to these new questions, and to many others that arise from reading the articles, what this issue makes clear is the need to continue reflecting and discussing questions to which we will probably never find a definitive answer. But what else is education if not a continuous reassessment of acquired certainties?

Crises and renewals: reasons for making and teaching History

Crisis y renovaciones: razones para hacer y enseñar historia

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Abstract

This article addresses the current connection between History as a discipline and the teaching of History, with special attention paid to the result of this connection, reflected in a critical renewal of history that meets the current needs of society. To this end, it addresses the current crisis in the discipline of History and stresses the loss of confidence in traditional methods and approaches. However, despite this 'crisis', it advocates an optimistic vision of the future, insofar as it can serve as an opportunity for renewing historiography. It further emphasises the importance of including new perspectives and voices in History, leading to a

certain decentralisation of the discipline. It questions the impact of information technologies on teaching History and research, as they must be accompanied by the development of students' critical thinking skills. The article also highlights the importance of History in understanding identity and contemporary challenges and advocates a vision of History as a critical social instrument. In this sense, it raises the need for a global history that connects local spheres with global ones, integrating diverse themes and approaches. Finally, it underscores historians' responsibility for education and public discussion, emphasising that knowledge of the past is essential for making ethical decisions in the present and future.

Key words: Historiography; teaching of history; public use of the past; education.

Resumen

Este artículo aborda la conexión actual entre la Historia como disciplina y la enseñanza de la Historia, con especial atención a la resultante de dicho binomio plasmada en una renovación crítica de la historia que responda a las necesidades actuales de la sociedad. Para ello, se aborda la crisis actual de la disciplina histórica y se subraya la disminución de la confianza en métodos y enfoques tradicionales, al tiempo que, a pesar de esta "crisis", se aboga por una visión de futuro optimista, en la medida que las crisis pueden ser oportunidades para la renovación de la historiografía. Asimismo, se enfatiza la importancia de integrar nuevas perspectivas y voces en la Historia, lo que conduce a una cierta descentralización de la disciplina, y se pone en cuestión el impacto de las tecnologías de la información en la enseñanza y la investigación histórica, por cuanto debe ir acompañada del desarrollo de un pensamiento crítico en los estudiantes. El texto también resalta la importancia de la Historia en la comprensión de la identidad y los desafíos contemporáneos, y propugna una visión de la Historia como un instrumento social crítico. En este sentido, se plantea la necesidad de una historia global que conecte lo local con lo global, integrando diversas temáticas y enfoques. Por último, se subraya la responsabilidad de los historiadores en la educación y en el debate público, haciendo énfasis en que el conocimiento del pasado es imprescindible para la toma de decisiones éticas en el presente y futuro.

Palabras clave: Historiografía; enseñanza de la Historia; uso público del pasado; educación.

The 'crisis' of History and of teaching History: a commitment to its critical social role

The word 'crisis' seems to constantly be looming over the discipline of

History. It has frequently been used to refer to the loss of confidence and the decline of forms of knowledge, methods and views that were once dominant in historiography. Today, it could even be argued that the apparent signs of weakness and of changes resulting in profound consequences has become even more pronounced. In Spanish historiography, this marked discouragement is partially rooted in professional problems related to the teaching and research structure, how it works and how it brings on new generations of professional historians. But beyond the situation in Spain, questions about the social function of History and historians in today's societies have become international in scope, and this trend has only continued over time.

Despite what we have asserted thus far, the authors of this article are confident about History, whilst still remaining cautious and relatively sceptical about its current situation. It is true that the decline of old teleological, deterministic and totalising interpretations has led to a present that is sometimes rather insecure for historiography. However, the proclaimed *end of History* at the turn of the twenty-one century was followed by observations that History had instead *returned* (Morales Moya, 1992, pp. 11-13). Though the discipline has certainly changed at least to some extent, we can also say that its true or, in some cases, imaginary crises have been linked to some of its own forms of renewal. In fact, according to Eley, multiple perspectives and approaches and the inclusion of new views and voices helped to *decentralise* the historiographic discipline, bringing more protagonists onto the stage of History (Eley, 2008).

Furthermore, demonstrating the need to define History's social meaning and function, it has also been suggested at some point that we all perform its necessary 'repairs', which will allow us to '(…) prepare it for a difficult and uncertain future' (Fontana, 1992, pp. 145-146). However, these repairs must be made in a context marked by the impact of information technologies on today's societies, among other issues. A few years ago, Pons warned that the advent of what were then called 'new' information and communication technologies (ICTs) had not only changed how we were doing research, but also how we handled ourselves within the 'digital membrane' in which we live, both in terms of how we *read* and how we write and disseminate the findings of our research. According to Pons, a transformation has occurred

that will be even 'more profound and irremediable in the future', both in the practice of historiography and elsewhere. Therefore, historians' attitudes and aptitudes will be crucial in shaping the evolution of what they have been calling 'digital history'. This is something that has had and will continue to have an extraordinary impact on how History is taught and studied (Pons, 2013a; Pons, 2013b, pp. 15-16).

However, a certain degree of scepticism towards discourses that appeal to the ICT and digitalisation 'revolution' is in order, as not all the outcomes of this kind of 'cybernetic utopia' are positive. Specifically, Riemen warns us about the current dangers of using new technologies in teaching, especially giving students too much information without guiding them and showing them exactly what to do with it. At the very least, this requires trying to foster critical thinking in the use of Big Data in education, because even though it allows for flexibility and personalisation (mobile e-learning, gamification, combined learning based on the flipped classroom and blended learning) (Salazar, 2016), it needs criteria to select, filter systematise and contrast the mass of digitalised information and data (Riemen, 2017). Methods for managing Big Data as a series of historical events are still new today, but students must be trained and able to use them for historical research. At the same time, the discipline must equip them with criteria so they can discern which data are applicable and which are not (Guldi & Armitage, 2016).[1] In this way, it would be possible for historical knowledge to regain the critical and transformative function required for understanding the world in which we live.

We must bear in mind that it is increasingly important to recover the past as a tool for recognising signs of identity and for recognising ourselves, especially given all the aforementioned challenges and uncertainties. This is especially true when relating with our social, cultural and environmental surroundings with confidence and imagination, as they largely shape the challenges and possibilities of the future. The landscape in which we work has undoubtedly become more complex, but perhaps more intriguing as well for that very reason. In this new atmosphere, we have not lost confidence

1 Jo Guldi and David Armitage suggest that students should be provided with knowledge about the Big Think Internet forum (https://bigthink.com/) founded in 2007, which programmes activities with talks by specialists in different fields of the social sciences and culture.

in the purpose, role and social function of History in the course of the new millennium, which is now inextricably associated with the controversial potential of the geological interval known as the 'Anthropocene' (Rull, 2018).

Reality in historical discourse: an indispensable hypothesis

Extreme subjectivism and the hegemony of symbolism, some of whose expressions have delegitimised the cognitive pretensions of historiography, must be appropriately nuanced. Here, we would do well to recall what Vidal-Naquet wrote almost twenty years ago (2008):

> If the historian has lost his innocence, if he is taken as an object, if he himself takes himself as an object—who should feel sorry about this? It is established that if historical discourse did not adhere, through as many intermediaries as it wishes, to what we must call reality, for lack of a better term, we would always be in discourse, but that discourse would also stop being historical.

Reality consists of objectivity and subjectivity, shaped by their interconnectivity (Accardo & Corcuff, 1986). From this point of view, thinking about, understanding and recounting History without considering its socioeconomic context strikes us as inadequate. This does not entail denying or ceasing to pay attention to action, subjectivity, the unconscious, etc. (Bourdieu, 1991). Some of the ever-suggestive and controversial ideas of the late sociologist Bourdieu can be very useful for historiography in this sense, insofar as they include a space for action and the individual within the framework of historical structures and temporalities with which we historians work (Bourdieu, 1989). Thus, these same structures possess nothing eternal or absolute; they are the result of History, the temporary materialisation of a state of force and of struggles between individuals, groups and institutions that are simultaneously also a product of History. Coming from another discipline, these approaches can ultimately foster theoretical reflection in our work, preventing us from falling into the easy temptation of denying objectivity and

scientific rigour in historiography, seeking refuge in a comfortable and well-written *neo-historicism.* Indeed, we need a strong epistemological framework, which will allow us, among other things, to successfully strengthen the critical function that we understand as inherent to History (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt & Perraton, 2000) in the complex and changing world of globalisation. And though this does not mean that we should present ourselves as specialists in epistemology and methodology, it is a crucial step not only for research, obviously, but also for understanding how to convey historical knowledge to students at different levels of education.

From our point of view, the practice of History should assume a global perspective, unlike some inherited legacies, built on the basis of integrating, and not just joining or attaching, fragments of histories chopped into pieces that are often presented to us today (Fontana, 1992; Fontana, 2006). It is now more necessary than ever to resume a view of globalisation that is by no means totally incompatible with *postmodernity* (Morales Moya, 1987). After the 'critical turn' associated with the fourth generation of the *Annales,* Gruzinski warned that the composition of the societies that make up the world today is not the same as the one that justified how History had been 'conceived' and 'done' until recently, often shaped by a single narrative and with a clear Eurocentric focus (Gruzinski, 2018, p. 244). Prior to this, Noiriel had proposed a historiographical programme that was largely a renewed and reconstructed version of Bloch's project, identified with sociohistory, a trend in research that goes back more than two decades and combines the founding principles of History and Sociology (Noiriel, 1997). Today's main issues lie at the heart of Noiriel's proposal, such as globalism and capitalism, state bureaucratisation and media influence (Noiriel, 2011). These are all long-term historical processes that have been relatively neglected for the last three decades. More recently, as British author David Armitage and American author Jo Guldi write in the opening line of their book *The History Manifesto*, 'A spectre is haunting our time: the spectre of the short term'.[2] They argue that some of the chief problems facing current societies, such as climate change and growing economic inequality, must be understood in terms of decades

2 This book caused some controversy when it was first published in open access in 2014. In light of the circumstances, it is worth rereading today.

and centuries. Hence, they call for taking a more inclusive and long-term approach to historical research, recovering History as a process that revitalises its social function as an instrument of knowledge and a tool for improving the development of humanity by shifting away from a historiography that has focused for decades on increasingly singular and specific periods, phenomena, episodes and figures. The approach they advocate would involve recovering Braudel's *longue durée*, though not simply by going back to it, but rather by critically returning to the past to refresh knowledge. In other words, it would seek to establish a permanent dialogue between the past and the present to shed light on the future, positioned to promote a global history to broaden the scale of study. This would entail decompartmentalising and connecting phenomena that are often separated in order to restore the explanatory ambitions of History and help to reestablish an understanding of the public utility of historians' work (Guldi & Armitage, 2016, pp. 117-118).

And yet, *what is Global History?* To avoid adopting it as a simple label, a new product with some measure of success in the academic historiographical market, we must provide a response that is not so easy to come by. If what we are talking about is returning to an updated version of world history or the old History of Civilisations, a History of International Relations or a superposition of searches and texts aimed at providing a global overview of a given century, it may not be beneficial for historiographic practice. A global perspective entails focusing on the links that societies have woven between them, the interactions and complexes that make them up, as well as the interlacing of the human, social, economic, religious and political pieces that tend to make the world uniform or that clash with and resist movement in that direction (Gruzinski, 2018; Drayton & Mota, 2018). In conclusion, the compartmentalisation, reframing and reconnection proper to Comparative History, which already has a long tradition, is not enough to create a Global History. It is the local world that takes on the character of a crossroads, since no history can fulfil a global ambition without a local base with an exact location. However, to move beyond the local world, historians must eschew the rules of the monograph and any type of restrictive microhistory, interweaving the histories of the nation and the local setting, individuals and small and isolated spaces (Gruzinski, 2018, p. 244). This does not rule out the need for

highly focused and exhaustively documented studies on the history of labour, racial and religious minorities, women, immigrants and LGBTQ+ people. Ultimately, among other proposals, Global History is a sufficiently solid potential alternative that may be able to offer a new paradigm that integrates the various specialties and themes, the diverse temporal sequences and the many different spatial areas. As Ginzburg has recently argued, 'microhistory and macrohistory, close analysis and global perspective, are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, they reinforce each other' (Ginzburg, 2024). Both short-term analysis and long-term overview should be combined to produce a more intense, sensitive and ethical summary of data (Drayton & Mota, 2018), posing a difficult challenge for historians today and in the future.

This aspiration to globality should also be wedded to a desire to address the results of our work to all those who can read and listen to us. In other words, it should force us, in turn, to speak about what may be important for most of society, such as its real problems and the issues of human beings in time, and to do so comprehensibly, without neglecting the complexity of the discipline.

The pace of life today and the *presentism* that followed the 'end of History' indicate the need to restore the connection between the past and the future. Since the 1970s, the pronounced specialisation of the discipline has distanced historians from these long-term perspectives. This is one of the reasons why they have lost the ability to influence politics, understood as the public space of debate par excellence, beyond, of course, the identification between politics and political parties or merely institutional matters. Thus, long-term views of the past can, in particular, reestablish the connection between history, political planning and public debate on the future—a direction that has characterised large sections of the Western historical tradition with a common conviction since classical times: knowledge of the past is 'a necessary precondition of making ethical decisions about how to conduct a society' (Guldi & Armitage, 2016).

Those of us who are dedicated to teaching, and especially to teaching History, have an essential role to play in these aforementioned objectives. We must help the new generations, meaning our students, continue to be able to reason, question and criticise. We must show them that far from

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being beleaguered by an irreversible and final 'crisis', History is constantly undergoing an enriching methodological renewal and is still one of the fullest ways to understand the world they live in. We must teach them a complex global history in which objectivity and subjectivity, the economic and cultural spheres, action and structures, the individual and the collective, all have a place. It must be a History expressed with language and must therefore possess a narrative clarity that can transmit knowledge comprehensibly to the largest number of people possible. And it must be a critical history, without absolute certainties, rigorous in the analysis and use of sources, devoid of any type of documentary hierarchies, committed to comparing the object of study with other realities, even if this requires knowledge of other languages and the necessary effort to understand other pasts and approach other certainties.

Audiences for conversations about the past

After vanishing from public conversation, displaced by other disciplines, particularly economics and political science, some have claimed that from 2019 onwards, History had begun to hit rock bottom in the educational and academic spheres as well (Mayayo, 2019a). That same year, historian and journalist Eric Alterman, who maintained his column *Altercation* for 30 years, until January 2023, warned of the decline in historical thought in American public universities (Alterman, 2019). However, it remained fundamental among the most elitist universities that educate the country's ruling classes, as proven by their enrolment figures.

Also during that same year, demonstrations and protests in Italy managed to somehow halt the attempt to remove specific History content from the entrance exam, initially sponsored by the Commissione Serianni appointed by the centre-left Gentiloni government (2016-2018). Meanwhile, Spanish universities were subjected to remarkable cuts in teaching staff and funding for historical research. This series of events, owing not so much to manipulation as to a disdain for History, indicates decay in the quality of democracies, sustaining and strengthening mythologies of the past that not only reject enquiry into the 'historical truth', but deny its very existence

(Mayayo, 2019b).

Moreover, university and professional history 'seems to be a secondary and minor road compared to the motorway of television series today' or to 'the dissemination of history by amateur journalists who never mention their sources' (Casanova, 2020, pp. 283-284). Ultimately, we can see that a significant swath of the population voluntarily and involuntarily uses various means to consume stories, narratives, overviews and books with powerful and occasionally dubious and debatable historical content. It is easy to notice that there is a demand to understand the past. Each society has a specific demand for history that forges its relationship with it according to its own needs. This multifaceted demand is met by various means and different groups. The question is: Who meets it? Various situations can arise. The publishing and media space can be covered by professional historians through widely distributed work or contributions to academic magazines, as well as by journalists, amateurs and even novelists. In this regard, we only need to consider the large number of widely distributed historical magazines in Spain that are important to the reading public, such as *Sàpiens, Clío, La Aventura de la Historia, Revista de Historia* and many others, to give just a few examples.

We also must keep in mind that history is consumed continuously today and that a historical discourse or one that appeals to the past in some way is being created, criticised and spread in almost all areas of thought. This is especially the case with audiovisual media and popular media such as comics and illustrated history,[3] to the point that historians often only come into contact with the educated public by participating in television documentary series, discussions sparked by the success of some 'historical' film or certain commemorative events. Opinion articles in the press, tourism promotion and radio programmes also convey and construct a certain idea of the past. However, today we can also find different examples of specialists from other disciplines treating History as important (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2019b, pp. 39, 55-62, 121-151, 504 and 536; Acemoglu & Robinson, 2019a, pp. 367, 380-383; Castells, 2017, p. 110; Geiselberger, 2017, pp. 53-54, 167; Rodrik, 2018, p. 316), in addition to other writers and intellectuals whose work is

3 One such example is the publication of the graphic adaptation of Antony Beevor's bestseller, aimed to be the general public's gateway to the Spanish Civil War (Beevor, 2020). Along the same lines, but for the Spanish dictatorship, see Pontón, 2023.

widely circulated and the topic of public discussion (Mishra, 2017, pp. 13-14, 19 and 30; Mishra, 2020, pp. 61, 70-71, 159-175 and 194).

Gruzinski thinks that to meet future audiences' demands for the past, we must write and speak about the past and future in public, so that our ideas can be easily shared. This dedication to the public foreshadows three new trends in writing History: first, the need for new narratives that can be read and understood by non-experts; second, a focus on visualisation and digital tools; third, the merger of the large and the small, the 'micro' and the 'macro', which makes the best use of archival work on one hand; and fourth, work on issues of common interest, based on the need to restore the connection between the past and the future. In this regard, we might add that the purpose of History, if we choose to accept it, would be to rewrite our relationship with nature, our relationship with technology and the inequality between countries, people, races and sexes, and to do so in a way that the general public can understand (Gruzinski, 2018, p. 213).

Moreover, an overabundant and saturated memory emerged forcefully in the 2000s. Used as a synonym for History, it has led to a 'commemorative obsession' in the European memorial landscape. As Traverso has pointed out, the political dimension of memory and the abuses accompanying it have affected how History is written (Traverso, 2006, pp. 11-12 and 20). This requires rising to the challenge of building a future audience for the past and rethinking how we regard that past.

However, we will continually lose ground if we dedicate ourselves to History whilst ignoring others whose work connects us to the past, such as filmmakers, visual artists, choreographers, novelists and all those who reflect the foundations of our present. Many of these products not only can be, and in fact are, incentives for the historian's profession, to put it in classical terms, but they also indicate current issues and sometimes even offer a critical and constructive standpoint that is now more necessary than ever (Gruzinski, 2018). In brief, the formative influence that the media and entertainment wield over audiences often replaces the sway that great nineteenth-century serial historical novels and school education once held. Historiography cannot underestimate analysing this either.

With regard to audiences, we ought to discuss the many shortcomings

that still burden the transmission of historical knowledge, content and method in our classrooms. This is what we have verified in our analysis of the structural elements that contribute institutionally to determining the approach to teaching History, jointly and correlatedly, starting with the textbooks most recently used in secondary schools, either exclusively or complementarily, given their importance in classrooms. In any case, these are probably the last or only history books that most people ever read (Tappi & Tébar Hurtado, 2024). The widespread use of text books, particularly by students, is a formidable example of the public use of the past, though with the important difference that by their very nature, the propagation of their content is mediated by teachers.

However, our analysis does not solely focus on textbooks, but also on curricula and final exams. Everything indicates that we must take a more critical stance, which tends to a problematising reading of historical phenomena and recovers their breadth and complexity. The shortcomings here are confirmed by the evidence that the skills required of students are limited to the passive assimilation of information, without going beyond it. This suppresses the acquisition of mental habits prepared to contrast and compare well-founded but divergent interpretations, as required by the epistemic and methodological status of the discipline. The possible consequence of all this is that the study of History may be easily trivialised—which is undoubtedly the most harmful thing that can happen in school—and it may reproduce and encourage readings supporting a deceptive and manipulative use of the past.

The results of our research indicate that, far from a serious, detailed study in line with historiographical discussion, the account of even two crucial events in the history of the respective countries, such as Spain's transition to democracy and the Italian resistance, remains tightly connected to its instrumental role in nation-building. Instead, it would be desirable for syllabi, exams and textbooks to begin to include broader perspectives less beholden to late nineteenth-century paradigms. By paying more attention to Social History and without detracting from potentially conflicting elements, even the 'subaltern classes' would be considered bearers of their own meaning and agency, regardless of their location in monocausal prefigurations of historical change. Ultimately, what stands out in this study is that the way that Spain's transition to democracy and the Italian resistance are taught in schools does

not send students the message that a parliamentary regime must be built 'from below', though it does make the issue of the conquest of democracy central. It also does not teach them how to use tools to help them to develop a critical and conscious perspective on knowledge of the past, understanding it as a right of citizenship.

In any case, the results we have reached should be understood as a step towards the development of future research, coordinated internationally and based on comparing school systems in different countries. In this regard, some points of a possible research agenda ought to be defined. Firstly, however traumatic, conflictive or 'divisive' it may have been, the recent past still occupies a central place in the political and cultural imagination in society today. Therefore, it is an especially important motivator and a necessary educational priority that can provide meaning to the study of History as a discipline and help us to understand the immediate foundations of the present (Cajani, Lässig & Repoussi, 2019).

The second point has to do more generally with teachers' relationship to teaching Contemporary History specifically. More so than in other times, in addition to transmitting historical knowledge, these teachers are also witnesses of events or interact with an individual and collective memory that is still active. This makes it useful and necessary to examine the 'lacking, unconscious and ambiguous' links between history, memory and the public use of the past (Silvani, 2005, pp. 196-197). The third point is related to disciplinary training, because when interacting with students, teachers pass on and rework the historical knowledge constructed in the halls of academia. In Spain, for example, universities should give greater importance not only to Contemporary History as a whole, but also to more recent history, in compliance with the Democratic Memory Law of 2022. In fact, to date only half of 42 History faculties include in their study plans compulsory six-credit exams related to Francoism, the transition to democracy, democracy and twentieth-century Spain (Fuertes Muñoz & Banderas Navarro, 2024, pp. 346-347). Finally, we are aware that the way we teach and tell the history of the past shapes how the present grasps its potential, as Drayton writes (Drayton, 2011, pp. 671-685).

The string of crises since the start of the twenty-first century may

indicate that short-term views work fine when there are no problems, but they quickly become inadequate once crises arise. This is why Guldi and Armitage conclude: 'Never before now has it been so vital that we all become experts on the long-term view, that we return to the *longue durée.* Renewing the connection between past and future, and using the past to think critically about what is to come, are the tools that we need now. Historians are those best able to supply them' Guldi & Armitage, 2016, p. 35). This is not because the historian is a 'magician who can completely reveal the past', nor a skilled healer who can cure it. Rather, the historian can act as 'a guide who encourages reading and thinking critically' (Casanova, 2020, pp. 383-384).

Thinking about the present in historical terms

Although the contours of the present are never precise enough and the past is not predetermined, having useful tools available to approach thinking about the present in historical terms, starting from the contemporary world, is an incentive to 'go back in time' (Gruzinski, 2018, p. 16). The purpose of History, as Bédarida said, is to 'modestly discover truths, even if they are partial and precarious, partially deciphering the myths and memories in all their richness' (Casanova, 2020, p. 285). This discipline can foster this encounter between the past and the future. As Bloch said, 'Moreover, this solidarity between the ages is so strong that the bonds of intelligibility between them truly have a double meaning'. Bloch also argued when contemplating the historian's profession that 'the misunderstanding of the present inevitably arises from ignorance of the past. But perhaps it is just as futile to try to understand the past if one knows nothing of the present' (Bloch, 2021, pp. 70-71). We might think that 'History is nothing if it is not tied to pedagogy, political ethics and a belief in the future' (Eley, 2018, pp. 23-24) because if 'ignorance of the past is not only harmful to knowledge of the present, but also compromises action in the present' (Bloch, 2001), this triggers a series of questions addressed at both the historian and the common person, both of whom must answer basic questions about what, when, how, who, why and for whom if they are to critically grasp the reality of both the past and the present (Vilar, 1997).

For all these reasons, we find it even more incomprehensible that the institutional players in charge of funding academic activity continue to stress the discipline's inability to spread its knowledge to society. This is a challenge that historians should aim to overcome by getting involved in the problems of the present through their academic practice (teaching and research),[4] worrying about the future, thinking historically and trying to build a grammar of critical reading based on the application of historical reasoning to today's world (Suau & Veiga, 2015, p. 137).

Indeed, *thinking historically* to understand—or to somewhat improve understanding of—much of today's world has been established as the competence-based hallmark of teaching in recent years. It is important to remember that there is a very lively discussion going on that, *grosso modo,* pits two models for teaching History against each other: one model that emphasises conceptual knowledge and another that prioritises the competence-based approach. This debate is associated with and stems from occasionally bitter criticism of the traditionally hegemonic model for teaching History, dominated as it is by the transmission of concepts, dates, data and facts of the past to acquire conceptual and factual content through memorisation (Sáiz & Fuster, 2014; Carretero & López, 2009; Prats & Santacana, 2011). This approach is often contrasted with another that stresses the competence-based learning of History. In any case, a third way that integrates both seems to be picking up steam, aimed at striking a balance by combing knowledge of the past with skill in History and historical procedures (Sáiz, 2014, p. 84). In other words, 'It is important to know what happened, but also how we know it happened' (Domínguez, 2015, p. 44). Or, as Jorge Sáiz and Ramón López (2015, p. 89) express in similar terms:

> a) The way of presenting the past by resorting to historical knowledge, dates, facts, figures, concepts and so on, which is referred to as substantive or first-order content; and b) strategic skills to give meaning to knowledge, understood as second-order content or meta-concepts, which take concrete form in skill to address and interpret

4 For a defence of this position, as well as a brilliant study on the production and consumption of history, see Trouillot, 2017.

historical issues and to understand the past as is done in historical research.

We could therefore construct historical thought through the combined activation of both knowledge of the past and certain strategic skills or historical meta-concepts (Lévesque, 2008; Seixas & Morton, 2013). From this perspective, and despite the constant reworking, we find it appropriate to outline—even if briefly—the historical meta-concepts that, as has been said, might allow for the development of historical thought. Some authors, such as Jesús Domínguez, ground historical thought in four major historical concepts: the use of evidence and historical sources; causal explanation; contextualised or empathetic explanation; and time, change and continuity (Domínguez, 2015). However, despite the value of this conceptualisation, Seixas and Morton's approach has become the most complete model, as it integrates up to six historical meta-concepts associated with six issues that historians must face in their work. In other words, the construction of historical thought is based in this case on six major concepts summarised by fundamental questions: How do we decide what is important to know about the past? (historical importance); How do we know the past? (evidence); How do we make sense of the flow of History? (continuity and change); Why did events of the past happen and what impact did they have? (causes and consequences); How can we better understand the people of the past? (historical perspective); and, ultimately, How can History help us to experience the present? (ethical dimension) (Seixas & Morton, 2013, pp. 5-6; Ponce, 2015, p. 226).

In contrast to this approach, we might consider that 'revisionisms' (understood not as revision or reinterpretation, but as the construction of myths and anti-myths) have been a challenge for History for decades. Sometimes we are told to ignore them because they cannot be stopped. However, this phenomenon has expanded and had an impact on historiography, in which the strategy to combat it would be to follow another path, as Vidal-Naquet (2004, pp. 117-118) warned us in the early twenty-first century:

In connection with revisionist writings, there has even been talk of intellectual excrement. I accept this expression, but there are laboratories where excrement is analysed. Since when are lies, falsehoods, myths and the

imaginary no longer objects of historical study?

In short, we would even need to try to show the added value of History compared to other disciplines, to pose questions and show evidence related to the key issues primarily affecting problems raised in the present (Suau & Veiga, 2015, pp. 146-148). This issue may even be more pressing given that we have entered new scenarios where rational words and criteria (Thompson, 2017) have largely been displaced by fake news, misinformation or poor-quality information, which are potentially highly corrosive for public discussions in which historians were involved decades ago. We obviously must not abandon or stop participating in these public discussions, and even less so in these times of crisis, of false narratives and fake stories, since historical thinking could help to free us from the supposedly *natural* laws on the functioning of the state, the market and the destiny of the planet.

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Thinking historically. The teaching of history in Italy between research and teaching

Pensar históricamente. La enseñanza de la Historia en Italia entre la investigación y la docencia

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Abstract

The aim of these pages is to offer some reflections on the centrality that the teaching of history should once again have today, in order to educate young people to live the challenges posed to them by the complexity of their times, and to help them to think historically, that is, to apply the rules of the historical method to the analysis of the present. In this context, the new historiographical paths that the globalized world has brought to the attention of historians and the teaching methods that are necessary to teach them in schools will be considered. In particular, it will be pointed out that Italy is lagging behind in its reflection on the teaching of history.

Key Words: Italy; History Teaching; Historiography; Methodologies; historical Research.

Resumen

Estas breves páginas pretenden elaborar algunas reflexiones sobre la centralidad que debería volver a tener hoy la enseñanza de la historia para educar a los jóvenes a vivir los retos que les plantea la complejidad de su tiempo, ayudándoles a pensar históricamente, es

decir, a aplicar las reglas del método histórico al análisis del presente. El razonamiento considerará las nuevas vías historiográficas que el mundo globalizado ha puesto en conocimiento de los historiadores y las metodologías didácticas necesarias para enseñarlas en las escuelas, haciendo hincapié en el gran retraso que sufre Italia en la reflexión sobre la enseñanza de la historia.

Palabras clave: Italia; enseñanza de la historia; historiografía; metodologías; investigación histórica.

Introduction

The purpose of this brief is to highlight the central role that history teaching should play in contemporary education. This is with a view to equipping young people with the requisite skills to face the multifaceted challenges of the present era by fostering the capacity for historical thinking. Lévesque, Case and Denos (2013) argue that the rules of the historical method should be applied to the analysis of the present and of historical becoming, which is constituted by a complex set of interrelated factors. These factors include both permanence and change, as well as long-term cultural contaminations. Italy, with its rich cultural heritage expressed not only in art and music but also in fashion and cuisine, is a microcosm of this complexity. It is the result of the interaction of different peoples (migrants and/or invaders) and cultures that have settled in the country over the centuries, giving rise to an extraordinary country in cultural terms.

In this context, it is important to highlight some general issues. In the light of the above, it is clear that a comprehensive study of historical method, historiography and the teaching of history cannot ignore the complex nuances that can only be briefly touched upon due to the limitations of this discourse. These include the analysis of the competitive admissions process to educational institutions, which often require a degree in history for those wishing to teach it, as well as the intricacies of recruitment and hiring practices for educators. The methodology of historical research and the disciplinary areas that characterise it differ according to the order and grade in question. It is im-

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portant to be aware of the significant differences in methods and approaches to the teaching of history according to the different levels of the Italian school system (primary, secondary, university) and the different types of schools (high schools, technical and professional institutes). In this article, I will refrain from discussing the subject of Artificial Intelligence (AI), which is currently a major challenge for researchers and educators. In fact, it is a subject of considerable complexity, with implications that are largely unknown and that could soon have serious consequences for research and teaching in all disciplines.

The impact of the web on the humanities

It is a challenge for teachers to keep abreast of the rapid advances in scientific research that are revitalising historical knowledge, and the innovations introduced by the periodic school reforms that each new government in the country introduces into its school system. However, the main challenge facing scholars and teachers of all disciplines over the past two decades has been technology and the Internet. Not only have they forced those in educational institutions of all kinds and at all levels to rethink their approach to research, methodology, content and disciplinary teaching, but they have also had a profound impact on people's lives.

In order to understand the profound impact that technologies and the web have on people's lives, the information philosopher Luciano Floridi (2017) has developed the concept of 'onlife', a neologism that uses the image of the mangrove, a plant that thrives in the brackish water where the sea and the river meet, to illustrate how the online and offline realms are not two separate entities, but two dimensions that interpenetrate with constant cross-references. Onlife can thus be defined as a daily way of life through which individuals connect, study, work and experience their relationship with information (Pasta 2023). It is a reality that is now ubiquitous and is becoming, for better or for worse, a way of being capable of generating cultural and economic models with a very strong impact (Pasta 2021; Raviolo, Pasta 2022). The multiplicity of devices that surround us has become an integral part of our

lives, often determining the rhythm of our days and influencing our modes of communication. The network, as postulated by Pierre Lévy (1999), has become a "potentially infinite computer whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere", a concept that has been compared to the nature of God. This assertion should convince researchers and educators of the need to address the potential of these tools, which often claim to be able to provide comprehensive knowledge on their own.

It is clear that the convergence of traditional knowledge and information technology, in all their fields of application, has taken on the character of a "paradigmatic" transition, which is manifested both in the modalities of humanistic research and in those of didactics. On the one hand, there is the 'scientific' imperative of understanding how to respect the epistemological status of the various disciplines that make up the humanities. The interdisciplinary field of the humanities has increasingly come to the fore in its engagement with technology and the digital realm. At the same time, a didactic imperative has emerged to approach the evolving linguistic landscape of the digital age in a constructive and participatory manner, while acknowledging the potential challenges and implications that the use of new languages and tools may have for the epistemological foundations of various disciplines.

It is clear that at a historical juncture such as the one we are in, characterised by rapid socio-historical changes, it is the disciplines based on historical methodologies that are most affected and consequently undermined, particularly in their role as interpreters of reality. History is undoubtedly such a subject. The fundamental issue in dealing with the crisis of humanistic knowledge is not to perpetuate the traditional diatribe between scientists and humanists, which has been characterised as "humanistic fundamentalism" or "instrumental technicalism" (Bernardini, De Mauro 2003, 9). Instead, it is necessary to recognise that an extraordinary change is taking place in the way culture is disseminated. This poses significant challenges for those involved in historical interpretation, including historians and others who seek to understand the past in the context of the present. It also poses difficulties for educators tasked with transmitting historical knowledge, given the rapid evolution of skills due to technological advances (Toschi, 2011).

Indeed, how can a discipline concerned with narrating the past find a

place in a society that seems to live in an eternal present? How can the rigour of the scientific method, as applied by the historian, be useful in interpreting the complexities of the present? And how can a teacher of history, at any level, effectively navigate the complexities of these evolving changes? The answers to these questions are not straightforward, not least because the international debate about the impact of technology and the Web on knowledge and its teaching is now fueled by a vast literature that has become difficult to navigate. Nevertheless, there is a consensus among scholars that there is an urgent need for those involved in the humanities at all levels of education, but especially at the university level, to assess the impact of information technology on the various disciplines, including history. This is not to regret the past, as it is clear that the advent of computers and the Internet has greatly facilitated the research work of scholars, including historians. However, it is also important to be cautious and to refrain from unquestioningly embracing the "new world", which continues to present unknowns, some of which may be dangerous. Furthermore, it is essential to recognise the significant economic and financial interests, especially those of high-tech multinationals, that are influencing the development of this new digital landscape. Historians and humanists more generally should engage with the digital realm and related technologies in order to continue to fulfil the traditional humanities function of researching, evaluating, critiquing, questioning, verifying and interpreting. This should be done in a way that enables them to own the tools at their disposal, rather than being owned by the technology. It is important to understand the advantages and disadvantages of this approach and, above all, to reaffirm the role of scholars and teachers that can emerge from this confrontation, renewed. In conclusion, historians must become protagonists and founders of a new tradition of historical knowledge in order to overcome their crisis and the weakening of their function in the general sphere of knowledge.

Within the Italian university system, historians and humanists in a broader sense have not yet fully taken into account the implications of the Internet as a cultural producer, with the capacity to shape and inform important points of reference. This is a cultural and social issue of particular concern to us as scholars and educators in the humanities, not least because, with few exceptions, humanists are no longer at the centre of the processes of cultural

dissemination as they were in the past. There are many reasons for this, many of which predate the advent of the Internet. But this does not detract from the fact that a crisis of role can be turned into an opportunity for renewal, without regretting a past that will not return. The rapid pace of technological progress is a constant in contemporary life. Whether electronic devices are regarded with affection or disdain, they are destined to become an integral part of the skill set required of those engaged in the field of humanistic culture, both as tools of production and, more importantly, as media of communication. All of this is communication, precisely because information technology is not only a tool, but also a language, and an interdisciplinary one at that. Moreover, the space of the web is not neutral; it is owned by those who manage search engines and their algorithms (Toschi, 2011).

The question of whether the Internet is an appropriate means of disseminating knowledge is no longer relevant, as its potential to become a dominant force in the dissemination of culture has already been realised. Instead, it is necessary to consider the role that humanists, who have historically been at the centre of the dissemination of culture, can play in this paradigmatic process of cultural revolution. In order to assess the future role of humanists in this context of rapid change, it is necessary to consider not only their position as users of new technologies, but also their potential as content creators and educators of future generations of humanists. This question is of considerable importance, as it forces us to consider the future of many professions related to the humanities and the role of the training institutions par excellence, namely educational institutions of all kinds and at all levels, and in particular universities. In the current era, the proliferation of information, which is difficult to regulate, has resulted from the advent of digitalisation and the World Wide Web. Over time, humanists have developed methodological tools, constantly evolving and refined, to identify the scientific rigour of a given work, including non-academic sources (e.g. bibliographies, apparatuses, etc.). The Web is still far from providing the above-mentioned resources, which are instead provided by journals, series, etc. It is therefore essential to "train" researchers who are increasingly able to control the content of the Net according to the categories proper to the humanities. Indeed, the mismatch between research and teaching opportunities is the greatest threat to the humanities. Wi-

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thout a generation of digital humanists, we risk being subsumed by computer scientists, engineers or other technical figures. Moreover, in a relatively short time, we may no longer be able to understand the mechanisms of knowledge production from the inside (Fiormonte, Numerico, Tomasi 2015).

In the case of historians, the issues become even more complex when one considers the nature of the sources available. The vast amount of information that appears on search engines turns search results into sources themselves. This, combined with the ease of access to materials and the instant verification of knowledge, leads many to believe that they can produce historical self-education without developing critical thinking skills. They are unable to evaluate sources, understand the risks involved or grasp the nature of the content. Furthermore, the nature of texts on the web is such that they can be updated, corrected and edited, resulting in a variable corpus that is subject to change. This has implications for the way in which they are preserved and therefore for their future accessibility as a source of information.

One of the most obvious consequences of this phenomenon can be seen in the field of academic education, particularly in the breakdown of the conventional relationship between research and teaching. Traditionally, this relationship was characterised by the gradual accumulation of knowledge, followed by its controlled dissemination. The traditional relationship between researching and teaching history has now broken down, rendering the former obsolete for interpreting society. Obviously, it is students and young people in general who suffer from this lack of confidence in history as a discipline. But they are also the ones most at risk in terms of their education. While the new generations undoubtedly have greater technical skills than adults, this is not always accompanied by an adequate level of critical competence in terms of content. The concept of "do-it-yourself" is implicit in the operation of the Internet, and this raises a number of questions concerning the control and, above all, the responsibility of the content offered by this vast repository of knowledge. In the specific case of historical knowledge, this is becoming a significant problem due to the enormous amount of information and misinterpretations with undeclared sources on the Web, which have become uncontrollable but are used by everyone, especially students when preparing their dissertations. This is becoming problematic in terms of historical knowledge,

due to the vast amount of information and misinterpretations with undeclared sources on the Internet, which are difficult to control. However, they are used by a wide range of people, especially students when preparing their dissertations.

What measures could historians and history teachers take to address a situation that also calls into question their role as scholars and educators? I believe that those in a position to do so must accept the reality of the changes brought about by technology and the Internet. These changes are now irreversible and the online environment affects all age groups. In order not to be left behind by these changes, it is necessary to address them from within society, rather than simply observing them from the outside. It is therefore imperative that educational institutions at all levels facilitate the formation of new historical knowledge and reclaim their role as centres of intellectual production and a space for the cultivation of the mind. While technology can undoubtedly assist in the didactics of various disciplines, allowing for a reduction in the traditional gap between teacher and learner, this should be done in a way that maintains a healthy balance and benefits all parties. The interpenetration of knowledge and skills is essential, as the absence of one renders the other meaningless. It is clear that technology and the Internet, if used intelligently and critically, have the potential to become an exceptional methodological tool. However, it is essential to recognise that they cannot replace the role of the teacher. The teacher is not only a transmitter of knowledge, but also a personality and a capacity for dialogue with his or her students. In this context, media literacy is of great importance and must concern both students and, in many cases, especially teachers (Rivoltella 2001, 2005, 2006, 2010).

The ability to navigate such a complex reality thus requires a nuanced and multifaceted approach, encompassing a range of interrelated domains, including study topics, didactics, scientific communication methods, the implications of open access, the relationship between paper and digital publications, the evaluation of research mandated by ministries, and the creation of a collaborative scientific dimension in the digital realm. The advent of digital technologies has made the traditional model of scientific work, characterised by autonomy and solitude, obsolete. This has significant implications for the very concept of knowledge, which is no longer conceived as a unified entity,

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but rather as a complex and fragmented phenomenon. The increasingly interdisciplinary nature of research, enabled by information technology, facilitates the exchange of methodologies and content, challenging the boundaries between different fields of study. The digital dimension of knowledge is now eroding the almost insurmountable boundaries that emerged in the 19th century between the "hard sciences", based on the experimental method, and the more traditionally speculative humanistic disciplines. It is clear that information technology and the Internet have introduced a new paradigm in the field of scientific practices. However, as has always been the case, the emergence of any new methodology requires a theoretical reflection not only on the methodology itself, but also on its genesis and the possible consequences of its implementation. In this respect, the role of the humanities can, or perhaps should, once again become central.

For this to happen, however, humanists, and in this case historians, must learn to master the tools offered by technology and be able to use them to shape the discipline not only from a scientific but also a pedagogical perspective. This is particularly important in the context of the Internet and social networks, which have become the primary source of information for young people and students. In particular, the Internet has become the main source of information for young people and students, often without any critical evaluation (Ciotti, Roncaglia 2008; Criscione 2006; Bordini 2008; Bandini, Bianchini 2007).

However, in addition to the above-mentioned problems, the Internet and social networks have also opened up new avenues for research and comparison, particularly with regard to the historian's primary tool, narrative. Indeed, the effective communication strategy that has enabled the success of Web 2.0 and 3.0, and of tools and environments such as Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), Tik Tok and YouTube, is the use of narrative. This is not only because users post content there, but also because they have the opportunity to tell their stories in virtual spaces, giving rise to the narrative turn of so-called postmodern society (Salomon 2008). Indeed, in a world as chaotic as the Web, narrative is the only tool capable of governing and structuring the fragmented individualities of the Web. In this sense, historians could make a significant contribution by using the historical method to reconstruct those

collective narratives that until recently constructed identity and citizenship, but in which individuals still need to recognise themselves. It is clear that this approach represents a public use of History 3.0, with the main difference being that the number of centres producing narratives has increased exponentially, to the extent that they are no longer under the control of educational institutions. The presentation of narratives and the ability to disseminate them according to the rules set by each community has proven to be an effective strategy for promoting shared memories on digital platforms.

Before the advent of the Internet, cultural institutions (schools, universities, museums, archives, etc.) were responsible for the control and production of collective narrative sources, which also shaped the management of Italy's rich cultural heritage. Today, these institutions are competing with many other agencies for the production of narratives. However, there have been few attempts by cultural institutions in Italy to narrate cultural heritage online. Instead, they have generally limited themselves to digitising their heritage and displaying it in a showcase format (Capaldi, Ilardi, Ragone 2011). The concept of the passive viewer is no longer applicable in the context of online communication. Instead, there is a clear preference for participation, sharing and intervention. This shift in attitude has significant implications for the way cultural institutions engage with their cultural heritage and a country's history. However, in the historical communication produced by the Web, where it is difficult to identify privileged points of view, historians can once again play a fundamental role by renewing their narrative methods. This can facilitate greater engagement with history among younger audiences and allow for a more nuanced examination of historical narratives, including their problematic aspects. While it is important to teach students to think historically, it is also important to avoid the pitfall of web history being overly focused on the present. This is because the sources used in web history are more suited to the contemporary period, but a short-term view does not fully capture the complexity of historical events over time.

What form should history take in the contemporary era?

The modern world presents historians with a number of challenges that they must address. The first of these challenges is undoubtedly the need to adopt a perspective that is no longer Eurocentric, both as regards the objects of historical study and as regards how to tell them. The teaching of national history, even if it cannot rightly be excluded from school curricula, no longer reflects the reality of classrooms where pupils of different ethnic and geographical origins, with their different histories and cultures, now coexist. To meet the need for history that no longer focuses solely on nation-building processes, historians have developed new historiographical orientations, such as world history and global history. These new approaches aim to conduct research that is sensitive to the problems of today's multi-ethnic and multicultural societies. These two historiographical orientations, which originated in the English-speaking academic world, have been adopted in Asia, particularly in Japan and China, but have not achieved the same level of acceptance in southern Europe. In the Italian context, there are historians who have begun to practice world and global history (e.g. Laura Di Fiore and Marco Meriggi 2011), despite the perplexity of the academic world. However, there has been no real discussion of the implications of such historiographical paths for the profession of history. Research centres have also been set up, such as the World History Research Centre at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore. However, a comprehensive reflection on the development of new historiographical approaches is still lacking.

In addition to a spatial dimension that extends beyond Europe, historiography has had to take into account other protagonists in the historical narrative who were overlooked for a long time and who have now been able to secure their rightful place in the narrative, including women, ethnic minorities and slaves. In addition, new historiographical approaches have emerged in response to the pressing issues of our time. These focus on areas such as environmental history, epidemiology, public health and emotions. In conclusion, history is a constantly evolving field of study, offering insights that can be used to understand the present and influence the future. It is a discipline that can facilitate the development of a multifaceted narrative capable of ad-

dressing the complexities of modern society. This openness to new spaces and protagonists can be seen in historical research and in the new lines of research undertaken by Italian scholars in recent years. However, it has not yet had a significant impact on classroom teaching, mainly due to the limitations imposed by the ministerial school curricula, which do not facilitate the ability of teachers to adopt a broader perspective. As noted above, there is a clear need to move beyond the confines of national history. However, it is important to recognise that public schools, not only in Italy but throughout Europe, have their roots in the French Revolution and the subsequent formation of the nation state. These institutions have played a central role in the development of national citizenship. The current school curricula, and in particular the history curricula, can be seen as a legacy of the nineteenth-century need for the newly formed Italian state to foster the development of a national citizenry and an elite ruling class. Consequently, they are not impartial in terms of their intended purpose, despite the efforts of certain ill-conceived educational reforms (such as the Moratti reform, Law No. 53 of 28 March 2003) to distot them. The inevitable result is a significant decline in the level of knowledge. It is a challenge to move away from this entrenched culture, which serves as a cornerstone for all nation-states, and to embrace alternative, more expansive perspectives that may not be inherently Eurocentric. Moreover, in the contemporary European context, moving beyond this nationalised approach to history is particularly challenging given the current crisis in the civic function of history itself. The continental economic crisis, the traumatic experience of the Corona pandemic and intense migratory flows have generated uncontrolled fears and a sense of siege and cultural disintegration in many EU countries. This phenomenon is particularly strong in European countries with a colonial legacy, such as France and the Netherlands. In recent years, there have been efforts in these countries to codify an official national canon, driven by concerns that students lack a sense of shared identity and a common historical and discursive framework. This is exemplified by the case of Italy, which has not been immune to these challenges. Conversely, in many European countries in the Balkans and the Baltics, the national narrative has experienced a resurgence after the interlude of communist rule, during which the dominant approach was to strengthen national culture in order to overcome

the significant ideological divisions resulting from communism (Colla 2023).

This is obviously a complex situation in which a balance must be struck between the educational demands of a diverse society and the teaching of history, which cannot be self-serving.

Indeed, the notion that the teaching of history should be adapted to the educational needs of the 21st century, where the conventional wisdom that human civilisation is inevitably shaped by the formation of nation states, including our own, is increasingly being challenged, particularly in the light of the need to promote global awareness and understanding. It is imperative not to lose sight of history itself, namely that the nation-state form is currently the most prevalent in the world, largely due to the fact that European states, for better or worse, spread it across almost the entire globe during their colonial and imperialist eras. Therefore, while it is important to acknowledge the interconnectedness of historical narratives across geographical and geopolitical spaces, including the Atlantic region, beyond the European continent, it is crucial to ensure that the content of historical knowledge is not distorted in the process of adapting it to educational needs. The study of historical events and personalities from a variety of perspectives does not imply the negation or erasure of those considered unpalatable because of their incompatibility with prevailing demands, including those related to education. From this point of view, it may be useful to reflect on the phenomena of cancellation culture and political correctness. Indeed, such phenomena tend to target their preferred victims within the context of historical narratives. The term 'cancellation culture', which has been the subject of intense and pertinent debate in the Anglo-Saxon world, especially in academic circles, has also appeared in Italian television, newspaper and university discourse in recent years. However, there has been a certain confusion surrounding the concept, which has contributed to the emergence of frequent misunderstandings. The phenomenon concerns anything that is considered incorrect, reprehensible or politically questionable. It affects not only public figures but also entire pages of history, creating a variety of interpretative polarisations that can influence the perception of historical events. This is achieved by taking facts out of their original context and erasing the past that does not conform to the current point of view (Piacenza, 2023).

Notable examples of this 'cultural erasure' include the removal of statues of prominent historical figures such as Winston Churchill or Christopher Columbus. These individuals are often held responsible for the exploitation of ethnic or gender minorities, and as a result their statues are removed from public spaces such as squares, or their names are erased from school textbooks. No distinction is made between different historical periods or situations, and nuances are not taken into account; instead, circumstances are seen in stark contrast. The focus is on both the present and the past, regardless of the context and circumstances that originally shaped them. These facts are then deployed in ongoing public and political discourse. In effect, the facts of the past are taken out of their historical context and applied to the present without due distinction. Despite the occasional reasonable position, over-generalisations are often made (E. Ng 2022).

This preoccupation with erasure has ramifications that extend beyond the realm of history and into the realm of literature. Notable works such as the Iliad and the Odyssey, as well as passages from both ancient and modern authors, have been indexed for reasons that are often unclear. One such reason is the use of terms or representations that would be considered racist today. However, at the time these works were written, such terms and representations were not uncommon (Bettini 2023). In such cases, what is the historian's appropriate response? The question, then, is whether the historian should give precedence to the common sense of contemporary society, which rightly no longer tolerates a certain kind of language and representation, or whether he should give precedence to historical fact, recognising that what has happened cannot be undone. The choice is not easy. Removing statues of patrons from public spaces because they were slaves does not change the tragic nature of the history of slavery. However, the act of tearing down such statues may be understandable. It is unacceptable to remove the study of the Iliad and the Odyssey from the curriculum of prestigious universities such as Oxford on the grounds that they are symbols of slave societies.

These are questions that history researchers and teachers must address today. It is possible that, despite Italy's relative backwardness in this respect, new didactic approaches could help the teacher to deal with this complex situation.

The didactics of history

For a long time, the didactic aspect of history has been overlooked in Italian universities. The reasons for this are numerous and difficult to summarise in a few sentences. As a result, there has been a considerable lack of reflection on the subject in Italy, which is particularly striking in view of the remarkable achievements in many areas of historical research.

The emergence of the coronavirus (Covid-19) and the subsequent introduction of distance learning (DAD) have also forced educators to look for new ways of promoting interaction through the use of technology. However, this shift in pedagogy also brought about a significant lag in the technological skills of many trainers, limiting their ability to fully exploit the potential of these tools. In fact, many of them simply reversed the online versions of their traditional teaching practices that they had used before the epidemic and subsequent lockdown. Teachers essentially continued with the same approach as before. One of the reasons for Italy's delay in establishing history didactics as a distinct and separate field of study is undoubtedly the lasting influence of the Italian idealism of Giovanni Gentile, the author of the only complete and epochal reform of the Italian school, implemented in 1923, and his pedagogical thought, based on the conviction that knowledge of the content of a discipline naturally entails the ability to teach it, thereby rendering teaching technique superfluous.

However, while the integration of the teaching of history with that of other humanities disciplines has taken place with a comparable delay, this has not been the case for other subjects. Mathematics, for example, has a long tradition of reflection on didactics dating back to the early 20th century, while geography has a strong academic foundation and a considerable number of members in the Italian Association of Geography Teachers, founded in 1955.

The 1990s saw a modest advance in reflection on the subject, following the reform law of 1990, which entrusted the universities with the training of secondary school teachers through the establishment of postgraduate specialisation schools. Prior to this, prospective teachers gained access to school teaching through a competition that assessed disciplinary knowledge but not didactic preparation. The 1990 law prompted some disciplines to reflect on

the didactic aspects of their teaching. For example, the Italian Philosophical Society set up a special didactic commission, while the Italianists founded a scientific association in 1996 with a focus on didactic aspects. On the other hand, the Central Council for Historical Studies, which represented historians at the time, did not seize the opportunity to initiate reflection on the subject. During this period, the teaching of history did emerge in some Italian universities, but these were isolated cases that did not have a significant impact, with the exception of the courses given by Antonio Brusa at the University of Bari and Ivo Matozzi at the Alma Mater Studiorum in Bologna (Cajani L. 2019).

Furthermore, the experience of the Schools of Specialisation for Teachers (SISS), launched between 1999 and 2000, did not contribute to the development of a substantial reflection on the subject. Following the closure of these schools between 2008 and 2009, teacher training has been the subject of rather ambiguous ministerial projects, including the Active Formative Apprenticeship (TFA) and the Percorsi Abilitanti Speciali (PAS).

The recent resurgence of interest in the didactics of history and its teaching can be attributed to the introduction of university courses designed to facilitate the acquisition of the 24 CFUs (university training credits) required to become a secondary school teacher. Half of these are to be obtained through disciplinary didactics. These courses have become an obligatory part of the curriculum since the reform of the secondary teacher recruitment system. The qualification previously required for access to the competitive class (old-school or one-cycle diploma) is no longer sufficient for participation in ordinary competitions or for inclusion in provincial (GPS) and school rankings. Subsequently, the possibility of attending three-year training courses (FIT) was introduced for those who had been successful in the teaching competitions (Decree-Law 59/2017). In addition, the initial training courses for secondary school teachers in grades I and II, known as "DPC", were introduced. Decree Law No. 36 of 30 April 2022, which included 60 CFU was strongly supported by the former Minister of Education, Patrizio Bianchi, and is part of the maxi-decree of the PNRR (National Recovery and Resilience Plan).

These legislative developments have led to a significant degree of reflection on disciplinary didactics and, at the same time, on the didactics

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of history. This reflection was prompted by a fundamental data point: the absence of specific university courses in the field of history didactics and the lack of experimentation with innovative methodologies for teaching historical knowledge. For example, there are no doctoral programmes dedicated to this teaching discipline, despite the specific declarations of the SSDs (disciplinary scientific sectors), which refer to it as an obligation (Ministerial Decree no. 639 of 02.05.2024, Annex A). There are no real academic research centres specialising in this field. It is clear that the lack of scientific reflection and monitoring of the numerous initiatives that have contributed to the development of the teaching discipline has meant that most of the significant proposals made by the few teachers involved remain largely unknown. This situation suggests that, as far as Italy is concerned, it is not possible to speak of homogeneous experiences, but rather of attempts, some of which have been successful, to systematise a multiplicity of experiences. One such organisation is the Italian Society for the Didactics of History, founded in April 2002. Finally, a scientific society dedicated to the teaching of history has been created in Italy. This initiative, led by historians and scholars from various disciplines, has brought together people from academic and educational institutions with a common interest in research into the teaching of history, its public applications and related training activities. This collaboration between the academic and educational communities is an important step in promoting interdisciplinary dialogue and knowledge exchange. The first public engagement will take place in the autumn of 2023.

Contrary to the situation in other countries, such as France or the Netherlands, where theoretical reflections on this topic have produced excellent results from the perspective of teaching practice (Cajani, 2019), scientific research on this topic is lacking in Italy. The crucial point, however, is not to enter into an ideological conflict with the pagan idealism that persists in the methods of teaching history in Italy. This often manifests itself in a vehement and controversial criticism of the frontal lecture method that has come to symbolise that era. Instead, it is important to recognise that a century has passed since that important school reform. The advent of technology, particularly the Internet, now makes it imperative to undertake a comprehensive reflection on the construction of teaching strategies and methodologies, taking into ac-

count the close relationship between knowledge and skills, and the fact that one cannot exist without the other. There must therefore be a balance between the two. It is not possible for 'doing' to override 'knowing' because knowledge, in order to be such, requires study, reflection and time, which is not currently available in the context of the modern school system. Furthermore, such approaches need to be student-led rather than teacher-led.

It is important to note that teaching methods are inherently subjective and can significantly influence not only academic success in the classroom, but also the perception of the discipline itself. In the present era, many individuals are involved in the act of teaching history. As a result, historians, who used to be the exclusive custodians of this function, are forced to navigate a phenomenon that Del Bo (2024, p. 13) refers to as "prêt à porter history" or "pop history", narrated by communicators who are not necessarily trained historians but who nonetheless strive to construct history that is accessible to a diverse audience. In the context of limited resources and the challenge of engaging students with limited attention spans, how can scholars and teachers effectively navigate the current educational landscape? It is imperative that they learn to use the tools of technology to their advantage, capitalising on their scholarly training and preparation, while recognising the enduring importance of books and reading. To this end, they must have a multimodal approach, integrating other forms of communication that are more in tune with the needs of their younger audiences. It is clear that this is a pivotal moment, a paradigm shift, as has been emphasised many times in this publication. However, I believe that there is no alternative at this point, not least in answer to the question 'what is history for', which is often posed to history educators in and out of the classroom. It is not enough to say that history is always new and that it provides the tools for understanding the reality of the present and influencing that of the future. It is imperative to make the compromise of speaking a common language that manages to attract the participation of all, teachers and students alike. In an information society such as ours, communication has assumed a pivotal role, which requires the acquisition of operational skills to ensure effective communication while preserving the narrative aspects that have historically characterised the dissemination of history. Without such efforts, historians risk becoming irrelevant in the construction

and narration of historical processes, which have always been necessary to understand reality and defend a historical, artistic and environmental heritage as precious as that of Italy. The protection of this heritage depends to a large extent on the quality of the historical knowledge of society as a whole.

Italy would be in need of a comprehensive reform of the system, along the lines of the Gentile reform, which would include all levels of education, from pre-school to university, and which would take into account the challenges of contemporary society. Despite the limited investment in education, schooling must continue to play a central role in safeguarding democracy and the common good.

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Against citizenship. Defending the teaching of History as a disciplina

Contra la ciudadanía. En defensa de la enseñanza de la Historia como disciplina

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Abstract

This article advocates the teaching of History from a disciplinary conception as opposed to the civic and memorialist dimension that is so often defended. To do so, it analyses the defining features of History as an academic discipline in order to defend a realistic and objectivist conception of this discipline. With this characterisation, it is defended a conception of History based on work about the rudiments of the historian's craft that addresses acquiring historical thinking in line with P. Seixas and others. Finally, the activities that can be included in the discipline are distinguished form those that belong to another domain, although it is outlined that many of the activities proposed from the perspective of historical memory are perfectly acceptable from a disciplinary conception of the subject. It is concluded that axiological contents related to civic education do not correspond mainly to the subject of History, but relate disciplinarily to Political Philosophy and educationally to the education community on the whole.

Keywords: History Education; Historical Memory; Objectivity; Citizenship Education; Politics and Education.

Resumen

Este artículo defiende la enseñanza de la Historia desde una concepción disciplinar opuesta a la dimensión cívica y memorialista que comúnmente se defiende. Para ello realiza un análisis de los rasgos definitorios de la Historia como disciplina académica para defender una concepción de la disciplina realista y objetivista. Desde esta caracterización se defiende

un tipo de enseñanza de la Historia basada en el trabajo sobre los rudimentos del oficio de historiador y dirigida a la adquisición del pensamiento histórico en la línea de P. Seixas y otros. Finalmente, se deslindan las actividades que caben en la asignatura y aquellas que pertenecen a otro ámbito y se defiende que muchas de las actividades que se proponen desde la memoria histórica son perfectamente asumibles desde una concepción disciplinar de la asignatura. La conclusión es que los contenidos axiológicos relativos a la educación cívica no corresponden primariamente a la asignatura de Historia, sino disciplinarmente a la Filosofía Política y educativamente al conjunto de la comunidad educativa.

Palabras claves: Enseñanza de la Historia; Memoria histórica; Objetividad; Educación cívica; Política y educación.

Introduction

The teaching of History is a matter that has kept educators and professionals of the discipline busy in recent years. It seems clear that the various traditional justifications of the sense of teaching History face serious rationale problems. The vision of a legitimising History of the process of national construction being no longer valid is taken for granted; alternatively, believing a scientific law of historical development that marks the way towards humanity's emancipation has fallen apart. To make the situation worse, the very notion of progress totters thanks to new postmodern perspectives. At this point, the question is, does it make sense to continue teaching our youths History?

In any educational forum, this question would be considered a provocation by History teachers, and they would feel indignant and would raise in unison to contend that History is still fundamental for critically understanding the present and for establishing democratic citizenship. This article aims to pose the second part of this response as a problem. The centrality of History for understanding the present is beyond all doubt, but why have we interiorised its role as the foundation of democratic citizenship as if it were an axiom? It is worth insisting on *why* because *how* is not hard to elucidate. From today's competences and skills hegemony, in which the survival of any knowledge is justified by its usefulness, both citizenship and concomitant memory seem to have been converted into a table of curricular salvation for

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History as a subject. Unlike subject matters like agonising Philosophy, we can challengingly answer the question of what History is for: to train citizens.

The perverse effect that has arisen from the success of this formulation is that we have ended up internalising as an unquestionable truth what should merely be a desperate conjunctural argument for curricular survival. Thus, most History teachers, and even historians, seem content to focus their work on restoring ignored collective memories and on building democratic citizenships; in other words, they are content with underlining the civic dimension of teaching our discipline, and sometimes of the discipline itself. This distinction made between the discipline and its teaching is no trivial matter, even though most of those participating in debate seem to sidestep it. Is the civic mission limited to teaching, or does it completely impregnate the discipline itself? In relation to this, does teaching a discipline have a different nature to the discipline itself other than level of difficulty? In other words, is teaching a discipline an initiation of its working rudiments (Miralles, Molina & Ortuño, 2011, p. 9) or merely a diffusion of its results? because both are certainly not equivalents. In our field, can we accept the externalisation of teaching History as uses of History? (Pérez, 2009, 41).

This article begins by taking a clear position with these questions. First, the historic discipline cannot be subordinated to present-day civic needs; second, teaching History means to initiate youths in the historian's gaze, and not to only diffuse its results in a more or less appealing manner. The didactic translation of these initial positions leads us to a consideration that is far-removed from today's more popular proposals.

The History subject as civic education

The didactic proposals that underline the civic dimension for teaching History in the present are based on opposing answers for the two above questions. On the one hand, they seem to move mostly towards the idea that History itself as a discipline is justified in the present; on the other hand, they are unanimous about the eminently diffusing conception of its teaching for civic purposes. This implies moving towards a History that prioritises projection towards the past of the problems that affect our co-existence in the present.

Ultimately, this is about building a narrative that adapts to current balances and legitimises the multiplication of historic stakeholders, including the new groups that state their identity today. Evidently, the main problem with this History, which comes over as being progressive and inclusive, is none other than the most gross anachronism, the main conventional enemy of History. Such a much-trumpeted interrogation of the past from the present seems to reduce the former to mere decoration in which to stage our current vicissitudes. In fact, nothing is asked because we do not care about the answer; all we want is the setting. This conception faces the pitfall of which, as the cultural turn has insistently reminded us for more than three decades, the experience and meaning of past oppression are very different from that of today and, therefore, the majority of the groups that we track from the present could scarcely conceive themselves during another period. Thus, it would seem that novel proposals rule themselves out. However, let's leave these historiographic contradictions and centre on what is merely didactic.

The didactic basis of these proposals is to put forward in past scenarios a series of activities so that students firmly place in their minds some principles that can be applied to present-day societies. This process involves assuming axiological propositions in which the past merely plays a motivating role for learning that does not derive from it, as it is not given any substance of its own. In this way, we enable students to internalise, for example, rejecting legal inequality without having understood anything of medieval society. Similarly, in the marvellous passage about Camus' school (2013, chapter 6A), in which the Nobel Prize winner pays tribute to the teacher who determinedly intervened in continuing his studies, our teacher training students, rather than a hero, they see a monster because he gave a slap in the face from time to time. Or they state that the main feature of Nazism was the lack of respect for diversity. One is astounded by the triviality of these approaches, and later rebels furiously against such banality, but students shoulder no responsibility in this particular perception. There is nothing in their attitudes to the study or in their knowledge other than ours, except for years of teaching History that addresses a far-removed object from developing any kind of historic gaze. At this point, the problem is no longer anachronism,but is a purely didactic matter. Obviously, the learning that derives from this conception of history is

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far from being significant learning because it does not arise from critical work about the past, but from assuming principles that are *illustrated* in the past and are totally independent of it. This conception reports a generalised deficiency of our intended civic education: critical thinking is neither developed nor is exercised, but is *memorised;* that is, the established conclusions *by us* are taken by the students without actually reaching them.

Another set of objections derives from the openly political dimension that this conception of the subject puts forward. We can talk about civic principles, but it does not escape anyone's notice that this is often a euphemism to make the dealing of openly ideological and political matters mellower. Obviously, nothing is neutral, everything is political…, but there are degrees. From a position that confers the discipline of History its own entity, we can set some possible frameworks of the interpretation of the past. Despite all the problems that are later examined, the range of what can be stated is not as wide as initially seen. Conversely in fact, some historiographic consensuses exist that limit the field and, thus, leave aside a lot of what circulates through other means. Nonetheless, from a conception that reduces discipline to politics, the criteria applied to settle present-day ideological conflicts that are projected towards the past are not easily outlined. Apparently, the common answer is to exalt procedural notions like democracy or pluralism that, to say the least in History, do not guarantee any certain outcome. As the French Catholic intellectual, who lived between the two last centuries, Charles Péguy (cited by Todorov, 2010, p. 37) put it, "as laid out in the Declaration of Rights of Man (…) war can be declared against the whole world while the world is the world". It is true that this problem generally affects the axiological dimension of education: how to transmit political principles and values without performing indoctrination? Yet then the matter is, why do we want to plunge into such boggy land when the discipline already has enough problems as it is?

Finally, the last criticism of the civic conception of teaching History has to do with its nature contradicting its own starting point. These proposals tend to begin with devastating criticism of conventional History with a nationalist background and moral intentionality. Paradoxically however, they end up passionately embracing the notion of reducing the teaching of the discipline to *lessons of History*. Evidently not those that legitimise Bourgeois

western patriarchal colonialist ethnocentrism, but those that result from rebuilding the discipline on "some people's critical knowledge whose citizenship claims from them the freedom and plurality of identities" and contribute to "build democracy not based on vertical and solipsist identities, but on those that are plural, anti-dogmatic and anti-essentialist" (Pérez, 2009, pp. 54 and 55). Without a doubt, they are all praiseworthy objectives but are, in the end, *lessons*.

As opposed to this civic-political drift, the conception that the present article defends is that teaching History at schools must not be based on the *memorising* of civic lessons, not even on their significant construction, but on progressive training in using instruments for making a critical analysis of the past, on initiating in the historian's gaze. This is not based on any fundamental pre-established objective other than acquiring skills from the historiographic analysis and a set of epistemic values derived from it, which differs considerably from reciting substantive statements that *we* have decided are critical. In this way, the intention is to base the subject of History on the way of knowing the past that has been marked out *historically and historiographically* from other approaches, such as epic poetry or literature, to propose, from university departments, a certain way to approach the past that now seems to succumb to a renewed offensive of ideology, politics, emotions and feelings. Ultimately, it is a matter of teaching the discipline, even though it is necessary to previously define what we understand by it.

On objectivity and neutrality again

The positions that prioritise the axiological dimension tend to start from the premise of denying the possibility of objectivity in History (Berger, 2019). They persist with the notion that any aspiration of objectivity is not only impossible, but also *bad faith;* that is, the will to hide the *objectivist's* own ideology. Faced with such manipulation, the historian's civic engagement tends to be conceited (Rüsen, 2019) and, in turn, tends to arouse unanimous applause. Such passion for the political dimension raises the question about what reasons led many to enter this disciplinary community. This ideological predilection may even lead us to think about a kind of epistemic transmutation from

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the deterministic objectivism of the Laws of History to activist subjectivism as a last resource to reach the same end.

From the ideologically opposite field, the very denial of objectivity tends to be based on a much more extreme epistemic approach: questioning reality itself, and much more historic reality, which is so hard to access. From this perspective, the presence of ideology (after all, human emancipation is not devoid of certain rhetoric charm) is not as important as the inexistence of something external to discourse on which some rule of correspondence applies. Ultimately, historic reality would be no more than a preferentially linguistic construct that results from historians' attempts to access it. For post-modernity, all we are left with is texts about texts on which to build numerous narrations with aspirations of rhetoric effectiveness.

To conclude, the discipline as it has been outlined for two centuries is submitted to crossfire aimed at undermining its main foundation, which is none other than the aspiration of rational knowledge from the past based on some kind of correspondence with traces of the reality from this time. This is what distinguishes it from other forms of approaching the past, such as epic, hagiography, literature or simple moralising. The demarcation criterion of History as a discipline is purely procedural: source criticism. We may think that this was Ranke's foundational contribution to the craft in the second quarter of the nineteenth century (Canales, 2021, p.44); a golden rule that, except for critical cases of structural ultra-theorising, is that we have all respected beyond our theoretical differences. In fact, the overwhelming and merciless criticisms made of Ranke did not derive so much from his ideal of source criticism, but from his denial of drawing up general laws from the outcomes of such a process. This was what he was being reproached for when he was accused of being a positivist who clung to facts: not rules about producing the datum, but him denying the pursuit of the process of knowledge proper to any social science. It is understood, then, that we can take as a starting point that the production of *relevant empirical evidences* (Longino, 1990, p. 43) of the past, according to some rules, has been the basis of the historian's craft.

We historians may be possibly going through a phase of disbelief of our profession's epistemic values. Indeed, the matter of the complex relation with the past is a topic of the discipline, almost an exemplar in Kuhnian

terms. The past is interrogated from the present, and from the particular concerns of a *situated* historian, is insisted on. We have all written essays on this as an initiatory exercise during our training process as historians. Later we have begun our classes by relentlessly attacking the idea of a past *Truth,* with a capital T, that History reproduces. Personally, I am increasingly surprised by the zeal with which rigorous colleagues apply themselves to delegitimising their work, because, if objectiveness is not possible, why do we bother spending hours on something so tedious like emptying a census? Why do we not prioritise rhetoric elegance by *adjusting* the results? Likewise, finding teachers who so passionately work to undo the laying of the foundations of their own subject to start with seems difficult in teaching. It is simply unimaginable that a Physics teacher will start a course with 14-year olds by insisting that the complex mathematical formulae that they must learn to apply are merely some contingent formalisations that result from the data *built* by the machinery of scientists and their own theories and, ultimately, an atom is merely a metaphysical construct. Looked at from a perspective, our insistence on the problems of objectivity in History seems to derive from an honourable anti-positivist reaction, exercised by few disciplines, to dismiss simplistic and trivial conceptions, and to establish some cautions as an epistemic value in historical thinking. Nowadays however, the novelty lies in some of these considerations no longer being noble concomitant learnings to the profession, but a malicious torpedo against its waterline either because reality itself is inexistent, as previously indicated, or any attempt to access it is inevitably polluted by our axiological presumptions.

As these premises stand, the drawn conclusion can be none other than the denial of historiographic knowledge as a differentiated instance of values, ideologies, confessions, feelings and emotions. Anything goes in its radical version; anything about the past can be stated because its acceptance is based on possessing enough rhetoric resources to convince, or on the power to impose it (let's not forget this much more frequent pragmatic derivation). In its more restrained version, it is not a matter of anything goes, but that the rules of validating a historiographic statement no longer lie in any adjustment mechanism to relevant empirical evidences from the past, but in them operating in another domain. Which one? This question is not explained to us, but is

deduced to lie in the ethical or the political domain, whether in its version of recurrent dialogue to reach the consensus or in the open cultural war, but also in the aesthetic and the emotional domains. All in all, it no longer lies in the traditional rules of the craft.

Let's be realistic; there is not much to argue against the postmodern position. To each their own with the rhetoric chosen in face of cancer. However, it is worth considering some specifications to those who conclude the impossibility of the objectivity from the historian's political engagement. It is actually paradoxical that most of these modern arguments stem from a rancid ninetieth century conception of objectivity as adjustment to an existing essential Truth that had been previously overcome much earlier than the postmodern challenge. The evolution of the objectivity notion in the twentieth century philosophy of science has most certainly been radical, and has gone from its classic characterisation by neopositivism from the idea that science had no subject and was devised from *nowhere* (and was, thus, absolutely objective and neutral) to positions that denied the possibility of any type or degree of objectivity (post-modernity, a part of sociology and the history of science). Yet despite the appeal of these radical positions, the main body of the philosophy of sciences that has developed from Kuhn is channelled in the effort to theorise acceptable forms of objectivity with notions such as "degrees of objectivity", "intersubjectivity", among others (Gómez, 2003, pp. 299-305). This theorising is generated within the new realism framework, the new empiricism (including feminist empiricism) or the new experimentalism, currents in which we can find such important philosophers as H. Longino (1990), P. Kitcher (1993), I. Hacking (1983), among others.

Generally speaking, these philosophers stress the social and intersubjective dimension, and even the conventional one, of research. Nonetheless, they provide a central place for research outcome; that is, data acquired from manipulating the facts being investigated. In this context, objectivity lies in using methods, procedures and techniques that have been intersubjectively tested and accepted (agreed on) in scientific communities, in obtaining these outcomes during different experiments or investigations, in the intersubjective knowledge of the obtained data, and even in the convergence towards the truth. As E. Agazzi states (1996, p. 31), "what is observed using certain

instruments, applying the correct rules of uses, is what scientific community accepts without objection". Thus, instruments and procedures are conventional, but what can be done with them and the results obtained are not.

This kind of objectivity is that which should rule historical research. In line with Longino's perspective, the first stage of objectivity in History would depend on historians' capacity to provide an effective explanation of their operational criteria of objectivation; in other words, clearly exposing operations that allow to establish what a datum is, if it has been verified, and if it has become a candidate for *relevant empirical evidence*. As indicated above, we are in this stage practically since Ranke's time and, ultimately, most of us in the craft are still doing, despite the postmodern challenge and the popularity of new approaches to the past. From this perspective, objectivity is no longer a matter of gaining access to the Truth, with a capital T, to become an intersubjective agreement about the rules that control the way to produce and handle historical sources; that is, about the rules of the craft.

Evidently this distinction does not do away with the problem of the historian's valuative and ideological implication in historiographic practice itself. The incidence of the social scientist's values, interests, ideology and prejudices in research is a classic in the reflection about social sciences that, far from being solved, has extended to natural sciences, particularly by feminist female philosophers of science. Longino claims that any scientific activity implies background axiological assumptions that the scientific method is incapable of eliminating in research and, therefore, in its outcomes. For this author, the only way to confront this type of elements present in any scientific task would be to make them objective by specifying them; that is, submitting them to public consideration in the scientific communities that can critically deal with them (Gómez, 2004, p. 161).

Such a reinforced leading role of the scientific community in the agreement about rules and in discussion about researchers' *background* would, for some, sound like a definite victory of relativism and politics, but is, in fact, something much more prosaic. What is at stake here is not the main visions about justice or human emancipation, but simply the type of operations that are acceptable to support our statements. Could they be others in our case? Doubtlessly they could, but would not then be those of the discipline that we

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have known as History for more than one century.

In short, History as a discipline is a discourse about the past, among many others; but not all these discourses about the past are History, simply because they do not comply with a set of rules and operations that define the craft. In other terms, History is not the only discourse about the past, but is the only one that is History. At this point, History, as an academic discipline, is understood to be a differentiated knowledge supported on some premises which define the constituent consensus of the community. First of all, the aspiration to objectivity is situated. As P. Zagorin claims (1999, p. 2), objectivity "was not a chimera, but an intrinsic aspect of historical reason which could not be abandoned as an aim or standard without also abandoning history itself as one of the foremost of the human and social sciences". Or as H. Paul has acknowledged (2015, p. 140) after numerous and tiresome circumlocutions, it is not a matter of renouncing other relations with the past, but of privileging "the epistemic relation over the others", which means aspiring to objectivity. We simply cannot conceive History as a discipline without this horizon. Secondly, some kind of realism, even the conventional kind, without which such a pretension would make no sense: something beyond our discourse must compulsorily exist to which to *objectively* adjust it. Finally, certain procedures and operations to obtain and to submit to criticism the sources, and to produce *relevant empirical evidences.* Certainly it is not too much, but suffices to clear the wilderness of proposals that we have before us.

This conception of History as a craft leaves out many facets that are now fascinating and which we intend to introduce into the subject at school. To begin with, it poses a distinction between History and public uses of the past that goes much further than teaching and diffusion. We cannot deny the intrinsic relation between one and the other, but identifying both spheres does not seem possible. Before resorting to the obsolescence of distinguishing between any science and its application, we must bear in mind that, in our case, the fundamental debate is not between History and its public uses, but one about public uses of discourses on the past in general that, in accordance with that previously set out, might be History or not.

At this point we have no choice but to face the elephant in the living room: memory. In Spain at least, memory is in fashion. In fact, the terms

memory and history are used as synonyms and books that are clearly about History are entitled *memory,* even when they respond to the most rancid positivist approach. Ultimately however, memory and History are still contradictory terms if we take into account the claim to objectivity set out above, even though the questioning such a distinction serves as a *topos* of the most modern historiographic reflections (Pérez, 2012, p. 252, Díez, 2020, p. 122). Memory is completely subjective and rules for it do not even exist. Nobody makes us submit our present reconstruction of the past to any type of procedure, and certainly not to avoid the coarsest narcissist masking, while some rules exist for what can be considered to be History. If only for this asymmetry of requirements, the expression *historical memory* is actually an oxymoron. In fact, Halbwachs himself (1980), whose quotation is chained by the champions of memory, established a radical opposition between collective memory and History by pointing out that History's advance destroys collective memory precisely for its objectivity (Huici, 2007, p. 32). Whatever the case may be, the so-called *historical memory* requires a tale of the past with clear political intentionality in the present that can legitimately distort, and fake, this past; History simply cannot, and whoever does so should not form part of the craft. It is not a matter of discrediting, but of simply separating spheres. History and memory are different things, just as ethics and politics are, and confusing them is malicious, and even dangerous (Muguerza, 1986, p. 30).

So, is the existence of engaged historians harmful? No, not at all. In fact, one author who is normally cited by critics of objectivity such as Rüsen (2019) distinguishes between objectivity, which he does not renounce, and neutrality, whose impossibility he defends. In a similar vein, Haskell (1998, p. 150) challengingly states: "I see nothing to admire in neutrality. My conception of objectivity (which I believe is widely, if tacitly, shared by historians today) is compatible with strong political commitment". Objectivity and neutrality would not, therefore, be equivalents. Unlike the classic position that separates the researcher and the citizen, and claims that domains are not mixed, acknowledging that social and political engagement play a relevant role in the development of any social discipline seems more plausible. Indeed, there is no doubt that attention paid to certain themes emerges from such commitment. This is obvious in the labour movement, and even more

so with women or subordinated minorities as ethnic groups, gay people and queers. Nobody can seriously postulate that these themes have been put on the table and would have played their present role if it had not been for the commitment of some History professionals. Indeed, the post-materialist thesis of epistemic superiority from dominated groups' viewpoint reinforces this idea (Gómez, 2019, pp. 85-7). However, it is not necessary to resort to these groups in which the ideological dimension is so explicit. Such apparently technical or internal matters like hunger undoubtedly stem from some kind of engagement when dealt with from a political dimension rather than as a *natural* result of food shortage (Zwarte and Arco, 2025).

Nonetheless, it is all a matter of time and degree. Do we really think that the best candidates to make the history of today's gay people are still gay activists? Evidently, this has not been the case of labour. Without openly questioning the contributions of trade unionists themselves, it is true that, for a long time now, the history of the labour movement is being developed by professional historians. Likewise, the feminist perspective in History has moved away from activism to become a serious theoretical relaying of the foundations of the craft, and other more recent commitments are expected to follow the same development. Or, for the sake of argument, has not criticism of the History of the Church being in ecclesiastics' hands been commonplace? Ultimately, what lies behind these misgivings and suspicions of militant or committed History? Well, some kind of notion of objectivity, a requirement to place at a distance the researcher from the study object that ensures unprejudiced study from which it is hard for those of us who have attended a faculty of History to shed. In line with this, H. Paul (2015, p. 78) notably dilutes the historian's political dimension by establishing that it acts in a very broad and generic sense and, moreover, constitutes a secondary effect of his/her work, but not of his/her main purpose. Doubtlessly this last situation emphatically marks the difference.

What can we say about the committed intellectual? Are we going to expect hours of dusty archives from the intellectual before something is said about the past? Of course not. In any case, the true matter is if the question still makes sense. The figure of the engaged intellectual seems to still lie in past times. Toni Judt (1992, p. 296) draws attention to the shift from the

philosopher intellectual to the university specialist intellectual in the 1960s. Certainly, those who talk with aspirations of impacting society knowing what they are talking about do not seem to be a worrisome requirement. Actually instead, what we have today is no other than a caricature of the committed intellectual, an impostor who adapts to mainstream and renounces fulfilling the main task performed by the classic intellectual, which was no other than making society feel uncomfortable by questioning its more unshakable convictions. This, the intellectual's critical mission, touches a raw nerve in debate about the alleged critical character with established Power of engaged History. Let's stop for a moment to think about what the discourses of Power are in our Western democratic societies. Can we really rigorously maintain that environmentalism, feminism or queer theory are presently[1] subordinated discourses alternative to Power after being assumed by most of our governments, the mass media and Academia itself? At least not in Spain and, we should add, this is fortunately so.

Let's leave aside historians' troubles to reconcile their ideological commitments and their public projection with their craft, and return to school and to the object of the present work: what History should be taught?

Back to school

After the above considerations, I believe that we can much more accurately reformulate the question of what kind of discourse about the past we should work on in the History subject. What History do we want at our primary and secondary schools? An echo chamber of discourses about the past that address cultural change or a tool to critically analyse this past?

Tragically for us, we cannot aspire to both objectives. For a few decades it was possible to still be excited about the disciplinary critical analysis of the past being, at the same time, discourse of emancipation. Trust was placed in an analysis of the past that made criticism of the present possible within the framework of a project for the future (Fontana, 1982). After the harsh criticisms of military and nationalist History, the hegemony of Social History allowed beliefs that work was done at the same time *for* social change

1 This article was written before Trump's victory, which is a worrying challenge to these hegemonic discourses..

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and *in* discipline, but these happy times came to an end. Nowadays, we have no main scientific theory of History that leads to emancipation. We are shipwrecked in a sea of values, ideology, feelings and emotions. With things as they are, we must opt between an ideological, public and engaged tale of the past and a disciplinary History that, at least, maintains objectivity as a horizon.

What this article proposes is History must be taught as the development of the understanding of the world that underlines it: the historian's gaze and the historical thinking on which it is based. To start with, this entails opposing the notion of teaching History as if it were a public use of History or as popularization. It involves, in turn, rejecting the centrality of memorising substantive contents, regardless of them coming from either old data or modern civic lessons. On the contrary, our proposal is basically procedural and prioritises that young people begin with the rudiments of the craft.

How to carry out such a proposal goes beyond the scope of this article, which has focused closely on arguing about *what* to teach. Nevertheless, an extremely appealing line of work exists. It is defended by Peck and Seixas (2008), and also by other authors like Wineburg (1991), and Lee and Ashby (2000), and has been set out in several works by specialists in the Didactics of History (Chávez, 2024). This perspective falls within the current that defends the need to teach to *make* History (Pla, 2005, p. 17). Carrasco and Pérez (2017, p. 282) characterise the proposal of the first cited authors as a conception of teaching History that centres on "understanding history as a method, as a way to investigate from this knowledge area and to, therefore, learn to think and reflect with history". S. Plá (2005, p. 39) stresses the back to academia nature of Wineburg's proposal and the rupture it implies compared to the prevailing cognitive approach from the beginning of the 1990s. As Carrasco and Pérez put it (2017, p. 285), "the expression 'thinking historically' highlights the acquisition of cognitive or thinking skills specific to the discipline, which are necessary to suitably understand the data and pieces of information about the past"; in other words, about the rules of the craft.

By taking this approach, the subject of History becomes an area from which all discourses of the past are subjected to contextualised criticism. Complex didactic designs are not necessary so that this way of critically

thinking ends by being extended to the present, which seems to be the universally accepted objective of education. It is in this leap to the present where this disciplinary conception of teaching History clashes with the memory conceptions of civic education since it also subjects its postulates to a critical and defunding discourse. Most of the trivial procedural conceptions of our civic education do not withstand an attack of historical thinking. Yet the key is that this is not a problem of History, but a problem of education in general and one that all of us must solve. However, this article is not about education and its purposes, but about teaching History. Evidently it is not a mission of this subject to offer convenient solutions to present dilemmas. History teachers have quite enough with offering instruments to draw back veils that mask human exploitation.

In everyday life in schools, this merciless critical dimension of the historian's gaze blurs in practice the boundary that from a theoretical point of view stands between the disciplinary and civic conceptions of the subject because most of the activities proposed from the latter fit in the former. To start with, and by particularly paying attention to the Spanish concern, the conception herein defended includes a large part of what is known as *historical memory*, which is no more than pure, plain History. It seems a hard thing to defend that Franco's repression is not History without also expelling the Holocaust from this field. From my point of view, the combative insistence on calling these traumatic and awkward events of the past "memory" is no other than questioning their presence in the curriculum through basic reasoning that any student (without forgetting interested political spokespersons) can easily develop. If they are not History, they are politics, and if they are politics, everything can be discussed, since it is not in vain that pluralism is the basis of our democracy. There is no other conclusion than democratically legitimising denialism. Thus, we arrive to the reduction to the absurdity of claiming penal punishment for those who develop to its ultimate consequences the attack against objectivity that the denouncers themselves have triggered. The paradox here is obvious, as well as depressing for the craft: any kind of historiographic objectivity is furiously fought to embrace the judicial Truth.

Strictly speaking, the historical memory problem at Spanish schools is none other than transferring to the curriculum the consensuses reached in

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the discipline. Conversely to what it might appear at first glance, it is no easy management in practice, but the fact that weaken the discipline right from the beginning scarcely helps. A simple example illustrates this assertion. We find two clashing historical propositions: one is the statement that the Franco Regime came about from a violent military coup against a democratic regime; the second is the descriptor of the syllabus of Higher Secondary Education year 2 of the Madrid Region: "The Popular Front. Public disorder. Violence and social conflicts" (Decree 64/2022, p. 218). The question to clear up is if both deserve the same consideration in the subject. Definitely not from the position herein defended. The first proposition is History because it forms part of the historiographic consensus, and the second is clearly tendentious and partisan. To be included in History, it would have to be reformulated within the framework of difficulties to consolidate the interwar democratic republican regimes of Europe, such as the Weimar Republic or the First Austrian Republic. Nevertheless, catching a glimpse of how it can be ruled out from civic conception is not seen because it is still strongly emotional historical memory, albeit that of the inheritors of Spanish Civil War winners. It is no easy task to justify refusal to dialogue with them at school because they *feel* and *remember* and wish to transfer their felt memory to the civic level. Of course, it does not seem acceptable to prescribe to people what they must feel… or it does, but, at any rate, why do we want to get soiled in such a bog? If we persevere in taking this way, we open the door that may end with dialogue in science classes with terraplanners, antivaccinationists and ufologists. Do we really want this?

It is, therefore, understood that an academic conception of teaching History certainly does not exclude works about the traumatic and awkward past that openly claims us today. It is not in vain that "the historian is for whom the problem of the present is more their own", according to M. Cruz (2006, p.150). However, dealing with it must be done from History, which imposes certain requirements: firstly, the obligation to restrict ourselves to transfer historical research outcomes to the subject; secondly, to avoid mystifications and to prioritise conceptual clarity. During the Spanish Civil War, the banal procedural resource of the use of violence does not apply because everyone killed. The same occurs with democratic anachronous fundamental-

ism because even moderate socialists have been hesitant about the value of democracy for years, and it certainly seems hard to conceptualise Stalinism from the 1930s as a democratic force no matter how much the Spanish Democratic Memory Law seems to expect it. It goes against the rules of the craft and draws us dangerously closer to the aforementioned tendentiousness. At this point, I understand that there is no need to specify that this is a disciplinary matter that derives from rigour in using concepts, not from judging value on the revolutionaries of the 1930s. At this level, Francoist return to Empire does not withstand the contrast with communist human emancipation.

Along another line, but one related to conceptual rigour, we are not authorised to speak about memory if there are no subjects who remember and, besides, in which case we should talk about memories in the plural. According to common sense, memory of either the Spanish Civil War or post-war repression does not fit in with schools today as a didactic resource because there is nobody there alive who remembers them. However, we can perfectly resort to the memories of the victims of the terrible violations of human rights in the Southern Cone or, in the Spanish case, of anti-Franco fighters. Resorting to memory in History classes is not only legitimate, but can be classified as *good* History to the point that paying attention to people experience has acted as a spearhead of historiographic renovation ever since the happy times of the hegemony of Social History. The fact that some have not understood something so obvious, namely that the objective study of the subjective is possible, and derive from their limitation all kinds of apocalyptic and apodictic admonitions about knowledge (Eley & Nield, 1995, p. 356) do not call the great potential of this didactic resource in the subject into question. The learning that every teacher can achieve from something so simple and mundane as a tale (or a picture) of the gruelling daily trip made by a recently immigrated female peasant from a shack of a home in the 1960s to clean in the centre of Barcelona or Madrid depends solely on their quality as a historian or an educator. In this case, there is no doubt that we are working on History from memory; in the former, we employ the past (and the legitimacy of the discipline) as the basis for a political tale. Teaching History can contribute to public policies of memory, but in no case can it be subordinated to them without denying the discipline.

We have acknowledged the many relations there are between History and historical memory, but the priority of this article is to clearly back the theoretical separation between both these spheres. Obviously every country needs a tale about its past, but it is no less obvious that a large part of this historical memory is mystification, distortion, if not open historical manipulation. We can also add: fortunately, provided that it is clear that historical memory is not History and its validity does not, therefore, derive from any rule that corresponds to available empirical evidences from the past, but from its capacity to encourage fair co-existence about the common rejection of certain atrocities. So, if referring to a resistant France helps to somewhat conjure up today's pitiful situation, then let its exaltation at schools be welcomed, but, having said that, not in the History subject. Please let's not take the frame of mind of teaching in the History classes something that is historically false, something that clashes with the results of applying rules of the craft and, worse still, us making these rules explode because, with things as they are, we might regret it, and very much so. It is paradoxical that part of the left being convinced that, once the moorings of objectivity are untied, they will steer the boat in this sea of subjectivities, values, emotions and feelings in which it intends to convert History, when it is evident that barbarians have come over as being much more skilful in handling this.

Perhaps the main source of confusion in this debate about the sense of teaching History lies in confusing disciplinary teaching and education. Despite the moral and political importance of any historiographic approach in the present, historical memory and civic education are not tasks of the subject of History, but a mission of education. Schematically, they are not a disciplinary objective, but a cross-sectional educational one, which, therefore, involve the whole education community. Nobody denies the importance of values and politics in education; the matter is *how* and *from where* to work them. Regarding *from where,* it is more than paradoxical so much insistence in the civic nature of education while pitilessly reducing the importance of the subject whose disciplinary objective is to precisely fulfil this mission: agonising Philosophy. It is worth asking the civic curricula makers what has Political Philosophy been doing for centuries if it has not been of these questions. From my point of view, Political Philosophy should set up the axis on

which all other disciplinary contributions would cross-sectionally rotate, but certainly not History.

Regarding History, we should temper our enthusiasm and restrict ourselves to our craft that, on the other hand, already presents a great potential for criticism of the present without having to unfold flags and hold up placards. Along the lines of applying this minimum of *ascetic self-discipline* that T.L. Haskell recommends (1998, p. 148), it would be worthwhile for History teachers to bear in mind the warning that Ferrer i Guardia, the libertarian pedagogue who was dreadfully shot in 1909 by the most uncouth Spanish right wing, made against impatient voices in his own field:

> However, the Modern School works on children whom it prepares to be men through education and instruction and do not anticipate either love or hate, adhesions or rebelliousness, which are adults' obligations and feelings; in other words, it does not wish to collect fruit without having previously produced it from crops; nor does it wish to attribute a responsibility without endowed the conscience with the conditions that have to build its basis. Let the children learn to become men, and when they are, let them declare themselves to be in rebellion in good time (Ferrer, 1912, p. 61)

Let us have much more confidence in the complex intelligence of our students and in their ability to solve contradictions between reasoning and ideology during their formative process.

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History teaching today in Europe: between preventive education, transitional model and renationalization

La enseñanza de la Historia en Europa, hoy: entre la educación preventiva, el modelo historiográfico-didáctico de transición a la democracia y la renacionalización

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Abstract

History teaching today in Europe: between preventive education, transitional model and renationalization. The teaching of history in schools is historically linked to a triple process that developed from the end of the 18th century: the construction of modern nations and, in parallel, their imaginaries, the schooling of young people by States, and the place of History as the driving force of a new regime of temporality. This teaching was centered around the nation in a heroic and finalist narrative projecting children into a national community turned towards irreversible Progress. This article discusses the transformations in history teaching that emerged in Europe at the end of the 20th century. It provides the context for this transformation with a new approach to the past focused on the victims of crimes (genocides, repression, civil war). This approach establishes a new narrative contract for societies: memorializing crimes and victims to strengthen social cohesion rather than forgetting them and preventing the repetition of these crimes by educating younger generations as tolerant

citizens through the transmission of the history of these crimes. It is in this new moral injunction and prevention that the teaching of history introduces crimes such as the genocide of the Jews into its curricula and sees the development of new large-scale pedagogical practices: the visit to the sites of massacres perceived as a performative education in human rights. The text presents different cases of European countries that are experiencing this evolution.

At the same time, the fall of communism in Eastern Europe and the integration of these countries into the European Union in the 2000s led to a change in the teaching of history integrated into a transitional model. This model advocated by the EU mobilizes supranational actors (institutions, NGOs). This time, history teaching serves an education for Europe and democracy by taking into account national minorities. The third part of the article addresses a movement of renationalization of history teaching that has been underway since the 2000s through the presentation of several European cases. In conclusion, the teaching of history thus always remains at the crossroads of politics and culture, under the prism of narrative issues of societies evolving in a globalized world now marked by an uncertain temporal horizon.

Key words: Europe; transitionel model; crimes; prevention; renationalization.

Resumen

Enseñar historia hoy en Europa: entre preventivo educación, modelo transicional y renacionalización. La enseñanza de la historia en las escuelas es históricamente vinculada a un triple proceso que desarrollado desde finales del 18e siglo: la construcción de las naciones modernas y, paralelamente, sus imaginarios, la escolarización de los jóvenes por parte de los Estados, y el lugar de la Historia como motor de un nuevo régimen de temporalidad. Esta enseñanza era centrada alrededor de la nación en una narrativa heroica y finalista que proyecta niños en una comunidad nacional transformado hacia Progreso irreversible. Este artículo analiza las transformaciones en la historia enseñanza eso surgió en Europa a finales del siglo 20e. Proporciona el contexto para esta transformación con un nuevo enfoque del pasado centrado en las víctimas de crímenes (genocidios, represión , guerra civil). Este enfoque establece un nuevo contrato narrativo para las sociedades: conmemorar los crímenes y las víctimas para fortalecer la cohesión social bastante que olvidando ellos, y prevenir la repetición de estos crímenes educando más joven generaciones tan tolerantes ciudadanos a través de la transmisión de la historia de estos crímenes. Es en este nuevo mandato y prevención moral que la enseñanza de la historia introduce crímenes como el genocidio de los judíos en su plan de estudios y ve el desarrollo de nuevos programas a gran escala educativo prácticas: la visita a los lugares de masacres percibida como una educación performativa en derechos humanos. El texto presenta diferentes casos de países europeos que están experimentando esta evolución. Al mismo tiempo, la caída del comunismo en Europa del Este y la integración de estos países a la Unión Europea en la década de 2000 provocó un cambio en la enseñanza de la historia integrado en un modelo de transición. Este modelo defendido por la UE moviliza actores supranacionales (instituciones, ONG). Esta vez, la historia enseñanza sirve a

la educación para Europa y la democracia al tomar en cuenta las minorías nacionales. La tercera parte del artículo aborda un movimiento de renacionalización de la historia enseñanza que ha estado en marcha desde la década de 2000 a través de la presentación de varios casos europeos. En conclusión, la enseñanza de la historia. de este modo siempre permanece en la encrucijada de la política y la cultura, bajo el prisma de las cuestiones narrativas de las sociedades evolucionando en un mundo globalizado ahora marcada por un horizonte temporal incierto.

Palabras clave: Europa; modelo de transición; crímenes; prevención; renacionalización.

Introduction

The teaching of history at school is historically linked to a threefold process that developed from the end of the 18th century onwards: the construction of modern nations and, at the same time, their imaginations (Anderson 1996; Thiesse, 2001), the schooling of youth by states (Luc & Savoie, 2012), and the place of history as the driving force behind a new temporality regime (Koselleck, 1979). While history tended to become an autonomous field of scientific endeavor in the 19th century (Delacroix, Dosse & Garcia, 2007), its schooling became dependent on the nationalization of individuals - and first and foremost pupils - as part of a process of socialization and secularization: a territory, a language, a common past, but also a new common space-time.

The historical past is not only the object of a transmission of knowledge to be shared with its events and heroes, it establishes a narrative framework that inscribes children in a specific temporal condition. The events of the past are not transmitted in a providential religious interpretation that projects their existence into a present and future determined by divine salvation. They are determined by the historical existence of the nation to which they belong, which must achieve Progress. Temporal finalism - previously of a sacred character - has not disappeared from the educational project; it has been transformed by making national history a structuring element in the education of pupils.

This centrality of the nation in the teaching of history is very marked in France, particularly in elementary school (Bozec, 2018). It varies according to the federal traditions of European states (Colla, Girault & Ledoux, 2024). But this patriotic centrality tends to fade in the last quarter of the 20th century, when other educational projects assert themselves. These projects once again mobilized the teaching of history, as they concerned the transmission of the past to younger generations.

Teaching the victims of history: a new education project

Like other regions of the world (America, the Far East), Europe experienced a turning point in remembrance in the 1980s-1990s, with political, social and cultural aspects, of which education is a major component (Ledoux, 2024b).

This shift in remembrance gives the past a new status. It is no longer seen as a bygone era distinct from the present, which society is responsible for passing on as a common heritage to young people, in order to educate them and socialize them into the nation. The past is thought of as a violent trace still active in the lives of certain individuals and the national community, a hidden trace that poses a problem for society as a whole, and which can only be resolved by transmitting it, particularly to the younger generations at school.

This new approach to the national past overturns the model for post-conflict situations (civil wars, authoritarian regimes) traditionally governed by amnesty-amnesia policies, where collective forgetting is seen as an instrument of social cohesion that brings cycles of violence to an end (Ledoux, 2024a).

The history to be passed on is first and foremost a history of crimes and victims - most often civilians - and not of the victories (military or political) or heroes that formed the narrative framework of the history taught at school. The social contract that links societies to their past is profoundly transformed, since what was supposed to form a national community was the homage paid by the living to the heroes who had defended the nation, sometimes at the sacrifice of their own lives, which the younger generations were to learn through the teaching of history. Now, what is supposed to make

society is the memorialization of the victims of mass crimes in the name of human rights and tolerance, particularly towards national minorities.

This past has a propaedeutic character that is highlighted through the lessons of history. This time, the aim is not to present young people with exemplars (heroes, events) to admire and follow, for educational purposes, but to recount past violence against civil society in order to ward off its recurrence, for preventive purposes. The aim is to build democratic societies by educating young people in tolerance and avoiding the repetition of violent pasts. The past is always invested with an educational function, but it is presented as a counter-model that must not be hidden.

This omnipresence of a criminal past to be resolved for the present and future of societies is not specifically European: it is also found in Latin America, for example (Herrera & Pertuz, 2020). In Europe, it has its own national singularities. In Spain, for example, it concerns above all the country's civil war and Franco's past, which was addressed in 1977 using the traditional model of forgetting-amnesty, before undergoing a reversal of perspective, initiated by civil society, which led the Spanish Parliament to pass the so-called "Recovery of Historical Memory" law in 2007 (Aguilar Fernández, 2008). Passing on the memory of the victims of the civil war and understanding a traumatized society is seen as a democratic necessity for educating younger generations (Gaston & Layana, 2023).

Beyond these national singularities, two main criminal pasts were mobilized in most European countries after the fall of the Iron Curtain. But the European map remains split in two by a clear border: the memory of Nazi crimes against the Jews in the West, the memory of Communist crimes in the East (Mink & Neumayer, 2007; Ledoux, 2020).

In the 1980s, countries like Germany and France were deeply affected by the genocide of the Jews, which reshaped their official narratives (Rousso, 1990; Eder, 2016) and the teaching of history in the following decade (Oeser, 2010; Legris, 2010). German teachers rely on the articulation of history teaching and civic education, and on the pedagogy of emotional upheaval (Betroffenheitspädagogik) to teach the genocide of the Jews and educate their pupils in democracy. Identification with Jewish victims and the mobilization of emotions around the Holocaust are the common pedagogical tools used to

educate young Germans from the former FRG and GDR in a uniform manner.

Beyond the case of German reunification, the democratic transition of the former communist countries of Eastern Europe and their accession to the European Union is producing a new model that is impacting on the teaching of history.

Between Europeanisation and Education Transition

In this integration of the Holocaust at the heart of its reunification policy, Germany played a leading role in the 1990s, turning it into a European matrix and giving the European Union a narrative identity. The European Union then put the memory of the crimes on its public policy agenda to identify the European space with a democratic space that defends the rule of law and protects minorities (Calligaro & Foret, 2012). In 1993, the European Parliament passed a resolution to preserve Nazi concentration camps as "European historical monuments", which would receive financial support from the EU. This decision marked the starting point for the construction of a European remembrance of Nazi crimes. On July 3, 1995, the European Parliament passed another resolution calling on all member states to introduce a Holocaust Remembrance Day in their national calendars.

While Holocaust memory is undergoing a wider process of globalization (Levy & Sznaider, 2006), it is being mobilized by European institutions both as a democratic criterion for EU candidate countries and as an instrument for the Europeanization of youth. Between 1998 and 2000, EU countries (led by Great Britain and Sweden) initiated international cooperation on Holocaust education (Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research). On October 31, 2001, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted a recommendation on "Teaching European history in the 21st century", which called for the history of the Jewish genocide to be included in national school curricula. In 2003, the Ministers of Education meeting at the Council of Europe instituted a Day of Holocaust Remembrance and Prevention of Crimes against Humanity in all schools, every January 27, the date of the liberation of the Auschwitz camp in 1945.

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The victims of the Holocaust are thus at the heart of a Western European educational project: the memorialization of mass crimes with a view to prevention (warding off a repetition of the crimes that devastated Europe in the 20th century) and the defense of national minorities - in this case, the Jewish minority. This educational project is not limited to the inclusion of this historical fact in school history curricula. It is accompanied by specific pedagogical practices, such as student visits to sites of memory of the massacres. From the 1990s onwards, the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp came to symbolize this evolution, which led more and more young Europeans to visit this site to educate them in tolerance, the fight against anti-Semitism and crime prevention. The site has become a symbol of the Second World War, but also of human rights education, and is the most visited by schoolchildren, who come in their hundreds of thousands every year: 571,300 (57% of all visitors) in 2006 and 1.029 million (72% of all visitors) in 2012. Geographic expansion has continued unabated over the past thirty years, with, for example, in 2018, the arrival of students from Poland (162,061), Germany (29,603), the UK (24,222), the Czech Republic (23,840), Italy (17,610), France (17,547), Slovakia (17,034), Norway (16,958), and so on. Apart from students from the USA and Israel, the majority are European.

This practice of school visits to memory sites is also supported by the EU as an instrument for the Europeanization of young people in the democratic transition and decommunization policies pursued in Eastern European countries during the 2000s. In Romania, for example, the educational policies developed by the Institute for the Investigation of the Crimes of Communism (IICCR), set up in 2005, include site visits as part of new teaching activities. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the 2007 textbook for Sarajevo high-school students is a response to European directives as part of a post-conflict transitional policy. It contains a folder entitled "Excursion: learning on site" with suggestions for excursions (Bessone, 2014; Milošević & Trošt, 2021).

This European educational model for the transmission of the past has thus been developed in part on the recognition of victims and minority rights, the corollary of which has been their inclusion in the teaching of history. The transmission of the criminal past is seen as central to the education of young European citizens to be tolerant and democratic. This model is used as a

democratic criterion for EU candidates from the Eastern European countries that joined in 2004, pledging to include it in their school curricula. In Romania, the country's entry into the EU in 2004 was followed by the inclusion of the history of the Jewish minority in school curricula common to all pupils (Murgescu & Avram, 2024).

More generally, the reform of education systems in European countries, in particular the recognition of victims through the teaching of history, has been perceived by European institutions as a privileged educational instrument for achieving the objectives of post-conflict reconciliation or post-communist democratic transition in its new member countries: the establishment of a state in a stabilized democracy. On the one hand, this policy is being pursued by a growing number of transnational actors, and on the other, it is based on the same pedagogical methods.

For example, the 2005 recommendations on the writing of history textbooks for primary and secondary education in Bosnia-Herzegovina come from a commission set up in 2004 by the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the Georg Eckert Institute. These recommendations emphasize the multiperspectivity[1] and interactivity that teachers must engage in with their students when teaching history. The pedagogical and civic objective advocated by the Council of Europe is twofold in order to get pupils more involved in this teaching: to touch pupils and develop their critical faculties, which comes close to the German didactic model (Bendick & François, 2015). Multiperspectivity and interactivity as a European educational model have also been adopted by countries such as Romania and Bulgaria in the run-up to their accession to the EU in 2007 (Constantin, 2021). This European education is reflected in the diversification of sources and interpretations in history textbooks. Such is the case of the textbook for high-school students on the history of communism in Romania, published in 2009 and designed collectively by secondary school teachers, members of the IICCR and the CPADCR (Presidential Commission for the Analysis of the Communist Dictatorship in Romania, created in 2006)[2]. An accompanying booklet for teachers has also

1 Multiperspectivity means "integrating the point of view of 'the other' into one's own worldview, developing interpretations of historical events through dialogue, [...] and committing to offering students a multiplicity of possible and open interpretations of events", Eckert Institute website.

2 Stamatescu, M., Grosescu, R., Dobrincu, D., Muraru, A., Pleşa, L., et Andreescu, S. (2009). *O istorie a comunismului din România*. Polirom, 2009, see Constantin, 2021.

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been produced, featuring visits to Communist museums and places of repression in Romania (Sighet) and Bulgaria (Belene). By passing on the history of Communist repression to pupils, the document aims to educate Romanians about democracy and Europe.

We can thus observe that the Eastern European countries that joined the EU in the 2000s were laboratories for the dissemination of a European educational model developed in the West. The end of Soviet domination in Eastern Europe ushered in a period of democratization, reflected in the decommunization of memories and an education transition (Parker, 2003). Indeed, the transformation of education systems represents one of the major aspects of the post-communist transition in Eastern Europe from a Soviet model of communist education to a democratic, European model of education (see the case of Bulgaria in Satchkova, 2003). History teaching is involved in this transition, which is leading to a liberalization of the textbook market away from state control and a pluralization of national and transnational European players in the transmission of the national past. But the content of the history taught has gone through several phases, from the criminalization of the communist past to the integration of EU codes into the history taught: respect for human rights, inclusion of minorities, reconciliation, multiperspectivity. This integration is taking place with various national actors who have graduated from international careers in the associative sector and NGOs specializing in public policy (education, human rights). In Bulgaria, the NGO Sofia Platform, founded in 2013 and headed by Bulgarian Louisa Slavkova who studied at the German University of Köln, devotes its activities to the democratization of Bulgarian society by promoting education and the memory of the communist period. She develops educational programs for young Bulgarians, in collaboration with the European Council on Foreign Relations and German and American NGOs involved in civic education, as well as the Eckert Institute and the European history association Euroclio. One of the aims of history teaching in Bulgaria, as in Romania, is the construction of a "European citizen" (Szakács, 2017) through educational standards promoted by the EU and transnational players, including in the field of didactics. The educational programs of the NGO Sofia Platform, for example, mobilize ped-

agogical innovations to encourage student interactivity (role-playing) and the critical analysis of historical sources in history teaching.

This model of transitional education promoted by European institutions does not transmit to young Europeans a grand narrative on the history of Europe, but a grammar of (good) management of inter- or intra-state conflictual pasts, centered on the recognition and overcoming of these conflicts in a reconciliatory perspective, particularly in relations between minorities and the majority of a state. This educational grammar also contains a pedagogical dimension, with the spread of interactivity and multiperspectivity methods within the classroom, or school visits to places of repression. In Eastern Europe, the promotion of this educational model among pupils is carried out by transnational actors involved in education, democracy and transitional policies.

Despite these supranational educational policies supported by the EU, national and regional singularities remain in the teaching of history. This teaching remains strongly imbued with national perspectives, as shown by textbooks from different European countries (Chopin & Divet, 2023; Amilhat, 2023). The apparent convergence between East and West remains formal. In the end, it is more the transmission of the past in its criminal and educational dimensions (democratization, defense of minorities) that has generated a certain consensus.

This consensus around a supranational educational model of history teaching has at the same time led to a "backlash". Indeed, the most recent period has seen the beginning of processes of renationalisation of history teaching which opposes the previous model.

Towards a renationalization of history teaching?

Since the 2000s, this educational model has had to face up to nationalist offensives in certain European countries, following a more global movement that also concerns democratic countries (May & Maissen, 2021).

In Japan, for example, the state-controlled school content for de-

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cades in order to provide a historical narrative that fostered attachment to the homeland. The decades from 1980 to 1990 saw an opening up of historical knowledge in teaching practices, by integrating plural readings of conflicts with their Korean and Chinese neighbors (Nanta, 2007). It was the debate launched by the Japanese media in 1982 over the Ministry's replacement of the term "invasion" by "advance", in connection with the Sino-Japanese war (1937-1945), that brought the issue to international attention. This led to initiatives by Japanese, Korean and Chinese historians, who decided to exchange their historical views on their respective countries, and then to write joint textbooks, modelled on the Franco-German history textbooks3. But these initiatives also provoked reactions. The association Atarashii Kyôkasho wo Ttsukurukai, ("association for the production of new textbooks") was created in 1995 by nationalists to oppose a counter-narrative to what they perceived as a "masochistic" or "suicidal" conception of national history. They denounced the mention in history textbooks of the Nanking massacre and the crimes committed by the Japanese army against the "comfort women" and published a middle school textbook validated by the Ministry in 2001. Although the textbook is little used by teachers, the arrival in power of Shinzo Abe as Prime Minister in 2012 marks a turning point by recommending nationalist history textbooks.

Following the collapse of the USSR, Russia saw a liberation of textbooks in the early 1990s, which benefited the teaching of history by emancipating it from the univocal Communist narrative. After coming to power in 2000, Putin showed an interest in history textbooks, arguing that they should "instill in schoolchildren a sense of pride in their history and their country" (Amacher, 2020). In 2003, a history textbook describing the Stalinist regime as "terrorist" and evoking a 50-year Soviet "occupation" of the Baltic republics was stripped of its "recommended" status by the Ministry of Education. In 2007, new history textbooks are published, including a methodical manual for teachers. The Stalinist repressions of the 1930s are presented as inevitable "distortions" of the country's "forced modernization", thanks to which the USSR was able to defeat Nazi Germany in the Second World War. More recently, new history textbooks for grades 1 and 12, entitled *History of Russia from 1945 to XXIe century*, were published for the start of the 2023

school year. Two new chapters on the war launched against Ukraine in February 2022, entitled "The special military operation" and "Russia, the land of heroes", were included. The textbook presents Putin as the man who prevented the end of human civilization by launching this "special operation" in Ukraine.

Poland had integrated minorities into its 2008 school curriculum, in line with European directives, following its accession to the EU. After the PIS came to power, the Polish nation was presented as strictly linked to the Catholic faith of the majority of the population, and new history curricula after 2017 led to the erasure of minorities, including the Jewish minority (Tartakowsky, 2020).

In France, nationalist projects have intervened in the teaching of history with regard to colonial history. The 2005 law on the recognition of the national contribution of Algerian repatriates during the colonial period included an article during parliamentary discussions, specifying that 'school programmes recognize in particular the positive role of the French presence overseas, notably in North Africa'. This imposed colonial narrative entered into direct conflict with a French anti-colonial current that was prevalent in the parties of the left, as well as among academics and teachers. It was quickly followed by a reaction from a number of historians demanding the abrogation of a law that imposes an official history and legalises a nationalist view. The controversial article was finally withdrawn a year later by French President Jacques Chirac. But heated debates about the teaching of history continued in the years that followed. Critics spoke out to defend 'national identity', arguing that it was threatened by this 'repentance' (crimes committed by French State against minorities like Jewish or black people concerning trade slave), which would lead inexorably to the decline of the nation. The offensive targeted the history programs, which, its promoters contended, had failed in its dual mission of transmitting to schoolchildren a love of the French nation and of its history. It regularly invoked the figure of Ernest Lavisse, with nostalgic discourse on the benefits of public schools under the Third Republic (1870-1940) presenting an idyllic image of the historical knowledge and patriotic consciousness of students in that period. Research over the past 20 years on history education in France has demonstrated that this nostalgic discourse

is not based in reality (Dancel, 1996; Chanet, 1996). A survey showed that students are aware of the events and characters (Clovis, Charlemagne, Louis XIV, Napoleon) that constitute the national narartive so central to the demands of the actors in this offensive (Létourneau and Lantheaume, 2016). And yet, these offensives are having an impact on educational policies, as we can see in 2019, with the modification of high school curricula. While these new programs do include the history of the slave trade and colonial slavery, the examples chosen reveal a narrative ambiguity. History teachers are asked to teach the slave trade through the example of Brazil, slavery through the example of the United States, and abolition through the example of France. This distribution gave France the role of abolitionist country that had for decades formed the fabric of the traditional historical narrative glorifying the French nation while concealing its slave-owning past. Protests by historians to the Ministry of Education led to changes in the history syllabus, integrating the example of the French slave ports.

Conclusion

History teaching was the social and cultural cement of the national constructions of the 19th century. This finalist teaching around a glorious past of the nation integrated the students into a specific temporal condition: the Progress accomplished by the ancestors on a timeline in which they themselves were projected. They have been integrated at the end of the 20th century into a model of democratic transition or plural citizenship, polarised around the victims of past crimes and the rights of minorities. This new narrative model presents the story to be taught as a preventive educational instrument. Today, history teaching finds itself embroiled in a cultural battle that is a narrative battle. But the teaching of history is also affected by other contemporary narrative matrices that present societies with a permanent risk (technological, ecological, terrorist: see Beck, 2001) or continuous testing (Martucelli, 2018). These narrative matrices indicate a profound breach in the temporal horizon that was once focused on Progress and is now marked by contingency and uncertainty.

The temporal finalism of the history taught in schools from the 19th century onwards to the glory of nations destined for Progress is now in crisis: "the future is now embedded in a matrix of mediated anxieties and continued attempts to ameliorate them" (Levy, 2020). But is the teaching of history there to heal us? (David, 2020). On the other hand, the recent renationalization of history teaching indicates that this school narrative is becoming an instrument of individual and collective reassurance that precisely provides a response to this temporal anxiety partly linked to the ecological crisis that we are experiencing on a global scale and to the development of supranational institutions. But is history teaching there to reassure our identities?

Through these developments over the past two centuries, we see how difficult it is for States and political actors to think of teaching history in terms of knowledge about the past to be transmitted, which is detached from any function of socializing children to a collective project. Is this a consequence of the development of history teaching in the 19th century, which from the outset was part of a project of socialization and political (nation) and temporal (progressive finalism) education? In any case, it is difficult to think of teaching history without a narrative model because the human condition remains anthropologically a narrative condition.

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A Pedagogy of Horror – the Holocaust in Israeli schoolbooks

Una pedagogía del horror: el Holocausto en los libros de texto israelíes

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Abstract

The paper summarizes a study of twenty-six Israeli schoolbooks of History and Holocaust studies, used in mainstream secular schools. It focuses on the representation of Holocaust victims in these schoolbooks. The study adopts a social semiotic approach to text analysis and attempts to reveal the interest of the rhetors and designers of schoolbooks through the analysis of representations, conceived of as motivated signs. The paper's argument is that regarding the Holocaust, Israeli schoolbooks often adopt the Nazi-German narrative and perspective, which is not responsive to victims' suffering, and represent them in a de-personalized way as icons, symbols, and specimens of categories. The paper ends with the schoolbooks' portrayal of Palestinians as Nazis.

Key words: Holocaust representation, atrocity photographs, multimodal analysis, motivated signs, Nazification of Palestinians.

Resumen

Este artículo resume un estudio sobre veintiséis libros escolares israelíes de Historia y estudios sobre el Holocausto, utilizados en escuelas laicas convencionales, y se centra en la representación de las víctimas del Holocausto en los libros escolares israelíes. El estudio adopta un enfoque de semiótica social para el análisis de textos e intenta revelar el interés de los retóricos y diseñadores de libros escolares mediante el análisis de las representaciones, concebidas como signos motivados. El argumento del artículo es que, en relación con el Holocausto, los libros escolares israelíes adoptan a menudo la narrativa y la perspectiva

nazi-alemana, que no responde al sufrimiento de las víctimas, y las representan de forma despersonalizada como iconos, símbolos y especímenes de categorías. El artículo termina con la representación de los palestinos como nazis en los libros de texto.

Palabras clave: Representación del Holocausto, fotografías de atrocidades, análisis multimodal, signos motivados, nazificación de los palestinos.

Introduction

The Questions

Upon considering the exposure of schoolchildren to photographs and verbal descriptions of German atrocities, year after year, the question is, how can we read these photos and texts and make children read them? Do the atrocity photos act like clichés, empty signifiers that distance and protect the viewers from the event? Have they become "degraded from a document containing context to a symbol lacking substance"? (Chéroux 2001*).* Does the repetition of horrid stories and photographs dull our response to contemporary instances of brutality, discarding them as something already known or, on the contrary, does their repetition in itself retraumatize, turning distant post-memory viewers into surrogate victims who, having seen the images so often, have incorporated them into their own narratives and memories, and have thus become all the more vulnerable to their effects? (Hirsch 2001, 8). Do the images of cruel perversity enable memory, mourning, and working through? (ibid. 5). Can these images enable a responsible and ethical discourse regarding contemporary suffering of others?

Some scholars believe that atrocity photographs resist mourning (Hirsch 2001). Their display creates nothing more than "horrid fascination" (Baudrillard, 1984) and degrades the victims every time they are viewed: "If the images were taken by the Nazis to degrade their victims, are we not colluding with them by displaying them? Do we have a right to show people in their last moments before facing death to support propaganda, for whatever purpose?" (Struk 2008, 115).

Methodology

The study adopts a social semiotic approach and uses methods of Multimodal Discourse Analysis (Kress 2012. Machin. 2013.). It attempts to reveal the *interests* of schoolbook rhetors and designers and their pedagogic purposes through the examination of the semiotic means of representation, such as discourse, genre, layout and visual elements.

Social Semiotics assumes that meanings and knowledge are *made* in signs or sign-complexes in specific modes, none of which are arbitrary (Kress 1993). Signs are shaped by their history and current usage in a given culture (Kress 2010), and are motivated, not always intentionally, by ideology, perspectives, values, and the position of the sign maker regarding the intended message and its recipients. These can be inferred from the text and testify to educational purposes and power relations. The meaning of every sign - be it verbal or visual, is determined not only by the sign's inherent qualities but also by the way it interacts with the other signs, by its location in a certain site (e.g. a page in a schoolbook) at a certain moment, by its material features, and by its metaphoric qualities.

Social semiotic inquiry asks semiotic questions in order to answer social ones. The social question of the present study is, what is the pedagogic purpose of Israeli schoolbook writers of history and Holocaust studies? The semiotic question is, what are the means by which these books depict Holocaust victims?

Pedagogic discourse is a composite of instructional discourse, or the content of a school subject, and regulative discourse, or the social relations, underlying a specific pedagogy (Bernstein 1996). Therefore, "pedagogic discourse cannot be identified with the discourses it transmits […]. It is the pedagogic principle which appropriates other discourses and brings them into a special relationship with each other, for the purpose of their selective transmission and acquisition at school" (ibid. 46). Schoolbooks transpose verbal and visual signs from other sites such as political and historical sources and *re-contextualize* them in the pedagogical discourse according to its specific goals. The *interest* that motivates the *recontextualization* of images and texts is "professionally shaped," and "it is one means by which power enters into

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the transposition of meaning." (Kress 2020,35). It is power that transforms content and meaning according to the way schoolchildren are encouraged to relate to the subject matter, and to the way its representation is designed to affect them. The researcher encounters the new sign and asks, what motivated its production or was criterial in its making? "That which is taken as *criterial* will be the *signified*." (Kress 2020, 35).

Both photographs and texts, selected according to what is deemed pedagogically relevant, are then *transformed* and create new relations between the semiotic and the "out of semiotic" (Chouliaraki 2006), namely with the social sphere in which they are used.

The social Context of the study

Israel has interpreted the slogan Never Again! as "Never Again to Us!" Not as "Never Again to Anyone!" (Elkana 1988). This interpretation leaves only two options: to sacrifice others or be sacrificed, to kill or to be killed, and therefore it is key to understanding Israeli sentiments and actions toward Palestinians and the Arab neighbours.

Israeliness was constituted first against the image of East European studious weak Jews, most of whom perished in the Holocaust without resistance. These, according to the first Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, were the Jews we do not want to be (Segev 2019). He stated publicly, "call me anti-Semitic but I must say this. [...] We do not belong to this people; we revolt against such a Jewish people. We do not want to be such Jews." (Segev, 2019, 448). The second group against which Israeliness was constituted is the Arabs who, according to Ben-Gurion, replaced the German Nazis as the potential exterminators of the Jewish people, after Israel has befriended Germany in 1953 (ibid.). Both groups are depicted in schoolbooks as absolute "others". In the discourse of a "state for a persecuted nation," the former despised Jews, who perished dishonourably without fighting back, became the potential "us" who may perish again, this time at the hands of "Nazi Arabs". All Israeli Jews, even those whose ancestors were not affected by the Holocaust, are perceived as the "hereditary victims," and feel they live in a world populated by Jew-hating murderers (Bauman 2001, p.14). "The world [is] defined by its intention

and determination to destroy the Jews."(Illouz, 2021). All share the trauma of the annihilation of European Jewry, which became Israel's "chosen trauma." Psychoanalyst Vamık D. Volkan, who coined the term, defines chosen trauma as the shared images of specific historical events "during which a large group suffered loss or experienced helplessness and humiliation in a conflict with a neighbouring group." (2015, 13). The traumatic experiences and the damaged self-images associated with the mental representations of the traumatic event are "deposited into the evolving self-representation of children of the next generations, as if these children will be able to mourn the loss or reverse the humiliation." Such depositing constitutes "an intergenerational transmission of trauma." (ibid.). Thus, it "is woven into the canvas of the ethnic or large group tent and becomes an inseparable part of the group's identity." (ibid.). A good example is the student who has recently emigrated from Ethiopia and told her college teacher: "I wanted to feel Israeli, so I went to Auschwitz."

"When a present-day conflict begins with current enemies, "chosen traumas" are reactivated along with entitlement ideologies, [which] refer to a shared sense of entitlement to recover what was lost in reality and fantasy during the collective trauma" (Volkan 2015, 16-17). The fears, expectations, fantasies, and defenses associated with a chosen trauma reappear when both conscious and unconscious connections are made between the past trauma and a contemporary threat. This process magnifies the image of current enemies and current conflicts. As we shall see later, Palestinians are represented in schoolbooks, as in the socio-political discourse in Israel, as potential or actual Nazis. The current events of hostility reactivate a sense of victimization, and the sense of revenge becomes exaggerated, and may perpetuate otherwise unthinkable cruelty against others. "Leaders intuitively seem to know how to reactivate a chosen trauma, especially when their large group is in conflict, or has gone through a drastic change, and needs to reconfirm or enhance its identity." (ibid.) For example, President Hertzog equates the Hamas attack of October 7.2023 against Israel, after decades of siege, to Nazi Antisemitic crimes (Goldberg, 2024): "Not since the Holocaust have more Jews been murdered on one day […] Not since the Holocaust have we seen such images of innocent Jewish mothers and children, teenagers and old women loaded

into trucks and taken away into captivity."[1]

Chosen traumas are similarly recalled during the anniversary of the original event, and the ritualistic commemoration helps bind the members of the large group together (ibid.). In Israel, Holocaust Remembrance Day serves as an opportunity for politicians and prime ministers to stir up fear and animosity toward the Palestinian co-citizens, subjects and neighbours, conflating them with German Nazis. Illouz contends that having been mentally and emotionally trained to live in fear, Israelis do not possess and cannot acquire the political maturity of truly democratic citizenry, for they will always yield to their fear. Their perception of the world as enemy, gradually shaped the Zionists' attitude toward Arab-Palestinians, whose anti-colonialist resistance is attributed to hatred of Jews, both by politicians and in textbooks.

Judith Keilbach (2009, 62) argues that "depending on the 'national' meaning of the Holocaust and the dimensions that one part of the population experienced, the use of pictures and their underlying motifs vary enormously." For example, the achievement of the Allied soldiers is emphasized by pictures showing the horrifying condition of survivors, and the cleaning up of the cadavers in the camps. These photographs, implicitly and invariably, "take the soldiers' point of view, showing the unimaginable horror to which 'our boys' were exposed."

Holocaust photographs and stories are mostly used to authenticate the Zionist narrative "from holocaust to resurrection" in which the Holocaust becomes the "distillation of history, and Zionism its ultimate conclusion." (Raz-Krakotzkin 2005, 166). This narrative asserts that the Jewish people "almost miraculously, arose like a phoenix from the ashes, and started anew immediately after the Holocaust, building a national home in the Land of Israel, despite the putatively immoral opposition of the Palestinian inhabitants of the land and the entire Arab world." (Bashir and Goldberg 2019).

Thus, as Holocaust historian Hannah Yablonka observes, "we only teach our students that we are victims" and educate "generations who do not understand what normalcy is." She calls the constant preoccupation with Holocaust atrocities "necrophilia," contending that "this unending harping on the Shoah as the most important thing, has destroyed Zionism and turned

1 President Hertzog, *The Time magazine* October 9, 2023.

Israel into 'an alternative to disaster' and nothing more." (Alfasi 2021).

Holocaust Instruction

Holocaust instruction in Israel is compatible with its ever-growing presence in the public sphere and its transformation into the main component in the formation of national identity (Naveh 2017, 280). During the 1950s and 1960s (Yablonka 1994) the topic of the Holocaust was all but ignored in the Israeli national memory. The Final Solution, during which millions of helpless Jews were slaughtered, was the antithesis to the national ethos that the education system sought to consolidate. Preparing the young generation for the task of defending the country in the face of its enemies was the educators' main priority (Resnik 2003) and Holocaust victims and survivors were typically viewed with contempt, for they undermined the Zionist project by letting the Nazis murder the future population of the state of Israel. A dichotomy was drawn between "them," who embodied the contemptuous diasporic past and "we," the resurrected Zionists of the future, who had buried the past. (Naveh 2017, 276).

However, after the setback of the 1973 war, Holocaust education was upgraded by the state as it sought "to shape national subjects that would voluntarily continue to live in Israel despite the security problems and would be eager to defend the homeland with their lives" (Resnik 2003, 310). Since then, the Holocaust has been taught as part of the Zionist narrative and has gradually become the central event of Jewish history (Oron 1993). It has thereby replaced the event of the establishment of the state of Israel, and is gradually replacing Zionism, not only as the defining element of Israeli identity, but also as the ultimate criterion according to which all the actions of humankind are interpreted (Naveh 2017).

The primary message conveyed by Israeli education is that antisemitism, which drove the Holocaust, was the incentive for the establishment of the state of Israel, and its raison d'être. From this discourse follows that only a Jewish state, wherein Jews form the majority, can guarantee security to each individual Jew in the world. As Holocaust historian Omer Bartov observes, regarding Holocaust Museum Yad-Vashem, "The visitor should leave with

the thought that had there been a Jewish state before the Holocaust, genocide would not have occurred; and since genocide did occur there must be a state." This is clearly expressed in a text for pre-school children:"A Holocaust is a huge disaster. And this disaster happened to the Jewish people not in the Land of Israel but in other, different countries all over the world. Jews can travel and visit other countries, but every Jew should know that Israel is his only true home"[2]In a Teacher's Guide of a holocaust education program for second grade (Dagan, B. 2020):"The students will understand that during WWII the Jews did not have a state. The establishment of the state of Israel guarantees our security and safety. We are in conflict with the neighbouring all the Arab countries, but now we can defend ourselves."

And for high school students:"The Zionist movement saw in the Shoa the proof that the Zionist way was the just one. The wish to establish a Jewish state was grasped as the need of all Jews in the world." (Mishol 2014, p.354) .

All Holocaust schoolbooks end with Israeli high school students marching on the path to Auschwitz, wrapped in Israeli flags, in a gesture of victory of Zionism over National Socialism. Bartov (1996, 178) phrases it as follows: "Just as the state can be traced back to the Holocaust, so too the Holocaust belongs to the state: the millions of victims were potential Israelis. And more: all Israelis are potential victims in the past, the present, and the future."

Representation of the Holocaust in Israeli Schoolbooks

Israeli students learn in horrifying details all about the process of annihilation "but no room is made for the annihilated themselves" (Raz-Krakotzkin 2005, 166). Historian Moshe Zuckerman (2023) argues that Israel betrayed the real Jewish victims by turning them into an ideology of victimhood. The exterminated Jews have become "a huge mass of anonymous objects (the six million), in which the Jewish individuals have become part of the practice of non-remembrance through the routinized fetishism of Holocaust 'memory'". (Zimmerman and Zuckerman 2023, 11). What matters is that the annihilation of European Jews happened. The particular victims matter less.

2 https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-5502051,00.html

Visual representation

Most images in Israeli schoolbooks represent Holocaust related concepts: hunger, starvation, labelling (the yellow badge), or the final solution. Hence, although the images are traumatizing and constitute what Yablonka calls "the pornography of evil," the students are prompted to think about Holocaust sufferers conceptually and to categorize them as they would categorize phenomena in any other subject matter.

Specimens of categories: The Badge as a Criterial Feature: explicit and implicit motivation.



Image 1. Keren 1999. *Journey into Memory*. Courtesy of Mapa Pub. Tel Aviv Books. The photographs are 1.Heinrich Joest. Warsaw Ghetto, Poland. September 19, 1941. Yad Vashem archive 2536. 2. Hanna Lehrer's photo: Yad Vashem Photo Archive 14081189

In *Journey into Memory* (Keren 1999), in a chapter titled "The Nazis devise plans to uproot and isolate the Jews," the photo of the woman arm-

band seller appears on the top center of the page and is probably the most salient image in the double-spread, given its placement and the horrific human image it presents. The photo was taken by Nazi amateur photographer Heinrich Jost, on his birthday trip to the ghetto, to celebrate his new Lycra camera. Alongside this photo is a drawing of a Star of David, alluding to the badges she is selling and signaling that this is the *criterial feature* of the photo, and the reason it was chosen. A diagonal vector connects the armband seller to a little girl who is positioned directly below a ruined Jewish shop, at the bottom of the page. She wears a badge with the Star of David. Her name and history are not mentioned, but in the archive of Holocaust Museum Yad Vashem, she is identified as "Hanna Lehrer, 6 years old, a Munich Jew, who wears both her personal golden Jewish star around her neck and the mandated Yellow Star badge identifying her, isolating her, and alienating her from other Germans. Hanna was later sent to Riga, Latvia, where she was killed." (Yad Vashem / United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Photo Archive). The badge is likewise placed beside her photo, magnified and in colour, emphasizing its prominence as the *criterial feature* that should be the focus of attention. The vector signifies that the woman and the girl are of the same order; two parts of a taxonomy whose criterial feature is the badge. The caption under the photograph of the girl includes questions: "A Jewish girl from Germany with a yellow badge. When was the yellow badge used to identify Jews in the past? What is the difference between past usage and that of the Nazis?" These questions clearly divert the focus from the little badge bearer to the badge itself. Whereas the woman was photographed by an independent amateur photographer, the girl's photo served to identify her on the ID cards the Germans issued for Jews. Van Leeuwen (2008, 42) observes that *identification* entails defining social actors not in terms of what they do, but in terms of what they, more or less permanently or unavoidably, are. Once Hannah was photographed, she was transformed into a specimen of the category of *Jewish children to be burned*. Marianne Hirsch (2001, 25) notes that "the very fact of their existence may be the most astounding, disturbing, incriminating thing about these photographs" that were taken for "identification, visibility, and surveillance, not for life but for the death machine that had already condemned all of those thus marked, with an enormous J in gothic script."

(ibid. p 27). In other words, such ID photographs of children and adults, index extermination (Hirsch 2001, 74).- The knowledge that she will die, that she has died, is transmitted by their very presence (Hirsch 2012, 231). The Israeli schoolbook classifies Hannah as an anonymous specimen of a different category, that of the *yellow star bearers*. But in both cases, her function is to feature metonymically as a specimen of her category, and not as an individual worth remembering and commemorating.

Although the explicit motivation to display these photographs was the badge, the question is, what was the implicit motivation to show these particular photos, a woman who seems "as if she was about to topple over and die the next moment," (Schwarberg, 2001) and a little frightened child who is about to be murdered. Although the students are prompted to focus on the badge, it is obvious that the photographed woman and child attract their attention. Hence it seems that the implicit motivation to choose these photographs must have been to "punch the students in the guts" as the inspector general said back in the 1990s (Miron 2005) , to remind them what happened to little girls and mothers when they lived in other countries, and hence assure their loyalty to the state, and "not to let the fire of vengeance die out".

The Boy from Warsaw ghetto – an icon and a symbol

Most photographs are de-contextualized or cropped and thus function as symbols and icons of the annihilation of Jews. Readers receive no information about the photographic event, the photographer, or the photographed subjects. Didi-Huberman (2012, 34) is concerned that the iconic use of cropped pictures points to "inattentiveness" toward the pictures and the events they represent. Rather than cropping, he urges viewers to imagine the unimaginable and make, an "effort of archaeological work […] that will relate the pictures in a constant sequence of collisions and connections, fractions or transformations." He therefore recommends that the photographs be left intact. In a similar vein, Lewis (2001, 349) speaks about "scholarly sloppiness" and argues that such tampering would never be permitted with verbal texts. "the cropped version of the photograph never carries a statement that it has

been cropped from a larger photograph. In fact, [...] not one example has been found where the reader is informed that some cropping has taken place."

Cropping detracts from the documentary value of the photograph "the meaning of the photograph can be significantly changed [...]particularly when supported by a carefully written caption, it is a practice judged to be unacceptable and unprofessional" (ibid.).



Image II. Forcibly pulled out of bunkers.17 © National Archives, Washington, Stroop Report Image No 89835b. Yad Vashem Archives 26655. 1065/848

One of the cropped photographs in which the unknown victim has gained "international prominence" (Ruth Ayab 2020) is the boy from Warsaw ghetto who raises his arms in surrender. Though Israeli schoolbooks often show the whole photograph of the Jews who were pulled from the bunker by force, they do not give any information about the people in the photograph, and use the cropped boy as a symbol. However, the cropped photograph came to symbolize adult male cruelty to children instead of commemorating the

uprising of the ghetto against Nazi might. Avieli-Tabibian (2009), displays the boy alone, de-contextualized, at the top left corner of every page of the chapter *The Armed Struggle of the Jews.* Thus, the uprising is symbolized not by one of the fighters nor by anyone who could commemorate the resistance and the revolt, but by a cropped photograph that was used by the Nazis as an icon of their achievement- the unredeemable annihilation of Warsaw Ghetto and of Jewish life. Avieli-Tabibian (2009) also presents a painting of the boy , by Michael Bak , on the entire front cover. The painting shows him from behind so that the viewer is placed in the position of the soldier Josef Blösche, who aimed his rifle at him. Since in Hebrew the front cover of a book is called its "gate," the student enters the book through this picture in the position of Blösche, through the symbol of Jewish annihilation. The painting was given a universal title, *Icon of Loss*. Bak has painted the boy dozens of times in numerous scenes, with or without a face, in a variety of cultural and religious contexts. In one of these the boy is nailed to the cross, and in another he carries the cross on his back along the Via Dolorosa in East Jerusalem. Thus, the icon is disengaged, in Rothberg's words, "from exclusive versions of cultural identity" and demonstrates "how remembrance both cuts across and binds together diverse spatial, temporal, and cultural sites." It also points to the similarities of racial and religious wars, be they Jewish, Christian, or Muslim (Rothberg 2009, 11, 95). The designer of the schoolbook chose the one which places us in the position of the boy's potential or real killer. We see only his back covered with what resembles the yellow *Juden* badge, his knapsack, and his raised hands. The boy faces a wall covered with the same yellow badge that covers his body; he is threatened from behind while coming up against the wall in front of him. This may be the wall that separated the ghetto from the Aryan section of Warsaw; or it may be the Wailing Wall in East Jerusalem, symbol of Jewish catastrophe and exile, which welcomes him at the moment he is caught by the Germans, just before his probable death, but blocks him instead of saving him. Though the painting is very different from the original photograph it could never be mistaken for any image other than that of the boy from Warsaw ghetto. This reinforces his status as an icon.

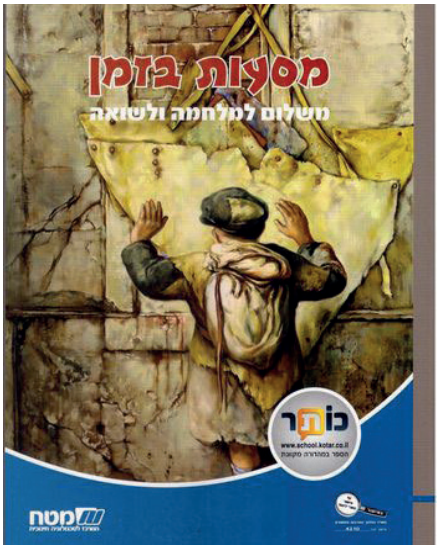


Image III. Avieli-Tabibian 2009. (Samuel Bak, Icon of Loss, 2008, 152×122 cm). Courtesy of the Center of Educational Technologies.

In Mishol (2014, 289-294), we see the boy from Warsaw at the bottom of each page of the chapter on the direct shooting of Jews by the Einsatzgruppen in the Ukraine. In addition, this icon of the annihilation of European Jews appears at the bottom of every page of Mishol's chapter about North African Jews during the Holocaust, and thus represents the exterminated Jews all over the world.

The cropped picture of the boy features, de-contextualized, on many of the schoolbook covers as well: trodden under a gigantic boot (Gutman 2009), raising his arms in front of Hitler and Stalin under a huge yellow *Juden* badge (Inbar and Bar-Hillel 2010), or floating in murky air above the warlords and the machines of war (Mishol 2014). In all these portrayals, he is looking out at the viewer with the pleading, frightened, innocent look Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) defined as a "demand." This look can be interpreted as a demand for responsibility or rather for response-ability in the sense that Levinas imparted to the term (Liss 1998, 112). However, in Israeli discourse, his demand is often interpreted as a call for vengeance against all those who *wish* to exterminate "us" again, exemplified in the play written by Israeli

playwright Hanokh Levin, *The Patriot*. In the play Mahmud, a little Palestinian boy, stands with his hands up, just like the boy from Warsaw, as an Israeli soldier holds a gun to his head. The Israeli soldier named Lahav (which is the Hebrew word for Blade), addresses his own mother as he aims the revolver: "He will avenge your blood and the blood of our murdered family, as then, mother, when your little brother stood alone in front of the German at night" (cited in Hirsch 2012, 144).

The Ivangorod mother- transmitting Nazi logic

The traumatizing images of atrocity, which the schoolbooks display, are ruled by what Marianne Hirsch (2001, 26) terms "the murderous National Socialist gaze", and the Nazi perspective often comes across as objective and factual. The following example suggests that Israeli schoolbooks are trapped in this gaze and reproduce it not only through the photographs, but also in the texts and in the questions that accompany the photographs. Thus, the textbooks often prompt young students to adopt the Nazi logic, which presents the victims as *Stücke* (pieces, units) as the Germans called them, or as ultimate "others."



Image IV. Einsatzgruppen murdering Jewish civilians in Ivangorod, Ukraine, 1942. Credit: Jerzy Tomaszewski, Poland. Yad Vashem Archive, Photo Collection 143DO5

One of the photographs that "made history," was widely disseminated and is immediately recognizable, is the photo of the Ivangorod mother being shot by German soldiers as she protects her child with her body (Struk, 2011). The mother, cropped from a larger image, was transformed into an icon of the murder of Soviet Jews by direct shooting. This photo became what photography historian Vicky Goldberg (1991,145) termed a "secular icon," namely a photograph that possesses intense symbolic impact through representations that inspire a degree of awe, mixed with dread or compassion, and that seem to encapsulate such complex phenomena as the power of the human spirit and universal destruction.



Image V. The cropped photo. Yad Vashem Archive 65779

The cropped photo appears in most publications including Israeli schoolbooks. Its *criterial features* are both concrete and conceptual, as in most icons: the shooting and the act of "mothering". The woman is no doubt aware that her act of protection is futile, yet all mothers can identify with her, because her act evokes the most universal quality of humanity (Chouliaraki

2006, 144). The killer and the two rifles behind him symbolize the height of male evil. This photo not only reports on a shocking possibility, but actually induces the shock. It raises the most fundamental moral question: how can a young mother and a baby be condemned to death? In so doing, it drives the viewers to demand that justice be restored (Chouliaraki 2006).

Schoolbooks usually present the cropped photo in its iconized state, sometimes devoid of details of time and place, and none of them discusses the photo and its trajectory, or its impact. They use it to discuss the method of direct killing and its "shortcomings", and to explain the transition to gas trucks as a more efficient means of exterminating the Jews. In most books, the cropped image is directly below the heading: "Searching for alternatives to direct shooting," thereby prompting readers to focus on the method of killing rather than on the killing of mother and child. In the schoolbook *Destruction and Heroism* (Hertz 2015) the cropped photo appears on each page of the chapter on the Holocaust and is thus transformed into a symbol of the entire process of extermination. It reappears in the sub-chapter on the Final Solution at the top of the page, alongside a photograph of an inscription a murdered Kovno Jew wrote in Yiddish with his blood, as he lay dying on the floor of his kitchen: "Jews Revenge!" Although the two murders were committed and recorded in two different locations 692 km apart, Ivangorod in the Ukraine and Kovno in Lithuania, in this layout it seems that the call for revenge from Kovno pertains to the murder of the mother and the child in Ivangorod, and hence to all the murders of Jews across the USSR. Since the word "revenge" is written in Hebrew letters, Israeli students may regard it as a call addressed to them directly, urging them to become indignant (Keilbach 2009) and to seek revenge. A poem about the massacre in Ponar, Lithuania, 726km. distant from Ivangorod, is placed under both photos, across the entire width of the lower part of the page, uniting them.

The three items (two photos and a poem) are thus detached from their original contexts and are recontextualized in the schoolbook, where they form a new complex sign that functions as a myth; and like many other myths, it represents horrendous injustice, sacrifice, noble humanity and the call for eternal revenge. The newly made sign combines three constitutive elements of our life: the feminine motherhood; the masculine - both the Nazi murderer

and the Jewish call for revenge; and the spiritual poetry that commemorates people's suffering caused by human barbarity. The new motivated sign connotes the concept of the human spirit that endures "in spite of everything": motherhood manifested to the last breath; a call for revenge written in blood by a dying man; and poetry composed by those who were about to be executed.

The Verbal Text

As mentioned above, the verbal texts within which this photo is embedded prompt readers to focus on another aspect altogether, namely the technical flaws of the method of direct shooting. In Hertz (2015, 108), the text begins thus: "The method of direct killing had its shortcomings: it was slow, wasted a lot of ammunition (at least one bullet per person) and was hard to conceal. The explosive sounds of shooting were heard from afar. The method presented certain hardships as far as the German soldiers were concerned as well: the work was dirty and required direct contact between murderer and victim. Hitler quite likely issued the order to extend the extermination of the Jews to other parts of Europe already at this stage […] This is why the Germans searched for more effective alternatives for the mass murder of the Jews."

The expository, dispassionate reasoning style of this description shifts the focus abruptly and changes the meaning of the photograph, from a representation of inconceivable cruelty and suffering, to an indication of the logistical problems of the German killers. The shift is so unsettling and surprising that one is moved to wonder about its educational purpose, and about the interest or the motivation of those who introduced it. What we experience here is the interplay between the extreme nature of the subject matter and the "normality" of the text, which is considered problematic by scholars such as Friedländer, Diner, Rothberg, or LaCapra. By noting that the method of direct shooting "had its shortcomings," and presented "certain hardships," the schoolbook neither invalidates nor rejects the method of direct killing, but rather adopts an objective and neutral position on the matter; it examines the method technically, and weighs its pros and cons, so as to convince readers that gassing was a better alternative. Gutman (2009, 228) explicitly invites

readers to view the photo of the Ivangorod shooting through Nazi eyes. The photograph is embedded in a text about the "search for alternatives to direct shooting." Below the photo, there is a question: "What were the reasons that drove the Nazis to seek alternatives to the direct shooting of Jews according to this photograph?" This question, which also appeared in the final History examination (matriculation) in winter 2022, explicitly directs the students to adopt the perpetrators' perspective along with their murderous logic. It prompts students to consider the photo of the woman, who is trying in vain to protect her child with her body, not as criminalizing evidence, as a devastating shocking image of the darkest evil and the loftiest expression of motherly devotion, but as an example of a rather sloppy method that needs to be improved, as proof of the waste of ammunition, inefficiency, and disturbing experience on the part of the German soldiers.

Students may be drawn to calculate how many bullets the German murderer had to spend on this woman and her child. At least two. But what if the child moves? What if the mother starts running? Maybe three bullets. Maybe four. The students may also ask themselves more humane and unanswerable questions such as "What thoughts ran through this mother's mind as she was forced to march to this site with her child? Did the boy try to run away, shocked and confused? Was the father killed first, before their eyes or is he one of the diggers in the distance?" (Lower ibid.) But instead of addressing the photographed people, the books emphasize the unnecessary hassle for the German soldiers, who only sought to do their duty, and for whom physical contact with the victims was terribly annoying. Hence, gassing was a far more efficient method. In this way, students are taught the bureaucratic thinking of the industrial mass murder, along with the total indifference to human life and human expressions of despair and helplessness.

The historical recount

The texts assume that this issue is debatable, that there were or can be arguments for and against method of extermination of people, and that some arguments can convincingly justify such an action, according to certain norms or logic.

Friedländer (1984) calls this writing "bureaucratic, rational and factual" or the "historiography of 'business as usual'," which, he asserts, is typical of textbook writing but should not be applied to writing about events such as the Holocaust. He (1992) argues, that when we seek to explain the Holocaust according to known norms or logic, we arrive at the limit of representation.

Naveh et al. (2009, 267), describe the solution to the sloppy method of direct shooting, using the genre of the *historical recount*, (Coffin 2006), called in other studies the realistic descriptive narrative (Chouliaraki 2006, 99). The recount is best suited to a seemingly dispassionate report, and it is the most common genre of textbook writing about the Holocaust (Peled-Elhanan 2023). This genre aspires to "objectivity at the expense of emotionality" (Chouliaraki 2006, 111) and tends to create the impression that the events are reported from a "universal" perspective, even if this is patently not the case. As Coffin (2006, 151) shows, recounts merely appear to be factual reports and their "objectivity is to some extent a rhetorical illusion." Discursively, the "objectivity" or "factuality" is construed "through the absence of direct, explicit forms of evaluation and the exclusion of competing, alternative interpretations" (ibid.). Adopting the recorder voice, (Coffin 2006, 152) the recount maintains the illusion of "history telling itself" (Barthes 1986) but the facts do not speak for themselves. Unlike the chronicle, which is, as Barthes argues, "discourse that does not signify," for it is "limited to a pure unstructured series of notations" (1986, 131), in the recount, despite appearances, "events are selected, edited and linearized" (Coffin ibid.) within what Hayden White calls "a specific framework of interpretation." (1992, 6). The writer of the recount obeys certain rules of re-contextualization dictated by his or her interest, affiliation, or ideology. The chronicle found, for instance, in the historical Annals, was written by an author who did not know how the future would play out. "The chronicler has no knowledge of the future and the historian does," and therefore the historical recount "describes past events in light of subsequent ones, unknown to the actors themselves" (Ricoeur 1984, 144).

The objective character of the recount is achieved, inter alia, through the exclusion or suppression of human agency by the use of the *passive form* or *grammatical metaphors*. Things happen without anyone willing them to

happen or making them happen. Take, for instance, this sentence: "Death in gas trucks was meant to reduce costs and solve the emotional hardship that arose during the direct shooting of Jews" (Naveh et al., 2009, 267). Death and the "emotional hardship" are the principal actors in this sentence, and they act (reduce, solve, arose) on their own volition. The recount refers to non-human participants which are often constituted by means of nouns and grammatical metaphors such as "the killing," or "the war," "the methods" that had their "shortcomings", or "the feelings that were forming during the operations."

The stages of the historical recount: the passage to gas

1. *Background or orientation* – provides a summary of previous historical events or conditions: "Having experienced technically and morally killing with gas in the euthanasia operation, in summer 1941, the Nazis began to prepare for the mass extermination of the Jews with gas." (p. 267).

2. Record of events – sequencing events as they unfold over time: "In the autumn of 1941 killing began in hermetically sealed gas trucks into which the exhaust pipe of the car was inserted. The Jews were loaded onto the truck, which would drive slowly around the designated area, until it was clear that all its cargo had suffocated and died. From the end of 1941 until this method was discontinued, some 400,000 people, mostly Jews, were murdered in these trucks, in a slow and excruciating method of killing." (ibid.)

3. The last and optional stage of the recount is *Deduction:* drawing out the historical significance of the events recorded. Coffin (2006, 56) states that "often a deduction explicitly interprets the historical meaning of events." She adds that in the deduction stage "a judgment is made concerning the historical significance of the events recorded, [but] typically, such judgments emerge 'naturally' out of the *record of events* stage," (p. 57) because the recorder voice "assumes or simulates reader alignment with the writer's world view, thus minimizing the amount of explicit interpersonal work to be done, in terms of negotiating with diverse audience positionings" (ibid. 151-152). Naveh et al. (2009, 287) assert without doubt that "the murder of the Jewish people is unique in the history of mankind and there has never been any mas-

sacre like it in the civilized world,"

Time is the major dimension according to which the recount is structured (Coffin 2006). The texts unfold with temporal expressions, typically functioning as a point of departure of each thematic unit: in the autumn, in the summer, from the end of 1941 until the discontinuation of this method, etc. Yet the temporal or additive connectors may assume the function of causal links. As Kress (2003, 3) explains: "The simple yet profound fact of temporal sequence and its effects are to orient us towards a world of causality […] and the narrative is the genre that is the culturally most potent formal expression of this." The background and the events are linked both temporally and causally. "Having experienced" denotes both chronology and causality, meaning that both "because" and "after" they had experienced killing with gas, the Nazi soldiers, having been trained to do something technically and to accept it morally, proceeded to do it efficiently on other occasions.

In terms of context, the content of the historical recount consists of "contact between different peoples, conflict and war" (Coffin 2006, 57). The emphasis is placed on groups of people, realized through generic participants as in the texts studied here: Germany and other states, the German soldiers and the Jewish victims, who are presented as homogeneous entities. In the paragraph quoted above, the non-human participants are the killing and the exhaust fumes. The human participants are objectified and labelled "cargo." Defining human beings as cargo is typical of racist discourse, such as that found in reports about the slave trade. This term entered Nazi terminology as well. For example, in his interview with Gitta Sereny in 1971, Franz Stangl, former Commandant of the Treblinka extermination camp, declared that he regarded the Jews as "cargo" to be dispatched:

"So, you didn't feel they were human beings?" [Asked Sereny].

"Cargo," he said tonelessly. "They were cargo." (Sereny 1974, 216).

Stangl justified this choice of the word by describing the victims as naked, huddled together, and whipped like animals. He compared the Jewish victims to cows that he saw in a slaughterhouse or to lemmings who inexplicably rush to their death.

By labelling the victims "cargo," Naveh et al.'s apparently neutral text adopts the Nazi de-humanizing perspective of the Jewish victims, especially

since the word "cargo" is not put in quotations marks. The linguistic choices annihilate the sufferers, and remove them from the existential order to which the readers belong.

In the *Deduction*, appearing to make a factual statement as they conclude the chapter, the authors deliver their judgment on a highly controversial topic, namely the uniqueness of the Holocaust, which has been debated by scholars, among them Naveh himself (2017), for several decades. The schoolbook declares that this genocide was unprecedented "in the enlightened world," which probably includes the USA, Australia, and other "enlightened" countries and colonial powers that perpetrated genocides, overlooking genocides in the Balkans, Rwanda, North Korea, Sudan or the Congo, to mention but a few. Typically of the recount, "there is an absence of negotiation and argumentation, and the writer does not invite the reader to challenge the view of events presented" (Coffin 2006, 58). Readers' acquiescence with this conclusion is neither suggested nor discussed, but simply assumed. Had they not assumed readers' acquiescence with this ideological conclusion, the authors could have exposed before them the complexity of this notion, or would have phrase this statement as a question,"Is this catastrophe that overwhelmed the Jews of Europe an incomparably unique historical phenomenon, or is it a case within the category of genocide?" Landau (2016, 4-5).

The dispassionate assertive writing of the recount dominates most mainstream secular schoolbooks. This "'textbook style" teaches the students to remain uninvolved and to approach both the events and the victims in a detached, "scientific" or "agoraic" manner (Chouliaraki 2006). The seemingly unbiased or bureaucratic discourse of history employed by the schoolbooks engenders the rational inductive questions that prompt readers to focus on situations, phenomena and events, of which people are specimens or indices, rather than on the individual human suffering and cruelty. This style, which lacks "empathic unsettlement" and transmits the Nazi perspective regarding their Jewish victims, is directed to Israeli students about to join the army and carry on a regime of occupation and oppression. It seems, as was mentioned before, that the rhetors' interest is to guarantee the students' loyalty to the state and not "let the fire of vengeance die out."[3] However, this fire is not di-

3 Avraham Green, general secretary of the Pedagogic Council in the Ministry of Education. In: Miron 2005.

rected against the German perpetrators and their collaborators in Europe, but against Palestinian colonized subjects and citizen (Goldberg, 2024).

The Representation of Palestinians

While the memory of the Holocaust is a pillar of Israeli consciousness, the memory of the Nakba is forbidden today by the state. (Raz-Krakotzkin, 2019, 134).

The Palestinian problem - a motivated sign



Image VII. The Palestinian Problem. (*MTII.2000.* 239).

The researcher asks, what motivated the choice of this photograph and its definition as the Palestinian problem, although there is nothing Palestinian about it? The criterial features of the photograph should be made clear in the caption and in the text in which the photograph is embedded. Caption: "The 'Palestinian problem' has ripened in the poverty, inactivity and frustration that were the lot of the refugees in their miserable camps." Main text: "Although Israel came victorious out of the survival-war that was forced upon her, the Palestinian problem would poison for more than a generation the relationships of Israel with the Arab world and with the international community".

Though we cannot be sure, the verbs *ripen* and *poison* may indicate the motivation for choosing the photograph. The criterial features of the image seem to be the extreme neglect and the stagnant water, an environment where poisonous diseases ripen. The Palestinians are never depicted in schoolbooks as individual people but as the problem they constitute for the Israelis, or as disease, as Ben Gurion called them ("Raah Hola" Pappe 2017). It is a self-directed problem that acts independently of human actors and must be solved.

While the Jews are presented as having endured 2000 years of hardship, pogroms, and Holocaust in their native countries, before being rescued by Zionism and the state of Israel, the Palestinians are denied their suffering and their own Holocaust, the Nakba. The destruction and the ethnic cleansing of Palestine are reported in schoolbooks only by way of its favorable consequences for the Jews as in: "From the Jewish point of view Plan D[4] was an enormous success. It strengthened the military power of the Jewish community[…]It created a [Jewish] territorial sequence as a 'strategic asset. "'(Blank 2006).

No room is made for the fate of the surviving victims or their testimony and the loss of human life is usually reported in approximate quantities. For example, Hagiladi in summing up the consequences of the 1948 war, give the exact figures of Israeli losses – "6000 killed, of which 4,500 soldiers and 1,500 civilians, and more than 30,000 wounded" (Hagiladi and Kassem, 2007: 20). However, regarding Palestinian losses the book provides estimated quantities:

"There were many casualties, many villages were destroyed and hundreds of thousands of Palestinians became refugees" (ibid.).

School curricula fail to take account of the history of Palestine since the Second Temple period. They present The Promised Land as the provenance of the Jewish-Christian civilization, while denying its Arab-Islamic history, including the four hundred years of Ottoman rule, which are barely mentioned in Israeli schoolbooks. The actual Arab presence on the land is deemed inconsequential, and consequently rejected to the point of obliteration. (Raz-Krakotzkin 2005).

Palestinians are never depicted as people like us, modern, professional, and have never been considered as candidates for assimilation or integration.

4 The ethnic cleansing of all the Palestinian villages between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

Visually they are absent from maps and stereotypically represented by racist icons, such as a nomad with a camel or a primitive farmer behind a plough carried by two oxen (Peled-Elhanan 2012). Their dehumanization, objectification, and Nazification legitimate their persecution, their exclusion, and their symbolic and physical elimination.

Nazification of Palestinians

Schoolbooks nazify Palestinians explicitly and implicitly and attribute their actions of resistance to Israeli occupation to Anti Semitic hatred of Jews. The Israeli victims of terrorist attacks, whether soldiers or civilians are equated to helpless Jews in European ghettos. *Focus on History* (2020,136) for instance specifies: "In Palestinian terrorist attacks, Israelis experienced "loss, bereavement, and existential danger, which allowed them to identify more easily with Holocaust survivors"(bold in the original). These experiences allowed Israelis to gain a sense of their vulnerability and helplessness, or in other words, their "Jewishness."

Enlisting the authority of leaders, the books quote former foreign minister Abba Eban, who spoke of Israel's "Auschwitz borders," and former prime minister Begin, who equated Arafat to Hitler and declared that Israel's attack on Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon had saved us "from another Treblinka" (Bar-Navi 1998).

Nothing positive is ever written about the Palestinians or the Arab neighbours, their cultures are never described, and they are all portrayed as seeking to "exterminate us again," out of "Arab Antisemitism" (Mishol, 2014a). "This, of course, justifies a brutal response to the threat." (David Grossman, 2002).

In conclusion, regarding the Holocaust, Israeli schoolbooks often present the Nazi-German narrative and its perspective, and prompt the students to disregard details such as individual people and concentrate on the larger event and its logic. Regarding the Palestinians, the books adopt Israeli military-political perspective, depicting them as problems, threats, and Nazis. Both perspectives are those of the perpetrators, who are not responsive to their victims' suffering. The educational message is that these "others" should

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not inspire empathy or mourning.

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Rhetoric v. Reality: Social Studies and History Education in Interwar America

La retórica frente a la realidad: las materias de conocimientos sociales y la enseñanza de la Historia en la América de entreguerras

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Abstract

Contemporary analysis of American history and social studies education reveals a complex picture. On the one hand, the media depicts battles between liberals and conservatives over the inclusion of racism, slavery, and diversity in standards and textbooks. On the other, research indicates that innovative pedagogy and new content struggle to uproot the textbook-centric pedagogies and rote-memorization exercises that commonly appear in classrooms. While history and social studies education is no doubt amplified by news coverage and social media, these debates, challenges, and controversies are not new, instead, they are part of a long historical lineage. This article traces that lineage by centering history and social studies education and reforms during interwar America (1919-1939). The interwar years were crucial for US history and social studies education because school enrollments significantly expanded and academics, teachers, and administrators created many reforms. However, most studies of the interwar years only consider reforms and fail to explore if those reforms appeared in schools. Highlighting how teachers taught and what they taught, combined with the historical context of the era, illuminates the possibilities, challenges, and limitations of history and social studies education reform.

Key words: social studies, history education, education reform, interwar era, curriculum, curricular history, and social history

Resumen

El análisis contemporáneo de la enseñanza de la Historia y de las ciencias sociales en los USA estadounidense revela un panorama complejo. Por un lado, los medios de comunicación tratan de las batallas entre liberales y conservadores por la inclusión del racismo, la esclavitud y la diversidad en los curricula y libros de texto. Por otro, la investigación indica que la pedagogía innovadora y los nuevos contenidos siguen luchando por desarraigar la didáctica centrada en los libros de texto y los ejercicios de memorización comunes en las aulas. Indubitablemente, la cobertura informativa y las redes sociales amplifican los problemas de la enseñanza de la Historia y las ciencias sociales, pero estos debates, desafíos y controversias no son nuevos, sino que forman parte de una larga trayectoria histórica. Este artículo traza esa línea centrándose en la enseñanza de la Historia y las ciencias sociales y las reformas durante el periodo de entreguerras en Estados Unidos de Norteamérica (1919-1939). Los años de entreguerras fueron cruciales para la enseñanza de la Historia y las ciencias sociales en los USA, pues el número de alumnos matriculados en las escuelas aumentó considerablemente y los académicos, profesores y administradores propusieron numerosas reformas. Sin embargo, la mayoría de los estudios sobre los años de entreguerras sólo consideran las propuestas de reforma y no exploran si estas se pusieron en práctica. Estudiar cómo y qué enseñaban los profesores, junto con el contexto histórico de la época, ilumina las posibilidades, retos y limitaciones de la reforma de la enseñanza de la Historia y las ciencias sociales.

Palabras clave: Enseñanza de Ciencias Sociales, enseñanza de la Historia, reforma educativa, época de entreguerras, currículo, Historia del curriculum; Historia social.

Introduction

History and social studies education reform in the United States presents ongoing challenges. For over a century, scholars, administrators, teachers, and even politicians have tried to alter the historical content that students learn and the pedagogical practices that teachers use. Historians have documented the myriads of reform movements in different epochs, particularly how they aimed to unseat rote pedagogies and textbook-centric learning that dominated social studies and history instruction. Despite the numerous and innovative attempts at altering instruction, many reforms never made their way into schools. Social studies and history education reforms are often unsuccessful in the US because they reflect the conservative nature of public schools, no-

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tably their resistance to change. Moreover, reforms are stifled by social, cultural, and political issues, commonly referred to as the "culture wars," that manifest in different eras.

To highlight the complexities encountered in attempts to reform American history and social studies education, this article specifically explores the interwar era (1919-1939). The interwar era is significant within the history of curriculum reform, particularly social studies education, for two key reasons. First, school enrollment expanded from 74% to 84% of school-aged children throughout the interwar era and high school enrollment expanded from 5.1% to 26% (Snyder, 1993). Second, many crucial social studies and history reforms emerged during the interwar era and were often directly related to the debates over historical methodology, the emergence of the field of "social studies," and the broader social and political landscape of the Great Depression and New Deal.

Social studies researchers recognized the importance of the interwar years and produced two lines of study that explored this era. First, scholars investigated prominent social studies and history education reports and reforms from organizations such as the American Historical Association (AHA) and the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). The central questions and debates that shaped this work addressed how reports of these organizations impacted schools, how social science coursework replaced history coursework, and how committee members reached a consensus despite internal disagreements. (Hertzberg, 1981; Saxe, 1992; Whelan, 1991; Keels, 1980; Ravitch, 1987; Jenness, 1990). Starting in the early 2000s, social studies histories from Fallace (2008; 2009), Halvorsen (2013), and Evans (2004), significantly expanded the scholarship of the late 20th century. They studied the intellectual impetus behind social studies reports and reforms, the changes and challenges within elementary social studies, and the impact of the culture wars on social studies. In addition to these subjects, they incorporated additional sources, new questions, and considered the changing social, intellectual, and political landscape of 20th-century America. Most of this research tended to center what *should* have been taught, rather than explore what *was* taught and how it was taught. This article attempts to address the latter and often overlooked question by providing a granular analysis of pedagogy, content,

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course offerings, and other sources from the school and classroom level that all help illuminate what students were taught in the interwar period. National reports and examples from schooling in the state of Wisconsin highlighted both general trends and explicit examples of social studies education. While it is impossible to definitively claim what teachers taught, how they taught it, and what students learned, this combination of qualitative and quantitative data, from both national and local sources, provides a comprehensive foundation to address those questions.

There are three crucial elements of interwar social studies education that the national and local sources reveal. First, most of the alternations that education reformers clamored for never reached the classrooms. Second, claims from interwar educators and scholars that social studies content, teaching practices, and course offerings significantly differed were incorrect, as there was striking commonality across all three areas. Third, textbook learning, rote memorization, and stale teaching practices continued to dominate the methodology of social studies education in classrooms.

Interwar Era Social Studies Reforms

Many social studies reforms emerged during the interwar era, as educators and scholars grappled with challenges posed by the Great Depression, New Deal, and burgeoning school enrollments (Evans, 2004). Three of the most prominent reforms of this period were social problems courses, the "new" history, and social reconstructionism. Each reform encouraged students to draw explicit connections from the past to the present, to understand the social and economic problems affecting local communities and the nation, and to generate solutions to these problems. There was no consensus amongst school reformers about what content, resources, and pedagogies teachers should incorporate. However, reformers shared a mutual goal: to weaken or eliminate textbook-central learning and rote assessment.

Education reformers, notably historians, were dissatisfied with the state of history in secondary schools during the early 20th century, so some sought to reform it. These individuals and groups particularly loathed high school history because of the overreliance on factual material and the study of

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politicians, dynasties, and battles. For these reformers, the "new" history offered a viable solution. Championed by Columbia University historians James Harvey Robinson and Charles Beard, the "new history" was a methodological approach to studying history. Advocates challenged the dominant conception of history: a scientific, i.e. objective telling of the past, and they believed history was a subjective assessment of how the present developed from the past. New historians also called for including social histories and accounts and experiences of ordinary people, not just the political and economic elite who traditionally dominated history education. New history also differed because its proponents sought to incorporate other social science disciplines such as sociology, political science, and economics to help interpret the past and link history to the present. In sum, new history offered fresh topics and approaches for students to replace the "dead and irrelevant" histories that dominated high schools. (Robinson, 1912; Whelan, 1991; Committee on Social Studies of the Commission to Reorganize Secondary Education, 1916).

Another notable social studies reform movement was the creation and adoption of the "problems" course, such as "Social Problems," "Modern Problems" or "Problems of American Democracy." These courses were almost exclusively offered in the final year of secondary school. The purpose was to integrate history, sociology, economics, civics, and other social sciences to address contemporary social problems. In theory, course topics would reflect student and teacher interests and interdisciplinary studies would guide studies of particular problems. Reformers who advocated for these courses did not specify a specific curriculum or textbooks, since political climates and societal needs should shape the course. So, in theory, the course would change annually. (Committee on Social Studies of the Commission to Reorganize Secondary Education, 1916; Whelan, 1991). Leading social studies reform group, provided a sample lesson with immigration as the topic and three disciplines to frame discussions: (1) Civics: laws and politics that govern and drive immigration regulation and restriction, (2) Economics: standards of living for immigrant populations and the effects of immigration on the labor market, and (3) Sociology: the assimilation of immigrant communities into new spaces and how their cultural contributions shape society (Committee on Social Studies of the Commission to Reorganize Secondary Education,

1916).

The final noteworthy social studies reform movement was social reconstructionism, a progressive education movement that sought to mobilize American public schools and teachers to enact social reforms (Riley, 2006). Arguably the most prominent social reconstructionist was George Counts, a professor of education at Columbia University. Counts envisioned replacing individualism with collectivism and applying interdisciplinary knowledge and studies to combat social issues, notably economic problems during the Great Depression. Moreover, Counts, like other school reformers, believed that students could act as agents of change to help address contemporary social ills. By emphasizing collective action through student application of technological knowledge, schools, students, and governments would "engage in the social planning and social engineering needed to create the cooperative commonwealth, the collective democracy" (Gutek, 2008, p.14). Counts' ideas resonated with reformers, who incorporated his ideas into influential reports on history and social studies such as the American Historical Association *Conclusions of the Commission* (1934), and Charles Beard's *Charter for the Social Sciences* (1932). Overall, many social studies reformers utilized Counts' idea that students needed technological understanding, knowledge, and the ability to analyze and address contemporary social problems.

Differences and Similarities in Social Studies: A National Study

Scholars have thoroughly documented the various reform efforts, but there is considerably less scholarship that explores if and how these reforms materialized in classrooms. Rather than focusing on the reformer's ideas and recommendations, I center assessments, courses of study, and other sources that depict classrooms to illuminate how successful these reforms were and what actually transpired in schools. This granular analysis reveals some key findings. First, despite concerns amongst education researchers that social studies and history education drastically differed, there was considerable overlap. Second, fears from reformers and researchers that stale teaching practices, rote memorization, and textbook-centric learning dominated classroom instruction were correct. Third, despite those concerns, attempts to improve

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social studies and history education did not produce noticeable impacts in schools.

During the interwar war era, there was a common belief amongst education researchers and reformers that social studies and history education vastly differed throughout the nation. Most of these assumptions stemmed from reports and studies that documented the broad range of class offerings and course sequences. For instance, some elementary and middle schools preferred general social science courses such as social studies, social sciences, or community civics. Other schools preferred established discipline-specific courses like American history and world geography. Most high schools required specific courses such as civics, some iteration of European or world history, and American history, yet many schools offered numerous electives like problems of democracy, economics, sociology, and others (Tryron, 1935; Lessen, and Herlihy, 1938; Dahl, 1928; Dawson, 1924). These variations in course titles, course sequence, and electives highlighted why scholars, educators, and administrators believed social studies and history education were in "a condition of utter confusion," "a state of disorganization," and "chaotic." (Dahl, 1924, p. 185-88; Dawson, 1924, p. 18; Beard, 1932, p. VII).

The statistics of the varying course offerings signified great diversity among social studies and history education, however, studies that probed beyond course titles and investigated class content, assessment, and pedagogies reveal a different picture. For example, Kimmel's (1933) *Instruction in the Social Studies* was a crucial social studies report because it accentuated the differences and similarities in the curricular content. Kimmel collected over eighty courses of study from junior and senior high schools throughout the US and carefully analyzed class offerings, sequences, course content, and textbooks. This work is unique because instead of simply cataloging the course offerings and sequence of courses, he investigated the content of the courses and the pedagogical methods in classrooms. There was considerable variation across content and course offerings, "but the variations in practice are more apparent than real," as similarities, not differences, overall permeated social studies" (Kimmel, 1933, pp. 1-4 and 26).Kimmel (1933) analyzed eight courses of study that included a required "advanced civics" course, In

some schools this meant advanced civics, American government, social civics, or problems of citizenship. The course names differed, which gave the illusion of diversity, in actuality, the courses were similar. All the content and units were arranged by topic, with a particular focus on the structures, functions, and organization of the American government.

These overlapping elements in structure and content led Kimmel to conclude that "the name of a course, however, does not serve to differentiate the types and plan of organization of content, which are likely to follow the plans of organization of the textbooks adopted for use in civics (Kimmel, 1933, pg. 53-56)". The study of "social problems" and "sociology' courses were also revealing. Nine courses of study contained either a social problems course (five) or a sociology course (four). According to Kimmel, "it is difficult to distinguish between courses" and the only discernible difference was the inclusion of the word "problems" proceeding topics and social issues, hence, "no attempt is made here to consider them separately." Both social problems and sociology classes emphasized the idea of "progress" as a fundamental theme, and topics included moral progress, the road to progress, and social progress (Kimmel, 1933, pg. 53-56). Despite the multitude of course offerings and distinct titles, the organization and course topics were similar. Much of the course content was almost identical. Courses of study for early or modern European, world history classes exhibited "few differences in content" (Kimmel, 1933, pg. 42). Eleven of the twelve courses of study included an introduction to prehistoric peoples based on anthropological and archaeological evidence. This segued into surveys of prominent ancient civilizations such as Greece, Rome, and Egypt, which focused on basic geography, political history, and "encyclopedic content," i.e., broad historical narratives. Second-semester topics varied but typically highlighted the Crusades, Renaissance, European colonialism, and the growth of economic globalization and trade (Kimmel, 1933). A similar organization existed in junior high school American history. Most schools designed their course around major political periods or wars such as the Revolutionary Era and other prominent historical events. Pre-Reconstruction era topics dominated the curriculum, and there was minimal study of the past fifty years (1880-1930). The courses of study and curriculums "seem to lack cross-sectional views of the life of the people

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at different periods in American history." This indicated to Kimmel (1933) that textbooks "influenced the development of outlines of content in courses of study," as teachers relied on broader sweeps of notable events and epochs instead of social histories (pp. 47-52.).

Courses of study indicated what teachers and schools planned to teach, but do not definitively determine what occurred in classrooms. Another source that helps illuminate what students learned was the test questions used to evaluate them. Worth Osborn, an employee of the State Department of Public Instruction in Wisconsin, researched history testing throughout the US. His study drew upon 2250 papers and tests from elementary and secondary American, ancient, medieval European, and modern European history classes (Osburn, 1926). His study corroborates Kimmel's (1933) claims that many social studies classes emphasized similar content, but it also demonstrated that teachers mostly expected students to memorize and recall information.

Elementary and secondary American history tests had several common characteristics. Osburn (1926) identified fifty overarching topics from the test questions. He noticed that forty-six common topics appeared in both the elementary and secondary levels. Of the fifty topics in elementary American history, five topics – the names of prominent individuals, the development of the colonies, early exploration, the Revolutionary War, and the Civil War – accounted for half of the test questions. Four topics – the development of the colonies, exploration, and presidents and administrations – also accounted for almost half of the questions in the secondary grades. Even the types of questions that teachers asked were similar. Osburn (1926) found nineteen types of questions in elementary schools, but "identify, give, what, name, and define" questions accounted for 60%. A few examples were "give the reason for Europe colonizing America," "define the Emancipation Proclamation," and "name the territories acquired from 1789 to the present" (pp. 13-24 & 71-92). Secondary questions deviated slightly but focused on the recall of facts, which comprised almost 60% of all questions. The content in elementary and secondary American history courses was also similar.

Osburn (1926) included an appendix with all the questions that appeared five or more times on examinations and grouped them by type, i.e.,

those that began with the words how, give, explain, why, etc. Rote questions focused on notable wars, important policy documents, or key political events. For instance, students were asked "what were the results of the War of 1812," "give the reasons for the Monroe Doctrine," and "define the Missouri Compromise." Even the higher-level thought questions focused on the same topics. For instance, the elementary and secondary "why" questions asked pupils why the Articles of Confederation failed and why the United States entered World War I. "Explain" questions considered the causes of the American Revolution and the differences between the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution. (Osburn, 1926, pp. 71-115). Osburn's (1926) study also demonstrated that the content in European and ancient history was far more standardized than in American history. A few topics of study included mostly English and French history, the names of prominent individuals, and "miscellaneous" subjects ("definition and comparison questions covering the whole field") – comprised approximately 50% of the questions in secondary European history courses. Three other topics – the church, Germany, and the First World War – comprised another 15% of the questions. The remaining 35% was scattered among 26 other topics. Ancient history was even more standardized. Of the 25 topics, Greece, Rome, and the memorization of names accounted for over 66%, two-thirds, of *all* the test questions. (Osburn, 1926)

Combine with above to American history, the most common questions for European and ancient history required pupils to memorize the subject matter. About 50% of the European and ancient history test questions began with define, identify, give, or name. Moreover, only 20% of the questions in European history courses and 17% in ancient history began with the words explain, why, how, and discuss, which might tap into higher-level thought (Osburn, 1926). The evidence indicated that European and ancient history content was more consistent and recall and identification questions were more pervasive compared to American history. This is unsurprising because ancient and European history courses were large surveys that covered vast amounts of material in a single course. The national data demonstrated the claims that social studies lacked cohesion and organization were wrong. Students typically took a similar course sequence and learned the same content, despite the variation in course titles and textbooks. History and social

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and social studies education appeared to remain "in bondage" to the textbooks (Evans, 2004, p.42). Most of the data suggested that teachers followed the course textbook and used recall and memorization-based assessment, with limited opportunity for students to explain, apply, or justify their understanding of the past. Finally, it appeared that the progressive reforms that stressed critical thinking and social history failed to gain traction in classrooms.

Case Study of Wisconsin

The national data, courses of study, and examinations provided a sense of the daily classroom practices. However, a case study of a specific state provides additional depth concerning the similarities and differences in course content, pedagogical practices, and the impact of reforms. The state of Wisconsin provides a strong example because Wisconsin schools were statistically average compared with other states in terms of budget, per-pupil spending, average attendance, teacher-to-pupil ratio, and many other categories (Callahan, 1945). Overall, social studies and history instruction in interwar Wisconsin neatly corresponded with the national trends: more similarities than differences in course content, reliance on textbook learning and rote assessments, and a lack of progressive reforms. The case study also demonstrates that state and district officials sought new pedagogies and ideas, however, contradictory teaching suggestions and nebulous strategies for incorporating those reforms made it difficult to discern how they materialized in classrooms.

Studies from Holzman (1937) and Kreunen (1931) demonstrated that Wisconsin schools offered a variety of social studies courses: American history, world history, ancient history, medieval history, modern history, economic problems, social problems, geography, commercial geography, US problems, citizenship, and others. There was a wide diversity of elective course offerings, but mainstays like civics and American history were required. For example, civics was required in anywhere from 75 to 88% of all ninth-grade offerings. There was no consensus for tenth grade, as some schools required citizenship, ancient history, or ancient and medieval history, but these percentages were relatively low. Eleventh and twelfth grades were similar to ninth and tenth grades. Modern history was typically taught in eleventh grade,

appearing as a requirement in about half and as an elective in a quarter of the schools, while a small minority required American history. Twelfth grade was the most standardized across the state, with 80% of schools requiring American history (Kreunen, 1931; Holzman, 1937).

Social studies examinations revealed that political, military, and dynastic history were commonly taught and that students were expected to memorize and regurgitate that information on tests. Roscoe Baker, a graduate student at UW-Madison, submitted a master's thesis that evaluated civics and world history tests. These exams were administered in a high school with over 2000 students in a city with 350,000 people, which meant the school was in the city of Milwaukee (Baker, 1928).

The American government and problems tests revealed that memorizing key topics and events was the main aspect of the test, but there were application and higher-level thinking elements. Exams were largely fill-in-the-blank, matching, and multiple-choice. The fill-in-the-blanks were one-page essays where students identified missing terms to complete the correct passage. Many fill-in-the-blank items concerned identifying key laws, documents, or other facts relating to the American government. Some matching questions provided an opportunity for students to apply that information to historical and contemporary problems, despite their dependence on rote information. For instance, one of the questions had the term "isolation" paired with "the rejection of the League of Nations." Multiple-choice questions relied mostly on memorization, offered some opportunities to apply the information to historical or contemporary events, and focused on important initiatives, policies, laws, events, or documents. (Baker, 1928).

World history tests used the same format: fill-in-the-blanks, matching, and multiple choice. The fill-in-the-blank tests exclusively concerned military conflicts, political events, or ruling dynasties:

The three tasks that Peter the Great had to perform were __, __, and __. The ambition of Russia to seize Constantinople during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was thwarted by __. De Gama is important because of __. Magellan's voyage is important because of __ and __. Two causes of the Hundred Years' War were __ and __. At the close of this war, England was expelled from France, retaining only __. The Magna Carta provided for __

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and __. The Model Parliament was called for the purpose of __. The temporary eclipse of the English Parliament during the Tutor period was due to __ and __ The purpose of the Hanseatic League was __. Modern Prussia had its origins in __ and __. The Renaissance has its beginning in Italy because of __ and __. (Baker, 1928, p. 100)

Unlike civics, the world history matching and multiple-choice questions were mostly memorization-based. One section had ten questions with leaders and their respective corresponding countries. The same test had another ten-question section that included dates and a notable event. Matches included 1066 with the Battle of Hastings, 1215 with the Magna Carta, 1688 with the Bloodless Revolution, and 1776 with the Declaration of Independence. The multiple-choice questions also featured dynastic, military, and political history, with a significant focus on Western Europe (Baker, 1928).

Courses of study complement the information from the state reports and reveal the similarities in content and textbook-centric pedagogy. Courses of study for high school classes were less available and lacked detailed descriptions of the content and topics. Elementary and middle school courses of study, however, contained elaborate units and topics, daily lessons, textbook readings, exam questions, worksheets, and student activities and projects. For geographic and population representation within Wisconsin, the courses of study come from Madison, Shorewood, La Crosse, Bayfield County (a rural district), and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to form a representative sample.

The social studies course of study developed by the DPI's Office for K-8 schooling was somewhat contradictory. A report in 1929 called for including child psychology, fostering a sense of social responsibility, deviating from the memorization of facts and dates, and other progressive reforms. Teachers should, however, emphasize established knowledge and content and rely on textbooks, which contradicted progressive reforms (Callahan, 1929). Even the objectives had discrepancies. The general aims of all social studies were to develop the child's ability to participate in society, emphasize their membership in the global society, and instill a sense of responsibility towards their communities. Yet almost all the objectives for grades one through four and about half for grades five through eight focused on learning specific

knowledge. The DPI stated, "it must always be borne in mind that the chief aim of Social Science work is twofold: To impart information and to establish ideals and attitudes" (Callahan, 1929, p. 156). So, if students understood and learned the course content – mostly political, military, and biographical information – it nurtured the necessary attitudes and moral responsibilities to transform them into good citizens.

The recommended social studies content that appeared was standard in the US. Grades one through four were general social studies that focused on the home, the farm, and the city, with mentions of Native American and pioneer life and foreign countries and transportation. Grades five through eight stressed histories with American biography in fifth grade, American beginnings in Europe (ancient and medieval European history) in sixth, American history in seventh, and a split between civics and the history of Wisconsin for eighth. Grades one through four incorporated a combination of social studies disciplines, notably geography and history, while grades five through eight emphasized historical content. The sixth and seventh-grade history courses seemed to follow the pattern documented in the national surveys. Much of the content was major political moments, key people and founding fathers, military conflicts, and the development and expansion of the nation. (Callahan, 1929).

The impact of the DPI's recommendations varied by district, but Bayfield County schools, a rural district in the far north of the state, implemented their sequence and course of study. Whether intentional or not, it appeared Bayfield directly copied the course of study from the DPI report in creating their social studies classes. Bayfield likely designed its sixth-grade course around its textbook, *Dawn of American History* by William Nida, and used sections of the textbook to match the topics from the DPI's course of study. For instance, the section in Bayfield's course of study about the Crusades corresponded to pages 278-320 from Nida (Herbster State Graded School, 1923-1960; Callahan, 1929). Similarly, Bayfield's fourth-grade social studies recommendation was transportation and communication, the second half of the fourth-grade course from the DPI. Again, Bayfield designed its course around their two textbooks, *Building our Country* and *Adventuring in Young America* by Anderson McGuire and Edna Phillips, directly copied the content, topics,

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and units from the DPI course of study, then corresponded the content with specific chapters from the two texts (Herbster State Graded School, 1923-1960; Callahan, 1929). Apart from the content and matching textbook sections, this was the extent of Bayfield's course of study; students probably read the assigned textbook passages and recited that information or knowledge for their social studies instruction (Herbster State Graded School, 1923-1960).

A Course of study from a small city, La Crosse, demonstrated similarities in content and teaching methods but ignored the DPI. Geography instruction from La Crosse's course of studies highlighted similarities between the districts. Fourth through sixth-grade geography in La Crosse (1926) covered the physical geography of the US, Australia, Latin America, and Europe. Each section and topic corresponded to passages from a textbook, typically fifty to two hundred pages of recommended reading, which appeared to function as the main source of information and guide for classroom instruction. Examination questions asked students to match physical locations such as cities, mountains, and rivers to their respective countries or states. Limited opportunities for students to apply information to different historical or social questions appeared, but some included "New York is the largest city in the United States why isn't Saint Louis?" and "why does South America export all supplies or surplus raw products and import manufactured goods?" (La Crosse Board of Education, 1926, Geography Section). It is unclear if the answers were part of textbook readings or if students had to apply the information to answer the questions.

Other courses of study from Madison and Shorewood schools demonstrated a more progressive approach to social studies. Like Bayfield, La Crosse, and Wausau, Shorewood, and Madison emphasized geography in the elementary grades, specifically the memorization of different geographic regions and peoples. However, both districts favored fusion coursework and required students to mobilize their knowledge and skills "to increase the child's understanding of the World about him" and "develop understanding and appreciation of the relations of people to each other and to the world in which they live" (Madison Public Schools Supervisor of Curriculum, 1932-1937, Box 1; Shorewood Schools Board of Education, 1933, p. 331). The curriculums featured more explicit critical thinking questions that called for pupils to

understand how and why the physical environment shaped cultures, economics, and society. There were also more examples of projects, activities, and test questions that encouraged students to apply the information they learned to a question or problem. Madison's course of study even included books from history reformers, such as Beard (1932) and the American Historical Association (1934) in their bibliography of recommended readings. However, it was unclear how those works explicitly appeared in the document, since most reformers ignored elementary social studies. While Madison and Shorewood incorporated memorization questions and textbook exercises, there was more emphasis on critical thinking questions, projects, activities, and calls for students to apply the knowledge they learned (Madison Public Schools Supervisor of Curriculum, 1932-1937; Shorewood Schools Board of Education, 1933).

Wisconsin schools mirrored the national trends in social studies and history education and highlighted the interest and challenges with progressive reforms. Similar to schools throughout the nation, progressive reforms did not commonly materialize in Wisconsin classrooms and schools, as teachers incorporated textbook-centric pedagogies and recitation-style assessments. Wisconsin schools offered many social studies classes and electives, but civics, an iteration of European history, and US history were the dominant subjects. Moreover, much of the content stressed memorizing the structures and functions of the American government and dynastic, military, and political histories, with limited opportunities for social history or higher-level thinking. The DPI and districts like Madison and Shorewood attempted to incorporate progressive reforms such as child-centric psychology and the application of history to contemporary problems. However, the lack of specificity about how to incorporate these practices, coupled with the emphasis on textbook pedagogies highlighted the difficulties and contradictions of reform.

Looking Beyond the Classroom: Social and Economic Challenges to Social Studies Reform

Qualitative and quantitative evidence from the national and local level demon-

strated that most reforms failed to appear in schools and that teaching practices and content were consistent. Yet, it does not explain why reforms were stifled and why instruction was similar. The broader context of the interwar era, notably the growth in secondary enrollments, the Great Depression, the differences in teacher education programs, and the politicization of history helps illuminate why these phenomena occurred.

Student enrollments rapidly expanded during the first half of the twentieth century because of wage increases, child labor and truancy laws, the Great Depression, and the expansion of public schooling (Reese, 2011; Tyack, 1974). From 1920 to 1940, school enrollments increased by over 20% from approximately twenty-three million to twenty-eight million students. High schools experienced a 225% increase from two and a half million to seven million students. The teacher force kept pace with the enrollment increases and experienced a growth of 20%, 700,000 to 900,000 teachers, which helped shrink average classroom sizes from thirty-two to twenty-nine pupils, still considerably high. (Snyder, 1993). Historians of education David Angus, Jeffery Mirel, and Karen Graves maintained that the increased enrollments triggered an important shift in the secondary curriculum. During the Progressive Era (1880s - 1910s) high schools in largely urban areas typically offered a vocational, liberal arts, or college preparatory course track. These scholars argued that the ballooning enrollments popularized a general curriculum track, which affected the opportunity for progressive reforms. Instead of integrating fresh content or new teaching techniques, teachers and administrators designed courses and instruction to reach the broader and expanding student body perceived to have differing intellectual abilities, which led to more elective classes. (Angus and Mirel, 1999; Graves, 1998).

The Great Depression prompted a sharp increase in high school enrollments because teenagers could not find steady employment (Tyack et.al, 1984). High school enrollments soared 33%, from four and a half to six million students from 1929 to 1934. School financing was also severely impacted. School expenditures declined from approximately 2.3 to 1.7 billion dollars, the first and only decrease throughout the 20th century. The teaching force experienced a decline of six thousand teachers and a 15% reduction in salary. The diminished teaching force and rising enrollments generated larger

classrooms, with a modest bump from 30 to 31 pupils on average (Snyder, 1993). Expenditures, the teaching staff, and classroom sizes rebounded to pre-depression levels by the end of the decade but did not produce an atmosphere conducive for progressive education reforms. Teacher education programs were also not accommodating to progressive social studies reforms. Social Studies researcher Edgar Dawson noted that most teaching training candidates completed studies in discipline-specific departments such as history or political science instead of training in multiple subjects. Students supplemented those requirements with teaching methods or education classes, which became secondary to their program (Dawson, 1922). It is impossible to determine how these teaching programs shaped classroom practices, but it does offer insights. It helps to explain why teachers relied on textbooks. Teacher candidates received a narrow content focus and likely lacked the breadth to teach the immense amount of required content. Instead of trying to learn new content and potentially another discipline, new teachers used the established materials and textbook supplements. Moreover, because the required coursework was mostly in disciplinary content, not in teaching methods, this likely impacted teacher candidates' ability to incorporate the pedagogical changes that social studies reformers desired.

History reforms also faced significant political hurdles during the Interwar era, notably strong nativist sentiment and the Rugg textbook scandal. Zimmerman (2022) notes that European immigrant groups and African Americans wanted representation in U.S. history textbooks throughout the interwar era. These groups did not seek to negate the dominant historical narratives of American progress and exceptionalism, rather they wanted representation within those accounts. Their attempts encountered resistance from nativists, particularly Southern white supremacist groups who contended these stories disputed the "pure" and "national" history of the US (Zimmerman, 2022, p.33). Similarly, this same nativist alliance sought to ban history textbooks that offered sympathetic or positive views of British history. They contend textbooks with pro-British sentiment ignored the uniqueness and exceptionalism of the United States, focused more on British superiority, and downplayed the importance and significance of the American Revolution (Zimmerman, 2022). The anti-British sentiment picked up significant press,

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so much so, that Wisconsin politicians attempted to pass legislation banning pro-British textbooks in their schools (Heckel, 1923).

Social studies and history instruction were further politicized during the Rugg textbook scandal throughout the mid-1930s to early 1940s. Harold Rugg, an education professor and social reconstructionist, authored a series of textbooks that explicitly highlighted how the present developed from the past, had students explore social problems rather than simply memorizing information, and promoted social histories. Throughout the early 1930s, Rugg's textbooks enjoyed considerable success and were commonly on bestselling textbook lists. However, his luck soon ran out. Rugg's use of "collectivist" and "socialist" language made his textbooks a target. Conservative and anti-New Deal organizations including the National Association of Manufacturers and the American Legion and notable individuals such as the Forbes family. These individuals and groups launched salvo after salvo against Rugg and his textbooks. The public campaign against Rugg and his books ultimately led to various attempts to bar his textbooks from classrooms, and in some instances, led to mass book burnings. The controversy ended as America entered World War II, but both instances highlighted the political challenges of implementing social studies and history reform. (Laats, 2015; Evans, 2004; Zimmerman, 2022).

Conclusion: Echoes of the Past

During the interwar era, a slew of progressive reforms emerged that sought to adapt history and social studies instruction to contemporary social problems and new historical methodologies. However, these reform movements were stifled, as most teachers relied on memorization, textbooks, and political, military, and dynastic history for classroom pedagogies and content. Despite some variations within social studies, ancient history, European history, civics, and US history dominated the course sequences. The course titles and topics often fluctuated, but the content remained markedly similar, and the examinations routinely asked students to recall notable events or individuals.

The social and economic challenges of the interwar era, specifically the burgeoning school enrollments, the economic impacts of the Great Depression, and the political nature of social studies all hampered schools' ability to incorporate progressive reforms.

Currently, attempts to reform history and social studies curricula in the United States encounter countless and immense obstacles. The US still does not have mandated national history standards, as each state sets its own standards. Moreover, the most recent bill in the mid-1990s to create national standards encountered a bitter bi-partisan divide, which culminated in an infamous 99-1 defeat in the US Senate (Nash et al., 2000). This lack of national standards creates notable differences in history and social studies curricula. For instance, a 2020 *New York Times* article highlighted the differences between California and Texas, a liberal and conservative state with the two largest textbook markets, in their adoption of history content standards and textbook usage, as each offered drastically different depictions of slavery, civil rights, and other topics in American history (Goldstein, 2020). Similarly, several states discussed banning the 1619 project, which highlighted the centrality of racism and slavery in the United States and documented policies and practices of systemic discrimination (Serwer, 2019). This lack of national standards, the legal reality of state and local control, and the political nature of history and social studies make reforms challenging.

Despite the politicization and lack of national standards, social studies instruction in the US shares many commonalities. Levstik (2008) compiled research that considers classroom content, pedagogies, and assessment to document what happens in classrooms. For the most part, secondary students took a similar course sequence: world geography, world history, American history, and Civics. In response to a survey on textbooks, Wade's (1993) and Robert's (2014) research indicated that textbook instruction is the dominant instructional method in history courses. Moreover, new research indicated elementary social studies suffered under increased state-mandated testing and was replaced by additional reading and math instruction (Levstik 2008). Despite the overreliance on textbooks and reduction of social studies in the elementary grades, regional and state reforms provide some schools and educators opportunities for innovative approaches to education. This often included newer

curricular resources like primary sources or advanced pedagogical methods that have students analyze and interpret rather than memorize information (Levstik 2008). In sum, Levstik (2008) carefully reminds readers that "on the surface little appears to have changed in social studies classrooms, patterns of instruction persist with textbooks still predominant." However, "case studies make it clear that interesting and exciting things can and do happen, but there seems to be little institutional support to ensure more students experience this kind of instruction" (p. 60).

Ultimately, these contemporary debates and challenges over social studies and history education are not new but are rather blips on a century-long continuum of reform. Let me be clear, this is not to say that reforms are futile so educators should abandon them. Rather, this article demonstrates that the debates, challenges, and opportunities for history and social studies reform are perennial. Currently, American students and teachers grapple with questions of discrimination and slavery in the founding of the US, which parallels the challenges with teaching subversive and collectivist ideas from the Rugg era. Just as in the past, history and social studies teachers typically rely on the textbook to help their students memorize information that they reproduce on exams. Hopefully, educators can look to the past to know what reforms are possible and have worked, but also understand the struggles of adaptation and devise strategies to mitigate these challenges.

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Values and History Education. The social representation on historical significance of Teacher Training students

Valores y enseñanza de la historia. La representación social de relevancia histórica en docentes en formación

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Abstract

The teaching of history involves a process of content selection that implies educational purposes, while the treatment of characters and events involves processes of creation of meanings that include emotions and values. Therefore, this paper analyses the social representation of prospective teachers of Primary Education on historical significance of universal history to seek which values are associated with the indicated contents. To this purpose, a non-experimental descriptive mixed design has been chosen. The study involved 202 students of the Primary Education programs at the universities of Murcia and Barcelona in the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic years. The questionnaire has been designed with an

associative approach by means of words-stimuli that 5 characters or events could evoke. The characteristics of what is considered historically relevant by the participants show an image shared with other studies, both national and in the European and Latin American context, in which an androcentric, political and sociocentric vision predominates. In addition, the analysis of the values associated with characters and events shows a predominance of the idea of progress (advancement) as well as that of achievement, which correspond mostly to current values, and that can be traced independently of the historical context of characters and events. What is outlined in this work can serve to rethink strategies for history teaching where more emphasis is placed on multiperspective, a greater weight in the contextualization of historical characters and events, and in giving voice to characters of history who have traditionally been silenced to highlight dominant values more typical of contemporaneity than of true weight. meaning and sense of past events.

Keyword: History education, social representation, historical significance, teacher training, Historical Culture, values.

Resumen

La enseñanza de la historia conlleva un proceso de selección de contenidos que implica de por sí qué finalidades educativas se pretenden, al tiempo que el tratamiento de los personajes y acontecimientos involucran procesos de creación de significados que incluyen emociones y valores. Por ello, en este trabajo se analiza la representación social de docentes en formación sobre los hechos y personajes relevantes de la historia universal con la intención de ver qué valores predominan asociadas a los contenidos indicados. Con tal fin, se ha optado por un diseño mixto no experimental de corte descriptivo. En el estudio han participado 202 estudiantes del Grado en Educación Primaria de las universidades de Murcia y Barcelona en los cursos académicos 2020-2021 y 2021-2022. El cuestionario se ha diseñado con un enfoque asociativo por medio de palabras-estímulos que 5 personajes o eventos pudieran evocar. Las características de lo que se considera relevante históricamente por parte de los participantes muestran una imagen compartida con otros estudios tanto nacionales como del contexto europeo y latinoamericano, en los que predomina una visión androcéntrica, política y sociocéntrica. Además, el análisis de los valores asociados a los personajes y hechos muestra un predominio de la idea de progreso (avance) así como la de logro, las cuales corresponden en gran medida a valores actuales y que se pueden rastrear independientemente del contexto histórico de personajes y hechos. Lo esbozado en este trabajo puede servir para replantear estrategias para la enseñanza de la historia donde se haga más hincapié en la multiperspectiva, un mayor peso en la contextualización de los personajes y acontecimientos históricos, y en dar voz a personajes de la historia que tradicionalmente han sido silenciados en aras a resaltar unos valores dominantes más propios de la contemporaneidad que del verdadero peso, significado y sentido de los acontecimientos pasados.

Palabras clave: Enseñanza de la historia, representación social, relevancia histórica, formación del profesorado, Cultura histórica, valores.

Introduction

The selection of school history content has always been a contentious issue, but the lack of specific content in Law 3/2020 amending Organic Law 2/2006 on Education in Spain has attracted the attention of the media, particularly those who warned of the potential loss of significant historical milestones that have shaped the country's collective identity. Additionally, the Royal Academy of History (hereinafter, in Spanish, RAH) has expressed concern about the disproportionate emphasis on contemporary history and the dearth of historical content, particularly in comparison to sociological, political, and economic studies. The RAH has also advocated for a clear distinction between history and memory, emphasizing the scientific rigor of history while acknowledging the subjective and evolving nature of memory (RAH, 2022).

The debate about what history content to teach masks, in reality, what educational aims are being pursued. However, has the teaching of history ever been dissociated or indifferent to the socio-cultural context in which it is taught and/or consumed? What selection has been made so far of what was considered relevant in history, and what meanings have been given to it? In light of these considerations, the issue of analysing the perspective of future primary school teachers in Spain on what is deemed relevant in history emerges as a crucial point of inquiry. This is particularly significant given that history constitutes the inaugural stage in which its significance begins to be reflected in the curriculum, with potential implications that may arise from this. In order to address this issue, an investigation was conducted to analyse the construction of historical significance among future teachers at the Spanish universities of Murcia and Barcelona. This was done with the aim of verifying the degree of coincidence in this respect and its possible implications.

Considering the aforementioned concerns, we have put forth the following specific objectives:

1. To identify the characteristics of the historical figures, facts, and events deemed relevant by the participants (trainee teachers).

2. To describe the meanings attributed to the historical figures, facts, and events most frequently mentioned by the participants.

Literature review/ State of the art

The analysis of the social meaning of the contents to be studied is often overlooked in the approach of didactic designs for the teaching of history. One possible explanation for this discrepancy is that there is a dichotomy between what is considered to be objective, and which must be confined to formal education. This distinction can be observed in the commitment to the teaching of historical thinking (Gómez, Ortuño & Miralles, 2018) and the consumption of history outside the educational sphere (Seixas, 2016). However, upon entering formal education, students are not free of historical knowledge, as they are conditioned by the historical culture they possess, which is determined by the way in which the group interprets, transmits, and transforms the past. This historical culture is used for the purposes of group cohesion and identity ties (Grever & Adriaansen, 2017). Consequently, the school itself (teachers, educational laws, among others) is not exempt from its own historical culture, which serves as an instrument for the generation of this identity element. Consequently, over recent years, there has been a growing interest in understanding how students construct meanings from historical content, including processes, characters, and so on. This interest extends beyond the view that teaching the historical method fosters critical thinking about historical knowledge (Epstein & Peck, 2019; Levesque & Croteau, 2020). Indeed, research in this area is already underway in Spain. For instance, studies such as those by Arias & Egea (2019), Ibagón, Maquilón & Miralles (2021) and Rivero, Navarro & Aso (2022) have identified the characteristics of the most relevant historical figures for trainee teachers and secondary school students. In the meantime, studies such as those by Mugueta (2016), Ortega & Pagés (2017), Rivero & Pelegrín (2019) or Ortuño, Molina & Maquilón (2024) have explored the meanings of historical events through the identification of clichés or values, thereby opening the door to understanding and influencing the socio-cultural context in the learning of history.

This contextual study helps to understand how meaningful learning of the subject is generated, since this context affects the meaning given to history insofar as it opens up the possibility of bringing these contents of the past closer to the use that is made of them to justify the present and how we

want the future to be (Fronza, 2016). A shared vision of the past by a group can become a social representation, insofar as these are carriers of collective memory. Consequently, the analysis of social representations of history is pertinent to competence education, given that the utilisation of the past is linked to common sense knowledge, which "guides individuals in the immediate context, enabling their adaptation to the physical world and their integration into social interactions, questioning membership of different groups" (Delfino, Sosa, Bobowik & Zubieta, 2020, p. 70).

The context of teaching history in schools provides an ideal setting for the intertwined teaching of methodology and the analysis of the meanings attached to it, which collectively facilitate the generation of more critical thinking about the nature of the self and the management of the past (Straub, 2005; Seixas, 2012 & 2016; Clark & Peck, 2018). This necessitates the integration of didactic approaches that facilitate the identification, analysis and interpretation of historical processes, events, and characters (first-order concepts typical of master narratives). Additionally, it requires the introduction of ontological elements that enable the questioning of the nature of the subject matter, the rationale behind its study and the intended applications (Alvén, 2021). Nevertheless, these concepts, which are referred to as third order concepts, continue to be overlooked. These concepts involve meaning-making processes and include emotions and ideologies (Edling, Löfström & Ammert, 2021). Awareness of this would facilitate self-reflection and the comprehension of the values that condition present actions and future decisions, which are also discernible in learned historical content (Spanget, 2013). It is thus necessary to reconsider whether the values associated with historical teachings should include or promote values of human dignity, universalism, and commitment to nature and to each other. These values can also be found in the more rigorous history that we wish to demonstrate (Rüsen, 2012). Furthermore, this entails elucidating the way our socio-cultural context is projected onto the past, a process that frequently gives rise to resistance to change in our present actions. In light of the climate crisis and the unsustainable concept of unlimited economic growth, there is an urgent need to educate new generations on the necessity to rethink our relationship with the environment and with each other. The prevailing anthropocentric vision of the past, which has

historically separated human life and nature, must be reconsidered in light of the interconnectivity of these entities (Nordgren, 2021). In reality, human life is inextricably linked to the natural environment, upon which our life projects are dependent.

Methodology

In this research, we have opted for a non-experimental design with a qualitative and quantitative data analysis method. The combination of narratives and statistics in content analysis is a powerful approach in social research, especially in education, as it allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter (O'Connor, 2019). In order to analyse the open-ended responses, a descriptive phenomenological design was employed, which is typical of the qualitative tradition. This approach allows for the identification of specific issues by searching for the meanings present in participants' responses (Kim, Sefcik & Bradway, 2017).

Research sample

The selection of participants was intentional as it allows us to capture the vision of history that future school actors will bring and use to act or make decisions in their classrooms (McCrum, 2013). This group of participants can be described as having similar characteristics, including students in non-compulsory stages, with intellectual concerns and basic historical training.

It should be noted that, although social representations are studied through the interrogation of individuals, the subject of the research is not so much the individual as the social group. This results in the intentional selection of the sample, as the socio-cultural context in which the subjects and groups develop was necessary for it to be as coincidental as possible (Gutiérrez-Vidrio, 2019).

The present study involved the collaboration of 202 students from two Spanish public universities (University of Murcia and University of Bar-

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celona), in the years 2020 and 2021. The mean age of the participants was 20.54 years (SD = 1.96), with an age range between 19 and 26 years. The majority of participants were women (168, 83.16%), with 44 men (21.78%). Regarding the academic year in which the students were enrolled at the time the survey was administered, 133 students (65.84%) were in their second year of their degree programme, while 69 students (34.15%) were in their second year. The data pertaining to the participants is presented in Table I.

TABLA I. Distribution of participants according to the gender of the respondents, origin of the university and year.

	2020		2021	
	University of Murcia	**University of Barcelona**	**University of Murcia**	**University of Barcelona**
MEN	13	7	20	4
WOMEN	31	42	40	45

Source: Compiled by the authors

Research instruments

In order to obtain the information, an ad hoc questionnaire was created, in which the participants were given the freedom to name five people or events in the history of humanity that they considered significant and relevant (positively or negatively). As Abric (2001) asserts, the questionnaire, in contrast to the interview, enables the introduction of quantitative perspectives, which facilitates the organisation of responses and standardisation to reduce the subjective aspect. This is achieved through the standardisation of the expressions of the surveys through the themes addressed, order of the themes, modalities of the responses, and so forth. In order to obtain meanings, the questionnaire was designed with an associative approach, with the intention of discovering the structure of a semantic map through the induction of a word-stimulus that the character or event in question could evoke. Despite its apparent simplicity, as Gutiérrez-Vidrio (2016) notes, this strategy of associating a word with an object (in this case a figure or historical event) involves a high de-

gree of abstraction. Furthermore, its spontaneous and less controlled nature facilitates much quicker and easier access to the constituent elements of the semantic universe of the object of study. This type of instrument is suitable for the study of social representations of history (Liu & Hilton, 2005; Zubieta & Barreiro, 2014). The adjectives, nouns or verbs in their infinitive form used by the respondents have been determined by the participants' own freedom of choice, which has resulted in a wide variety of forms and terms being used. In order to facilitate the analysis process, the information has been condensed by summarising the adjectives into a single word that encompasses all the variants (nouns, adjectives or verbs) used by the participants (see Annex). Although the term "example" is the sole item in this annex, the frequency of all the variations has been considered when determining the digit that represents the repetition of this quality associated with a character or event (referred to as a "case" in the research).

Procedure

For the analysis of the data, we employed the qualitative analysis software NVivo 1.6, which allowed us to integrate qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques simultaneously. To this end, we constructed three large families of codes pertaining to the subject who made the assessment with respect to the object of the representation, the attributes of the object and the assessment of the object itself. With these, we proceeded to two types of operations necessary for the analysis of the representation: firstly, we proceeded to the construction of the objects of the representation (in this case, processes, events, or historical characters) by means of the identification of typologies within them. Secondly, we used socio-demographic information codes of the participants (gender, university of origin and year of participation). The historical characters and events have been classified as cases, to which four attributes have been added (see Tables III and IV). The geographical and temporal coding has been carried out in accordance with conventional criteria: the traditional periodisation by centuries and the action during the life of the

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characters.

In regard to the second operation (value projection), the appellatives have been coded in accordance with the theory of universal values as proposed by Schwartz and Boehnke (2004). This theory posits that values are conceived as "beliefs linked to emotions that act as a guide for actions and judgments, which can be ordered by order of priority and importance, forming the value system of each individual" (Páez, 2014; 136). It is important to note that these values can be considered motivational types, as each value reflects the goals and objectives to be pursued. This reinforces the idea that social representation allows us to understand the meaning of what is considered relevant in history, as the participants identify which values motivated the characters to do what they did and for which they are worthy of being remembered and studied. The Annex contains a list of qualities associated with the values, while Table II presents the definition proposed by Schwartz and Boehnke (2004).

TABLE II. Definition of values by Schwartz & Boehnke (2004).

Self-Direction	Independent thought and action, choice, creation, or exploration
Benevolence	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the well-being of all people and nature
Conformity	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the well-being of all people and nature
Stimulation	Novelty, attraction and change in life
Hedonism	Pleasure or sensory gratification for oneself
Achievement	Personal success by demonstrating competence in accordance with social standards
Power	Social status and prestige, control or domination over other people or resources
Security	The security, harmony and stability of society and relationships, as well as those of the self.
Tradition	Respect for, commitment to and acceptance of the traditions and ideas offered by a culture or religion
Universalism	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection for the well-being of all people and nature

Source: Schwartz & Boehnke, 2004

In order to analyse these data, it is necessary to consider that the number of options available to respondents to freely choose characters or events was 5 (with their corresponding value associated with that choice), which translates into 1,015 entries to analyse, with their respective qualifiers. If we focus on the total number of registered cases only, the figure rises to 232 cases (characters or events named without counting their repetitions). The data enabled us to proceed with the research, as it demonstrated a high degree of saturation of the responses, with 23% of the possible cases covered in the sample. This indicated the existence of specific objects on which to symbolise what was considered relevant in the historical sphere.

Results

With respect to the first objective of the study, as we can see in tables III and IV, the responses by groups attached to a university, as well as the gender of the respondents, do not differ in terms of the type of figure selected (mostly political military), their geographical affiliation or their gender. Although participants were given the possibility of choosing characters from any period and geography of the world because of their relevance to the history of mankind, the answers are mostly linked to Europe and Spain, following the pattern of the curricula of the compulsory educational stages. Likewise, 49.6% of the personalities chosen are male, compared to 22% of female characters and 28.4% who name historical events or processes. The chronology of the historical characters and events is mostly from the 20th century (48.7%), to which, if we add the percentages of events and characters from the 19th century (10.3%) and the 21st century (10.8%), we can see an overwhelming majority of contemporary history over the rest of the historical periods. It is worth noting that women select more female characters than do male respondents (see Table V): 36.3% of female respondents select historical characters, compared to 16.4% of male respondents, who do so in 16.4% of cases. Finally, there is a high coincidence in the characters and events shown in the questionnaires of both universities and different years (Figure I).

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TABLE III. Typology of characters/events by university

	Event	Politician/military	Thinker/Philosopher	Scientist	Activist	Artist	Technology	Writer	Adventurer	Religious person	Political ideologies	Businessperson	Sportsperson	Total
UB	31	43	7	23	9	16	2	8	2	4	2	2	1	150
UMU	47	39	8	17	7	13	1	7	2	3	1	3	2	150
Total	61	67	11	26	11	24	2	12	3	5	2	5	3	232

Source: Compiled by the authors

TABLE IV. Geography of figures/events by university

	Europe	Spain	World	USA	Asia	Africa	Latin America	Total
UB	55	34	16	26	6	5	7	149
UMU	54	35	22	28	6	2	4	150
Total (exclusive)	78	59	26	45	9	6	9	232

Source: Compiled by the authors

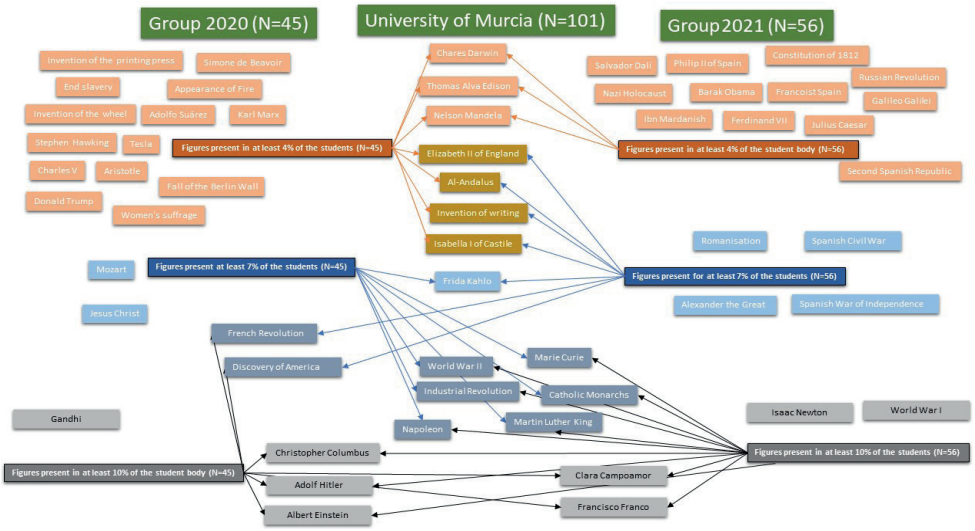
TABLE V. Typology of figures according to the sex of respondents

	Character = Woman	Character= Man	Total
MEN	13	66	79
WOMEN	48	84	132
Total (exclusive)	51	115	166

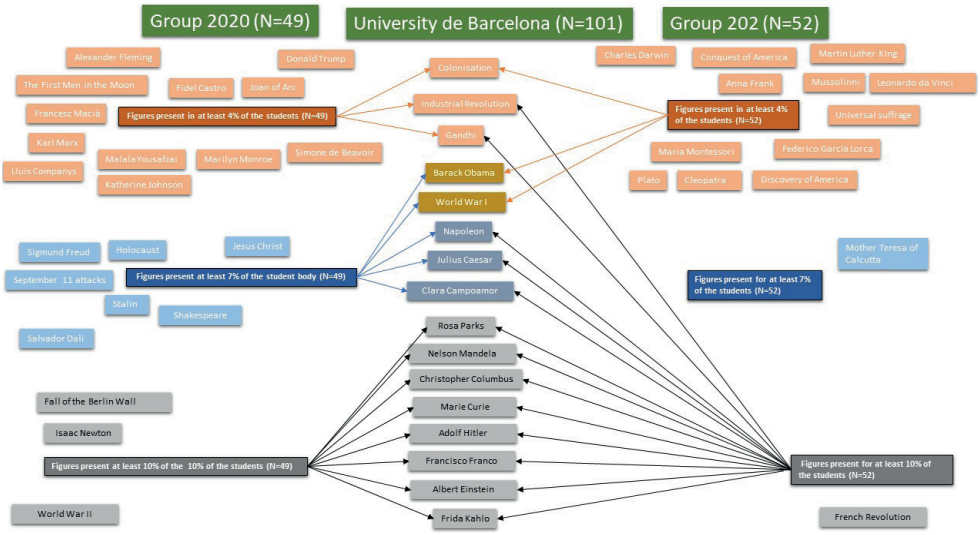
Source: Compiled by the authors

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FIGURE I. Most cited characters and events by university and year



Source: Compiled by the authors



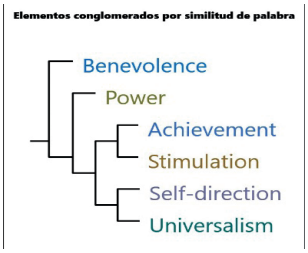
Source: Compiled by the authors

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In addition to these considerations, we are also interested in the selection process itself and the meaning that is ascribed to it. The initial premise is that the ten values outlined by Schwartz and Boehnke (2004) can be differentiated into three distinct levels. These are presented in Table II. Firstly, the most frequently repeated values are those of change/stimulation, achievement/merit, moral valuation (goodness/evilness) and power. Secondly, and to a lesser extent, there are mentions of values related to the idea of transcendence of the individual and the idea of self-direction/freedom. Finally, values such as security, order, tradition, and hedonism are mentioned only marginally (Annex).

However, as will be demonstrated below, it is of interest to note that these values are often combined, and associations are established between them. Indeed, considering Pearson's correlation index according to the similarity of words in the coding process (see Figure II), connections emerge that allow us to obtain a more complete understanding of what the historical characters and events embody for the participants.

FIGURE II. Dendrogram with the association of values according to the similarity of words in the coding.



Source: Compiled by the authors

In order to analyse the meanings attributed to the historical figures and events selected by the participants, we will focus on the values that have been most frequently repeated and the qualifiers associated with them. We will exclude those values that have a marginal presence (security, order, tradition, and hedonism), although it is true that, on occasions, the latter appear related to other predominant values.

Change/ stimulation

The idea of change/stimulation is one of the first to be associated with 'relevant'. The adjectives most frequently used to describe this idea are Discovery, Courage, Revolution, and Innovation (these adjectives have a frequency of 148 out of 179 for the total number of adjectives associated with change/ stimulation). And associated with these adjectives are historical figures such as Christopher Columbus, Marie Curie, Frida Kahlo and the French and Industrial Revolutions (see Figure III). The values associated with these characters, archetypes of change, correlate with the idea of Achievement (personal merit), meaning, therefore, that change implies progress. Not only that but change and progress also go hand in hand with the idea of individuality shown in the value of self-direction. There are several examples:

Reg. 139 qualifies Columbus as an important character in history "since he discovered America [value=Stimulation] and was a step [understood as progress] in history [value= Achievement]".

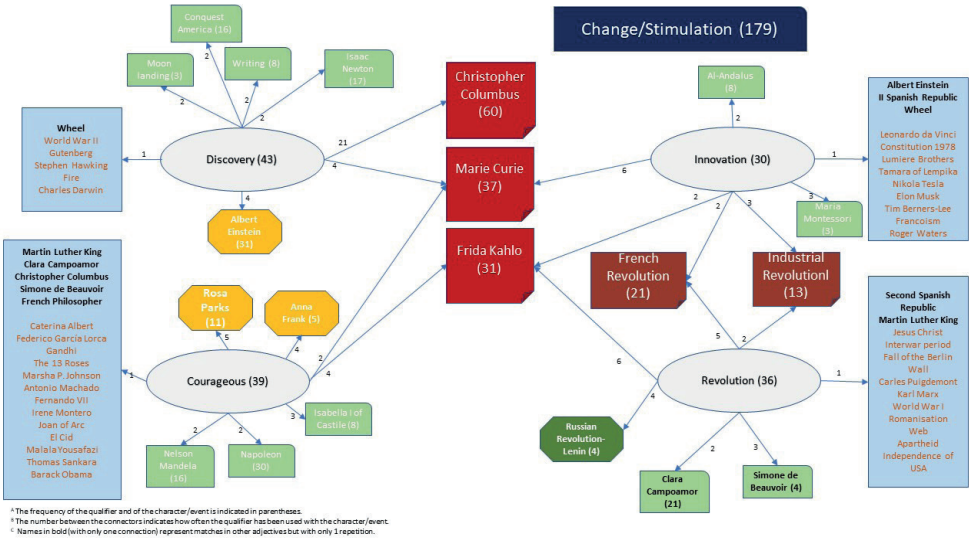
Reg. 148, also highlights Columbus, whom he describes as "ambitious [value=Achievement] because he wanted [value=Self-direction] to discover beyond what was known and to break the rules of that society [value=Stimulation/Change]".

Reg. 248 cites Einstein, whom they describe as "intelligent [value=achievement] because he made great scientific breakthroughs (theory of relativity). His motivation was to make great scientific discoveries [Value=-Stimulation/Change] that would help us understand how the world works".

Reg. 721, cites Marie Curie, whom they described as "revolutionary [value=Stimulation/Change] because at the time in which she lived I think she was very daring and thanks to her daring she managed to be valued [value= Achievement] by other people who were involved in the same thing as her".

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FIGURE III. Adjectives and figures associated with the value Change/stimulation



[a] The frequency of the qualifier and of the character/event is indicated in parentheses.
[b] The number between the connectors indicates how often the qualifier has been used with the character/event.
[c] Names in bold (with only one connection) represent matches in other adjectives but with only 1 repetition.

Source: Compiled by the authors

Furthermore, the stimulation/change value leads us to highlight that events involving a high degree of violence, such as the arrival of Europeans in America, the French and Russian revolutions, the World Wars or American independence appear as elements of change associated with values of Achievement, such as the idea of progress, freedom, or transcendence. These events are seen as traumatic elements, indeed, but with a result that allows social progress (also associated with values of universalism or transcendence of the individual). Again, there are several examples:

Reg. 888 identifies the Russian Revolution as "revolution" [value=stimulation/change], and justifies it as the "revolution par excellence, total unity [value=universalism] to achieve a cause".

Reg. 857, indicates the French Revolution as "necessary [value=universalism] for all the positive consequences it brought about [value=stimulation/change; = Achievement], not only in France but throughout the world, in spite of the brutality]".

Achievement

Another of the most repeated values is that of achievement, associated with appellatives such as ambition, genius, progress and intelligent, which cover 66% of the total number of adjectives used for this value. In this case, the most frequently cited characters are from the world of science, except for Napoleon and Columbus. As for the reading of the adjectives used, the message seems to follow a pattern in the respondents: male scientists are basically described for their qualities, while female scientists are associated more with the idea of social change (Figure IV). An example is found in Reg. 240, who, when describing Einstein, describes him as "intelligent" [value=achievement] "because he developed theories that have been very important for science". However, Marie Curie presents a connotation more as a symbol of vindication of women than of her own value as a scientist (also cited), it being significant that, together with intelligent, her adjectives go more towards the term of progress, revolution, innovation. Examples of this are:

Reg. 720, describes her as "innovation" [value=stimulation/change] because she "seems to him to be an empowered woman, very advanced [value= achievement] in her time and for that reason she is innovative".

Reg. 699, describes her as "determined" [value=self-directed] because "she sacrificed a lot for her work and for science. She did not give up even if she suffered for it".

It is also interesting to note that only two men named Marie Curie (5% of men) as a relevant figure, while 35 women selected Marie Curie (21% of women). In the case of Albert Einstein, of the 31 respondents who chose him, 25 were female and 6 male, which means that 15% of males identified him as relevant, while females accounted for 15.4%.

Another interesting idea shown in the value associated with Achievement is the idea that social advancement is technological development. For examples, see:

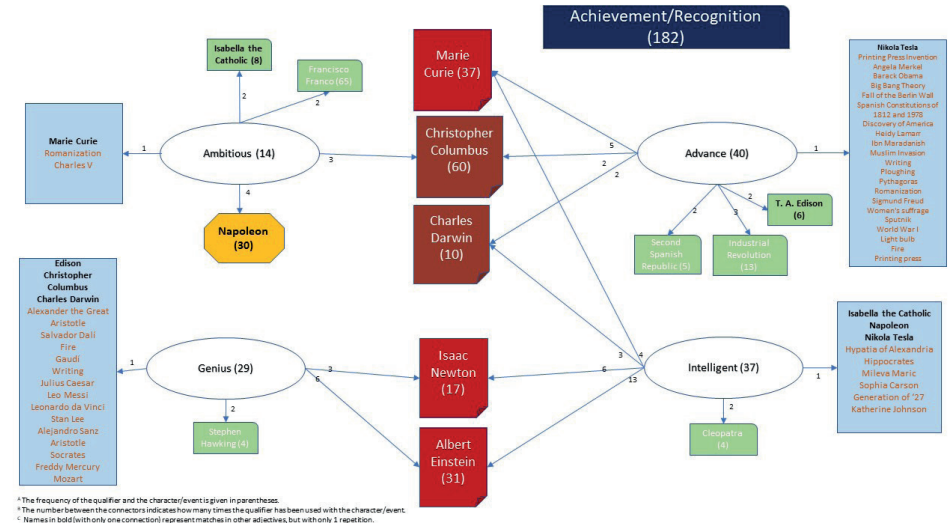
Reg. 878, which, in highlighting the Industrial Revolution, qualifies it as "advancement" [value= Achievement] "because it enabled a total change [value=Stimulation/change] in societies and people's lives".

Reg. 884, also describes the Industrial Revolution as "progress because it meant being able to achieve many more rights [value=universalism], discov-

ering [value=stimulation/change] new ways of working".

Reg. 882, qualifies the Industrial Revolution as "innovation [value=-stimulation/change] because it meant the beginning of a new era, in which great advances [value=achievement] were made in different fields (economic, social, technological...)".

FIGURE IV Historical figures and events associated with the achievement/ recognition value



Source: Compiled by the authors

Benevolence

In the case of adjectives associated with the idea of moral evaluation of historical figures or events, negative appellatives such as murderer, evil or cruel stand out (115 times out of 161), and all of them with a strong association to two historical figures: Adolf Hitler and Francisco Franco (Figure V).

In contrast to what happens with other values, we can see how moral evaluations revolve around 20th century events and personalities still very much alive in the collective memory and with evident manifestations in the present. It is striking that, with regard to the two aforementioned figures, there

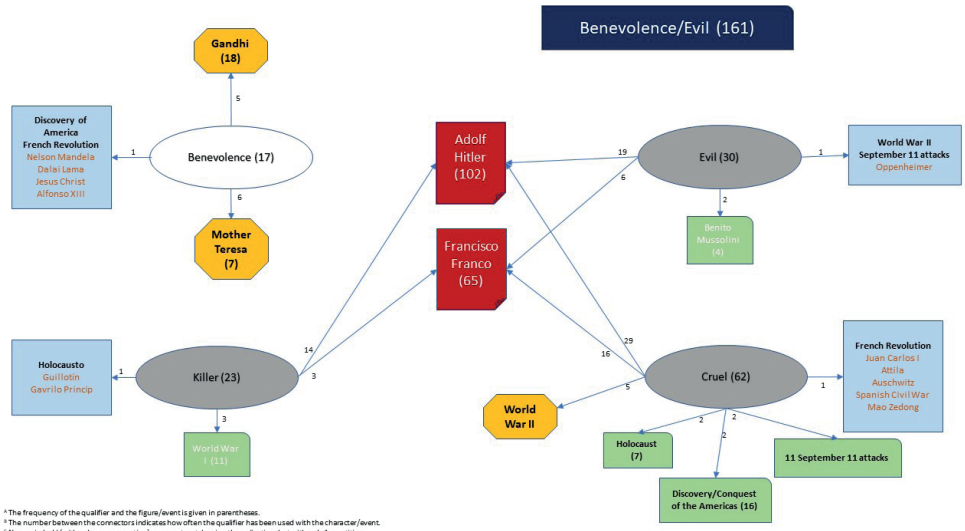
is a difference in perception on the part of the participants. In the case of Hitler, the association with evil is manifest: 60% of the mentions associate them with qualifications such as evil, murderous, or cruel. An example of this is Reg. 469, which describes him as "racist, [value=universalism] because he carried out a lot of atrocities [value=benevolence/evilness] against the Jewish and black population".

However, in the case of Franco, only 34% associate him with evil. This is the case of Reg. 332, who describes him as "cruelty [value=benevolence/evil] because he killed a lot of people and showed cruelty in every action". The appellatives intended for Franco are not applied to the nature of the subject, but to the way in which he exercised power: Reg. 304 describes him as "dictator", and Reg. 310 uses the appellative "authoritarian" [value=power] and justifies it with "he was a dictator who for evil [value=benevolence/evil] marked the history of Spain for many years, with the war and the dictatorship)".

As a counterpoint, among the characters associated with goodness, Gandhi and Mother Teresa of Calcutta stand out, although they have far fewer mentions than Hitler or Franco.

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FIGURE V. Historical figures and events associated with the value of benevolence/evil.



[a] The frequency of the qualifier and the figure/event is given in parentheses.
[b] The number between the connectors indicates how often the qualifier has been used with the character/event.
[c] Names in bold (with only one connection) represent matches in other adjectives but with only 1 repetition.

Source: Compiled by the authors

Power

The idea of power is closely linked to mainly male characters (only Isabella the Catholic stands out: Figure VI), generally linked to adjectives that could be considered to have a negative moral evaluation: imperialism, dictator, authoritarianism, or conquest.

However, alongside these adjectives, we find evaluations of these same characters that are linked to the ideas of achievement (mainly), and self-direction, to a lesser extent. Only Hitler and Franco have a moral evaluation of their actions, motivated, as we have already indicated, by the possible validity, still, of their actions in today's society. Figures such as Julius Caesar or Napoleon are basically associated with the idea of power (almost two out of every three times they are mentioned), and not necessarily with negative evaluations. This "friendly" character of power can also be found in characters such as the Catholic Monarchs, Alexander the Great, or even Napoleon

himself. There are several examples:

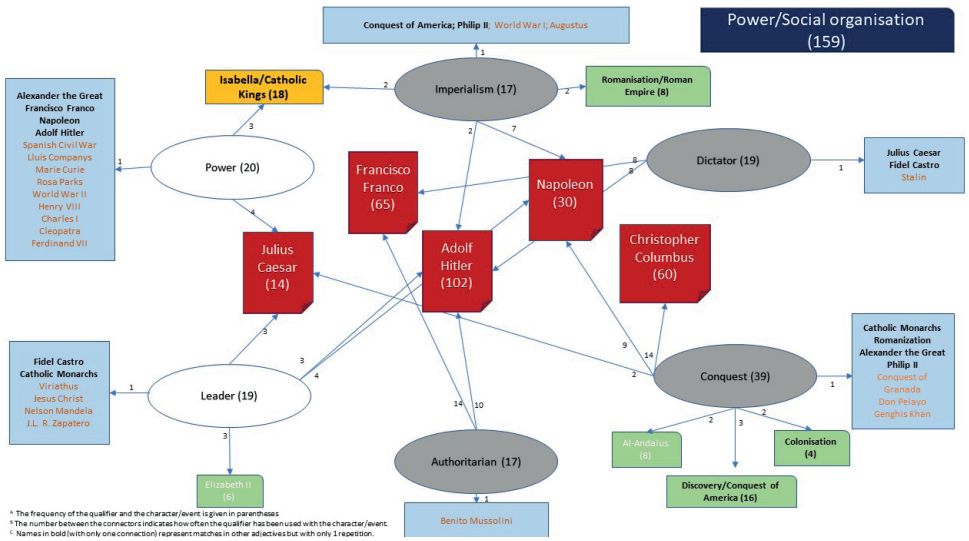
Reg. 659 highlights Caesar and describes him as "astute [value=achievement] because I consider that he conquered [value=power] a large part of Europe thanks to his strategies".

Reg. 790 describes Napoleon as "ambitious [value= achievement] because I consider that he was a very non-conformist [value=conformity, in a negative sense]".

Reg. 13, describes Alexander the Great as "strategic [value=achievement] because he conquered many territories [value=power], so he was intelligent and very ambitious [value=achievement]".

Finally, Isabella the Catholic is highlighted in Reg. 629, as "courage [courage=stimulation/change] because she had to face unpleasant situations in order to reach the throne".

FIGURE VI. Historical figures and events related to the value of Power

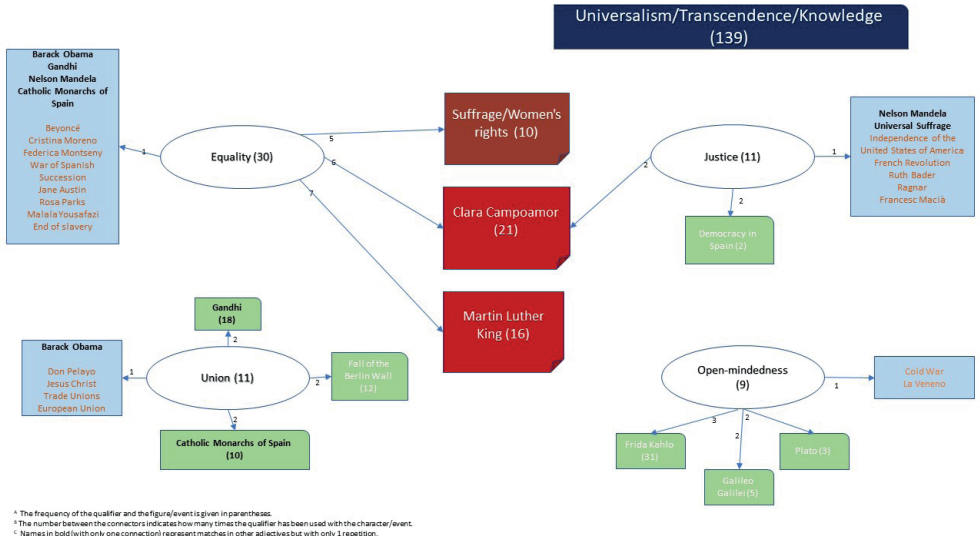


Source: Compiled by the authors

Universalism

Another value with a high number of associations is universalism. The adjectives equality, justice, union, and open-mindedness are used to describe the concept with great frequency. Furthermore, the figure of Clara Campoamor (see Figure VII) is associated with these values. In addition, respondents identified Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela as other figures worthy of mention in this category. It is noteworthy that all of the figures are associated with the idea of achieving civil rights, which is inextricably linked to the value of non-conformism. The references to Barack Obama and the Catholic Monarchs are noteworthy. The latter are associated with the idea of union and equality within the Spanish territory.

FIGURE VII. Historical figures and events related to the value of universalism/transcendence



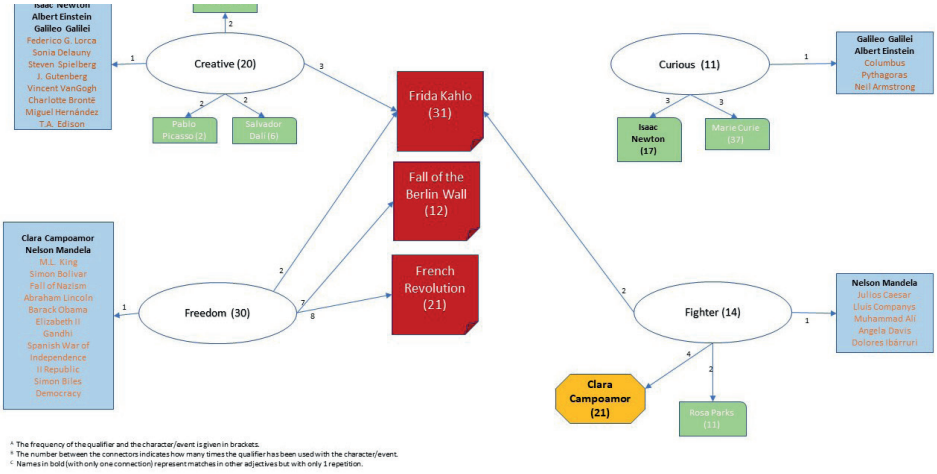
Source: Compiled by the authors

Self-direction

There is a tendency to associate the value of self-direction with stimulation

and achievement. If the idea of universalism is associated with the achievement of civil rights, the idea of self-direction is largely reflected by two historical processes: the French Revolution and the Fall of the Berlin Wall, which exemplify liberation from an oppressive system of social organisation. The most commonly used qualifier is freedom (see Figure VIII). On a second level, we find the idea of struggle, which is associated with activists such as Clara Campoamor, Rosa Parks, and Frida Kahlo herself. This association also leads us to see how the most frequently cited female figures (Marie Curie, Frida Kahlo, Clara Campoamor) are always associated with the character of icons who have made a break with the world they lived in, pioneers in the advance towards a society in which women have visibility. Nevertheless, men are associated with the idea of power and their achievements are recognised for their individuality and personality, rather than as proper names in the service of a cause. Consequently, the stereotypical idea of women as a collective is partly maintained.

FIGURE VIII. Historical figures and events related to the value of freedom/ self-direction



[a] The frequency of the qualifier and the character/event is given in brackets.
[b] The number between the connectors indicates how many times the qualifier has been used with the character/event.
[c] Names in bold (with only one connection) represent matches in other adjectives but with only 1 repetition.

Source: Compiled by the authors

Discussion

Despite the overwhelming weight of contemporary events over other historical periods, the prevailing view is that there are no significant differences between the characteristics of past and contemporary historical figures and events. In addition, it is important to analyse what these characteristics lack historicity. The first of these is that, according to the answers, the driving force of history seems to be simplified in the will of the characters. In this view, power lies in the individual, in the great characters who are generally men. Furthermore, androcentrism continues to be the general pattern when it comes to signifying characters, in line with stereotypical ideas in the educational sphere (Sáenz, 2015; López Navajas, 2015; Bel, 2016). This conception of historical agency also reduces the role of collective action, of the commons, to invest it in a few leaders. Although it is associated with the image of nationhood and progress, this vision is in fact a far cry from modernity, as it promotes the idea of natural hierarchy (Seixas, 2012b). Furthermore, the will of these characters is seasoned by the value of achievement/recognition and self-direction, which are associated with individualism (Páez, 2014), a dominant contemporary trait (Vega, 2012). The concept of the individual, merit or achievement, and freedom are also associated with the notion of progress and evolution. Social and individual progress and advancement is therefore the fruit of meritocracy, an idea that arose precisely in the 19th century. However, it is important to acknowledge that the concept of meritocracy and progress are inherently linked to the legitimisation of inequality in the contemporary world. This is evidenced by the justification of failure in the individual's lack of aptitude (Piketty, 2014), as well as current reports, demonstrates the myth of creating the causes of inequality and privilege as an individual responsibility rather than a structural phenomenon (Future Policy Lab, 2022).

Another of the characteristics that can be identified in the responses is that of violence. This represents a pivotal element in the selection of events or characters that exemplify changes in humanity (Arnoso, Paéz, Bobowik & Basabe, 2018). The selection of these events (wars, revolutions, processes of conquest) is therefore motivated by the fact that traumatic acts leave their mark on memory, resulting in feelings of anger, sadness, fear, and anxiety.

However, alongside this traumatic character, there is also the notion that violence is necessary as an element of change and progress. This demonstrates the continued relevance of one of the main pillars of nineteenth-century historiography (Iggers, Wang & Mukeherjee, 2008).

Furthermore, the aforementioned characters and events exhibit Eurocentrism or sociocentrism (Arnoso et al., 2018), which gives excessive global importance to events and cultural values. As the Royal Academy asserted in its allegations to the new law, it is necessary to expand the Eurocentric perspective in Spain in order to comprehend the challenges of the contemporary world. Nevertheless, this assessment does not appear to be limited to the new curricular framework; rather, it is a persistent feature of the textbooks used (Sáez & Bellatti, 2016; Gómez & Chapman, 2017). In this sociocentric framework, there is a tendency to view technological development as a driver of social and economic growth on a global scale. In other words, the ideas expressed about what is relevant also demonstrate a freedom associated with individuality and materialism, which are largely based in Europe and North America (Castells, 2005).

Conclusion

The characteristics of what is considered historically relevant by the participants show a similar picture to that of the studies by Mugueta (2016), Arias and Egea (2019) or Ortuño, Molina and Maquilón (2024), for the Spanish case. In addition, the work of Delfino, Sosa, Bobowick and Zubieta (2020) for Latin America, and that of Van Havere, Wils, Depaepe, Verschaffel and Van Nieuwenhuyse (2017) for other European latitudes, should be considered in relation to the androcentric, political and sociocentric vision. Furthermore, our work contributes to the understanding that the values associated with historical relevance (change, achievement, goodness/evilness, power, or self-direction) correspond to a significant extent to current values, typical of industrial and mercantile productivity, strong economic development, and urbanised societies where the nuclear family predominates over the extended

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family (Páez & Zubieta, 2006). The concept of good and evil is largely a consequence of the role that the teaching of history can have in the transmission of values. Students tend to perceive a moral charge in the history content they are taught, differentiating between good and bad, justice and injustice, and so on (Löfstrom, Ammert, Sharp & Edling, 2020). Finally, the concept of power is closely linked to the significant influence of political history on the development of curricula and school textbooks (Gómez, Monteagudo & Miralles, 2018). The results presented here contribute to an understanding of the role that history plays in the formation of a sense of community and group cohesion. This is because historical narratives are often constructed in a way that exemplifies behaviours that are more typical of the present. This is in accordance with the findings of González, Santisteban and Pagès (2020).

Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study. Firstly, the participants are a very limited and unrepresentative sample. Although it is essential to consider the characteristics of the group (in this case, trainee teachers) in the analysis of social representation, it is true that the participants represent a smaller sample in relation to the population of this group. Therefore, it is advisable to exercise caution in interpreting the results. Similarly, a more comprehensive analysis of materials (educational resources, leisure resources, press materials, social networks, audiovisual materials, etc.) is required in order to ascertain the role of historical culture in the formation of this social representation. Secondly, the design of the research and the length of the article have precluded the possibility of conducting an interesting gender perspective study that would allow us to trace the extent to which the predominant values may or may not be subject to the gender bias of the respondents and the historical figures chosen. Finally, for an analysis of historical culture and the values inherent in the teaching of history, it would be beneficial to extend the focus to other sectors of the population, such as practising teachers, pupils at different stages of education, and educational curricula.

In any case, it is our contention that the proposed strategies for the teaching of history, as outlined in this work, can be employed to inform the design of training materials for teachers. These materials should facilitate the development of skills that enable students to engage with historical figures

and events from multiple perspectives. Furthermore, they should contextualise historical figures and events within their respective historical contexts. Finally, they should provide opportunities for students to engage with historical figures and events that have been traditionally marginalised, in order to highlight dominant values that are more representative of contemporary times than of the true weight, meaning and significance of past events.

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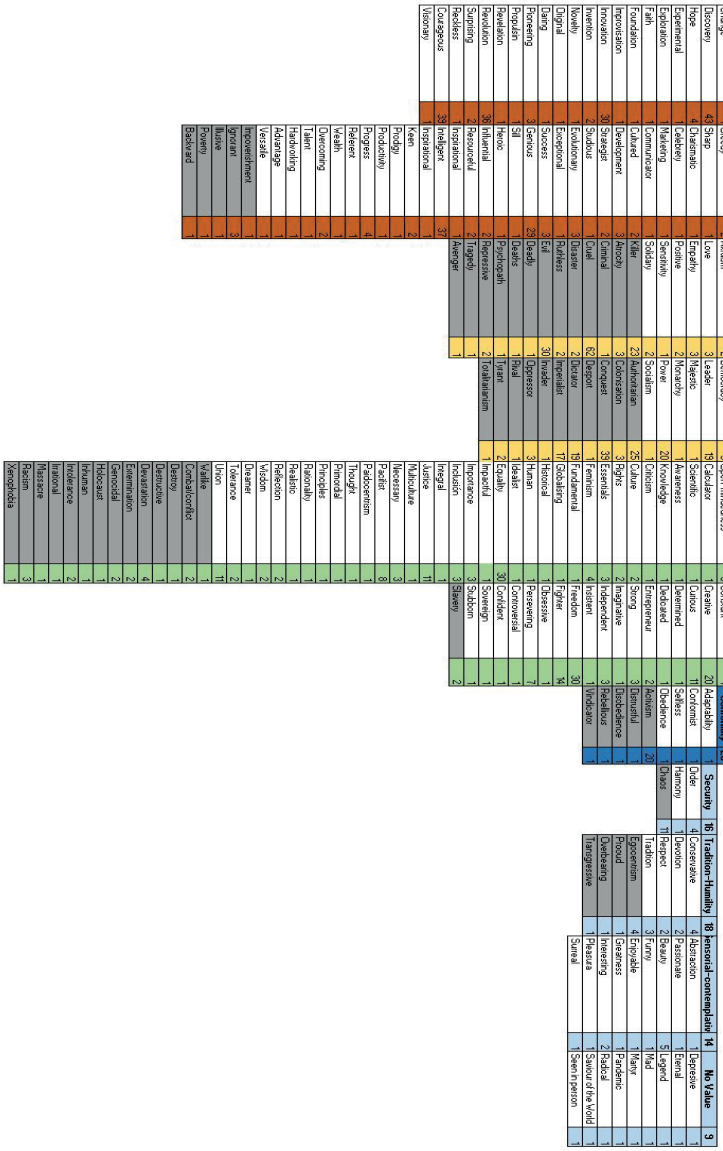
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Annex



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The battle for the narrative of democratic historical memory in the educational system: when history hides the past

La batalla por la narrativa de la memoria histórica democrática en el sistema educativo: cuando la historia oculta el pasado

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Abstract

This article presents the results of research on the knowledge that young people who have completed secondary education in Spain currently have about the repression of the Civil War, Franco's repression and the anti-Franco struggle. A mixed methodology has been used, triangulating qualitative (interviews and discussion groups) and quantitative (questionnaire) instruments. The results show that these issues are not always dealt with or are glossed over, and that the contents developed in textbooks and curricular materials still maintain silences, distorted or equidistant versions and deliberate concealments. It is concluded that it is necessary to dispute the account of a democratic historical memory in a rigorous and extensive way in the school curriculum in the face of pressure from the ultra-right in its current "cultural battle" against memory and to help rebuild a counter-hegemonic curriculum, which takes into account the victims who have been left on the margins of history, so that "their name is not erased from the memory" of future generations.

Keywords: Democratic Historical Memory; History of Spain; School Curriculum; Educational System; History Teaching.

Resumen

En este artículo se presentan los resultados de la investigación sobre el conocimiento que tienen actualmente los jóvenes que han terminado Educación Secundaria en España respecto a la represión de la Guerra Civil, la represión franquista y la lucha antifranquista. Se ha utilizado una metodología mixta, triangulando instrumentos cualitativos (entrevistas y grupos de discusión) y cuantitativos (cuestionario). Los resultados muestran que no siempre se llega a estos temas o se dan por encima, y que los contenidos desarrollados en los libros de texto y materiales curriculares aún mantienen silencios, versiones tergiversadas o equidistantes y ocultamientos deliberados. Se concluye que es necesario disputar el relato de una memoria histórica democrática de forma rigurosa y extensa en el currículum escolar frente a la presión de la ultraderecha en su actual "batalla cultural" contra la memoria y ayudar a reconstruir un currículo contrahegemónico, que tome en cuenta a las víctimas que han quedado en los márgenes de la historia, para que "su nombre no se borre de la memoria" de las futuras generaciones.

Palabras clave: Memoria Histórica Democrática; Historia de España; Currículo escolar; Sistema Educativo; Enseñanza de la Historia

Introduction

In Spanish educational legislation, the study of History is considered a fundamental element of school activity. Both the Organic Law of Education (LOE) of 2007 and the current LOMLOE (Organic Law 3/2020, of 29 December, which amends Organic Law 2/2006, of 3 May, on Education) state that it serves to deepen the knowledge of personal and collective heritage, as well as to understand the historical phenomena and processes of the past and also provides relevant knowledge that influences the personal and collective vision of the present. In addition, we must take into account that the subject of History taught in educational centers is the only time for a large part of the population when they have direct contact with academic history (Marina, 2015).

The teaching of history during the time of the Franco regime allowed

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the manipulation of historical events, both of the more distant past and of the events closer to it, i.e., the years of the Second Republic and the Spanish War, Franco's repression and the anti-Franco struggle (De la Cuesta and Odriozola-Gurrutxaga, 2018). This fact fostered the creation of an adulterated collective memory for many generations of Spaniards. In fact, Francoism silenced the democratic republican memory, both that of the defeated and that of the resisters, and reconstructed a narrative where the terms were radically inverted: the victims became guilty and the coup perpetrators and repressors appeared as the heroes, in order to consolidate a new collective memory akin to its purposes (Castillejo, 2008).

The death of the dictator and the transition to democracy brought the hope of a substantial change in the educational system and especially in the teaching of Spanish History. But the truth is that during the time of the so-called "Transition" it was avoided to focus many efforts on restoring the recognition and dignity of those who had fought to defend the democratic legality of the Second Republic and who were persecuted, repressed and shot during the Spanish War and postwar period and there was no process of condemnation of the fascist dictatorship of Francoism or those who had been participants in it (De la Cuesta and Odriozola-Gurrutxaga, 2018).

During practically the first three decades of Spanish democracy, the visibility of that memory hidden and distorted by Franco's regime was not questioned by the governments of the Transition. The pact of "not looking back to reopen wounds" was imposed, both in society and in education, with the excuse of the so-called "sabre rattling" (referring to a possible new fascist coup d'état) and alleging the need for a "philosophy" based on "overcoming the past". The "powers that be", linked to the Franco dictatorship, which continued to hold the positions of power, continued to impose their vision and their narrative in schools, despite the fact that in Spanish academia there were already solid studies questioning and denouncing this narrative, generating an abundant and consolidated historiography that was systematically ignored in academic content (Díez-Gutiérrez, 2022).

This conditioned the development of a memory policy in the educational system. The false memory of Franco's regime was not challenged by a memory policy based on republican democratic references, which would

really link the Second Republic with the democracy that emerged in the transition. A "policy of forgetting" was thus maintained in textbooks and curricular materials, which has maintained a vision of history that justifies the institutionally established "policy of forgetting" (Barreiro, 2017; Rina, 2019).

The first step to begin to dissipate the fog within the historical memory created around the Second Republic, the war and the fascist dictatorship took place in 2007 with the first Law of Historical Memory. But it arrived thirty years late and with many omissions, as memorialist movements repeatedly denounced, and had no real impact on the change in the educational system, where democratic historical memory continues to be a "pending subject" (Ardoiz *et al.*, 2020).

Subsequently, the different autonomous laws of historical memory and the recent Law of Democratic Memory of 2022 seemed to be aimed at repairing that forgetfulness, that "memoricide" that avoided, time and again, to apply clearly and directly the international human rights principles of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-repetition also in education.

However, the current educational law, the LOMLOE, reduces the contents of democratic historical memory to a generic and diffuse study of the "history of democracy and its contribution to the strengthening of the democratic principles and values defined in the Spanish Constitution", in its forty-first additional provision. This diluted approach is surprising, when however this same law obliges all Spanish students to study the Jewish holocaust; but nothing is expressly said about the "Spanish holocaust", as Preston (2011) called it.

The above has led us to propose this research to try to study the level of knowledge that students have about Franco's repression and the anti-Franco struggle. We consider that if any student who finishes his or her school period without having a minimum knowledge about such events in the history of Spain is a clear indicator that something must be modified in the educational system (Cano and Navarro-Medina, 2019).

Method

The purpose of this research has been to investigate the knowledge that young people who have recently finished their non-university studies have about the consequences of Franco's dictatorship and repression and the anti-Franco struggle.

The research focuses on exploring the real knowledge that the Spanish students who have passed through school after having completed the 4th year of ESO, 2nd baccalaureate or similar courses corresponding to other previous educational laws have about the democratic historical memory. For the History of Spain is a subject that is taught in all schools, and also during two school years: 4th year of Compulsory Secondary Education and 2nd year of Baccalaureate.

We want to know if young people really have access to a rigorous and solid knowledge of the current historiography on the Franco dictatorship and repression, and the anti-Francoist struggle, or if on the contrary, once they have gone through the educational system, they are not knowledgeable about certain events that occurred during the Civil War and the dictatorship such as, for example, the repression and the anti-Francoist struggle (Gutiérrez, 2019).

The complexity of the social reality under investigation favors the use of a qualitative and quantitative methodology in a complementary manner that helps to understand the phenomenon under study. This is what has come to be called "methodological triangulation" (Feria *et al.*, 2019). This triangulation implies that both methods invigorate each other, providing points of view and insights that they could not offer separately; contrasting results and forcing more refined rethinking and reasoning (Páramo, 2018).

Instruments and procedure

As mentioned above, the triangulation of research instruments strengthens the results of the research by complementing the application of different techniques in the same research to gather information and contrast the results (Torres, 2021).

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Three instruments were used to collect information:

- one of a more qualitative cut, the focus group (Chaverri, 2017).
- another one that is part of the quantitative methodology, the questionnaire, the
- and the interviews, which are also qualitative in nature and which helped us to deepen those aspects that had remained more ambiguous or to clarify them (Nadège and Bürki, 2022).

The survey "Democratic Historical Memory in education" was initially designed with Google Forms with 26 indicators, divided into six sections (variables, knowledge, repression, resistance, memory recovery, agreement with statements). To validate its content, a Delphi method of consultation with experts was applied (Ruiz, 2014). In this phase, six experts in this field of research analyzed the suitability of the indicators and proposed a set of changes, referring to the content and structure of the questionnaire: linguistic precision, closure of items, change of order of some questions and elimination of two questions because they considered that they did not fit the object of the research. Based on this revision, a second version of the instrument was elaborated.

This new version underwent a second validation process to test its reliability (Ruiz, 2014) by applying it, as a pilot test, to a group of 25 students, selected by convenience.

When analyzing the results of the pilot application, two aspects were found that facilitated the improvement of its final version and contributed to its comprehension. These changes were introduced in the final version of the questionnaire by making lexical corrections in two questions.

The final questionnaire was composed of six sections with 24 questions. 4 questions on demographic characterization; 4 questions on knowledge of the subject; 3 on the subject of repression; 4 on anti-Francoist resistance; 8 on the subject of the recovery of democratic historical memory; and a final one on the degree of agreement with a series of global statements.

At the end of the questionnaire, participants were asked if they were

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willing to be interviewed about the issues raised in the questionnaire, in greater depth and responding openly to those aspects that most concerned them about the issues addressed or about elements that had not been raised but were important to them.

Forty-four interviews were conducted, with an average duration of 90 minutes, most of them by telephone or videoconference (except those where it was feasible to travel to conduct them in person), and in which the same issues raised in the questionnaire were addressed, but giving the possibility to qualify the answers, argue them and expand on aspects that had not been addressed in the survey. This allowed us to complement some relevant aspects that we present in the results, quoting verbatim the answers collected in these interviews.

Finally, 5 discussion groups were conducted with 22 students that allowed contrasting different points of view through a debate in which all participants could communicate their opinion in a relatively equal way in terms of the possibility of expressing it and contrasting it in an argued way with the rest of the participants (Escobar & Escobar, 2023).

Sample

The results obtained by means of the three instruments referred to above yielded the following sample of 3,591 persons: 44 persons interviewed in depth, 5 discussion groups in which 22 students participated and 3,591 persons who answered the questionnaire applied. The population that participated most in the survey was from Castilla y León (23.4%), but there is representation from all the autonomous communities, where the following stand out: Community of Madrid (16%), Catalonia (12.3%) and Andalusia (11.3%). As for the percentage of participation by sex: 58.4% women and 41.6% men. In terms of age, 70% of the participants were in the 16-30 age bracket and, in terms of education, almost 70% had completed their high school studies. In other words, the majority of the participating population (Rositas, 2014) are young people who, in theory, would have studied Spanish history during the years of democracy.

Results

The following are the main results of the research according to the findings found through the research instruments applied, focusing on the categories extracted from the analysis of the responses collected, around the main thematic blocks or topics raised in the study:

- Time devoted to historical memory in the classroom.
- From what approach the Franco dictatorship was approached.
- How Franco's repression was dealt with in the classroom
- The anti-Franco struggle

The last question, referring to the general contents explained in the classrooms, dealt with how Francoism had been explained to them in a generic way, that is, how it had been defined. As in the other questions, there was still a percentage of people who had not reached or did not remember how it was explained to them (13.4% and 15.9% respectively). As for the definitions, the results obtained were as follows: a fascist dictatorship (28.2%), an authoritarian regime (27.1%), a totalitarian government (10%) and a period of autarchy (5.5%). That is to say, more than 80% do not qualify Franco's regime as either a dictatorship or a fascist regime, showing that they are not aware of the historical reality that has the consensus of the scientific community. Within this percentage, two data stand out:

- the first that the ratio of uninformed people (around 30%) remains the same.
- and secondly that 5% defines it as the regime saw itself, as a simple period of autarky.

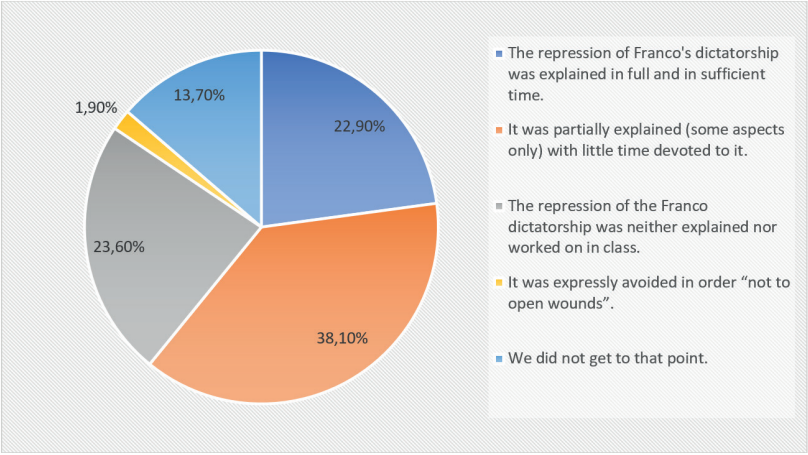
Despite these results, almost 30% do qualify it as a fascist dictatorship, which means that we are making progress, albeit very slowly and with gaps, since this value should be at least the majority message of the sample.

In the first part of the block of questions referring to Franco's repression that was asked to the participants in this research was whether they re-

membered having studied in class contents about the repression of Franco's dictatorship in their school. The data obtained graph I are as follows:

- Only 22.9% recalled that the repression of Franco's dictatorship had been explained in a complete way and that time had been devoted to it,
- 38.1% stated that it was partially explained (some aspects only), dedicating little time to it,
- 23.6% said that the repression of Franco's dictatorship was not explained or worked on in class,
- 1.9% explained that they expressly avoided addressing it "so as not to open wounds",
- 13.7% did not even reach that issue.

GRAPH 1. Do you remember having studied in class contents referring to the repression of Franco's dictatorship in your school?



Source: Compiled by the authors

This means that 77% did not deal with the repression of Franco's dictatorship in the school contents of the corresponding subjects. A substantial gap referring to 40 years of dictatorship that is ignored by more than three quarters of the students who passed through the classrooms. This confirms

what was previously analyzed with respect to the preliminary study on how the beginning of the Spanish war and Franco's regime was studied, where approximately 80% of the students had not been trained and informed with the optimal and accepted terms within the scientific community.

Undoubtedly, the last three results are the most relevant in this block, since they point out three problems inherent to the educational system when exposing and working on these topics with students and, therefore, to the present and future society.

- The first problem would be to maintain the idea that dealing with the past reopens wounds, an idea that emanates directly from the discourse of the Transition.
- Secondly, not addressing the contents consciously, which indicates a lack of teacher preparation or the interference of certain political currents within the teaching staff dedicated to the teaching of history.
- Finally, not organizing the syllabus so that there is enough time to deal with this topic reflects a bad organizational design of the school contents on the part of the administrations and those responsible for education. At present, there are enough bibliographic resources available to make a complete approach to this subject, such as Paul Preston's publication *The Spanish Holocaust: hatred and extermination in the Spanish War and after.*

In the interviews we found similar responses. Above all, participants who, in a more expressive and developed way, indicate that it was explained to them above: "*sometimes it was mentioned as the typical list that you learn by heart about repression, but it is not explained from a perspective of explaining and dealing in detail*" (E2).

Others point out that the explanation of these contents was actually omitted: "*No! many aspects are omitted*" (E44) or "*no! not at all. General features are explained, such as perhaps the suppression of freedom of association, censorship, etc., but the most bloody aspects of Franco's repression are not detailed. I am the granddaughter of a political prisoner imprisoned under Process 1001, who we never even saw in class, for example...*" (E32).

In spite of the amount, in terms of volume and typology, of repression exercised by the regime against any person contrary to its ideology, we consider that the four best known, supposedly, would be: (a) "the walks" and the shootings (mass graves), (b) the systematic repression, (c) the triple repression of women and (c) the economic repression. Therefore, we decided to evaluate the repression by means of these four variables.

The first of these variables corresponds to "walks" where the results obtained were as follows:

- 27.3% recognized that they were told about them in class and remember what they are,
- 47.6% stated that it had not been discussed,
- 11.1% that it had been treated, but they did not remember what it referred to, they did not remember.
- Some 14% indicated that they did not provide this content.

That is to say, almost half of the students did not know what was behind the euphemism of "stroll" used to hide a dramatic and brutal reality: the extrajudicial executions by firing squad, after taking them for a "stroll", of people who defended republican democracy or who were not sufficiently sympathetic to the fascist cause or to the instigators of the coup d'état.

Something similar is found when asking them about the ditches and graves where more than 100,000 victims of Franco's repression lie (Etxeberria and Solé, 2019; Muñoz, 2019). Only 19.9% answered that it was discussed and analyzed within the contents addressed in their center. 32.4% referred that it had been alluded to, but without clarifying how, who and why and 38.2% that the topic was not addressed in class. Finally, 9.6% indicated that the topic had not been addressed.

As in previous questions, we observed that approximately 80% had not had any training related to the mass graves. This is significant because it endorses the message of 40 years of peace proclaimed by Franco's regime during its period of validity and still maintained by current political parties.

Likewise, the fact that 32% were not explained the reasons for these graves is equally worrying and shows the lack of interest in knowing in depth this part of our history that influences so much our present and future. Finally,

we observe how almost 10% did not get to see this topic due to lack of time and a deficit in the planning of the educational program.

To complement the study with respect to mass graves, we asked a direct question in the personal interviews: *And, in addition, do you think that high school students should be taken to see in the field how the exhumations of mass graves of those repressed by the Franco regime are carried out? Why?* This was also addressed in the discussion groups.

The reason for this question was to evaluate the possibility of making visits as a complement to the explanation in the classroom. In the majority, the answer to the question was positive as a desire and willingness: "*to know the work that is being done, yes, but to see at the moment how they exhume reprisals is perhaps too hard"* (E10).

In the same line they expressed themselves in a discussion group where we extracted the following statement:

> *"It seems to me a good idea to try to instill social responsibility and empathy for the families of the victims of Franco's repression. We hear from some politicians that this is "reopening wounds", that we must "let the dead rest". They do not tell us about the pain of a family that was robbed of a member they never saw again, that could not mourn because they had nowhere to go to mourn. And there are thousands of people like that, who do not want nor deserve that society looks the other way, hides and forgets their loved ones murdered by a fascist dictator*" (E19).

The pattern is practically repeated, in a quite similar way, in other aspects related to Franco's repression:

- 15.9% considered that the systematic and organized repression of those "suspected" of being disaffected with the regime was analyzed in class.
- 42.4% stated that it had not been discussed in class.
- 29.4% that had been mentioned without further explanation.
- 12.3% indicated that they had not been able to explain this topic.

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- 80% were unaware of this type of repression.

The above shows the normalization of a vision of the dictatorship as a period of "peace and calm" that the dictatorship itself was responsible for disseminating, but which has not been sufficiently countered even in the classroom using recent historiography. Likewise, we observe that there is still a high percentage of people who never got to know these contents during their schooling.

The fourth section to analyze the repression was the aspects referred to the specific triple repression exercised on women: for being left-wing and "red"; for breaking molds and stereotypes during the second republic; and for being family or linked to republicans:

- 56.4% indicated that it was not explained to them nor did they see it in the textbooks,
- 3.6% indicated that it was not explained, but it did appear in the books,
- 29% indicated that it was seen, but did not go into further explanation,
- only 6% indicated that they dealt with this topic in class and in depth,
- 15% stated that it did not happen because it was not reached.

Undoubtedly, the results obtained in the study leave us with very worrying data. The first is that more than half of those surveyed were not given any explanation of this type of repression. Secondly, only 6% received full training. Finally, 3.6% were not told about it, nor did it even appear in textbooks. In other words, more than 90% did not know that the regime provided women with "special and specific treatment" because they were women in terms of repression. Therefore, the data show something recurrent in history and in history textbooks: the permanent and systematic invisibilization of women as a social actor.

Regarding the economic repression exercised by the dictatorial regime, the last point discussed focused on asking about the seizure of assets, which has been the origin of so many of today's great fortunes.

- 15.6% said that the laws of seizure of property of repressed republican

families had been discussed in the classroom,
- 52.8% said they had not been treated,
- 18.2% which, although it had been mentioned, had not been explained,
- The remaining 13.4% said that this issue had not been addressed.
- more than 80% did not have clear and contrasted information regarding the figure of seizures and the laws of seizure of assets of the dictatorial regime.

Of that percentage, it stands out that more than 50% were not even provided with knowledge of this type of repression, which allows us to make an assessment in a current key because not knowing this type of repression obviates how a part of the families with greater purchasing power today obtained their fortune through forced expropriation of reprisals or through the exploitation of Republican families (Maestre, 2019).

Likewise, we also observe that the pattern of lack of knowledge is maintained, with 10-15% of the students not having had the opportunity to learn about this topic in class "due to lack of time". Only 15% had the opportunity to know and work on the plundering of Franco's property in an accurate and relevant way the laws of seizure of property to Republican families.

The lack of knowledge reflected in the data regarding repression confirms the answers obtained in the personal interviews: "*because of my experience in high school and high school, these types of topics were not addressed*" (E30), or "*they are mentioned in a very general way"* (E20). However, in the discussion groups there were also responses that contrasted with the above: "*it is also necessary to explain what the Republicans did, not only what Franco's side did"* (GD-1).

Anti-Franco struggle

Something similar occurs with the subject of the anti-Francoist struggle. When asked if they remembered having studied in class contents referring to the anti-Franco struggle against the dictatorship in their school, the percentages of distribution of the answers were similar. Thus, the "memoricide" with respect to the struggle for the return of democracy and the opposition to the continuity of Franco's dictatorship, which continued in some cases until the

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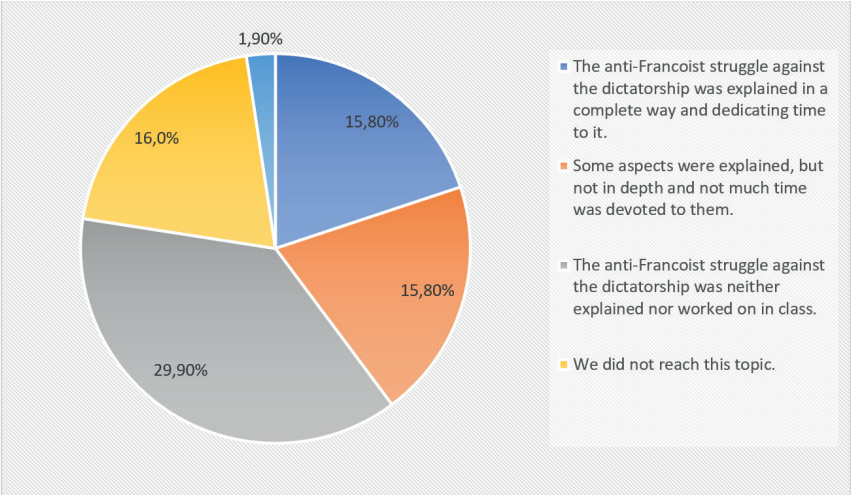
sixties of the twentieth century, was evident. The mantle of oblivion seems to have left in the gutter of history also so many women and men who largely gave their lives for the ideals of social justice, freedom, coexistence and democracy that had brought the Second Republic and whose memory seems to have been forgotten in the transmission to future generations in school.

As can be seen in graph II in the results obtained in the questionnaire it is shown that:

- Only 15.8% recalled that the anti-Francoist struggle against the dictatorship had been explained in a complete way and that time had been devoted to it,
- 36.4% stated that some aspect was explained, but not in depth and with little time devoted to it,
- 29.9% stated that the anti-Francoist struggle against the dictatorship was neither explained nor worked on in class,
- 1.9% explain that the anti-Francoist struggle against the dictatorship was expressly avoided “so as not to open wounds”, and
- 16% did not even reach that issue.

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GRAPH II. Do you remember having studied in class contents referring to the anti-Francoist struggle against the dictatorship?



Source: Compiled by the authors

An 84.2% did not deal with the anti-Francoist struggle against the dictatorship in the school contents of the corresponding subjects. Another incomprehensible gap that is ignored, in this case, by more than four fifths of the students who passed through the classrooms.

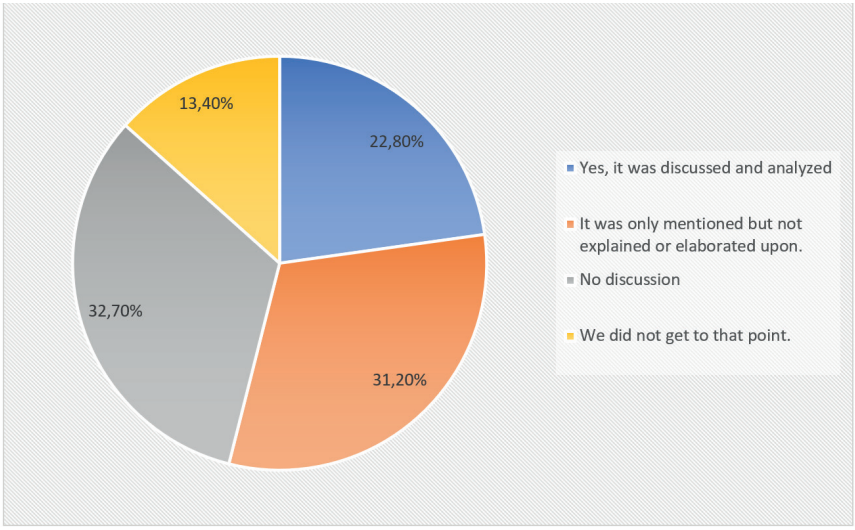
In this sense this "forgetting" or "forgetfulness" questions the learning in school of essential values related to truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-repetition, which even from the UN have pointed out and reminded the Spanish government, on repeated occasions (2014, 2020), warning it that knowing the truth of Franco's repression and the anti-Franco struggle is an inalienable right of the Spanish people (Díez-Gutiérrez, 2022).

Within the resistance that opposed Franco's regime, in spite of having several nuclei such as the students or the workers, we made special emphasis on asking about the resistance and the anti-Francoist guerrilla, since we had the hypothesis that at least this could be one of the aspects dealt with in the classrooms.

By observing the graph III we realize that this subject is also unknown by the students, as shown by the results obtained:

- 22.8% stated that content on resistance and guerrilla warfare was discussed and explained,
- 31.2% were only mentioned,
- 32.7% did not talk about it, which is serious because it indicates that the subject was discussed, but for various reasons it was not addressed,
- 13.4% did not reach this issue. Based on the results obtained, the hypothesis proved to be correct.

GRAPH III. Explanation of the guerrilla and the anti-Francoist resistance



Source: Compiled by the authors

Almost 80% of the surveyed population is unaware of the opposition that was exercised against the regime during its term. This high degree of ignorance confirms once again the same story of forgetting the repression. It seems as if during the 40 years of Franco's regime in Spain "social peace" and

the rules of a bloody dictatorship had reigned.

Within this high degree of ignorance, we observed differences related to the way this type of content is approached in the classroom. On the one hand, deliberate omission or succinct explanation, only mentioning it. On the other hand, the failure to even mention this type of content, corresponding to almost 15% of the sample.

The results regarding the schoolchildren's knowledge of the role of the "maquis" in the anti-Francoist struggle differ slightly from the previous ones, where 20.2% openly acknowledged that their role and the struggle they sustained had been explained, a percentage that agrees with the previous question.

But 14.6% said that they had only been mentioned, but that the role they played in the dictatorship was not explained in depth. And 20.2% declared that "it was the first time they had heard that term". In addition, a majority percentage (28.3%), almost a third of the students mentioned knowing the term and the reference to the "maquis" on their own initiative, not because they had studied it in the classroom. It is not unreasonable to think that this may be the case, since there are currently numerous studies of the maquis and opposition to the regime (Serrano, 1998; Serrano, 2001; Hernández, *et al.*, 2007; Andrés, 2019). Finally, 16.6% again insisted on a recurring topic throughout the research: they had not reached that part of the agenda.

The results concerning the maquis leave us with two very interesting readings. First, knowledge of the figure and role of the maquis is quite balanced (48.5% know about it vs. 51.5% who do not know about it). This result contrasts with those seen in other contents. However, this percentage of people who do know the maquis should be qualified, which leads us to the second reflection. The knowledge of the maquis is largely due to a personal interest in the figure of the anti-Franco fighters, but not because it has been worked on in the contents of the classes.

The same can be seen in the statistical analysis carried out, according to the autonomous communities (Table I). We observe how the distribution of the percentages is equitable, since the results show that in no community is the value of "yes, the maquis was explained" higher than the others. It also stands out that in almost all the autonomous communities the highest value

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corresponds to students knowing about the maquis on their own initiative, not because it was explained to them in the classroom. Furthermore, in the communities with the highest participation, the second option corresponds to the statement that they did not know this term.

TABLE I. Study of the maquis according to Autonomous Communities

Communities	*No*	*First time I hear it*	*I know for my own interest*	*The term was used, but not explained in depth.*	*Their role and struggle was explained, and what it meant for them.*
Andalucía	54	60	61	34	57
Aragon	9	12	11	18	33
Principality of Asturias	19	21	11	22	49
Canary Islands	10	8	0	4	11
Cantabria	5	6	0	2	8
Castilla-La Mancha	17	34	13	20	29
Castilla y León	98	103	184	64	94
Catalonia	45	49	112	39	44
Community of Madrid	48	73	144	58	54
Valencian Community	23	34	47	20	32
Extremadura	21	18	26	15	13
Outside Spain	0	3	3	0	1
Galicia	25	26	14	12	11
Balearic Islands	4	0	1	4	0
La Rioja	2	5	4	2	16
Region of Murcia	6	14	19	14	14
Community of Navarra	2	2	3	4	3
Basque Country	0	4	12	8	3

Source: Compiled by the authors

Similar results also appear with the interviews, where most of them show a lack of knowledge of the figure of the maquis. However, some of the people interviewed provided us with some motivations as to the reason for

this situation with respect to the explanation of the maquis. A student who had recently finished high school explained: "*because of the way in which Francoism is conceived in the social narrative, as a victorious regime where peace was maintained for almost 40 years. When the reality was quite different, the regime was maintained with high levels of violence and fierce opposition from the beginning*" (E6).

Another student was more critical: "*I guess many are not trained on the subject or are not interested in giving a topic that can cause controversy with parents*" (GD3).

Conclusions and discussion

The first finding of this research is that this topic is not always addressed in high schools or, sometimes, it is overlooked, either because of the length of the syllabus, the way in which the subjects are taught, or the fact that certain historical topics continue to be taboo.

As a second conclusion, it can be observed that the majority of the respondents showed that what was dealt with in the classrooms focused especially on the Spanish war (59.4%) and only 5% mentioned that emphasis was placed on Franco's repression and the anti-Franco struggle. This conclusion is directly linked to the third in relation to deliberate silences and cover-ups.

A third conclusion is that the contents developed still maintain the silences about Franco's repression and the anti-Franco struggle. "Omissions that could be understood as a discourse (by omission) legitimizing the dictatorship, minimizing its consequences and contributing to the adoption of an uncritical perspective in a student body that finishes education" (Mancha, 2019).

Moreover, it seems that in the analysis of this historical period and in the explanation of the Civil War, the so-called theory of equidistance or equalization (Erice, 2009) still persists, in which the Civil War is presented as a confrontation between two sides, a fratricidal struggle between brothers,

where the two opposing parties are to blame for the events that occurred in it.

The block on Franco's repression left more significant conclusions. Practically half of the sample that participated in the research stated that the repression carried out against people "suspected" of being disaffected with the regime had not been explained in class (42.4%), that the specific and triple repression of women had not been addressed (56.4%) and that the economic repression through the seizure of goods had not been dealt with in any way (52.8%). With these data, it is not surprising that the majority of society is not able to visualize the consequences of the Franco regime in today's society nor the so-called "non-accountable effects" of repression (fear, trauma and humiliation), also suffered by the social and family environment of the repressed persons (Ranz, 2019).

Regarding the repression of women, both in the interviews and in the survey we could see that this repression has not only not been sufficiently addressed in education and curricular materials, but that they were so surprised by this topic that it seemed as if they had never been able to imagine it. This we consider to be the responsibility not only of maintaining the silence of the repression on them -which they share with their male peers- but they have also suffered oblivion by much of the official historiography (Ferrer, 2019; López, 2017) and this is reflected in education. The interviews also revealed that most of the participants were unaware of the role of the anti-Franco guerrilla women, either by omission in the classroom or by not showing that there were people, and very many women, who opposed the dictatorship or by trying to show that the Franco regime was a period of peace where there were no altercations.

In conclusion, the research seems to show a lack of will on the part of the educational administration, a lack of time for the development of the entire agenda and a poor structuring and planning of the same. Which is causing the invisibilization or minimization not only of the tragedy of those who were shot on walls or thrown into chasms or precipices, but also of the tragedy of those who survived as "losers" and their descendants, and of the struggles of those who maintained the rebellion against the dictatorship, may explain in part the "normalization of the dismemory" (Fuertes, 2018).

Pereyra (2005, p.13) states that "there is no historical discourse whose

efficacy is purely cognitive; all historical discourse intervenes in a given social reality, where it is more or less useful for the different forces in conflict". Indeed, as we have shown in this article, it is possible to identify a fundamental conflict between two tendencies of historical education in Spain with respect to the Franco dictatorship. The first seeks to hide the past, often under a supposedly good intention of not opening wounds that have taken a long time to heal. It opts for the social peace that allows ignorance, thus being useful to those actors who benefited from terror, repression and plundering. In this regard, the bet by the ultra-right to find in history and its narration a space in which to wage a "cultural battle" (Ballester, 2023) based on the promotion of questionable and non-rigorous stories about different processes such as European colonial expansion or Franco's dictatorship itself is outstanding. In short, what such groups seek is to attack the democratic historical memory and thus hinder the possibilities of such memory to enable substantial changes in the present, either through a rhetoric that seeks to "whitewash" Francoism (Bono, 2024) or the open denial of the past through the removal of plaques in tribute to the victims of Francoism (Martí, 2024).

In the face of this, there persists a position that, by dint of fighting against the current of oblivion, has sought to unravel the past, thus also illustrating the contradictions of the present, seeking to build a complex argument as to why it is important to promote changes in the judicial, military or administrative structures, as well as substantial legal changes with mechanisms that prevent access to information and thus, hinder the possibility that new generations can dispute the historical narrative, such as the law of official secrets, in force since 1968 and modified in 1978. To achieve this, it is necessary to strengthen historical awareness (Ortega *et* al., 2024) in the educational system, and in this, teachers are a central actor (Sánchez, 2024).

The aforementioned trends are not *phantasmagorical* figures without material substratum or context. They are the product of a set of social and political forces that operate on a daily basis and that find in history a field of dispute.

Although history has been considered as the field of the objective as opposed to memory as the field of the subjective, sometimes taking both concepts and both realities as incompatible and assuming that the history told by

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specialists assumes a plus of veracity, which memory, whether collective or individual, does not have, we consider that democratic historical memory can help to reconstruct a counter-hegemonic curriculum (Connel, 2009) in which the lived experiences and points of view of the least favored sectors in history are recovered, taking into account the victims, although the accounts of their suffering are often presented as "conflictive" topics (Carrasco, *et* al., 2024).

Recovering democratic historical memory in education means rebalancing a historical narrative that has been distorted for too long. But it also means transmitting a collective imaginary in defense of truth, justice and reparation as fundamental values in any democracy. Therefore, in this context, it is more necessary than ever to recover historical memory as the basis of democratic citizenship and teacher training (De la Cruz & Milla, 2024). Without knowledge there is no historical memory, no truth, justice or reparation possible. There is no possibility of disputing the historical narrative, nor of finding in history elements that allow us to build, collectively, a more democratic future.

For this reason, adequate disciplinary training is necessary in the Degree in History and in the Faculties of Teacher Training, as well as the dissemination and transfer of knowledge in the continuing education of teachers or through updated syntheses in accessible formats, such as videos, websites, social networks, textbooks, didactic guides or synthesis books (Fuertes & Banderas, 2024). In addition, the gradual inclusion of methodologies such as oral history, visits to places of memory or democratic memory projects in different educational centers contribute, with the incorporation of new voices and perspectives, to an epistemological change and the incorporation of new perspectives that allow us to point to a direction of change (Banderas, 2024).

This research has tried to help in this endeavor. Although one of the limitations of this research, which we should not forget, is that it would need to include more voices from different autonomous communities to enrich the analysis of how historical memory is approached in different parts of Spain. Another limitation is that the sample of this research has been of convenience and intentional and, therefore, biases can be introduced in the results, since not all segments of the population have the same probability of being included in the sample, so the results and conclusions obtained are not generalizable

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as they are not representative of the total population, but they can be transferable to other similar contexts. In future research it would be desirable to be able to do stratified sampling that is more representative and that can increase the validity and generalizability of the research results (Reyes, 2022).

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Research section

Review articles in educational research: A bibliometric analysis

Artículos de revisión en investigación educativa: un análisis bibliométrico

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Abstract

The rapid advancement of scientific knowledge creates the need to synthesize existing knowledge and review articles play an important role in this regard. This study aims to provide a comprehensive review of review articles in educational research. To this end, 12163 review articles published between the years 1956 and 2022 in the "Education & Educational Research" category in the Web of Science Core Collection were analyzed by bibliometric method. It has been found that the number of review articles showed a high rate of increase between 1996 and 2012. The number of review articles published since 2013 is higher than the number of such articles in the previous 57-year period and accounts for 57% of the literature. The most influential publication in the literature has been found to be Hattie and Timperley's study on feedback.The most productive and influential journal has been found to be Review of Educational Research. The most prolific author has been found to be Hwang G.J., while the most influential author has been found to be Dochy F. While the University of Wisconsin contributed to the literature the most, the University of Michigan has been found to have the highest publication impact. With 131 countries contributing to the review literature, the USA is the most productive country with the highest publication impact. The systematic review and meta-analysis methods have been found to be more prominent. Five main themes have been identified in the Review literature. It was found that the East and the West collaboration more with each other, with the USA, England Australia, and Canada

playing a unifying role between these two blocs. The USA provided the most collaboration.

Keywords: education, research, review, bibliometric.

Resumen

El rápido avance del conocimiento científico crea la necesidad de sintetizar el conocimiento existente y los artículos de revisión desempeñan un papel importante en este sentido. Este estudio tiene como objetivo proporcionar una revisión exhaustiva de los artículos de revisión en la investigación educativa. Para ello, se analizaron mediante el método bibliométrico 12163 artículos de revisión publicados entre los años 1956 y 2022 en la categoría "Education & Educational Research" de la Web of Science Core Collection. Se ha constatado que el número de artículos de revisión mostró una alta tasa de incremento entre 1996 y 2012. El número de artículos de revisión publicados desde 2013 es superior al número de artículos de este tipo en el período anterior de 57 años y representa el 57% de la literatura. La publicación más influyente en la literatura ha resultado ser el estudio de Hattie y Timperley sobre la retroalimentación.La revista más productiva e influyente ha resultado ser Review of Educational Research. El autor más prolífico ha sido Hwang G.J., mientras que el autor más influyente ha sido Dochy F. Mientras que la Universidad de Wisconsin es la que más ha contribuido a la bibliografía, la Universidad de Michigan es la que más publicaciones ha publicado. Con 131 países que han contribuido a la literatura de revisión, EE.UU. es el país más productivo y con mayor impacto de publicación. Los métodos de revisión sistemática y metaanálisis han resultado ser los más destacados. En la bibliografía de la revisión se han identificado cinco temas principales. Se ha constatado que Oriente y Occidente colaboran más entre sí, y que EE.UU., Inglaterra, Australia y Canadá desempeñan un papel unificador entre estos dos bloques. EE.UU., fue el país que más colaboró.

Palabras Clave: educación, investigación, revisión, bibliometría.

Introduction

Scientific knowledge has increased rapidly all over the world, with thousands of new articles, reports, and other materials being published physically and via the Internet every day (Linnenluecke et al., 2020; Siddaway et al., 2019; Zupic & Čater, 2015). As it has throughout history, science is developing; however, the pace of this development is much higher today than in the past. The number of scientific and technical journals increased from about one million in 2000 to about two and a half million in 2018 (World Bank, 2022). This

trend has led to an unsystematic proliferation of information in many different sources and academic disciplines.

This growth necessitates a synthesis and integration of the knowledge on the topic of interest, and the collection and evaluation of available evidence (Tranfield et al., 2003). Here, review articles have the potential to serve that purpose. The holistic evaluation and synthesis of new knowledge are becoming increasingly difficult due to a large amount of data and limitedness of time. Scientists struggle to identify studies on their topic of interest, critically examine the content and quality of available evidence, and synthesize existing results (Linnenluecke et al., 2020).

There are many types of reviews in the literature. Table I shows some review types in the literature. Review articles can address a wide range of research questions. As with primary research, review articles may utilize a variety of approaches and methods (Newman & Gough, 2020). Before 1980, almost all review articles were based on narrative reviews, which represents a more traditional approach (Baumeister, 2013). Traditional literature reviews often lack completeness and rigor and do not follow a specific methodology (Snyder, 2019).

Table I. Some review types

systematic review	meta-analysis	meta-synthesis	narrative synthesis	textual narrative syntehesis	systematic narrative synthesis
thematic synthesis	meta-study	meta-narrative	critical interpretive synthesis	qualitative meta-summary	realist review
systematic scoping review	systematic quantitative review	systematic mixed studies review	systematic mapping review	rapid review	network meta-analysis
living systematic review	living meta-analysis	semi-systematic review	qualitative systematic review	critical review	integrative review
bibliometric review	mixed methods review	literature review	critical review	comparative review	theoretical review
review of reviews/ umbrella review/ tertiarty review/ synthesis of reviews/ review of systematic reviews/ review of meta-analyses/ synthesis of reviews/ review of systematic reviews/ review/meta-review/systematic meta-review/meta-meta-analysis					

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In recent years, traditional review studies have been replaced by ones that follow a specific methodology and follow a replicable, transparent process. There are many methods in the literature such as systematic review, meta-analysis, meta-synthesis, and systematic narrative synthesis. The common feature of these methods is that they help to review existing research using open, accountable, and rigorous research methods (Gough et al., 2017). Systematic reviews are regarded methodical, comprehensive, transparent, and replicable (Siddaway et al., 2019). Meta-analysis is a quantitative method used to combine the findings of multiple studies that employ comparable methods to examine the same question. In contrast, the narrative review can utilize many different methods and processes and combine findings from studies addressing different questions (Baumeister, 2013). Semi-systematic review is used to identify themes, perspectives, and issues in a research discipline or methodology, or to identify components of a theoretical concept. The integrative review aims to generate new knowledge by critiquing and synthesizing the literature on a topic in a way that allows new theoretical perspectives to emerge (Torraco, 2005). Meta-synthesis integrates qualitative research findings to identify themes, concepts, and theories that produce new conceptualization or offer a fuller understanding of the phenomenon under study (Thorne et al., 2004).

Review types are quite diverse and new methods are emerging. Review studies, when done well, offer new and valuable contributions to knowledge (Siddaway et al., 2019). They combine many studies and produce value a single study cannot do by itself (Baumeister, 2013). Review studies also provide a solid foundation for advancing knowledge and developing theory (Webster & Watson, 2002), and help identify areas where more research is needed and therefore set directions for future research. They can provide insight and guidance to implementers and policy makers (Linnenluecke et al., 2020).

The benefits of review articles have led to their widespread use in many scientific disciplines. Review articles have been published in medicine (Brooks et al., 2020), management (Zhang & Parker, 2019), environmental science (Ferronato & Torretta, 2019), linguistics (Dehghanzadeh et al., 2021), finance (Roychowdhury et al., 2019), history (Islam et al., 2021), technology (Bodkhe et al., 2020), and many other disciplines.

Review articles are widely published in the field of education as in many other disciplines. In educational literature, review articles have been published on many topics such as virtual reality (Akcayir & Akcayir, 2017), teacher leadership (Wenner & Campbell, 2017), learning (Morris, 2020), higher education (Salam et al., 2019), experimental learning (Morris, 2020), augmented reality (Sirakaya & Sirakaya, 2022), and peer bullying (Thompson et al., 2020).

The number of review articles in education literature is in an increase. The growth of the literature has created the need for a holistic examination of review articles in the field of education. However, there is no research in the literature that holistically and comprehensively addresses review articles in educational research. This study aims to examine review articles in educational research holistically using bibliometric analysis. To this end, the study aimed to evaluate the contribution made to the education literature through review articles on the basis of author, country, institution, and publisher, and to reveal the patterns and intellectual structure in the literature. This is thought to provide researchers with a general overview of review studies in the field of education. Accordingly, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

RQ 1: What is the basic bibliometrics of review articles in educational research? In order to reveal the intellectual structure of the literature, we focused on the following bibliometrics: (1) Number of publications and citations over time, (2) Most cited publications, (3) Most productive and influential journals, (4) Most productive and influential authors, (5) Most productive and influential institutions, (6) Most productive and influential countries, (7) Basic concepts in the literature

RQ 2: What are the themes that were identified in review articles in educational research?

RQ 3: What is the extent of the collaboration between countries in terms of review studies in educational research?

This research contributes significantly to educational research in two ways. Firstly, it highlights the importance of review studies in educational research, which has become increasingly crucial due to the rapid growth of scientific knowledge in recent years. Secondly, this study sheds light on the publication performance and impact of journals, authors, and institutions,

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providing valuable information for future educational research policies. Thirdly, it reveals the intellectual structure of the knowledge base on which educational research is founded and identifies the main themes of the field. This approach provides direction for future research on knowledge gaps in educational research. Furthermore, conducting a study through review studies is more valuable as they synthesise information from multiple similar studies. This approach creates more robust evidence compared to analysing individual studies. Conducting a bibliometric analysis using review studies in educational research can provide general information about the field of education, guide future research, and inform decision-making processes.

Method

In this research, the bibliometric analysis method was used to examine the review articles in the field of education with a comprehensive and holistic approach, to identify the general overview and trends of the publications, and to reveal the collaboration interactions and intellectual structure. Bibliometric analysis is a popular and rigorous method used to explore and analyze large volumes of data. While this method enables us to unpack the evolutionary nuances of a specific field, while also at the same time shedding light on the emerging areas in the field in question (Donthu et al., 2021). This type of systematic review reveals trends that have emerged in the literature over time and offer empirical foundations for charting the way forward (Hallinger, 2021). Managing the rich source of data in a particular field and discovering the underlying structure of the field requires the use of bibliometric methods (Zupic & Čater, 2015).

Identification of Resources

In this study, the Web of Science Core Collection (WOS) database was utilized for a comprehensive review of review studies. The WOS database is a

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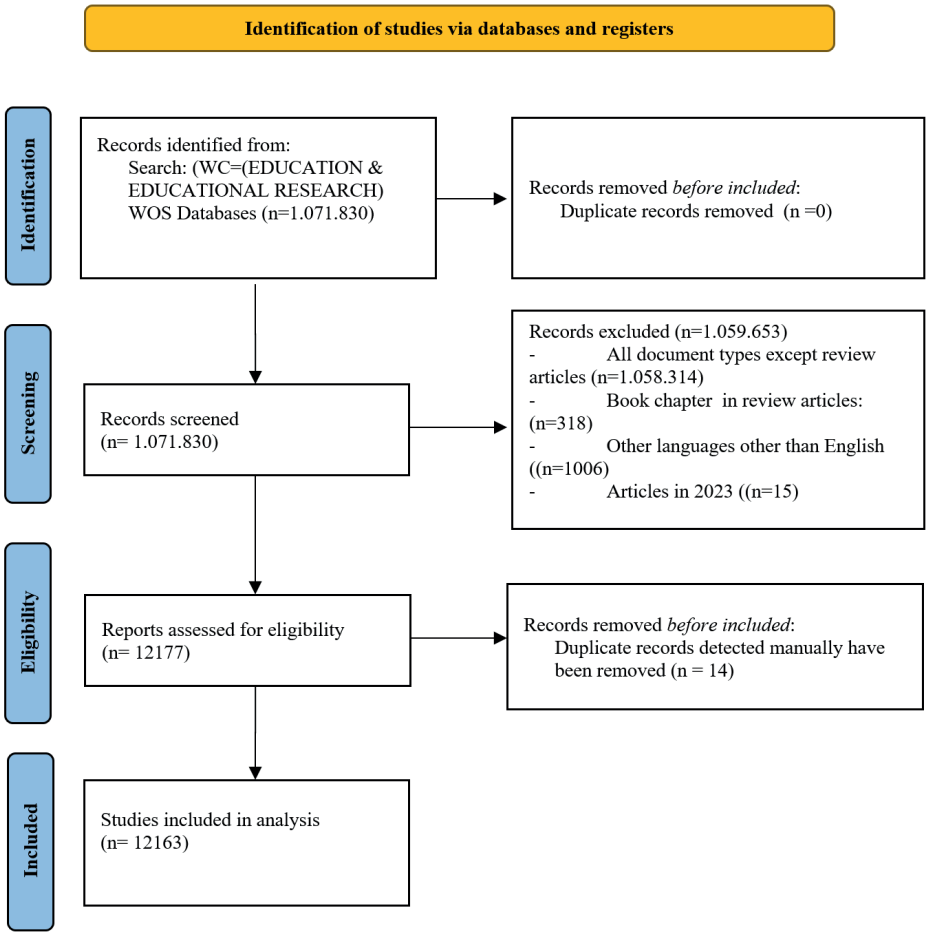
large database containing approximately 86 million publications in over 21 thousand peer-reviewed journals in 254 subject categories (Clarivate, 2023). The WOS database was selected as it contains a large number of review articles in educational research.

In determining the publications, the following search strategy was employed in performing a search on the WOS database (on January 05, 2023):

(WC=(EDUCATION & EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH) and Review Article (Document Types) and Book Chapters (Exclude-Document Types) and English (Languages) and 2023 (Exclude-Publication Years)

First, the category "Education & Educational Research" was selected in the WOS database. This search yielded 1,071,830 publications. Then the Review Article filter was applied, and 13,516 publications were found. Since we wanted to focus only on articles, a total of 318 "Book reviews" were excluded. English was then chosen as the language of publication, leaving 12,192 articles. Then, three publications with the publication year of 2023 were excluded and there remained 12,189 review articles. During the data cleaning phase, 12 publications with the publication year of 2023 and 14 duplicate publications were identified in the data set and these were removed from the data set, leaving a total of 12,163 publications to analyze. Figure I shows the PRISMA scheme that this research follows (Moher et al., 2009).

Figure I. PRISMA Flowchart



Data Extraction and Analysis

Bibliometric data on 12,189 publications were downloaded from the WOS database in the form of plain text in 25 parts. This data document contained descriptive information such as author, title, year of publication, citation data,

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etc. The downloaded data files were merged into a single plain text. The plain text data file was then converted into MS Excel format for analysis in both R and Vosviewer, the former of which was also used for data control. The data cleaning process was performed on the MS Excel document.

One of the most important considerations before starting bibliometric analysis is data cleaning. The documents retrieved from the databases need to be corrected for problems such as duplicate phrases, spelling and typographical errors, and lack of important information. Because although bibliometric data is reliable in most cases, sometimes there may be more than one version of the same study. Also, the references sometimes contain multiple versions of the same publication and different spellings of an author's name (Zupic & Čater, 2015). Cleaning the data before bibliometric analysis is important for the reliability of the findings. Therefore, in this study, the data were cleaned through a rigorous process before analysis. First, the MS Excel document was examined and metadata such as year, publication title, and author name were reviewed. 564 documents did not have a publication year. These publications have not yet been published but are in early access. Since it is not clear when these publications were published, year data could not be coded. In addition, although the year filter was applied during the search, 12 publications were found to be from 2023. These publications were excluded from the dataset.

The second operation was to check for duplicate data. As a result of the detailed examination of the data, 14 publications were identified as duplicates and these publications were removed from the dataset. Thirdly, spelling differences were checked and corrected. In bibliometric data, concepts that mean the same thing and are spelled differently are often found. In this study, spelling differences and instances of miswriting such as misspellings (e.g. "USA" and "USA.;"), words spelled differently having the same meaning (e.g. "Goethe univ" and "Goethe univ Frankfurt"), and singular and plural spellings (e.g. "systematic review" and "systematic reviews" or "adolescents" and "adolescents" or "5-college" and "college"), were brought together in the "thesaurus file" for analysis using Vosviewer and in the "synonyms text" for analysis using R. Thus, the scattered data were merged and the accuracy of the data was ensured.

MS Excel, Vosviewer, Bibliometrix, and Biblioshiny software pack-

ages in the R tool were used for data analysis. Vosviewer is a software tool for creating and visualizing bibliometric networks (Van Eck & Waltman, 2014). The Bibliometrix R package is an open-source software tool that provides tools for quantitative research in scientific methodology (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). Biblioshiny is a secondary development of the Bibliometrix-based Shiny package in the R language. Biblioshiny covers the core subject matter of Biliometrix and enables bibliometric analysis and visualization through a web-based interface (Xie et al., 2020).

In this study, answers to three research questions were sought. Basic bibliometric analyses were conducted to answer the first question of the study. In these analyses, the number of publications was used as a measure of productivity, and the number of citations and citations per publication were used as measures of impact. The ratio between the number of documents and the total number of citations is one of the best measures of the impact of publications and contributors to a field (Saravanan et al., 2022).

For the second research question, co-occurrence word analysis was performed. This analysis is used to identify the most frequently studied topics of a given area or subject and to reveal the conceptual themes of the said area (Donthu et al., 2021; Hallinger & Kovačević, 2021). Co-occurrence word analysis counts the titles, keywords, and abstracts of publications in the database. It also calculates the co-occurrence of these words in the title, keyword, and abstract (Zupic & Čater, 2015). Vosviewer uses keyword co-occurrence matrices to create a science map by visualizing similarities between words (Van Eck & Waltman, 2014). This analysis reveals conceptual themes in the literature (Su & Lee, 2010; Zupic & Čater, 2015). The close proximity of word nodes in the resulting science map indicates that they are thematically similar (Zupic & Čater, 2015). The word groups formed in the science map are shown in the form of colored clusters, and these clusters are regarded as the themes of the field under study (Su & Lee, 2010; Zupic & Čater, 2015).

The country co-authorship analysis was performed to answer the third research question. Two scientists co-authoring a paper are considered to be linked. These connections between two or more scientists form co-authorship networks. Co-authorship networks develop over time between researchers across research fields. Scientists from different research fields, institutions,

and authors from different geographical regions can be a part of a particular co-authorship network, or one scientist can be involved in different co-authorship networks (Uddin et al., 2012). Collaboration network analysis provides information on potential partnerships for future research in a studied area (Xu et al., 2022).

Results

The General Overview of the Publications

The general overview of review articles in education literature is shown in Table II. A total of 12,163 Review articles on education, published in the period between 1956 and 2022, were examined. These articles were contributed by 22,827 authors from 131 countries. While the average number of co-authors per paper was found to be 2.33, the rate of international research collaboration was found to be 11.72. The number of Review articles was found to increase by 5.89% on average annually.

Table II. Basic Information about Publications

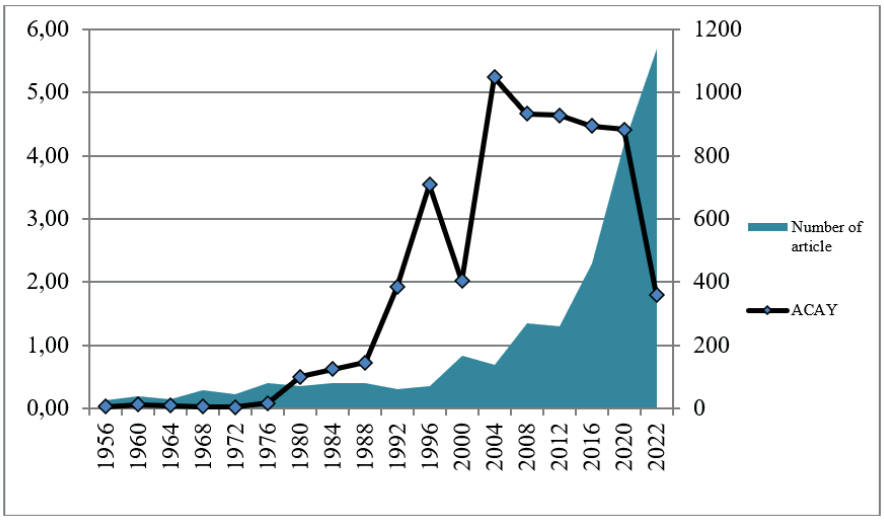
Timespan	1956-2022
Publications	12163
Review Articles	11599
Review articles, Early access	564
Annual Growth Rate %	5,89
Document Average Age	15,3
Average citations per document	31,7
References	622833
Authors	22827
Countries	131
Single-authored documents	4183
Co-Authors per Document	2,33
International co-authorships %	11,72

The number of publications by years and the average number of cita-

tions per year is shown in Figure I. From 1956 to 1996, the number of Review studies increased at a slow pace and remained generally stable. From 1996 to 2012, there has been a significant increase in the number of relevant publications. Yet, after 2013, the number of review articles showed a much more considerable increase. The number of articles published since 2013 is higher than in the previous 57 years and accounts for 57% of the literature. The first reason for this phenomenon is the increase in the number of scientific publications and the need for further synthesis of the literature as a result of the rapid progress of scientific knowledge. This can be seen as a factor that leads to an increase in the number of review articles. The second could be the increase in the number of scientific journals. According to the Journal Citations Reports by Clarivate, while there were 161 scientific journals in four education categories in the "Science Citation Index Expanded" and "Social Science Citation Index" in 2002, it increased to 315 in 2012 and 924 in 2021. From 2012 to 2021, the number of scientific journals in the education category nearly tripled (Clarivate, 2022).

Since older articles are known to receive more citations, the average number of citations per article per year (AC_{AY}), which is a year-adjusted measure of impact, has increased significantly over the years. The reason for the decline in the last year can be shown as the lack of citations of publications not yet indexed in WOS.

Figure II. Number and Impact of Review Articles
AC_{AY}: Average citations per article per year. Note: Early access review articles (n=564) are not included in the figure above.



Most Cited Publications in Review Literature

Table III shows the list of the ten most cited publications among the Review articles. Among the Review articles, Hattie and Timperley's (2007) study on feedback received the highest number of citations. In the said study, a conceptual analysis of feedback was presented and the evidence for its impact on learning and achievement was reviewed. Furthermore, a feedback model was proposed that identifies the characteristics and conditions that render feedback effective. This study also ranks first in terms of total citations per year (TCY). This shows that this study is still among the most cited papers and therefore feedback is still a leading subject in education literature. The second most cited paper was found to be Fredricks et al. (2004). This study reviewed the definitions, measures, antecedents, and consequences of school engagement. The publication ranks second in the TCY ranking. As far as most cited articles are concerned, it is seen that five articles were published in "Review

of Educational Research".

Table III. Most cited publications

Author(s)	Publication	Journal	TC	TCY
Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007).	The power of feedback	*Review of Educational Research*	4544	267
Fredricks, J. A., Blumenfeld, P. C., & Paris, A. H. (2004).	School engagement: Potential of the concept, state of the evidence	*Review of Educational Research*	4078	204
Mishra, P., & Koehler, M. J. (2006).	Technological pedagogical content knowledge: A framework for teacher knowledge	*Teachers College Record*	3168	176
Kirschner, P. A., Sweller, J., & Clark, R. E. (2006).	Why minimal guidance during instruction does not work: An analysis of the failure of constructivist, discovery, problem-based, experiential, and inquiry-based teaching	*Educational Psychologist*	2888	160
Stanovich, K. E. (1986).	Matthew effects in reading - some consequences of individual-differences in the acquisition of literacy	*Reading Research Quarterly*	2695	71
Tinto, V. (1975).	Dropout from higher education - theoretical synthesis of recent research	*Review of Educational Research*	2625	54
Ladsonbillings, G. (1995).	Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy.	*Educational Research Journal*	2456	85
Sirin, S. R. (2005).	Socioeconomic status and academic achievement: A meta-analytic review of research.	*Review of Educational Research*	2152	113
Hidi, S., & Renninger, K. A. (2006).	The four-phase model of interest development.	*Educational Psychologist*	1766	98
Shute, V. J. (2008).	Focus on formative feedback.	*Review of Educational Research*	1759	110

TC: total citation, TCY: total citations per year

The Most Productive and Influential Journals in Review Literature

Table IV shows the list of the top 20 most productive and influential journals in the Review literature. Considering the number of publications, it is seen that the most productive journal is "Review of Educational Research" (RER). Of all review publications, 5.3% were published in this journal. The first rea-

son for this is that the journal has been published since 1931. The second reason is that this journal only publishes review articles. The second journal, Educational Research Review (ERR), has been active since 2006 and 2.4% of the review studies were published in this journal.

Taking a look at the journals in terms of the average number of citations per publication (CPP), which is an indicator of impact, RER ranks first. "Reading Research Quarterly" journal comes second. According to the h-index, which is an indicator of impact and productivity, RER comes first and ERR second. Overall, these 20 journals were found to feature 27.2% of all review articles and offer a potential haven for researchers interested in publishing review articles on education.

Table IV. The most productive and influential journal

Rank	Journal	NP	PRPT	TC	CPP	h index
1	Review of Educational Research	648	5,3	87514	135,1	290
2	Educational Research Review	294	2,4	18801	63,9	130
3	BMC Medical Education	211	1,7	4442	21,1	58
4	Education Sciences	186	1,5	1216	6,5	27
5	Frontiers in Education	168	1,4	605	3,6	21
6	Reading Teacher	161	1,3	282	1,8	14
7	British Journal of Sociology of Education	146	1,2	1187	8,1	30
8	Language Learning	134	1,1	7997	59,7	88
9	Etr & D-Educational Technology Research and Development	134	1,1	3968	29,6	61
10	Phi Delta Kappan	134	1,1	412	3,1	17
11	Computers & Education	131	1,1	11522	88,0	106
12	Reading Research Quarterly	118	1,0	10742	91,0	103
13	Educational Researcher	118	1,0	6001	50,9	76
14	Teaching and Teacher Education	117	1,0	5459	46,7	73
15	Education and Information Technologies	117	1,0	1639	14,0	38
16	Academy of Management Learning & Education	100	0,8	7669	76,7	86
17	MINERVA	99	0,8	900	9,1	28

18	Teachers College Record	98	0,8	7084	72,3	84
19	Language Teaching	97	0,8	3452	35,6	58
20	Interactive Learning Environments	93	0,8	1399	15,0	35
	Total (T), mean (m)	3304 (T)	27,2 (T)	182291 (T)	55,2 (m)	71,15 (m)

NP: number of publications, TC: total number of citations, CPP: citations per publication, PRTP: publication rate in total publications. The ranking on the list was made based on the NP value.

The Most Productive and Influential Authors in Review Literature

Table V shows the productivity and impact values of 20 authors who published more than 10 review articles. Among the Review article authors, Hwang G.J. was found to be the most prolific, followed by Giorgis C. and Johnson N.J. The most influential author according to the CPP value was found to be Dochy F., followed by Slavin R.E. and Hew K.F. The h index is a widely used indicator as a measure of productivity and impact. The most productive and influential authors in terms of the h index were found to be Hwang, G.J., Hallinger P., Slavin R.E., and Tsai C.C.

Table V. The most productive and influential authors

Rank	**Author**	**NP**	**TC**	**CPP**	**h_index**
1	HWANG GJ	39	1056	27,1	16
2	GIORGIS C	30	25	0,8	2
3	JOHNSON NJ	30	25	0,8	2
5	TSAI CC	21	1188	56,6	13
4	HALLINGER P	21	581	27,7	13
6	SLAVIN RE	14	1699	121,4	13
7	KRISHNA LKR	14	160	11,4	8
8	BURGESS A	13	309	23,8	9
9	ZOU D	13	186	14,3	7
10	APPLE MW	13	109	8,4	4
11	MASON S	12	150	12,5	8

13	LIVINGSTON N	12	11	0,9	2
12	KURKJIAN C	12	10	0,8	2
14	SCHON I	12	8	0,7	2
15	DOCHY F	11	2879	261,7	11
16	MELLIS C	11	272	24,7	8
17	ROBERTS C	11	149	13,5	8
18	HEW KF	11	957	87,0	7
19	LEE K	11	209	19,0	4
20	DIETERICH DJ	11	7	0,6	1

NP: number of publications, CPP: citations per publication.

The Most Productive and Effective Institutions in Review Literature

Table VI shows the institutions that have contributed the most to the Review literature and their impact. The institution that publishes the most review articles is the University of Wisconsin, USA. In second place is the University of Illinois in the USA and in third place is the University of Toronto in Canada. In terms of impact, the highest CPP value, i.e. the most impactful institution, was found to be the University of Michigan. Stanford University ranked second and the University of Wisconsin ranked third. In general, the prominence of the universities in the USA among the universities in the top 10 is striking. The universities in the USA were found to achieve high productivity and impact.

Table VI. The most productive and influential authors

Rank	Affiliations	Country	NP	PRPT‰	TC	CPP
1	University of Wisconsin	USA	125	103	8647	69,2
2	University of Illinois	USA	122	100	7433	60,9
3	University of Toronto	Canada	97	80	6456	66,6
4	Ohio State University	USA	91	75	3869	42,5
5	University of Michigan	USA	91	75	10699	117,6
6	University of Hong Kong	Hong Kong	88	72	2731	31,0
7	Penn State University	USA	84	69	5516	65,7
8	University of Georgia	USA	84	69	3843	45,8
9	University of North Carolina	USA	80	66	3991	49,9
10	Stanford University	USA	70	58	6352	90,7

NP: number of publications, TC: total number of citations, CPP: citations per publication, PRTP(‰): publication rate in total publications. The ranking on the list was made based on the NP value.

Most Productive and Influential Countries in Review Literature

Table VII shows the list of the most influential countries that have contributed the most to the Review literature. A total of 131 countries have contributed to the review literature, with the USA making the largest contribution. The United States was found to be nearly four times more productive than the UK in second place. This finding is parallel with that of Ivanovic and Ho (2019). After the USA, the UK, Australia, Canada, and China contributed the most. Six of the ten most productive countries are in Europe. Among the ten most productive countries, the USA has the highest publication impact, followed by the Netherlands and Belgium.

Table VII. The most productive and influential countries

Rank	Country	NP	TC	CPP
1	USA	7546	207538	27,5
2	UK	1891	36729	19,4
3	Australia	1548	17745	11,5

4	Canada	1081	20992	19,4
5	China	1045	10715	10,3
6	Spain	645	6099	9,5
7	Netherlands	595	15752	26,5
8	Germany	527	7185	13,6
9	Turkey	288	2676	9,3
10	Belgium	247	5857	23,7

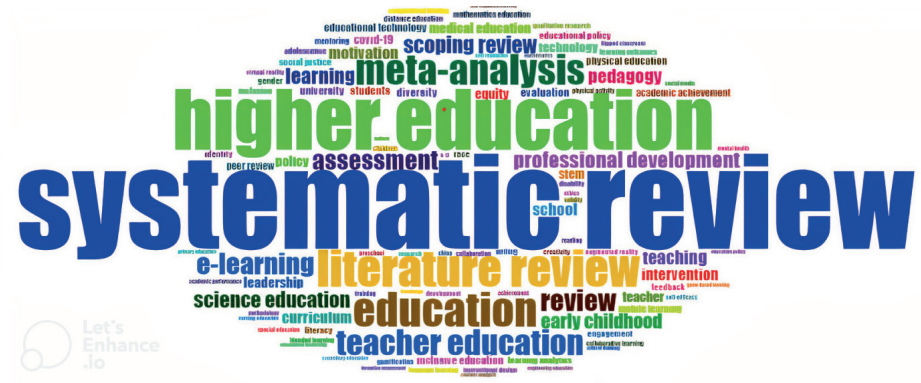
NP: number of publications, TC: total number of citations, CPP: citations per publication, PRTP: publication rate in total publications. The ranking on the list was made based on the NP value.

Basic Concepts in the Review Literature

Word Cloud analysis was performed to identify the key concepts in the Review literature. The 100 most frequently repeated author keywords that were detected as a result of the analysis are shown in Figure III. Figure III shows that "systematic review" is the most frequently repeated concept in the literature. Accordingly, it may be concluded that systematic review is a widely used method in the literature, although there are many types of reviews. The second prominent concept was found to be "higher education". Based on this fact, it can be inferred that review studies cover topics on higher education rather than the K-12 level. The concepts of "literature review" and "scoping review" are among other most repeated concepts. Each of these methods refers to a different type of review. Grant and Booth (2009) suggested that there are 14 different types of reviews. According to Grant and Booth (2009), the literature review is a general concept, and it aims to review new and current literature. A comprehensive search strategy may not include quality assessment and synthesis is generally narrative. A scoping review aims to identify the potential size and scope of available research literature. It involves a complete search strategy and no formal quality assessment. Synthesis is typically done in narrative form or in the form of tables. "Meta-analysis" is one of the main concepts in the respective literature, according to the figure. It can be inferred from here that meta-analysis is a method frequently used in review studies. Other most frequently used terms are "teacher education", "e-learning", "assessment", "professional development", "science education", "learn-

ing", "early childhood", and "pedagogy". Indeed, these concepts provide a scope of the issues examined in the review. They also serve as indicators that review methods are used in different contexts.

Figure II. Basic Concept Map. Note The font size of words is directly proportional to their frequency.



Themes of Review Literature

The second research question aims to reveal the themes of the review literature. A co-occurrence keyword analysis was performed to determine the thematic map of the Review literature and the results of the analysis are shown in Figure IV. Co-occurrence keyword analysis revealed five clusters in the review literature.

The first cluster is shown in green and the main concepts in this cluster are "higher education", "online education", "education technology", "mobile learning", "technology", and "pedagogy". The cluster mainly focuses on educational technologies. It can be said that the education level that is subject to the most scrutiny is higher education. "Systematic review" and "literature review" are at the center of both this cluster and the whole network. The main reason for this is that this study focuses on review articles. In addition, the fact that the largest node of the network is "systematic review" shows that systematic review methods are widely used in the review literature. This clus-

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ter features studies on the interaction between education and technology such as learning analytics (Gedrimiene et al., 2020), augmented reality (Akcayir & Akcayir, 2017), educational technologies in higher education (Bedenlier et al., 2020), internet of things in education (Kassab et al., 2020), and mobile learning (Crompton et al., 2016). There are also studies that address the role of technology in education from a pedagogical perspective (Burden et al., 2019; Chiu, 2021; Theelen & van Breukelen, 2022).

The second cluster is shown in red on the map and the main concepts it features are "teacher education", "professional development", "early childhood", "curriculum", "equity", "diversity", "identity", "gender", "social justice", and "race". In this cluster are studies on topics such as social justice and teacher education (Mills & Ballantyne, 2016), teacher education for equality (Liao et al., 2022), social justice, diversity, and equality (Gumus et al., 2021), teacher and social justice (Xenofontos et al.), gender differences (Fisher et al., 2020), and the development of teacher identity (van Lankveld et al., 2017). As is seen, this cluster also features studies on teacher training and professional development. There are also studies on race (McDermott et al., 2015) and diversity and equity (Lewis et al., 2019) in the context of education policy. Basically, this cluster examines issues such as diversity, equality, justice, and gender in education. In addition, it deals with teacher education and professional development issues and examines them in the context of educational policies.

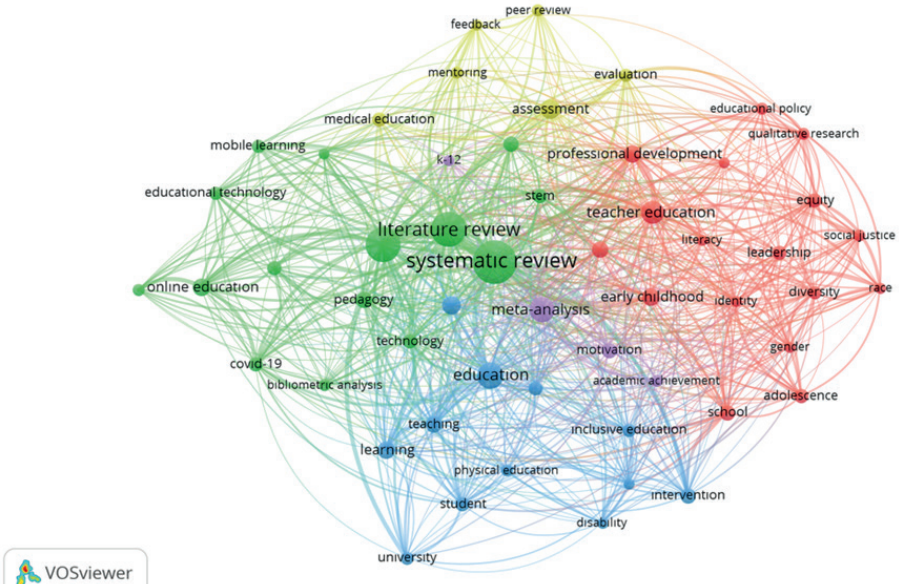
The third cluster is shown in blue on the map. The main concepts of this cluster are "education", "teaching", "learning", "student", "disability", "inclusion", "intervention", and "inclusive education". In this cluster, the concept of training is located near the center of the map and is therefore a central node of the map. This is because the subject under study is education. There are two main topics in the cluster. The first is learning and teaching, and the second is inclusive education. Student learning (Gao et al., 2020; Stenalt & Lassesen, 2022), teaching skills and knowledge to students with developmental disabilities (Apanasionok et al., 2019), teaching effectiveness for the education of students with disabilities (Iacono et al.), inclusive curriculum for students with disabilities or learning disabilities (Rendoth et al, 2022), teacher education for inclusive education (Tristani & Bassett-Gunter, 2020),

inclusion in physics education (Qi & Ha, 2012) are the main research topics of this cluster.

The fourth cluster is shown in yellow on the map. The main concepts of this cluster are "assessment", "evaluation", "peer review", "feedback", and "mentoring". The main focus of this cluster is measurement and evaluation in education. This cluster features studies on assessment practices and processes, such as the impact of student peer review on student outcomes (Mulder et al., 2014), student-centered feedback design (Ryan et al., 2021), the effectiveness of verbal feedback between students (Dickson et al., 2019), student voice in assessment and feedback (Sun et al., 2022), and theories in assessment and feedback research. In addition, research on the implications of these issues in medical education (Cook et al., 2017; Karthikeyan et al., 2019) and mentoring (Goh et al., 2022; Kow et al., 2020) are also of interest to this cluster.

The fifth and smallest cluster of the map is presented in lilac. There are two main concepts in this cluster: "academic achievement" and "motivation". This cluster focuses on research topics such as academic achievement and motivation (Dekker & Fischer, 2008), motivation at the K-12 level (Potvin & Hasni, 2014), the role of interpersonal relationships in students' motivation and academic achievement (Martin & Dowson, 2009), the effect of need supportive teaching on adolescents' motivation.

Figure IV: Co-occurrence map of keywords (threshold 50 co-occurrences, display 54 keywords)



Collaboration Interaction between Countries

The third research question aims to reveal the cooperative interaction between countries that have contributed to the review literature. To this end, country-co authorship analysis was conducted. The number of nodesaffects the readability of the science map produced in Vosviewer. To ensure readability, the collaboration analysis included 97 countries with at least three publicationsand at least one collaborative author. The country collaboration network map is shown in Figure V. The country that cooperated the most is the USA. This is followed by England, Australia, Canada, and China.

When the collaboration map is examined, it is seen that countries in the East such as China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan, and Thailand cooperate more among themselves and form a cluster. In addition, countries in the West, such as the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Switzerland, Switzerland, Portugal, and France cooperate more among themselves. USA, England,

Australia, and Canada are at the center of the network, connecting the eastern and western clusters.

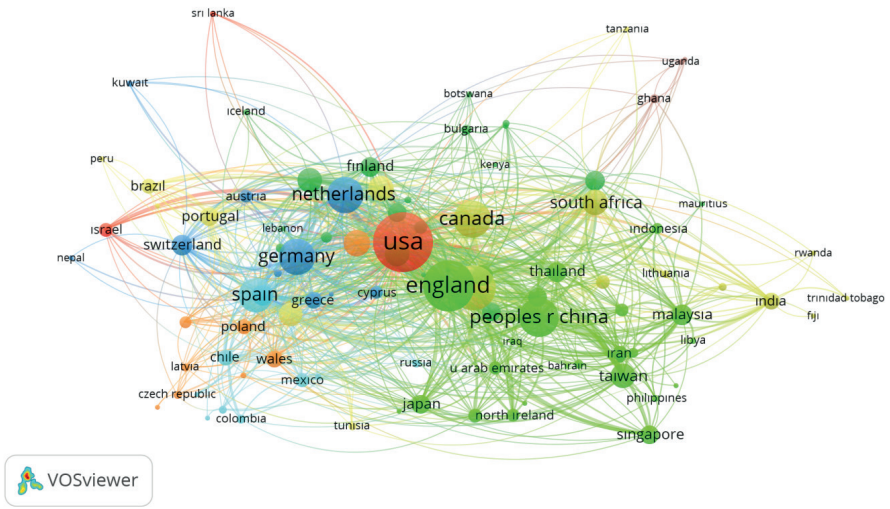


Figure V. Country co-authorship analysis (N= 131 countries, threshold minimum number of 3 publications and at least one link, display 97 countries).

Discussion and Conclusions

This study comprehensively analysed educational research by considering review articles. With long-term data covering the period between 1956 and 2022, this research has revealed the contributions to educational research, the productive and influential authors, journals, institutions and countries, the thematic structure of the field and the collaboration network. The findings of the study provide a comprehensive synthesis of the current state of educational research, as well as recommendations for the advancement of educational research.

According to the findings of this study, it was revealed that review

studies in education reached a significant growth trend between 1996 and 2012, but the most important growth occurred after 2013. This growth of review studies in the last thirty years is actually parallel to the growth of educational research. It can be said that this is actually the case for many disciplines. Because review studies occur as a result of increasing literature volume. As more publications are made in a field, both the literature grows and the subject matter diversifies. This situation reveals the need to synthesise more topics, fields or a discipline. This is also true for educational research. While there were approximately 7000 publications in the WOS database between 1980 and 2003, there has been a significant increase in the number of publications since 2005 and has continued to increase. This growth volume of educational research has resulted in the growth of review studies. Such a finding indicates that the number of publications in educational research will increase more in the coming years and therefore review studies will also increase more.

The Word Cloud analysis of this study reveals which review methods are more dominant in the review studies that are constantly growing in the educational literature. When a search is made in the WOS database as systematic review, it is seen that systematic review studies are not a dominant review methodology, especially until 1990. Until these years, it can be said that traditional review studies were a popular review methodology in scientific fields. However, since the beginning of the 1990s, systematic review methodology has shown a growing trend in the global literature and has become a review methodology that is used more and more every year. This situation is also valid for educational research. The results of this study revealed that systematic review and meta-analysis methodologies are the two most commonly used review types in educational research, respectively. The reason for the widespread use of systematic review methodology in educational research may be due to the significant differences between it and traditional literature. The traditional review deals with a wide range of topics and handles the studies in the literature subjectively, lacking a systematic methodology. However, the systematic review method seeks to answer a specific research question. In addition, it follows a rigorous, transparent, structured and reproducible process. Therefore, since the systematic review method is a more scientific

method than the traditional review in terms of both its scope and the methodological process it follows, it has been accepted and widely used in educational research as in other fields.

The findings of the thematic analysis of educational research focused on five themes in particular. The first of these is studies on educational technologies. This theme includes topics such as computer assisted education, online learning, digital education tools. The development of technology in recent years has resulted in the enrichment of educational technologies. Educational technology applications that aim to improve the quality of education such as facilitating and enriching students' learning and providing digital information literacy have an important place in educational research. Chen et al. (2020) revealed that educational technology research has shown a significant increase in recent years. Especially blended learning, online social communities, socialised e-learning, mobile supported language learning and game-based learning have gained importance in recent years. It seems inevitable that innovative applications in education will emerge in the coming years, especially as artificial intelligence and machine learning applications develop.

Another theme includes studies related to teacher education. Professional development of teachers, who are the basic cornerstone of education, has been a subject of interest for many years. For this reason, theoretical and practical applications of teacher education have been criticised and tried to be improved in certain periods (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Grossman et al., 2009). Studies on teacher education have focussed on issues such as how teachers learn, what they contribute to the learning process, how educational policies affect teachers' professional lives at the school level, and teachers' social networks (Avalos, 2011). As a result, teacher education is a subject whose policies and practices are evaluated according to changing global, national and regional conditions.

One of the emerging themes in educational research is studies focusing on the ethnic, cultural and demographic structures of education such as gender, social justice, diversity and race. Access to education and educational resources around the world, the imbalance between literacy rates, the diver-

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sity created by internationalisation, the psychological aspects of education according to gender, diversity in multicultural education and racial factors are among the important topics of educational research. Researchers argue that education can play a key role in eliminating inequalities between different groups and contribute significantly to the construction of society (Arar et al., 2017; Berkovich, 2014; Shields, 2010). For this reason, educational research has been addressed from many perspectives in the context of gender, social justice, diversity and race.

The third cluster includes topics on teaching, learning and students. This cluster, which covers the most fundamental topics of educational research, focuses on student learning, types of learning, emerging learning environments, the changing nature of teaching methods, and student achievement. Recent studies on this theme have emphasised the use of digital technologies in teaching and learning, e-learning environments and quality, virtual learning, augmented reality, flipped classroom, game-based learning, and other diverse and emerging learning environments. This situation can basically be seen as a result of the development of technology and at the same time the search for alternatives to traditional learning approaches.

The fourth cluster includes studies on Assessment and evaluation. Assessment and evaluation in education includes studies on measuring student performance and evaluating the effectiveness of educational programmes and educational policies at institutional, regional, national and global levels. Assessment and evaluation in education determines the level of learning outcomes and enables a critical review of existing policies. Developing effective strategies and policies in education plays an important role in improving the education process. This theme is a topic that is currently being analysed according to changing and evolving regional and global conditions. Especially in recent years, assessment and evaluation in online education, which is mandated by COVID-19, has been frequently examined. In addition, new student assessment approaches have been proposed to improve the quality of education (Liu et al., 2022).

The last cluster in educational research is on academic achievement and motivation. Academic achievement is one of the most frequently analysed topics in educational research from various perspectives. Determinants

of academic achievement, barriers to academic achievement, differences between students' academic achievement at regional and national level, differences between students' achievement ethnically and racially are the topics examined within this theme. However, studies in which academic achievement is associated with motivation are also included in this theme. The relationship between academic achievement and motivation, the interaction between motivation and career goals, teaching motivation among teachers and its effects, tools to increase academic achievement and motivation were also examined within the scope of this theme.

This study revealed the countries that contribute the most to educational research. The most productive countries are USA, UK, Australia, Canada and China. One of the reasons behind the high productivity is that USA, UK, Australia, Canada are English speaking countries. The reason behind China's productivity is that it has a large higher education system. Basu (2010) found that the number of scientific journalsin a country has an impact on its scientific productivity. Therefore, the factor behind the USA being the most productive country may be linked to the number of USA-based journals indexed in the WOS database. Lee and Bozeman (2005) found a positive relationship between international collaboration and scientific productivity. Another reason behind the high productivity of the countries on the list, the USA in particular, may be that they engage in international collaborations more. The USA is also the country with the highest publication impact. It is known that highly cited articles are authored by researchers from different countries (Aksnes, 2003; LanchoBarrantes et al., 2012). In addition, while author collaboration is expected to produce more citations, this is also related to the type of collaboration (Tahamtan et al., 2016). International co-publications gain more citations than domestic co-publications (Goldfinch et al., 2003). One of the reasons behind the high publication impact of the USA can be associated with the results of this research.

A clearer picture is obtained when co-authorship co-operation and productivity between countries are evaluated together. The top five rankings in the collaboration network are aligned with the top five countries in the list of the most productive countries. Therefore, it can be said that countries that cooperate more are more productive. This is consistent with the results of

previous studies (Aksnes, 2003; Goldfinch et al., 2003; Lancho Barrantes et al., 2012; Lee & Bozeman, 2005; Wagner et al., 2019). In the collaboration map, it is seen that countries located in a similar geography cooperate more among themselves and form a cluster. Nomaler et al. (2013) investigated the effect of geographical distance on citation frequency and concluded that as the geographical distance increases, the number of citations also increases. The fact that the USA, England, Australia, and Canada are in a position to unite the East and the West, i.e. that they have cooperated with countries far away, can be attributed to the high publishing impact ofthese countries. The collaboration map shows that numerous countries cooperate less frequently. Since many countries with fewer connections can be seen in the collaboration map, it can be said that there's room for further international collaboration. The expansion of the co-authorship network, i.e. the development of international collaboration, is important for the development of the field.

This study has some practical implications for researchers, academics, administrators and policy makers. First, awareness of the growth trends and themes in review articles in educational research can guide researchers in identifying their own research focus. Understanding the collaborative structure revealed by this study can improve the diversity of research results by enhancing potential cross-national research collaboration. Recognition of influential authors and institutions can support collaborative efforts, and recognition of influential journals can shed light on publication opportunities for researchers. This study, which reveals the current structure of educational research, has enabled researchers to recognise and bring to light issues that have remained in the background. The results of the study emphasise the need for decision-making by a wide range of stakeholders, to encourage more collaboration, to increase potential cooperation between isolated countries, and to advance the field of education. In addition, this study reveals the current use of review methodology in the field of education, allowing researchers to recognise the wide range of these methodologies. Researchers can bring new research questions to the agenda by integrating the thematic and methodological trend of educational research.

In future research, the temporal change of themes in educational research can be analysed periodically. In addition, changes in methodological

and content trends in review studies in recent years can be addressed by using a more in-depth qualitative method. Themes in educational research, review methodologies, collaboration patterns at cultural and regional level can help to identify differences in educational research. Particularly at the disciplinary level, contributions to educational research from other disciplines and which aspect of education these contributions have been made more can be a new research question.

This study has some limitations. First, this study is based on the WOS database. This means that the Scopus database was ignored. The possible effect of this limitation on the study is that the findings may change if the Scopus database is included. However, since WOS and Scopus have similar content despite their differences, such a limitation may need to be tested in future research. Second, bibliometric studies are by nature a method that analyses a large collection of data. Therefore, it is not possible to make inferences about the quality of studies for large data sets. Third, as in many previous bibliometric analyses, this study focuses on English language publications. This limitation ignores contributions from studies in other languages and may affect the findings in a certain direction.

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Higher Vocational Education and Training: Examining an unexpected upskilling and reskilling pathway for STEM and non-STEM university graduates in Spain

Formación Profesional de Grado Superior: Examinando una vía inesperada de upskilling y reskilling para titulados universitarios STEM y no STEM en España

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Abstract

This article analyses the type of learning strategies of university graduates who subsequently choose to study a higher vocational qualification in Spain. The aim is to show whether this decision responds to an upskilling or reskilling strategy. The methodology used is quantitative, and taps on official survey data of the learning pathways and VET-to-labor market transitions of Higher VET Graduates in Spain (ETEFIL-19). First, the magnitude of University-to-Higher-VET transfer is determined and the profile of the university graduates involved in this transition is characterised. Second, the "relatedness" between the field of study of origin and the Higher VET area of destination is analysed. Thirdly, the perceived usefulness in terms of employability is studied. The results reveal that University-to-VET transfer is mainly chosen by women and that the decision is taken years after completing their university studies. The positive and statistically significant association between the Higher VET area and their previous university degree reveals that this transition is best interpreted as an upskilling strategy, rather than a career change. University graduates also perceive that their VET qualification has been useful in finding a job. Finally, policy and practice implications are considered, while the limitations of this study and the need for future lines of research are raised.

Keywords: Vocational Education and Training, university graduates, VET-University pathways, Post-Baccalaureate, Reverse Transfer, employability, STEM, contingency analysis, reskilling, upskilling, ETEFIL-19

Resumen

Este artículo analiza el tipo de estrategias de aprendizaje de aquellos jóvenes que tras lograr una titulación universitaria optan por estudiar un ciclo formativo de Grado Superior de Formación Profesional en España. El objetivo es mostrar si esta decisión responde a una estrategia de actualización (upskilling) o de recapacitación (reskilling). La metodología utilizada es de carácter cuantitativo, fundamentada en la encuesta oficial española que estudia la inserción laboral de los jóvenes españoles con relación a los itinerarios seguidos dentro del sistema educativo y las transiciones entre el estudio y el trabajo (ETEFIL-19). Primero, se determina la magnitud de este fenómeno y se caracteriza el perfil de las personas que protagonizan esta transición. Segundo, se analiza la relación entre la rama de estudio de procedencia y la familia profesional de destino. Tercero, se estudia la utilidad percibida en clave de empleabilidad. Los resultados revelan que esta trayectoria se desarrolla mayoritariamente por mujeres y que la decisión se toma años después de finalizar sus estudios universitarios. La relación entre la rama de estudios previos y la familia del ciclo cursado es positiva y estadísticamente significativa, por lo que su decisión se toma principalmente en función a una estrategia de upskilling, más que de un cambio de carrera. Asimismo, perciben que su titulación de FP les ha resultado útil para encontrar empleo. Finalmente, se consideran las implicaciones en el ámbito de la política y de la práctica, a la vez que se plantean las limita-

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ciones de este estudio y la necesidad de futuras líneas de investigación.

Palabras clave: Formación profesional superior, egresados universitarios, pasarelas FP-Universidad, itinerarios educativos, empleabilidad, STEM, análisis de contingencia, reskilling, upskilling, ETEFIL-19

Introduction

Vocational Education and Training (henceforth VET) attracts different profiles of adults who, at different points in their life course, decide to return to education/training (Cournoyer et al., 2017).. In Europe, this trend has been accentuated in recent years and more and more schools are admitting adults to IVET courses (Markowitsch & Hefler, 2019).. The return of adults to the education system is a phenomenon that shows large variations across occupations and countries (Lerman 2017, cited by Markowitsch & Hefler, 2019).

These flows are an example of the increasing de-standardisation, individualisation and fragmentation of young people's transitions to adulthood (Montes Ruiz, 2019) and challenge the excessively rigid and linear configuration of educational pathways and routes to employment, which have long since become much more ambiguous, protracted and indirect (e.g. Golding, 1999; Moodie, 2004; Taylor & Jain, 2017; Townsend & Dever, 1999)."edition":"C. Selby-Smith (Ed..

The presence of university graduates in VET classrooms is not a new phenomenon, nor is it exclusive to Spain. Research undertaken in countries such as Australia and the United States aimed at determining the volume of this flow, the context in which it occurs and the reasons behind this decision. The counter-intuitive nature of University-to-VET transfer is perhaps one of the reasons why this phenomenon has received little attention in Europe (Montes Ruiz, 2019).

In the United States, Townsend & Dever (1999) coined the concept of "Post Baccalaureate Reverse Transfer" to characterise the movement of university graduates to Community Colleges (2-year VET). Two years earlier, Gose (1997) estimated that between 10% and 20% of students entering

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this type of training had a previous university degree. Subsequently, several authors (e.g. Friedel & Friesleben, 2017; Leigh, 2009) have continued this line of research but the scope has often been limited to specific educational institutions or states, so that no clear picture is available at the country level.

In Australia, the movement of graduates from university to VET was virtually unknown until Golding (1999) uncovered the magnitude of this flow in the State of Victoria. In the period 1991-1997, he estimated that about 40,000 VET students had a prior university qualification each year, although the accuracy of these figures was questioned years later by Moodie (2004). More recent statistics show that in the last five years the percentage of VET graduates with a prior university degree in Australia is between 12% and 15% (National Centre for Vocational Education Research, 2022)..

Generally speaking, university graduates decide to enrol in a VET programme years after obtaining their degree. In Europe, tertiary education attracts a significant number of students aged 25+ as an *upskilling* or *reskilling* strategy (European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion et al., 2016). In Finland, analysis of a group of short-cycle higher education programmes showed that the average age of students was around 40 years and at least 12% had a university degree (Aittola & Ursin, 2019).

Golding (1999) and Townsend and Dever (1999) highlight the unforeseen nature of this movement both for the individuals involved, as it was not part of their career plans, and for the VET providers, designed to take in students entering from conventional entry routes such as Compulsory Secondary Education or Upper Secondary Education. In the USA, Friedel & Friesleben (2017) criticise the fact that educational authorities still do not have the relevant mechanisms in place to collect data on the volume and characteristics of VET students with previous university degrees and to analyse the impact of their presence on the quality of training or at a budgetary level.

Periods of economic downturn and the resulting increase in unemployment and job insecurity lead to a return to the education system of people with work experience (e.g. Harris et al., 2006; Lehmann et al., 2014; Molgat et al., 2011). For instance, in Australia, the movement of university graduates into VET took place in the early 1990s during an episode of economic reces-

sion that led to high unemployment rates among university graduates (Golding, 1999). In any case, several authors point to the multi-causal character of this phenomenon (e.g. Chen et al., 2020; Hagedorn & Castro, 1999; Harris et al., 2006; Quinley & Quinley, 1999).we examine the lived experiences of international reverse transfers to understand the reasons for reverse-transfer and to understand the students' learning experiences. Methods: Using a phenomenological approach, we recruited 10 international reverse transfer students attending one four-year university or one of the two community colleges. We conducted individual interviews with all participants and analyzed transcript data through Bourdieu's sociological theory of field, habitus, and social and cultural capital. Results: We identified three types of international reverse transfer students: undergraduate reverse transfers, temporary reverse transfers, and postbaccalaureate reverse transfers. Each type reported different reasons for reverse transfer but shared similar influential factors of the reverse transfer process as well as the learning experiences while enrolled at the community colleges. Contributions: This study helps to fill an information and research gap regarding international reverse transfer students. We present the academic, social, and cultural challenges faced by international students and offer practical implications for higher education practitioners for improved understandings and better processes to serve international students from diverse cultural backgrounds.","container-title":"Community College Review","DOI":"10.1177/0091552120932223","ISSN":"0091-5521, 1940-2325","issue":"4","journalAbbreviation":"Community College Review","language":"en","page":"376-399","source":"DOI.org (Crossref. For example, Harris et al. (2006) identified 19 factors including, among others, improved employment prospects, cost of study, location, school reputation, flexibility of study mode, recommendation from social or work environment, or purely personal interest. These decisions take place in contexts of uncertainty and not always voluntarily (Fouad & Bynner, 2008) and are reactive or proactive depending on a combination of individual, social and contextual factors (Cournoyer et al., 2017)..

Retraining or upgrading of professional skills as main motivators

Reskilling is the process by which a person acquires a new set of skills that will enable them to perform a different occupation and involves a career change, while *upskilling* is the process by which a person acquires an additional set of skills that enhance their ability to perform the job for which they were trained (Evans, 2022). The presence of university graduates in US community colleges has been explained in terms of both an *upskilling* and *reskilling* strategy (Chen et al., 2020; Friedel & Friesleben, 2017; Quinley & Quinley, 1999). we examine the lived experiences of international reverse transfers to understand the reasons for reverse-transfer and to understand the students' learning experiences. Methods: Using a phenomenological approach, we recruited 10 international reverse transfer students attending one four-year university or one of the two community colleges. We conducted individual interviews with all participants and analyzed transcript data through Bourdieu's sociological theory of field, habitus, and social and cultural capital. Results: We identified three types of international reverse transfer students: undergraduate reverse transfers, temporary reverse transfers, and postbaccalaureate reverse transfers. Each type reported different reasons for reverse transfer but shared similar influential factors of the reverse transfer process as well as the learning experiences while enrolled at the community colleges. Contributions: This study helps to fill an information and research gap regarding international reverse transfer students. We present the academic, social, and cultural challenges faced by international students and offer practical implications for higher education practitioners for improved understandings and better processes to serve international students from diverse cultural backgrounds.","-container-title":"Community College Review","DOI":"10.1177/009155212 0932223","ISSN":"0091-5521, 1940-2325","issue":"4","journalAbbreviation":"Community College Review","language":"en","page":"376-399","-source":"DOI.org (Crossref.

In this article two hypotheses are put forward to explain the movement of Spanish university graduates (ISCED 5) into Higher VET, the *reskilling* hypothesis and the *upskilling* hypothesis. Therefore, this study pursues three objectives: 1) to quantify and characterise the flow of university graduates

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towards Higher VET in Spain; 2) to contrast whether this flow is mainly due to an *upskilling* or *reskilling* strategy and; 3) to assess the usefulness of the Higher VET qualification obtained in order to find employment.

Reskilling hypothesis

This hypothesis suggests that University graduates (ISCED 6) enrol in Higher VET programmes (ISCED 5) that are not related to their previous degree on the lookout for a career change. The reskilling strategy may be motivated by unemployment or job insecurity, but also by personal or family reasons. In Spain, Rujas Martínez-Novillo (2015) points to the Intermediate VET programmes as a re-entry door or a way of "recycling" for people who left the school system without the compulsory education qualification but the aim of this article is to check whether the Higher VET programmes constitute a reskilling route for people with a university degree.

Upskilling hypothesis

VET has been identified as a way for university graduates to expand the repertoire of professional skills that they have not obtained at the end of their academic training (Temmerman, 2019). In Spain, García-Brosa (2019) points to the Higher VET programmes as an incipient re-entry route into the education system for university graduates seeking to specialise in certain areas or to complement their training. Thus, the *upskilling* hypothesis assumes that university graduates enrol in Higher VET programmes to further enrich their competence profile in which technical, academic and generic skills complement each other (Markowitsch & Hefler, 2019).

In general terms, the approach to test these hypotheses is to verify whether or not there is a relationship between prior university education and subsequent VET studies, as will be seen in the following section.

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Method

Instruments

In order to determine the magnitude of the flow of university graduates into Higher VET, it is essential to identify a robust, reliable and accessible data source (Teese & Watson, 2001). In Spain, the latest edition of the Survey on the Transition from Education/Training to Labour Market Insertion (hereafter ETEFIL-19) (INE, 2020) fits the needs of this study to a large extent due to the size of the sample analysed, its accessibility and the type of data collected that allow us to establish the degree of relationship between the chosen VET programme and the previous university degree.

The main objective of ETEFIL-19 is "to *study the subsequent educational trajectory and the process of labour market insertion in relation to the studies undertaken by each of the 5 groups of interest for the survey* (including Higher VET graduates), as *well as the transitions between study and work*" (INE, 2020, p.5). The territorial scope of ETEFIL-19 covered the whole of Spain. The data collection method combined direct web-based (CAWI) and telephone (CATI) interviews and the consultation of administrative data. The surveys were conducted between August 2019 and January 2020. ETEFIL-19 provided access to information on the educational background and previous training of higher technicians who had completed their studies in a Spanish educational institution five years earlier.

Sample

ETEFIL-19 surveyed in 2019 an effective sample of 7,802 Higher VET graduates out of a theoretical sample of 11,031 persons from a total population of 113,910 persons who had successfully completed a Higher VET qualification in the academic year 2013-2014. It should be noted that ETEFIL-19 provides estimates with a relative error of no more than 5% for the most important characteristics, using the Jackknife method (INE, 2020).

In order to achieve the objectives of the present study, a subsample of the total effective sample (n=7,802) was selected, consisting of Higher VET graduates who had a university degree before enrolling in a Higher VET

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programme (through the variable EST_B19_1 of ETEFIL-19). This subset is made up of 767 persons representing 9.8% of the sample.

Approach to hypothesis testing

Once the study sample had been selected, dichotomous variables were created to classify the previous university degree and the Higher VET programme according to whether or not they belonged to the scientific-technological field (STEM/NOT STEM). STEM university degrees were categorised as those included in two branches of knowledge: Engineering and Architecture and Science. In the case of VET, nine programme areas were included in the STEM category according to the classification proposed by the National Institute for Educational Assessment (INEE, 2017)

TABLE I. Branches of study and professional families in the scientific-technological field (STEM)

STEM BRANCHES (university)	STEM PROGRAMME AREAS (VET)
Science Engineering and Architecture	Building and Civil Works Electricity and Electronics Energy and Water Mechanical Manufacturing Food Industries Extractive Industries[1] IT and Communications Installations and Maintenance Chemistry Transport and maintenance of vehicles

Source: Compiled by the authors

It should be noted that Health-related studies are left out of this categorisation following the proposal of the US National Science Foundation (n.d.), considering that a good part of Health and Health Sciences graduates end up working in the care field and not so much in sectors linked to research

1 The Extractive Industries vocational family has no Higher Level training cycles.

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or innovation[2] . Therefore, including health science graduates could distort the results and make it difficult to understand the real opportunities and trends in the STEM field. Thus, this analysis has chosen to limit the focus to fields more closely related to traditional science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

From this categorisation it is determined that there is a relationship between the VET qualification and the previous university degree both when both belong to the field of science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM→STEM) or when both are outside (NON STEM→NON STEM). Both scenarios support the *upskilling* hypothesis. Conversely, the *reskilling* hypothesis is supported when field of origin and destination do not match (STEM→NO STEM / NO STEM→STEM).

Data analysis

Data analysis was carried out with JAMOVI v2.3.21.0, an open source statistical analysis software. The analyses include the calculation of descriptive statistics (analysis of the flow of university students to VET) and descriptive-correlational analyses to test the *reskilling* and *upskilling* hypotheses, namely contingency analysis and Chi-square tests (χ^2). In the latter case, the analysis complies with three assumptions: the two variables are nominal, each variable comprises two independent categorical groups (STEM, NOT STEM), and none of the cells has an expected value of less than 5.

The chi-square test ($\chi 2$) of independence allows us to determine whether there is a relationship between the type of Higher VET qualification obtained in 2014 and the previous university degree considering two large categories (STEM and NO STEM). In this case, the sample corresponds to a single population, Higher VET graduates with previous university degree. The individuals have been classified according to two qualitative variables of a binomial nature: STEM Higher VET (Yes/No) and previous STEM university degree (Yes/No).

2 The US National Science Foundation only considers Health Sciences as a STEM degree at the doctoral level.

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Results

Socio-demographic profile

The number of people with a previous university degree who obtained a Higher VET qualification in the 2013-2014 academic year was 767, which represents 9.8 % of the sample at national level (n=7802). In addition, 17.1% of Higher VET graduates with a university degree (n=131) had at least a Master's degree.

The average age at the time of obtaining the Higher VET diploma in 2014 was 32 years and 50% were 30 years old or older (min=23, max=45, SD=6.5 years).

TABLE II. Higher technicians graduating in the 2013-2014 academic year by age group in 2014

	TOTAL HIGHER VET GRADUATES		**HIGHER VET GRADUATES WITH A PREVIOUS UNIVERSITY DEGREE**	
AGE GROUP	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
Under 25	4.462	57,2%	73	9,5%
25-34 years	2.428	31,1%	454	59,2%
35-44 years	648	8,3%	181	23,6%
45 years and over	264	3,4%	59	7,7%
All ages	**7.802**	**100%**	**767**	**100%**

Source: Compiled by the authors based on ETEFIL-19 data.

The percentage of Higher VET graduates with a previous university degree doubles the average (9,8%) in the 25-34 age group (18.7%) and almost triples among graduates aged 35-44 (27.9%).

TABLE III. Higher VET graduates with previous university degree by age group in 2014 with respect to the total number of graduates.

	TOTAL HIGHER VET GRADUATES	**HIGHER VET GRADUATES WITH PREVIOUS UNIVERSITY DEGREE**	
AGE GROUP	N	N	Percentage
Under 25	4.462	73	1,6%
25-34 years	2.428	454	18,7%
35-44 years	648	181	27,9%
45 years and over	264	59	22,3 %
All ages	**7.802**	**767**	**9,8%**

Source: Compiled by the authors based on ETEFIL-19 data.

The results in Tables II and III indicate that the decision to pursue VET studies does not take place immediately after completing university studies. In terms of gender, 67.5% are women, although the gender gap decreases with age, as shown in Table IV.

TABLE IV. Higher VET graduates with a previous university degree by sex and age group in 2014 2013-2014 academic year with

AGE GROUP	**SEX**				
	Male		**Female**		**Total**
	N	% of row	N	% of row	N
Under 25	15	20,5%	58	79,5%	73
25-34 years	140	30,8%	314	69,2%	454
35-44 years	70	38,7%	111	61,3%	181
45 and older	24	40,7%	35	59,3%	59
All ages	**249**	**32,5%**	**518**	**67,5%**	**767**

Source: Compiled by the authors based on ETEFIL-19 data.

Reasons to enrol in Higher VET

The main reason for university graduates to enrol in Higher VET programmes

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is to improve their future career prospects (67.8%). Personal interest comes next in the list. The expansion of knowledge for personal satisfaction is a reason cited more frequently by university graduates (24.8%) than by the sample as a whole (17.7%). In third place are "other reasons" (6.9%), which are not further detailed in the ETEFIL-19 micro-data[3] .

TABLE V. Reasons for taking Higher Vocational Training studies

	TOTAL HIGHER VET GRADUATES		**HIGHER VET GRADUATES WITH PREVIOUS UNIVERSITY DEGREE**	
REASONS	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
Training with your future career in mind	5.607	71,9%	520	67,8%
Expanding knowledge for personal satisfaction	1.380	17,7%	190	24,8%
Other reasons	796	10,2%	53	6,9%
NS/NC	19	0,2%	4	0,5%
Total	**7.802**	**100%**	**767**	**100%**

Source: Own elaboration based on ETEFIL-19 data.

With the ETEFIL-19 data is not possible to determine whether University graduates were unemployed when they decided to enrol in a Higher VET programme. However, 18.9% of the sample who was employed in 2019 indicated they stayed at the same job they had before earning their Higher VET qualification in 2014. This suggests that, in these cases, unemployment was not the reason to study VET.

Level of satisfaction with the decision taken

In 2019, five years after completing the Higher VET qualification, and re-

3 Question B5 of block B for the CFGS group only allows you to select one of these two options or "Other".

gardless of their employment situation, 85% of university graduates indicate that they would enrol in Higher VET again, compared with 85.4% of the total sample. Likewise, 83.1% of university graduates would choose the same Higher VET programme again, which attests to a higher degree of satisfaction with the training studied than the sample as a whole (74.1%).

TABLE VI. Satisfaction with the decision to study Higher VET

Question	TOTAL HIGHER VET GRADUATES		HIGHER VET GRADUATES WITH PREVIOUS UNIVERSITY DEGREE	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
I would study Higher VET again	6.663	85,4%	652	85,0%
I would choose the same Higher VET programme	4.936	74,1%	190	83,1%

Source: Compiled by the authors based on ETEFIL-19 data.

Geographical distribution

At regional level, the percentages of Higher VET graduates with a previous university degree, vary substantially ranging from 4.9% in Catalonia to 13.3% in the Valencian Community which tops the list of eight regions with percentages above the national average of 9.8%. The other regions that exceed the national average are Asturias (12.8%), the Canary Islands (12.7%), Galicia (12.7%), Castile and Leon (11.9%), Andalusia (11.8%), Murcia (10.5%) and Cantabria (10.3%). The autonomous cities of Ceuta (21%) and Melilla (4.6%) mark the maximum and minimum, respectively.

University field of study of origin

Almost half of the Higher VET graduates with previous university degree (49.9%) come from the "Social and Legal Sciences" branch. They are followed in order of importance by holders of degrees in "Engineering and Ar-

chitecture" branch (16.8%) and "Sciences" (13.3%), which together represent 30% of university graduates who had completed a STEM degree before enroling in Higher VET. Health Sciences and Arts and Humanities contribute a similar percentage of graduates that is slightly above 9% (Table VII).

TABLE VII. Higher VET graduates in the 2013-2014 academic year, by university field of study of origin

UNIVERSITY FIELD OF STUDY	Frequency	Percentage
Social and legal sciences	383	49,9%
Engineering and Architecture	129	16,8%
Science	102	13,3%
Health sciences	72	9,4%
Arts and Humanities	70	9,1%
Indeterminable	11	1,4%
Total	**767**	**100%**

Source: Compiled by the authors based on ETEFIL-19 data.

A slightly more fine-grained analysis reveals that one out of every five university graduates who completed a Higher VET programme had a degree in the field of Education Sciences and Teacher Training (20.7%), Architecture and Construction[4] (9.3%) and Management and Administration (8.2%).

Higher VET destination

Although the presence of Higher VET graduates with a previous university degree has been detected in each and every one of the 25 Higher VET programme areas [5] , 60% chose to earn a Higher VET qualification in seven areas: Socio-cultural and community services (16.9%), Health (12.6%), Hospitality and tourism (8.7%), IT and communications (6.8%), Administration and management (5.6%), Commerce and marketing (5.1%) and Image and sound (5%) (Table VIII).

4 ETEFIL-19 data do not allow disaggregation by degree in this category.
5 The Extractive Industries vocational family has no Higher Level training cycles.

TABLE VIII. VET Programme Areas that account for 60% of VET graduates in the 2013-2014 academic year

VET PROGRAMME AREA	Frequency	Percentage
Socio-cultural and community services	130	16,9%
Health	97	12,6%
Hospitality and tourism	67	8,7%
IT and communications	52	6,8%
Administration and management	43	5,6%
Trade and marketing	39	5,1%
Image and sound	38	5,0%
Subtotal	*466*	*60,7%*
Total	**767**	**100%**

Source: Compiled by the authors based on ETEFIL-19 data.

Higher VET graduates with a previous university degree with respect to the total number of Higher Technicians, by VET programme area

University graduates are unevenly represented across VET programme areas ranging from a barely 3.8% of Higher VET graduates in Physical Activities and Sports programmes to values over 15% in Food industries (17.1%) and Chemistry (16.9%)[6] . It is interesting to note that these are the only two STEM VET programme areas where female graduates outnumbered male graduates in the 2020-2021 academic year (Moso-Díez et al, 2024).

Testing the upskilling or reskilling hypothesis

As mentioned above, testing the *upskilling* or *reskilling hypothesis in University-to-VET transfer* requires determining the degree of relationship be-

6 The percentage rises to 19.4% in Glass and Ceramics/Wood, Furniture and Cork/Textiles, Clothing and Leather/Arts and Crafts, which ETEFIL-19 considers on an aggregate basis.

tween the branch of knowledge of the previous university education and the Higher VET qualification obtained in 2014. This analysis was carried out in two steps: (1) identification of the branch of university studies according to the VET programme of destination and (2) contingency analysis to determine the relationship between academic branch of origin and VET programme of destination.

Identification of the branch of university studies according to the VET programme of destination

Table IX shows that graduates from STEM branches (Science and Engineering and Architecture) are in the majority in six VET programme areas clearly ascribed to the STEM field (INEE, 2017).

TABLE IX. Percentage of STEM university degree holders in STEM VET Programme areas

STEM HIGHER VET PROGRAMME AREA	Higher VET graduates with previous university degree	STEM university graduates	% of STEM university graduates
Chemistry	36	32	88,9%
Energy and water	11	9	81,8%
Building and civil works	20	16	80,0%
Installation and maintenance	16	10	62,5%
Electricity and electronics	30	18	60,0%
Mechanical manufacturing	30	16	53,3%

Source: Compiled by the authors based on ETEFIL-19 data.

Similarly, non-STEM university graduates (Social and Legal Sciences and Arts and Humanities) represent a majority in non-STEM Higher VET Programmes (Table X).

TABLE X. Percentage of NON-STEM university degree holders in NON-STEM VET Programme areas

NON-STEM HIGHER VET PROGRAMME AREA	Higher VET graduates with previous university degree	NON-STEM university graduates	% of NON-STEM university graduates
Socio-cultural and community services	130	122	93,8%
Graphic arts	14	13	92,9%
Trade and marketing	39	36	92,3%
Image and sound	38	34	89,5%
Administration and management	43	35	81,4%
Hospitality and tourism	67	54	80,6%
Physical and sporting activities (including intermediate level sporting education)	9	7	77,8%
Transport and maintenance of vehicles	7	5	71,4%
Personal image	12	8	66,7%

Source: Compiled by the authors based on ETEFIL-19 data.

Tables IX and X show, therefore, that there is a certain relationship between the branch of university studies of origin and the area of Higher VET programme completed in 2014 in a high percentage of cases, supporting the *upskilling* hypothesis.

However, Information Technologies (IT) and Food Industries are two VET programme areas in the STEM field that do not fit this pattern. In the IT area, 55.8% of Higher VET graduates with previous university degree come from Non-STEM disciplines outnumbering STEM university graduates (40.4%) by 15 percentage points. A similar pattern is observed in the Food Industries programme area although the differences are smaller (Table XI).

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TABLE XI. STEM professional families with a majority of graduates from NON STEM branches (Social and Legal Sciences and Arts and Humanities)

VET PROGRAMME AREA	Higher VET graduates with previous university degree	STEM university graduates (a)	Non- STEM university graduates (b)	Difference (b-a) in percentage points
Food industries	24	41,7%	45,8%	4,2
IT and communications	52	40,4%	55,8%	15,4

Source: Compiled by the authors based on ETEFIL-19 data.

On the other hand, the presence of STEM university graduates in non-STEM VET programme areas is much lower, exceeding 10% only in the following areas: Administration and management (16.3%), Hotel and catering and tourism (12%), Image and Sound (10.5%).

Correlation between the branches of origin and VET programmes of destination.

Table XII shows that 65% of STEM university graduates opted for a STEM VET programme. This pattern is even more pronounced among non-STEM university graduates who opted in the majority (79.8%) for professional families outside the scientific-technological field. The contingency analysis, ($\chi 2 = 122.7$, $df=1$, $p < .001$), indicates that there is a positive and significant association between the university branch of origin and the VET programme of destination. The Phi coefficient shows that the magnitude of the relationship between the variables has a moderate to large effect size (0.407).

TABLE XII. Contingency table of studies of origin and destination.

STEM / NON STEM			VET PROGRAMME AREA		
			Total		
BRANCH OF UNIVERSITY STUDIES OF ORIGIN	**STEM**	Observed	134	71	205
		Expected	72,1	133	205
		% row	65,4 %	34,6 %	100 %
	NON STEM	Observed	83	329	412
		Expected	144,9	267	412
		% row	20,1 %	79,9 %	100 %
	Total	Observed	217	400	617
		Expected	217,0	400	617
		% row	35,2 %	64,8 %	100 %

	Value	**gl**	**p**	**Contingency ratio**
χ^2	122,7	1	< .001	0.407
N	617			

Source: Compiled by the authors based on ETEFIL-19 data.

Usefulness of the higher technical qualification for finding employment.

Having a Higher VET qualification has proved useful to find a job for 57,4% of Higher VET graduates with a previous university degree employed in 2019. This perception changes depending on the time when they found the job. Among those who kept the same job they had before graduation in Higher VET, only 37.4% considered that the Higher VET qualification had been useful. In contrast, the perception of usefulness rises to 62% among those university graduates who found or changed jobs after completing the Higher VET qualification in 2014.

The correlation analysis (χ^2= 24.7, df=1, p < .001), indicates that there is a positive and significant correlation between the time of finding employment and the perceived usefulness of the Higher VET qualification. On the other hand, the Phi coefficient (0.19) shows a moderate effect size. It should be noted that no differences are observed when comparing the perceived use-

fulness of Higher VET qualification of STEM university graduates (62.5 %) with that of graduates from NON STEM university graduates (62.3 %) employed in their current job from 2014 onwards..

TABLE XIII. Perceived usefulness of the Higher VET Programme for finding employment by university graduates employed in current job before or after Higher VET graduation in 2014.

EMPLOYED IN CURRENT JOB		USEFULNESS OF HIGHER VET PROGRAMME IN FINDING EMPLOYMENT		
		Yes	No	Total
Before 2014	Observed	46	77	123
	Expected	70,6	52,4	123
	% of row	37,4 %	62,6 %	100 %
From 2014 onwards	Observed	328	201	529
	Expected	303,4	225,6	529
	% of row	62,0 %	38,0 %	100 %
Total	Observed	374	278	652
	Expected	374,0	278,0	652
	% of row	57,4 %	42,6 %	100 %

	Value	gl	p	Contingency ratio
χ^2	24,7	1	< .001	0.191
N	652			

Source: Compiled by the authors based on ETEFIL-19 data.

Perceived usefulness of the Higher VET qualification among university graduates who opted for the *reskilling* strategy.

Table XIV shows that STEM university graduates who transferred to a Non-STEM Higher VET programme are more sceptical about the usefulness of VET studies for finding employment (66%) than non-STEM university graduates in STEM Higher VET programmes (79.7%). However, these differences are not statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 2.6$, df=1, p =.104)

TABLE XIV. Perceived usefulness of the Higher VET Programme for finding employment by university graduates who adopted a reskilling strategy and found their current job after completing Higher VET in 2014.

RESKILLING STRATEGY		USEFULNESS OF CFGS IN FINDING EMPLOYMENT		
		Yes	No	Total
STEM to NON STEM	Observed	35	18	53
	Expected	38,8	14,2	53,0
	% of row	66,0 %	34,0 %	100 %
NON STEM to STEM	Observed	47	12	59
	Expected	43,2	15,8	59,0
	% of row	79,7 %	20,3 %	100 %
Total	Observed	82	30	112
	Expected	82,0	30,0	112,0
	% of row	73,2 %	26,8 %	100 %

	Value	gl	p
χ^2	2,64	1	0.104
N	112		

Source: Compiled by the authors based on ETEFIL-19 data.

Discussion and conclusions

Firstly, and given the scarcity of research in the field of unexpected educational trajectories (Markowitsch & Hefler, 2019; Friedel & Friesleben, 2017; Leigh, 2009)this study shows novel research results in University-to-VET transfer in Spain. The scope and weight of this flow of young people and adults shows that it is a relevant line of research, since one in ten graduates in Higher VET had already completed university studies in the years analysed. This work reveals the existence of a profile of Higher VET students whose specific needs, reasons and causes leading to these somewhat counterintuitive trajectories have not been considered in the design of conventional educa-

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tional itineraries.

Second, the characterisation of these students shows a clear gender bias, as more than two thirds are female (67.5%). According to Duncan's dissimilarity ranking (Imdorf et al, 2015), this trajectory is very close to qualify as feminised (within 3 percentage points). The age at which this educational decision is made shows a different dynamic depending on gender, with female university graduates making this transition at an earlier age (under 35) than males, with a higher proportion after the age of 45.

Thirdly, the movement of University graduates into Higher VET is more oriented towards *upskilling* than towards *reskilling*. The upskilling strategy is more evident among non-STEM university degree holders, with 79.9% transferring to non-STEM Higher VET programmes, whereas 65.4% of STEM university graduates opt for a STEM Higher VET programme. This greater propensity of non-STEM students to *upskill* goes hand in hand with their greater weight in the total number of transfer students, with 60% coming from the Social and Legal Sciences and Arts and Humanities. This supports the *upskilling* hypothesis, which results in a profile with academic and vocational qualifications (Markowitsch & Hefler, 2019).

In fourth place, the main motivation for pursuing this path is career-related (67.8%), which is largely in line with the final assessment of usefulness, since five years after graduating in Higher VET most of the university students considered that the VET qualification was useful for them to find or change jobs (57%). Although this depends on whether or not they previously had a job, with a more positive influence on those who did not have a job before 2014. Therefore, it can be inferred that this pathway is more useful for labour market insertion than for labour mobility. However, more research is needed in this respect. In any case satisfaction with the decision made is high in general terms as most of university graduates would transfer again to Higher VET (85%) and would choose the same Higher VET programme (83.1%)-

Fifthly, there is a clear need to adopt measures that make the bidirectionality of the VET-University pathways visible through the exchange of information and recognition mechanisms between the two systems, since the pathway from University to VET is not only important, but also represents a useful learning strategy for labour market insertion and improvement. Al-

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though, in Spain, the mutual recognition of credits in both directions has been in force since 2011 (RD 1618/2011, of 14 November, on the recognition of studies in the field of Higher Education), the path from university to VET provides new elements to consider in the configuration of the formulas for transfer, connection and new models of relationship between Higher Level VET and the University that are proposed by Organic Law 2/2023, of 22 March, on the University System and Organic Law 3/2022, of 31 March, on the organisation and integration of VET.

Finally, the present study identifies educational-occupational transitions that can facilitate the work of career guidance teams, a key agent for the integration of this type of students in VET classrooms (Fletcher & Tyson, 2021). To this end, it is necessary to have up-to-date sources of information on prior university or VET progression in both enrolment processes and graduate tracking protocols and to facilitate cross-referencing between the two systems (Fowler, 2017)..

Limitations and future research

One limitation of the study is that survey participants completed the Higher VET diploma in 2014, which indicates that they were holders of Bachelor's and Master's degrees not adjusted to the model of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) that came into force in 2010. The Royal Decree 1393/2007 of 29 October 2007, establishing the organisation of official university education, predicted that the new organisation of Higher Education studies would increase the employability of graduates. If this prediction is fulfilled, it is possible that the movement of university graduates to Higher VET will decrease. This can only be corroborated when the results of a new edition of ETEFIL become available.

On the other hand, the categorisation of branches of study and VET programme areas as STEM/NON STEM is only a "proxy" to determine the relationship between qualifications at the origin and at destination. A higher level of disaggregation of the data would allow for a more precise analysis of this relationship between specific previous university degrees and VET

programmes. Even so, it would still be difficult to establish the relationship between the two if this work is not accompanied by qualitative studies (e.g. interviews, discussion groups, etc.) that allow us to explore in more detail the reasons given by the people who make these non-traditional transitions.

In general, the transition from university to VET is useful for finding employment but in order to assess more accurately the success of these *upskilling* or *reskilling* strategies, it is necessary to contrast these perceptions with the analysis of labour market insertion and job quality indicators collected by ETEFIL-19. Similarly, it is necessary to identify whether studies that are initially unrelated to each other may end up revealing their complementarity in the medium or long term if both degrees represent an advantage in a selection process.

Finally, university graduates make up only a part of the total volume of people moving from the university system to the VET system. Unfortunately, the ETEFIL-19 dataset does not quantify the volume of Higher VET graduates who previously dropped out from university. The drop-out rate for undergraduate studies in Spain stands at 13.5% (Fernández-Mellizo, 2022)but the destination of this group of students once they leave the university system is unknown. Recently, Tieben (2023) has found that VET absorbs a significant proportion of students leaving the German university system with 34.2% of university dropouts choosing VET only one year after leaving. Corroborating in the future whether this phenomenon is repeated in Spain would pave the way for the formulation of specific mechanisms for early drop-out detection and guidance in a coordinated manner between the university system and the VET system.

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What variables help define an active teaching style at University?

¿Qué variables ayudan a definir el estilo docente activo en la Universidad?

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Abstract

Universities are called upon by society to deliver a more comprehensive education to their students as their true mission. Doing this means that they must not only develop innovative strategies in the classroom, but also consider the community as an agent in this educational process. Hence, the goal of this study was to identify variables in university teachers that were related to an active teaching style focused on student learning, as well as

to examine whether their level of social participation and their use of methodologies such as service learning were linked to differences in teaching approach. We used a sample of 1550 university teachers of various ages and knowledge areas. They completed an online scale online—part of a broader instrument—designed and validated to identify their teaching styles. Comparisons of means were made based on their respective profiles. The results show that teachers tended to adopt student-centered learning approaches, but women, those who had completed training course, and those who had worked outside the university setting who demonstrated a more active, student-focused teaching style. There were higher scores on the scale from teachers who actively participated in charity or social organizations, and by those who applied service-learning methodology in their classes. These results should be taken with caution, as effect sizes were sometimes small. Despite the limitations, the study sheds light on differences in teaching practice, and also suggests that the design of teacher training plans incorporate innovative, sustainable activities that support a student-learning-centered model.

Key words: higher education, teaching style, active methodologies, service-learning, social commitment, teacher training.

Resumen

A la universidad se le reclama desde la sociedad civil una formación más integral del alumnado, considerando su auténtica misión educativa. Para cumplir con su cometido, no solo es imprescindible el desarrollo de estrategias innovadoras en las aulas, sino que también se requiere la consideración del entorno comunitario como agente de ese proyecto formativo. Así, el propósito de este trabajo es averiguar las variables del profesorado universitario que se relacionan con un estilo docente activo, enfocado al aprendizaje de los/as estudiantes, así como analizar si su grado de participación social o el uso de metodologías como el aprendizaje-servicio se vinculan con diferencias en su modo de enfocar la docencia. Utilizamos una muestra de 1550 docentes universitarios, de distintas edades y áreas de conocimiento, que cubrieron online, en el marco de un instrumento más amplio, una escala diseñada y validada para identificar su estilo docente. Se emplearon pruebas de comparaciones de medias en función de sus perfiles. Los resultados indican que el profesorado se orienta hacia un estilo centrado en el aprendizaje del alumnado, pero son las mujeres, quienes han realizado cursos de formación o trabajado en otros sectores al margen de la universidad las que presentan un estilo docente más activo y focalizado en el estudiantado. Puntúan más alto en la escala aquellos que participan activamente en organizaciones de la sociedad civil, y los que han aplicado la metodología de aprendizaje-servicio en sus clases. Estos resultados deben ser asumidos con cautela, ya que en ocasiones el tamaño del efecto es bajo. Concluimos, asumiendo las limitaciones, que el estudio no solo arroja luz sobre diferencias en la práctica docente, sino que también favorece prospectiva edificante para el diseño y fomento en los planes de formación docentes de actividades innovadoras y sostenibles que avalen un modelo centrado en el aprendizaje del alumnado

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Palabras clave: educación superior, estilo docente, metodologías activas, aprendizaje-servicio, compromiso social, formación del profesorado

Introduction

In recent years, Spanish universities have been encouraged to place more emphasis on teaching innovation in their classrooms in an attempt to tailor their methodological structures to a model that is centred on student learning (Álvarez Castillo et al., 2017). To that end, they have taken on board the arguments of the Council of the European Union (2013) by underlining the social dimension of higher education and accepting that educational excellence must not only be in terms of economic growth and competitiveness, but instead it must also contribute to social development and inclusion. Hence the invitation to member states to increase flexible learning opportunities by diversifying the way content is delivered and by adopting student-centered learning approaches.

Nowadays, few universities do not have organizational charts without a service, plan, or program aimed at driving and shaping innovation in their teaching personnel. These units should, however, be run by specialists in the field rather than, as in more than a few cases, by people selected via more political than technical decision-making. This is especially so if what we aim to do is to make changes that can have a positive impact on the quality of educational processes. Naturally, one of the competencies of teachers who seek to provide high-quality teaching is demonstrating a disposition towards methodological innovation (Lorenzo et al., 2019). This disposition may be apparent through the use of various didactic methods to awaken a love of learning in their students, through continued contact with the social and professional environment, through good management of student teacher interactions, or through developing an attitude of continued study that can bridge the gap between research and teaching.

This concern and awareness culminated in the development of the European Higher Education Area, it which both processes are commonly as-

sociated. However, as Del Pozo (2008/2009) reminded us, methodological innovation was not a fundamental element in the agenda of the Bologna process. In fact, nor was it included in the "harmonization" goal. It was not until the declaration of the Education Ministers' conference in London (London Communique, 2009) that there was an explicit reference to the change from a teacher-centered model to student-centered learning. Nonetheless, that should not stop us from recognizing that the European Higher Education Area has provided a good opportunity for reflection, renewal, and improvement in our universities (Santos Rego, 2013).

This change is largely due to the need to respond to society's calls for universities that do not merely churn out professionals but are instead committed to the surrounding community and willing to work towards the common good as a way of combatting injustice and inequality (Lorenzo et al., 2019).

The change of model allows us to introduce the concept of "teaching style" (Fischer & Fischer, 1968). González-Peiteado and Pino-Juste (2014, 2016) noted that when we talk about teaching style, that refers to the particular, relatively stable way each teacher has of addressing the teaching-learning process. Teaching style is an important element given its impact on the organization and management of a class, on the methods and resources used, and on the form of communication and interaction (González-Peiteado, 2013). We should not forget, of course, that the way a teacher teaches is influenced by cognitive, social, and cultural variables, but also by experience, along with their theories or basic beliefs about what university teaching and education of students should be.

Whatever the teaching style, it is logical that it is linked to the different elements of the act of teaching—and related to the act itself—and significantly influences student learning and the quality of the process (González-Peiteado & Pino-Juste, 2016). In any case, teaching style influences student motivation, learning, and performance (Frunzâ, 2014; Jiang & Zhang, 2021). Along these lines, Huang and Zheng (2022) demonstrated the relationship between teaching style and learning efficacy. They examined the effect of teaching style in advanced mathematics courses on university students' learning efficacy, analyzing the mediating effect of motivation for learning. Their

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results showed that when teachers focused excessively on patterns of thinking and teaching and ignored students' problems with learning, understanding and mastery of mathematical knowledge was deficient.

In the literature there are two large general models which, depending on the time and the context, have been given various labels (González-Peiteado & Pino-Juste, 2016). In our case, we will refer to the classification from Gargallo et al. (2017): the teaching-centered model (instruction paradigm) and the learning-centered model (learning paradigm, student-centered model). This model, also called the "active" (González-Peiteado & Pino-Juste, 2016) or "open" (Renés Arellano et al., 2013) model, seeks to encourage student learning, autonomy, and their metacognitive self-regulatory abilities. According to Gargallo et al. (2017), it incorporates more innovative teaching, the use of meaningful evaluations, and a flexible curriculum. The role of the teacher is that of a mediator and shaper of good learning environments and experiences, while the student has a more active role and is the real protagonist of their learning. According to Martínez Martínez et al. (2019) and Renés Arellano et al. (2013), teachers who have high or very high levels of preference for this open style of teaching encourage active learning styles in their students. They are innovative, flexible, and spontaneous. They often introduce new content, motivate students with novel activities or with real problems from the students' surroundings. They encourage working in teams and generating ideas and they often change methodologies. They try to ensure that their students do not spend too much time on the same activity and leave students free to organize how much time they spend and the order in which they do tasks. They are usually well informed about current events and are open to class discussions.

The literature indicates that an education on these terms can give students notable benefits in terms of intrinsic motivation, possibly due to the direct opportunity to develop their self-efficacy (Waterschoot et al., 2019). However, it also affects a range of variables that are important for academic and personal success: engagement with learning, personal development, cognitive skills, academic performance, and psychological wellbeing (Reeve, 2009). In contrast, a controlling style of teaching is related with less student development and a tendency to behaviors such as procrastination (Codina et

al., 2020).

It is exactly this context that helps explain the considerable growth in service-learning (SL) in our universities (Sotelino-Losada et al., 2021). In this methodology, teachers are no longer mere transmitters of knowledge, they are also guides and accompany their students in co-constructing knowledge and putting it into practice, with the focus on meeting a need identified in the community. In this way, service-learning and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) are interconnected. There are three goals that are inherent to this methodology; goal number 4 (Quality education), number 17 (Alliances to achieve objectives), and number 10 (Reduce inequality). However, all SL projects can potentially involve other SDGs.

Our aim with this study is to shed light on the variables that are related to teaching style in university teachers. We have three specific objectives. Firstly, to determine the extent to which the characteristics of university teachers are related to an open teaching style. Secondly, to examine whether their level of social participation is linked to differences in the way they approach university teaching. Finally, to explore the correspondence between knowledge and use of SL and teaching style.

Method

Sample

The sample comprised 1550 university teachers aged between 24 and 76 years old, with a mean age of 50.15 years (SD=19.670). Just under half (46.3%) were women, 53.7% were men. The knowledge areas they belonged to were Social and Legal Sciences (35.3%), Experimental Sciences (18.6%), Health Sciences (18.1%), Arts and Humanities (15%), and Technical Education (12.9%).

Most of the sample (53.7%) had permanent positions in their universities. Teaching experience ranged from 1 to 54 years, with a mean of 19.52 (SD=11.582). Almost two-thirds (64.4%) collaborated—or had collaborated

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in the previous five years—with some kind of association, non-governmental organization (NGO), foundation, or civic social body. A similar percentage (66.4%) had participated in a teacher training program in their university in that previous two years. Almost half of the sample (49.2%), in addition to working in the university, worked or had worked in other settings. Just over a third (37.6%) were aware of service-learning methodology (SL), and 10% had applied it in their classes.

Instruments

For this study, we used the "Questionnaire on General Competencies of University Students. Teaching Staff" (COMGAP). Specifically, we used a validated scale that incorporated this instrument, aimed at measuring the participants' teaching styles, which is described in more detail in Santos Rego et al. (2017). The scale comprises 12 questions using a 5-point Likert-type scale where 1 is never and 5 is always, with items asking how often the teacher uses certain practices in their teaching (see Table 1). The scale has high internal consistency (α=.82) and groups the items in three factors that explain 53.60% of the variance: collaboration with external agents in teaching (4 items, α=.76); teaching strategies in the classroom (4 items, α=.62); and the role of the students (4 items, α=.74).

TABLE I. Description of the items in the teaching style scale

Item	Description
Item 1.	I present practical cases for analysis as support for student learning
Item 2.	I usually invite external professionals to the university to explain their work
Item 3.	I use continual evaluation (e.g., essays, reports, portfolios, etc.)
Item 4.	The students actively participate in my classroom sessions
Item 5.	I encourage activities that promote critical thinking (debates, questions in class, etc.)
Item 6.	I use the students' experiences to relate to the material
Item 7.	I recommend that my students visit exhibitions or attend events related to the subject.

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Item 8.	I promote and organize complementary activities outside of teaching hours (visits, conferences, etc.)
Item 9.	I use working in teams as a teaching strategy
Item 10.	I use technology to encourage student participation and interactivity (online tutorials, virtual classrooms, forums, etc.)
Item 11.	I try to ensure an atmosphere of good interpersonal relationships in my classes
Item 12.	I encourage my students to attend activities or seminars in other subjects

Source: Compiled by the authors

In addition, the questionnaire includes questions gathering information about the teachers' sociodemographic profiles: age; knowledge area; years of teaching experience; position in the university; collaboration with NGOs, charities, foundations or other social bodies; participation in university training programs; work in other areas; and knowledge and application of service-learning methodology.

Procedure

The questionnaire was applied during academic year 2019-2020. It was distributed online, via an instructional email, to teachers at 7 Spanish universities via the SurveyMonkey platform. The study complied with the guidelines of the Bioethics Committee at the University of Santiago de Compostela and was approved on 11/02/2019. It complied with the extant legislation on data protection and digital rights.

Firstly, in order to verify that the factorial structure defined in the validation of the scale was a suitable representation of the information provided by the data from the study sample, we performed a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Following that, we performed a cluster analysis to facilitate the interpretation of the question about whether teachers had collaborated with NGOs or other social bodies. The aim was to group the multiple response options depending on the type of collaboration, as that meant identifying different profiles in the participating teachers. Clustering was done by applying the two-step

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cluster model, the advantages of which are the automatic determination of the optimum number of clusters, the acceptance of categorical and continuous variables, and the power of working with a large amount of data (Rubio-Hurtado & Baños, 2017).

Lastly, once the scale factors were confirmed and the clusters for the collaboration variable established, we used comparisons of means: Student t and ANOVA with Sheffe's post-hoc test, depending on the case. The aim was to determine whether there were differences in teaching style, measured by the scores in the factors in the scale, according to the different variables that determined the profiles of the participating teachers. The effect sizes were calculated in these tests using Cohen's d for the t test and η^2 for the ANOVA. The results were interpreted according to Cohen's (1988) classification: 0.2, small; 0.5 moderate; and 0.8 large for Cohen's d, and 0.01, small; 0.06, moderate; and 0.14, large for η^2. The level of significance for all tests was $\alpha = 0.05$, and they were performed using IBM-SPSS v24 and AMOS v24.

Results

Construct validity

For the CFA with three factors, we considered the evidence of the construct's factorial structure provided in the validation of the instrument (Santos Rego et al., 2017). Figure I and Table II show the indices of fit and the mediation model of the scale, respectively.

The results of $\chi 2=374.193$, $p<.001$ indicate the distance between the hypothetical and sample variance/covariance matrices. This value not being significant would indicate the absence of a discrepancy between the two. However, as this is a statistic that is highly sensitive to sample sizes greater than 250 individuals (Hair et al., 2009), other indices should be presented: GFI, CFI, RMSEA, and SRMR. Looking at the values for the model in each of these indices (Table II) confirms a good fit, in line with the most prevalent criteria in the literature (Hooper et al., 2008).

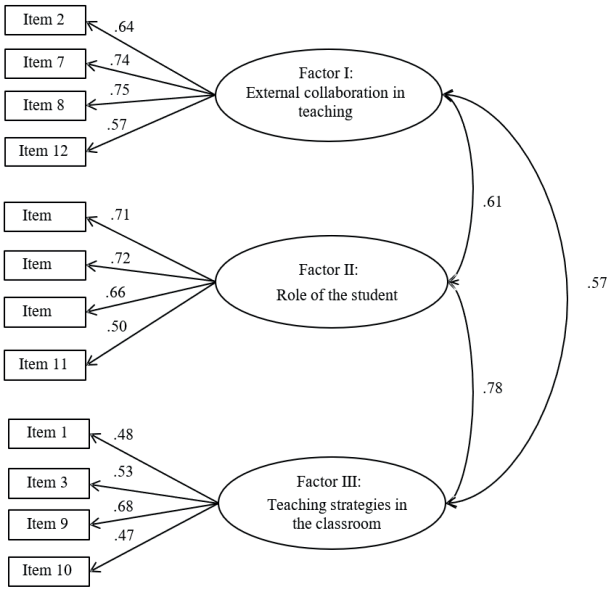
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TABLE II. Goodness of fit indicators for the model

χ2	df	p	χ2/df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA [CI]	SRMR
374.193	51	<.001	7.337	.96	.933	.064[.058,.070]	.0396

Source: Compiled by the authors

FIGURE I. CFA model for the teaching style scale.



Source: Compiled by the authors

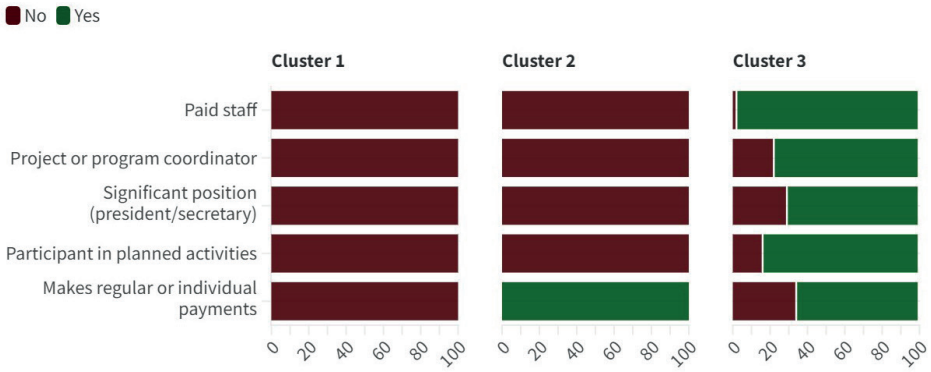
Cluster analysis of the variable "Contribution to an NGO, charity, or other civic social body"

To determine the type of contributions teachers made to NGOs or similar bodies, 4 response options were set, coded as independent binary variables: periodic or single monetary payments; participation in planned activities; project or program coordinator; and senior role (president, secretary, or paid position). The cluster analysis was done using the log-likelihood distance measure, as the variables are categorical. On executing the algorithm, it of-

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fered three clusters as the optimal solution. The silhouette value—a measure of how similar an object is to its own group (cohesion) compared to other groups (separation)—was 0.8, and as that is close to 1, it indicates a good fit of the model.

FIGURE II. Composition of each cluster of the variable "Contribution to an NGO, charity, or other civic social body"



Source: Compiled by the authors

After reviewing the composition of each cluster (Figure II), we labelled the groups as follows:

- The first group represented 37.6% of the sample. It contained teachers who have no relationship with any NGOs, through payment, participation, or work. This group was labelled "non-contributing" teachers.
- The second group represented 37.5% of the sample and was made up entirely of teachers who made either single or periodic monetary payments but did not actively participate in the organization. This group was labelled "financially contributing" teachers.
- The third group represented the remaining 24.8% of the sample and was made up of teachers who, even if they did make payments, were actively involved in an NGO or other body's activities (whether as a participant in planned activities, performing a specific role, coordinating a project, or being paid personnel). This group was called

"actively involved" teachers.

Comparative analysis based on the scale factors

In response to the objectives set for this study, the results of the comparative analysis of the factors found in the teaching style scale are presented below (Table III). In general, the factor about participation of external agents in teaching had the lowest score (M=2.91, SD=.928), although attending planned activities in other courses and the recommendation to visit exhibitions or attend events in other subjects were the teachers' preferred options in this dimension. The next highest scoring factor was teaching strategies in the classroom (M=3.85, SD=.753), with the items "encourage activities that promote critical thinking" and "try to ensure that there is a good climate of interpersonal relations in my classes" being the teachers' favorites. The highest scoring factor was the role of the student (M=4.00, ST=.698), with the highest scoring items being presentation of practical cases for analysis and continual evaluation.

TABLE III. Descriptive statistics for the items and factors in the teaching style scale

Factor	Items	Mean (SD)
Factor 1	*External collaboration in teaching*	2.91 (.928)
	Item 2. I usually invite external professionals to the university to explain their work	2.48 (1.260)
	Item 7. I recommend that my students visit exhibitions or attend events related to the subject	3.31 (1.180)
	Item 8. I promote and organize complementary activities outside of teaching hours (visits, conferences, etc.)	2.57 (1.238)
	Item 12. I encourage my students to attend activities or seminars in other subjects	3.27 (1.171)
Factor 2	*Role of the student*	4.00 (.698)
	Item 4. The students actively participate in my classroom sessions	3.93(.904)
	Item 5. I encourage activities that promote critical thinking (debates, questions in class, etc.)	4.02(.943)
	Item 6. I use the students' experiences to relate to the material	3.53 (1.074)

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	Item 11. I try to ensure an atmosphere of good interpersonal relationships in my classes	4.49 (.773)
Factor 3	*Teaching strategies in the classroom*	3.85 (.753)
	Item 1. I present practical cases for analysis as support for student learning	4.08 (.903)
	Item 10. I use technology to encourage student participation and interactivity (online tutorials, virtual classrooms, forums, etc.)	3.64 (1.206)
	Item 3. I use continual evaluation (e.g., essays, reports, portfolios, etc.)	4.00 (1.09)
	Ítem 9. I use working in teams as a teaching strategy	3.69 (1.170)

Source: Compiled by the authors

Following the general description of the sample, we moved on to the comparative analysis considering the teachers' sociodemographic profiles. The results of the binary variables in the study (Table IV) indicate the following:

- Gender was a discriminant factor in determining teaching style. Women had significantly higher scores in the three factors.
- Teachers with temporary contracts had higher scores in teaching strategies and in the role of students than teachers who had completed the civil service exams and had permanent contracts. However, this variable was not related to the involvement of external agents in teaching.
- Teachers who had received training or who had worked outside of university teaching had significantly higher scores in the three factors than teachers who had not.

TABLE IV. Tests of differences of means (Student T) between binary variables

	Variable	Categories	n	Mean	SD	t	df	Cohen's D
Factor 1 EXTERNAL COLLABORATION IN TEACHING	Sex	Male	761	2.81	.926	-4.363***	1423	.232
		Female	664	3.02	.917			
	Administrative situation	Permanent contract	762	2.89	.904	-.540	1423	.029
		Temporary contract	663	2.92	.955			
	Received training	No	464	2.75	.932	-4.596***	1423	-.260
		Yes	961	2.99	.917			
	Other jobs	No	710	2.81	.945	-3.871***	1423	-.205
		Yes	715	3.00	.901			
Factor 2 ROLE OF THE STUDENT	Sex	Male	761	3.88	.728	-6.840***	1422.991	.360
		Female	664	4.13	.637			
	Administrative situation	Permanent contract	762	3.93	.693	-3.722***	1423	.198
		Temporary contract	663	4.07	.696			
	Received training	No	464	3.87	.764	-4.656***	801.189	.278
		Yes	961	4.05	.655			
	Other jobs	No	710	3.92	.701	-3.883***	1423	.206
		Yes	715	4.07	.688			
Factor 3 TEACHING STRATEGIES IN THE CLASSROOM	Sex	Male	761	3.74	.792	-6.083***	1422.857	.320
		Female	664	3.98	.684			
	Administrative situation	Permanent contract	762	3.79	772	-3.145***	1423	.167
		Temporary contract	663	3.92	.725			
	Received training	No	464	3.70	.801	-4.994***	831.474	.293
		Yes	961	3.92	.718			
	Other jobs	No	710	3.77	.768	-3.935***	1423	.208
		Yes	715	3.93	.729			

***p<0.001; **: p<.01; *: p<.05
Source: Compiled by the authors

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Looking at the results of the comparisons for non-dichotomous variables in Table V suggests the following:

- Belonging to one knowledge area or another was significantly related to the scores in the three factors, with moderate effect sizes. Teachers in the areas of Arts and Humanities, and Social and Legal Sciences demonstrated a more active teaching style.
- The results indicate that teachers with 15 years of experience or less made more use of teaching strategies in the classroom and promoted situations allowing students to take on a more active role, although the effect was small in these cases. There was no indication of such differences in the dimension referring to collaboration with external agents in teaching.
- Teachers' ages did not seem to be a discriminant factor in external collaboration in teaching. However, there were higher scores from teachers aged 41-50 than in those over 60 in the use of teaching strategies in the classroom and in the role of the students.
- With regard to contributions to NGOs and other similar bodies, determined by the cluster analysis, teachers who actively participated had higher scores in all of the factors than teachers who did not or who contributed only financially.
- Finally, teachers who used service-learning methodology had significantly higher scores in all three factors than teachers who were unaware of it and those who were aware of it but did not use it.

TABLE V. Comparison of means (ANOVA) for non-binary variables.

	Variable	Categories	n	Mean	SD	F	df	Differences*	η2
Factor 1 EXTERNAL COLLABORATION IN TEACHING	**Knowledge areas**	1. Health Sciences 2. Experimental Sciences 3. Social and legal Sciences 4. Technical Instruction 5. Arts and Humanities	251 253 515 185 221	2.78 2.55 3.05 2.69 3.30	.909 .860 .900 .937 .868	28.382***	4	2<3*** 2<5*** 1<3** 1<5*** 4<3*** 4<5*** 3<5*	.074

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	Teaching experience	1. 15 years or less 2. 16 to 30 years 3. More than 30 years	555 642 221	2.93 2.89 2.90	.954 .917 .887	0.249	2		.000
	Age	1. Under 40 2. 41-50 3. 51-60 4. Over 60	273 414 543 188	2.78 2.98 2.92 2.86	.931 .968 .910 .861	2.839	3	-	.005
	Contribution to NGOs etc	1. Non contributing 2. Financially contributing 3. Actively involved	510 547 368	2.72 2.86 3.24	.887 .942 .876	36.615***	2	1<3 2<3	.049
	Awareness of SL	1. Unaware 2. Aware, but does not use it 3. Aware, and uses it	791 468 166	2.76 2.95 3.48	.917 .902 .824	43.409***	2	1<2*** 1<3*** 2<3***	.058
Factor 2 ROLE OF THE STUDENT	**Knowledge areas**	1. Health Sciences 2. Experimental Sciences 3. Social and legal Sciences 4. Technical Instruction 5. Arts and Humanities	251 253 515 185 221	3.91 3.78 4.13 3.71 4.25	.752 .661 .645 .692 .631	28.769***	4	4<3*** 4<5*** 4<1* 1<5*** 2<1** 1<3**	.075
	Teaching experience	1. 15 years or less 2. 16 to 30 years 3. More than 30 years	555 642 221	4.08 3.97 3.86	.702 .657 .761	8.179***	2	3<1*** 2<1*	.011
	Age	1. Under 40 2. 41-50 3. 51-60 4. Over 60	273 414 543 188	3.99 4.12 3.94 3.89	.749 .628 .667 .802	6.677***	3	4<2** 3<2**	.014
	Contribution to NGOs etc	1. Non contributing 2. Financially contributing 3. Actively involved	510 547 368	3.90 3.95 4.19	.712 .638 .698	21.241***	2	1<3*** 2<3***	.029
	Awareness of SL	1. Unaware 2. Aware, but does not use it 3. Aware, and uses it	791 468 166	3.90 4.04 4.36	.722 .642 .591	32.855***	2	1<2*** 1<3*** 2<3***	.044

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Factor 3 TEACHING STRATEGIES IN THE CLASSROOM	**Knowledge areas**	1. Health Sciences 2. Experimental Sciences 3. Social and legal Sciences 4. Technical Instruction 5. Arts and Humanities	251 253 515 185 221	3.67 3.66 4.04 3.82 3.86	.819 .752 .664 .696 .808	17.296***		2<5* 2<3*** 1<3***	.046
	Teaching experience	1. 15 years or less 2. 16 to 30 years 3. More than 30 years	555 642 221	3.91 3.83 3.77	.744 .742 .787	2.976*	2	3<1*	.004
	Age	1. Under 40 2. 41-50 3. 51-60 4. Over 60	273 414 543 188	3.81 3.92 3.87 3.71	.757 .724 .735 .824	3.791**	3	4<2**	.008
	Contribution to NGOs etc	1. Non contributing 2. Financially contributing 3. Actively involved	510 547 368	3.74 3.83 4.02	.770 .757 .690	15.968***	2	1<3*** 2<3***	.022
	Awareness of SL	1. Unaware 2. Aware, but does not use it 3. Aware, and uses it	791 468 166	3.79 3.84 4.16	.779 .737 .582	16.540***	2	1<3*** 2<3***	.023

***p<0.001; **: p<.01; *: p<.05
Source: Compiled by the authors

Discussion and conclusions

The analysis in this study indicates that university teachers are oriented towards a teaching style that is centered on student learning, especially in the classroom teaching strategies and the active role of the student, which is consistent with the demands of a socially committed university (Santos Rego, 2013). As Santos Rego et al. (2015) noted, universities must consider their civic mission in such a way that they can be at the vanguard of programs and projects that can change and improve their surroundings and contribute to a more inclusive society. Our study also suggests that this may be related to a

more collaborative teaching style and to greater student participation. This challenge also involves moving from a teaching-centered model to a learning-centered model (Gargallo et al., 2017; González-Peiteado & Pino-Juste, 2016).

However, it is more nuanced than that, and we have been able to identify some variables related to university teachers' teaching styles that should be considered when designing teacher training programs.

We determined how certain sociodemographic variables are related to teaching style. In our study it was the female teachers who tended more towards extending education beyond the classrooms, including active teaching strategies, and involving students. This does not seem to be a recent trend. More than twenty years ago the study by Lammers and Murphy (2002) concluded that although there was a prevalence of lecturing in university contexts, women used these approaches significantly less than men. More recently, and along similar lines, González-Peiteado and Pino-Juste (2016) showed how students' education at university could influence how they thought about teaching styles. In their study with students studying education at the three public universities in Galicia (Spain), they also concluded that women were more likely to prefer an active style, which for the researchers included reflexive, cooperative, individual, innovative, and inquiring styles of teaching.

In addition, it was the teachers on temporary contracts (non-*funcionarios*), with less experience (15 years or less), aged 41-50, who scored highest in teaching strategies and in seeking an active role for students. In a study in a secondary school, Bou-Sospedra et al. (2021) concluded that the younger teachers opted for active teaching styles, while the older teachers tended to use a more structured style, and that teaching experience had no influence. This is consistent with Mazumder and Ahmed (2014), who found that younger teachers or teachers with less experience demonstrated more active teaching styles than older, or more experienced, teachers. Those authors attributed this to the possibility that they were more enthusiastic about the profession, or even to an erroneous concept based on teachers' egos, believing themselves to be much better than they really were. In addition to these two hypotheses, we believe that our results may be due to the higher demand for training in teaching strategies that may be presented by those who are facing a new situ-

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ation as university teachers.

There is no doubt that future university teachers must be trained in active methodologies, as that will allow them to construct, with suitable reflection, their own teaching styles. It is not for nothing that all of the literature clearly shows the influence of such methodologies on students' learning (Combey & Gargallo, 2022). Similarly, we firmly believe that teachers who are engaged with their own training and involved in their social environment can present better feelings of self-efficacy and critical thinking, skills that may directly influence how they shape themselves as teachers (Amirian et al., 2023). In fact, according to our results, doing training courses and having worked outside of the university lead to higher scores in the three factors in the scale. In other words, the training done in universities has a positive effect on the adoption of more student-centered methodologies or on opening up learning contexts.

Similarly, the results suggest that the knowledge areas of the arts and humanities and social and legal sciences have the highest concentration of teachers who exhibit more active teaching styles. This may be because both are areas with direct social applicability, based on the appreciation of culturally diverse environments (Santos Rego et al., 2020), meaning it is easier to incorporate innovations in teaching.

In addition to that, an effective contribution to community wellbeing may also have an impact on the sense of self-efficacy. In our study, students with high levels of social participation or who used SL methodology had higher scores in all of the dimensions examined. In that regard, in a study about service-learning for educating teachers in Spanish universities, Álvarez Castillo et al. (2017) noted that, both in Europe and in other parts of the world, there was a widespread culture of training university teachers in specific teaching skills. Despite that, we agree with Gargallo et al. (2017), who noted that it was no easy matter for universities to move from a teaching-centered approach to a learning-centered approach, given the need for structural changes in the heart of the institutions.

Finally, we recall what García (2006) noted, that teaching style is somewhere between the art and the technique of teaching, that there was no ideal form of teaching, but that it was possible to distinguish certain good

practices that contribute to reducing classroom tension and creating a motivating atmosphere.

Obviously, active methodologies are not the answer to all of the challenges of 21st century education, but using them may be a step towards a student body whose experience in academia has a direct impact on their competencies. For example, in the case of service learning as an educational methodology, teachers consider it to be proactive, adaptable, flexible, and innovative because it can link educational content to real social issues, encouraging civic engagement and developing students' abilities and values. In this way, it not only promotes acquisition of academic knowledge in an active, practical way, but it also promotes an aware, participative, entrepreneurial student body (Santos Rego et al., 2020).

The point is that the efforts to empower higher education should not be limited to students, teachers should also be able to change through a teaching style based on collaboration, empathy with the students, and social change.

Despite that, it is worth noting that our study does have some limitations. Firstly, the lack of a more profound impact on specific practices of each teacher in their classrooms. This is something that may arise as a future line of study in our research, involving a qualitative study with a smaller sample of university teachers. That would also help corroborate some of our study's conclusions, as although there were indications of significance in some of the teacher profiles, the effect sizes were small in some cases, which suggests that the differences should be interpreted with caution.

Another limitation is that we only focused on a single protagonist in the teaching-learning process and did not collect student perspectives, despite there being studies (Bou-Sospedra, et al., 2021) indicating a discrepancy in the teaching-learning process between the different educational agents. This is important because it would give us evidence to analyze how desirable it would be for teachers to change their teaching practices to balance learning style preferences and move closer to doing what they should be doing (Martínez Martínez et al., 2019).

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Formative assessment processes in Basic Education. A Systematic review

Procesos de evaluación formativa en Educación Básica. Una revisión sistemática

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Abstract

The growing interest in formative assessment requires a systematic analysis of the key elements of the research developed in recent years. Existing literature reviews focus on the factors influencing formative assessment but do not deal with the perceived benefits used or the strategies employed. Thus, this review aims to answer the following questions: (i) What are the benefits perceived by elementary school teachers regarding the use of formative assessment in classroom practice?; (ii) What are the factors that influence teachers' intentions to use formative assessment processes in the classroom?; (iii) What are the most frequently used formative assessment strategies in the classroom by the teachers and how are they used? A systematic review of the last five years was carried out in WOS, SCOPUS, ERIC and Psychinfo following the PRISMA statement. After applying the inclusion criteria, 36 studies

were analyzed. The results show that teachers perceive the benefits of assessment processes associated with 10 variables related to process improvement, learning regulation or teaching improvement. Moreover, the factors that influence their intention to apply them are personal, interaction with others and contextual facts. Finally, the most used strategies are providing feedback, involving students in the evaluation, sharing evaluation objectives and criteria, and asking questions. Therefore, this study contributes to systematizing the research carried out concerning formative assessment processes, opening a door to the generation of new lines of research and the application of concrete actions in educational practice.

Key words: formative assessment; elementary education; teachers; benefits; strategies

Resumen

El creciente interés en la evaluación formativa requiere un análisis sistemático de los elementos claves de la investigación desarrollada en los últimos años. Los trabajos de revisión existentes se enfocan en los factores que afectan a la evaluación formativa pero no abordan los beneficios percibidos utilizados ni las estrategias empleadas. Por ello, esta revisión busca responder las siguientes preguntas: (i) ¿Qué beneficios percibe el profesorado de Educación Básica sobre el empleo de la evaluación formativa en la práctica del aula?; (ii) ¿Cuáles son los factores que influyen en las intenciones del profesorado para utilizar procesos de evaluación formativa en el aula?; (iii) ¿Cuáles son las estrategias de evaluación formativa más empleadas en el aula por parte del profesorado y cómo se emplean? Se realizó una revisión sistemática de los últimos cinco años en WOS, SCOPUS, ERIC y Psychinfo siguiendo la declaración PRISMA. Tras la aplicación de los criterios de inclusión, 36 estudios fueron analizados. Los resultados muestran que el profesorado percibe beneficios de los procesos de evaluación asociados a 10 variables relacionadas con la mejora del proceso, la regulación del aprendizaje o la mejora de la enseñanza. Por otra parte, los factores que influyen en su intención de aplicación son de carácter personal, de interacción con los demás y contextuales. Finalmente, las estrategias más empleadas son proporcionar feedback, implicar al alumnado en la evaluación, compartir los objetivos y criterios de evaluación. Por tanto, este estudio contribuye a sistematizar las investigaciones realizadas en relación con los procesos de evaluación formativa, abriendo una puerta a la generación de nuevas líneas de investigación y a la aplicación de acciones concretas en la práctica educativa.

Palabras clave: evaluación formativa; educación básica; profesorado; beneficios; estrategias

Introduction

Assessment is one of the most controversial aspects of educational processes (Bilbao-Martínez & Villa-Sánchez, 2019). Its social function aimed solely to hold students accountable for their performance. This has been the focus of assessment for a long time. However, for decades, research has shown that assessment can have immense pedagogical potential, improving teaching and learning processes (Bizarro et al., 2019). Formative assessment emerges as a process that aims to constantly improve this process. Specifically, it is a type of assessment that is integrated in the teaching and learning process, which encourages, among other things, a higher degree of learning acquisition by the students, the regulation and self-regulation of learning, student autonomy and the improvement of the teaching work, thus optimizing the teaching and learning processes (Azpilicueta-Amorín, 2020; Hamodi et al., 2015; MacDonald, 2022; Ramírez et al., 2018). However, despite the growing research on the subject, there are no studies that systematically review teachers' perceptions of the benefits that the implementation of these processes may have in classroom practice. This hinders the ability to reasonably justify why the development of formative assessment practices should be encouraged in Basic Education (Primary and Secondary Education). Furthermore, understanding the research topics developed around the benefits of these processes will contribute to the emergence of new research proposals on elements that have not yet been addressed.

In addition, the application of these processes in the classroom is limited and, in many cases, traditional forms of assessment are still in use (Talaquer, 2015). This raises the question: What factors influence the use of these processes? The systematic reviews by Heitink et al. (2016), Schildkamp et al. (2020), and Yan et al. (2021) identify two types of influencing factors: personal factors and contextual factors. The former is linked to teachers' pedagogical beliefs and their perceived literacy in employing effective formative assessment strategies. The latter relates to both external and internal educational policies, the work environment where teachers carry out their duties, working conditions, and students' skills and abilities for the effective development of assessment. These reviews cover studies conducted prior to October

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2019, analyze the perceptions of teachers from different educational levels, including higher education, and do not consider factors related to the relationships and interactions that arise within the school background (teachers and students) and their potential impact on the use of formative assessment. It is essential to have updated information to identify the aspects that need to be emphasized in order to promote the development of formative assessment in the school context and, from there, to develop actions that help reduce the gap between theory and practice.

Another key point is the strategies used by teachers when applying formative assessment processes. The literature identifies five key strategies for developing formative assessment (William & Leahy, 2015): (i) sharing objectives and assessment criteria with students; (ii) encouraging questions and discussions in class; (iii) providing feedback that allows students to review and improve their work; (iv) involving students in their learning; and (v) involving students in the learning of their peers. However, to what extent do teachers use these strategies? On what aspects do they focus on within each of these strategies when applying formative assessment processes? In relation to these questions, it seems necessary to systematically analyze which formative assessment strategies teachers report using when implementing these processes. In this way, conclusions can be drawn about which strategies may be most relevant for introducing teachers to these processes, and which should be emphasized more in both initial and ongoing training, as well as identifying which aspects remain unexplored in research.

For these reasons, we believe there is a gap in the literature, and specifically a lack of systematic reviews that provide a methodical understanding of the benefits perceived by teachers from the application of formative assessment processes, the factors influencing teachers' use of these processes, and the way formative assessment strategies are applied. Thus, this review seeks to answer the following research questions:

> Q1: What benefits do Basic Education teachers perceive from the use of formative assessment in classroom practice?
> Q2: What factors influence teachers' intentions to use formative assessment processes in the classroom?

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Q3: What are the most used formative assessment strategies in the classroom by teachers, and how are they applied?

Method

A systematic review of the literature of the last five years was carried out following the guidelines established in the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) statement (Page et al., 2021) for this type of studies.

Search Process

For the research, the search terms were defined based on the research questions and following the PICO strategy (Costa-Santos et al., 2007), considering the population and the intervention. Key terms and their synonyms were used to access a wide variety of studies. After consulting the specialized literature, the terms listed in Table 1 were used.

The search was conducted in four databases: Web of Science, Scopus, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), and PsychINFO. In Web of Science and Scopus, the search was conducted using the interfaces provided by the databases themselves, while in ERIC and PsychINFO, the EbescoHost platform was used. An independent search was performed in each database using the same filters and strategy. To initiate the search, a Boolean equation was formulated using the AND and OR connectors (Table 1). Only articles related to the fields of education, social sciences, psychology, and humanities published in the last five years were included. All publications were exported to the reference management software Refworks.

TABLE I. Research questions and keywords

Research questions	Q1: What benefits do Basic Education teachers perceive from the use of formative assessment in classroom practice? Q2: What factors influence teachers' intentions to use formative assessment processes in the classroom? Q3: What are the most used formative assessment strategies in the classroom by teachers, and how are they applied?	
PICO	**[1]Population**	**[2]Intervention**
Keywords	*primary education**	*formative assessment**
	*primary school**	*formative evaluation **
	*elementary education**	*alternative assessment**
	*formal education**	*assessment for learning*
	secondary school	
Search	([1] *OR) AND ([2] *OR)	

Source: Compiled by the author.

According to the research questions proposed, the following inclusion criteria were established for the selection of articles:

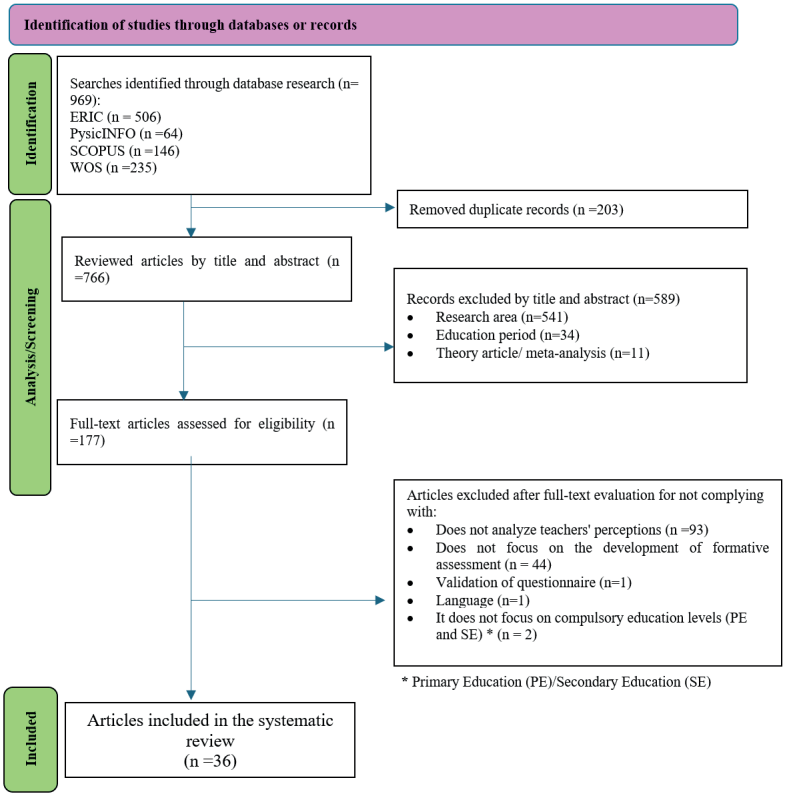
- Studies analyzing teachers' perceptions of the benefits of formative assessment or studies investigating factors influencing teachers' intentions for developing formative assessment or research analyzing the use of formative assessment strategies in the classroom.
- Studies that present empirical results (excluding theoretical work, instrument validation, meta-analyses, or systematic reviews).
- Peer-reviewed articles.
- Articles written in English.
- Studies published between January 2018 and March 2023.

Article Selection and Data Extraction

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The final selection of studies followed several stages (Figure 1). The initial search yielded 969 articles across the four databases. After removing duplicates (n=203), 766 publications remained for review. The titles and abstracts of these were analyzed, excluding those that did not meet the inclusion criteria (n=589). Of the 177 studies that remained for full-text analysis, 141 were excluded for not meeting one or more of the established inclusion criteria (see exclusion reasons in Figure 1). Finally, 36 studies were included in the systematic review.

Figure I. Flowchart of the study selection procedure according to PRISMA statement



Source: Compiled by the authors

Data Analysis

To analyze the information from the selected publications, the full texts were read, and the results were recorded using two data extraction templates. The first template captured the characteristics of the studies analyzed through the following categories: (i) title; (ii) authors and publication year; (iii) research methodology and data collection procedures; and (iv) number of participants in the study. The second template was used to analyze the results and conclusions of the selected studies, including aspects related to the research questions. These criteria were employed to assess the internal quality of the selected studies and to respond to The Critical Appraisal Instrument for Systematic Reviews to evaluate the suitability of the studies for the review. The PRISMA guidelines were used to assess the quality of this review, and registration was included in PROSPERO. Additionally, the AMSTAR2 critical appraisal tool was used, obtaining an overall moderate confidence rating.

Results

Descriptive Analysis of the Literature

The data extraction template detailing the characteristics of the studies included in the systematic review is presented in Appendix I. A summary of the most relevant information from this template is provided in Table 2. Most of the analyzed studies utilized a qualitative methodology (55.3%), followed by mixed methods (24.8%) and quantitative methods (19.4%). Most qualitative or mixed-method studies employed phenomenological or ethnographic designs. The three most common data collection methods were interviews (18%), questionnaires (22.5%), and classroom observations (25.7%).

Of the selected studies, 47.2% were conducted in the Secondary Education level, 33.3% in Primary Education, and 13.8% involved teachers from both educational levels. The geographic distribution of the studies is broad, with most of the research located in Asia (41.6%), followed by Africa (22.2%) and Europe (16.6%). Regarding the subject or educational area taught by the

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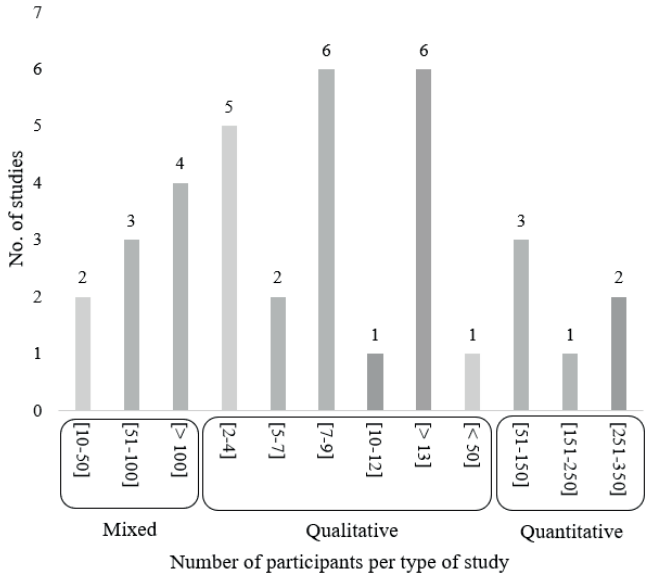
teachers, 30.5% of the studies gathered data from teachers across various disciplines, another 30.5% from teachers of Math's and English, and 2.7% from studies investigating science-related disciplines (such as Science, Chemistry, and STEAM). The number of participants ranged from 2 to 47 in qualitative studies and from 50 to 330 in quantitative studies (see Figure I).

Table II. Descriptive information of the data analyzed

Analyzed variable			N Studies	%
Methodology	Qualitative	Observation and interview	14	38.8
		Interview	5	13.8
		Intervention and interview	1	2.7
	Quantitative	Questionnaire	7	19.4
	Mixed	Observation and questionnaire	1	2.7
		Interview and questionnaire	5	13.8
		Observation, interview and questionnaire	3	8.3
Education level	Primary Education		12	33.3
	Secondary Education		17	47.2
	Primary Education and Secondary Education		5	13.8
Continent	Asia		15	41.6
	Africa		8	22.2
	Europe		6	16.6
	America (USA and Canada)		5	13.8
	Australia		1	2.7
Knowledge fields	Different subjects		11	30.5
	Math		11	30.5
	English		11	30.5
	Science		1	2.7
	Chemistry		1	2.7
	STEAM		1	2.7

Source: Compiled by the authors

Figure I. No. of participants by type of study



Source: Compiled by the authors

The results were organized according to the three research questions: (i) Perceived benefits of formative assessment in classroom practice for Basic Education Teachers; (ii) Factors influencing teachers' intentions to use formative assessment processes in the classroom practice, and (iii) Formative assessment strategies most commonly used in the classroom by Basic Education teachers and how they are used.

Table III. Register of analyzed studies Source: Compiled by the authors

Variables					No. of study analyzed (Check Annex I for list of studies)	N
Benefits of formative assessment				Improvement of the teaching and learning process	5,6,23,31	4
				Integrated in the teaching and learning process	16,24, 36,	3
				Respond to student needs	3,16,21,23,31	5
				Value the students' performance	1,7,8,13,14,19,21,22,24,26,36	11
				Identify needs and challenges	10, 19,21,36	4
				Provide feedback	16,23, 33	3
				Promote learners self-regulation	7,10,13,21,22,24,25,26	8
				Redesigning teaching	6,19,24	3
				Collect performance evidence	5, 7, 10,13,16,24	6
				Report summative achievements and establish marks	6,10,13,16,19,21,22,23	8
Factores influyentes en el desarrollo de la evaluación formativa	Personal issues			Personal engagement and motivation	1,2,3,7,14,18,19,20,25	9
				Perceived self-efficacy	10, 14, 16, 28,35,36	6
				Knowledge and skills	9,11,14,17,30,34,36	7
				Education-training	3,7,9,10,14,20,27,30,36	9
	Interaction			Poor teacher engagement	3,5,20,23,27,29,32,36	8
				Negative attitudes of students	9,15,26,27,30,34	6
	Background issues	External policies		Curriculum	8,9,10,11,30,36	6
				National tests	5	1
				Test System/ Summative Exams	1,7,16,31,24,25,26,27,30,32,33,35	12
		School policy		Direction Support	3,9,10,14,17,20,35,36	8
				Study Program	1,9,10,17,20,21,30,33,34,36	10
				Lack of teacher autonomy	20	1
		Working terms	Lack of time	Overloaded workload	3,4,5,7,9,10,14,20,24,26,27,29, 30,32,35,36	16
				Administrative tasks	20	1
				Teaching assignments	5,9,10,20,36	5
				High ratios	3,7,9,27,36	5
				Student diversity	24,34	2
Formative assessment strategies				Sharing learning objectives and learning standards	3,4,6,8,9,10,11,12,15,17,26,29, 30,32,33	15
				Ask questions	4,8, 9,10,11,29,33,36	8
				Provide Feedback	3,5,6,8,9,10,13,15,17,18,21,22, 29,30,32,33,36	17
				Involvement of different educational agents	3,5,6,8,12,17,18,21,25,26,27,29,31, 33,34,36	16

Source: Compiled by the authors

What benefits do Basic Education teachers perceive about the use of formative assessment in classroom practice?

Nineteen studies identified teachers' perceptions of the benefits of implementing formative assessment in the classroom. In most of these studies, the participating teachers perceive formative assessment as a tool for enhancing the teaching-learning process (Boström & Palm, 2019; Dayal, 2021; Mahalambi

et al., 2022; Thaçi & Sopi, 2022). Three studies highlighted the value of formative assessment as an integrated element within the teaching-learning process (Kaur, 2021; Martin et al., 2021; Zeng & Huang, 2021). Additionally, two studies indicated that teachers agree on the benefits of formative assessment for developing a student-centred constructivist approach, as it allows the collection of meaningful information about students' learning to respond to their needs (Dayal, 2021; Namoco & Zaharundin, 2021).

In line with this, teachers in eleven other studies view formative assessment as a tool to assess student performance, thereby supporting their holistic development (Hasim et al., 2018; Mahlambi, 2021; Taçhi & Sopi, 2022; Zeng & Huang, 2021). Studies by Ma (2021), Martin et al. (2022) and Zeng and Huang (2021) emphasize the importance of providing feedback on task performance and on the instruction that has taken place in their classrooms to guide and encourage their students in their learning process. The diagnostic function of assessment is also noted to identify students' needs and difficulties, enabling teachers to adapt their instructional practices (Govender, 2020; Kyaruzi et al., 2018; Ma & Bui, 2021; Zeng & Huang, 2021). Another aspect explored is the self-regulation of learning as a benefit of using formative assessment processes, particularly when students are involved in the assessment (Demir et al., 2018; Govender, 2020; Hasim et al., 2018; Ma & Bui, 2021; Mahalambi, 2021; Martin et al., 2022; Namoco & Zaharundin, 2021; Ng et al., 2020). Moreover, four studies highlight the regulatory function of assessment as a means of obtaining evidence on what works or does not work in practice, allowing for the adjustment of teaching methods (Zeng & Huang, 2021).

Lastly, despite a paradigm shift being observed in the conception of assessment, there is still a significant influence of traditional certification-focused practices. Six of the studies highlight the role of assessment in gathering evidence of students' academic performance, measuring the grade of learning and verifying their level of competence in the tasks performed. (Boström & Palm, 2019; Demir et al., 2019; Govender, 2020; Hasim et al., 2018; Kaur, 2021; Martin et al., 2022). Eight of the studies also emphasize assessment with a qualifying purpose, highlighting its summative nature (Dayal, 2021; Govender, 2020; Hasim et al., 2018; Kaur, 2021; Kyaruzi et al., 2018;

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Ma & Bui, 2021; Mahalambi, 2021; Mahalambi et al., 2022). In some of these studies, teachers view formative assessment as a tool for comparing marks from previous years with those of subsequent years (Kaur, 2021) or as small tests carried out throughout the process that allows the qualification at the end of the learning process (Dayal, 2021; Kaur, 2021). This perception of assessment leads to confusion among teachers in some studies when trying to understand formative assessment (Kaur, 2021; Mahalambi, 2021; Zeng & Huang, 2021).

What are the factors that influence teachers' intentions to use formative assessment processes in the classroom?

Out of the 36 studies included in the systematic review, 29 examined the factors that influence teachers' intentions to use formative assessment processes in their classrooms. To analyze these factors, they were categorized into three main groups: (1) personal factors; (2) interactional factors; and (3) contextual factors.

- **Personal factors**

These factors are related to the individual characteristics of teachers. We identified the following ones:

(i) Motivation, personal commitment, and enthusiasm for improving their teaching work and the teaching-learning process are among the main factors that lead them to try to develop formative assessment practices (Abdulla-Alotaibi, 2018; Ahmedi, 2019; Andersson & Palm, 2018; Demir et al., 2018; Jawad, 2020; Krishnan et al., 2020; Kyaruzi et al., 2020; Lam, 2018; Namoco & Zaharundin, 2021).

(ii) The perception of self-competence is fundamental for the use of formative assessment. The studies by Yan et al. (2022) and Saeed et al. (2018) show that teachers with higher perceived self-efficacy

are more predisposed to use formative assessment in their classes. Seven studies in this review show that when teachers feel they lack the skill and ability for the correct implementation of alternative assessment practices, they are less willing to use them (Figa-Gurundu et al., 2020; Graham et al., 2021; Jawad, 2020; Khechane et al., 2020; Swaran-Singh et al., 2022; Yan, 2021; Zeng & Huang, 2022).

(iii) Training received on and in assessment. Nine studies highlight the lack of training in assessment as a determining factor for the application of these processes (Andersson & Palm, 2018; Demir et al., 2018; Figa-Gurundu, et al., 2020; Govender, 2020; Jawad, 2020; Lam, 2018; Rahman et al., 2018; Swaran-Singh et al., 2022; Zang & Huang, 2021). This lack of training is primarily associated with: (a) absence of alternative assessment manuals (Figa-Gurundu et al., 2020); (b) lack of specific examples or practices (Demir et al., 2018; Yan, 2021); (c) insufficiency of tools and strategies that facilitate the implementation of formative assessment in the classroom (Demir et al., 2018); and (d) negative attitudes of teachers towards training in these processes (Figa-Gurundu et al., 2020).

- **Interaction with others**

Another aspect that stands out as a factor influencing teachers' intention to apply formative assessment processes is the lack of involvement and collaboration among teachers in the school context (Andersson & Palm, 2018; Boström & Palm, 2019; Lam, 2018; Mahalambi et al., 2022; Rahman et al., 2021; Sun-Keung-Pang, 2020; Veugen et al., 2022; Zeng & Huang, 2021). Actions such as exchanging experiences or collaborating with other teachers to plan assessment processes are facilitating factors that influence teachers' intention to apply these processes (Lam, 2018; Palm, 2018; Rahman et al., 2021).

On the other hand, student involvement in the development of these practices is also a conditioning factor (Figa-Gurundu, 2020; Johnson et al., 2019; Ng et al., 2020; Rahman et al., 2021; Swaran-Singh et al., 2022; Yan,

2021). These studies show a lack of student motivation to engage in self and peer assessment practices and a negative attitude towards formative assessment, which greatly hinders the implementation of these processes (Figa-Gurundu, 2020; Johnson et al., 2019).

- **Contextual facts**

These facts are related to the educational background. For analysis, they have been organized into three groups:

(i) **External Policies**: Eighteen studies analyze their influence. The few synergies between administration and school make it difficult to use formative assessment processes (Boström & Palm, 2019; Govender, 2020; Graham et al., 2021; Kaur, 2021; Kechane et al., 2020). This is compounded by the demands of the curriculum, which leads teachers to spend a significant time in fulfilling it (Boström & Palm, 2019; Figa-Gurudu et al., 2020; Govender, 2020; Graham et al., 2021; Kaur, 2021) and the difficulty in incorporating appropriate assessments and activities into the classroom based on the content and learning standards stipulated in the curriculum (Swaran-Singh et al., 2022). Another highlighted element is the importance given to national assessment tests in national education policies and, consequently, by schools, which leads teachers to prepare students for these standardized tests (Boström & Palm, 2019; Figa-Gurudu, 2020; Zeng & Huang, 2021). Finally, the need for marking or test-taking is also a factor that limits the implementation of alternative assessment practices (Dayal, 2021; Demir et al., 2018; Namoco and Zaharundin, 2021; Vaugen, 2021 & Yan et al., 2022).

(ii) **School Policy**: Thirteen studies highlight this element as an influential factor. The lack of support from school authorities and management teams to promote formative assessment makes teachers feel limited to complying with what is set out in the school curriculum (Abdullah-Alotaibi, 2018; Figa-Gurudu et al., 2020; Govender, 2020; Khechane et al., 2020; Lam, 2018; Ma & Bui, 2021;

Swaran-Singh et al., 2022; Zen & Huang, 2021). Another factor to consider is school schedules, since when they are too extensive, they do not allow teachers to spend time implementing formative assessment processes (Abdullah-Alotaibi, 2018; Figa-Gurudu et al., 2020; Govender, 2020; Khechane et al., 2020; Lam, 2018; Ma & Bui, 2021; Swaran-Singh et al., 2022; Williams-McBean, 2021; Yan. 2021; Zeng & Huang, 2021).

(iii) **Working Conditions**: Covered in 17 studies. Of these, 16 highlight that teachers perceive the lack of time as the most conditioning factor (Andersson & Palm, 2018; Bernard et al., 2019; Boström & Palm, 2019; Demir et al., 2018; Figa-Gurundu et al., 2020; Govender, 2020; Jawad, 2020; Lam, 2018; Martin et al., 2022; Ng-Win et al., 2020; Rahman et al., 2021; Sin-Keung-Pam, 2020; Swaran-Singh et al., 2022; Yan et al, 2022; Zeng & Huang, 2021). Teachers attribute the shortage of time to the excessive workload linked to administrative and teaching tasks. These administrative tasks include being involved in too many intervention programs and the excessive demand of the administration to establish qualifications and satisfy the bureaucracy and external exams (Boström & Palm, 2019; Demir et al., 2018; Ma & Bui, 2021; Ng-Win, 2021; Rahman et al., 2021; Yan, 2021; Zen & Huang, 2021). Teaching tasks refer to actions such as attending to all students' needs, preparing classes, excessive ratios, and the heterogeneity of students in classrooms, which hinders the effective development of individualized formative assessment (Andersson & Palm, 2018; Demir et al., 2018; Figa-Gurudu et al., 2020; Martin et al., 2022; Rahman et al., 2021; Yan, 2021; Zeng & Huang, 2021).

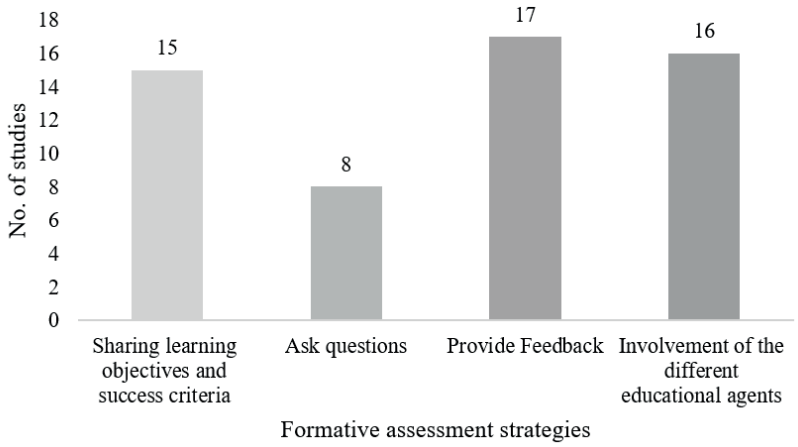
What are the most common formative assessment strategies used in the classroom by teachers and how are they used?

Twenty-five studies were found that address the third research question, analyzing the most used formative assessment strategies in the school context. The studies analyzed these agree with the five key strategies proposed by

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Wiliam and Leahy (2015). For the analysis, they have been grouped into four strategies, combining student involvement in their own learning and that of their peers. Figure II shows the number of studies that analyze each of the included formative assessment strategies.

Figure II. Number of studies included for each of the formative assessment strategies analyzed.



Source: Compiled by the authors

Sharing learning objectives and success criteria with students

In fifteen of the analyzed studies, it is noted that learning intentions are made explicit and learning objectives and/or assessment criteria are shared with students to focus them on the aspects they should concentrate on in their learning. Some studies indicate that this should be done both, at the beginning and the end of the lesson (Bernard et al., 2019; Sun-Keung-Pang, 2020). One of the practices developed to share these elements with students involves breaking down the learning objectives into simpler terms so that they are understandable (Andersson & Palm, 2018; Dayal, 2021). These studies also emphasize the importance of discussing learning objectives with students, giving them autonomy at certain times to agree on what is intended to be achieved and involving them in the teaching and learning process (Andersson & Palm, 2018;

Dayal, 2021; Dudeck et al., 2021; Sun-Keung-Pang, 2020). Other strategies used for this purpose include presenting the learning objectives in writing (Anderson & Palm, 2018) or sharing previous work from other students, providing exemplary models that help them reflect on the aspects they should focus on to adequately complete the tasks (Bernard et al., 2019; Veugen et al., 2021).

Encouraging class discussions, questions, and assignments that challenge students' learning

The formulation of questions to highlight student learning is present in eight of the analyzed studies (Bernard et al., 2019; Dubeck et al., 2021; Figa-Gurundu et al., 2020; Govender, 2020; Graham et al., 2021; Sun-Keung-Pang, 2020; Williams-McBean, 2021; Zeng & Huang, 2021). It is emphasized that these questions should be relevant, clear, open, and varied, aiming to motivate students to think, reflect, respond, and act accordingly (Bernard et al., 2019; Graham et al., 2021; Sun-Keung-Pang, 2020). Additionally, these questions should be appropriate to the students' level, allowing for the assessment of each student's understanding (Sun-Keung-Pang, 2020; Williams-McBean, 2022). For this strategy to be effective, studies highlight that the questions should be integrated into the teaching and learning process and formulated swiftly (Dubeck et al., 2019; Figa-Gurundu et al., 2020; Graham et al., 2021; Sun-Keung-Pang, 2020). One factor that can influence the appropriate use of this strategy is the teacher's experience, as shown in the study by Johnson et al. (2019), where more experienced teachers are able to use this strategy effectively.

Provide feedback

Among the strategies used in formative assessment processes, feedback is the one represented in the largest number of studies (n=17). Oral feedback is most frequently used in the studies to communicate to students what they have done well, indicate the mistakes made, and provide suggestions for further improvement (Boström & Palm, 2019; Figa-Gurundu et al., 2020; Khechane

et al., 2020; Zeng & Huang, 2021). However, some studies include written feedback as a strategy when it refers to written assignments and tests or group work (Andersson & Palm, 2018; Zeng & Huang, 2021). Furthermore, it is shown that for feedback to be effective, suggestions for improvement should be proposed and not just the errors communicated (Andersson & Palm, 2018; Kaur, 2021). Finally, three studies indicate that feedback is not used correctly because there is insufficient time or resources to detect, understand, and help overcome each student's errors, leading teachers to focus corrections on highlighting the mistakes made and assigning a grade (Kaur, 2021; Khechane et al., 2020; Lam, 2018).

Involve students in their learning as well as in self-assessment and in peer assessment practices

The strategy of self-assessment and peer assessment is present in 16 studies. In 11 of the studies, these processes are applied through different ways (self-assessment, peer assessment) and in different tasks such as individual or group classwork, oral presentations, etc. (Bernard et al., 2019; Boström & Palm, 2019; Dayal, 2021; Dubeck et al., 2021; Grob et al., 2021; Khechane et al., 2020; Krishnan et al., 2020; Namoco & Zaharundin, 2021; Ng et al., 2020; Rahman et al., 2021; Sun-Keung-Pang, 2020). The use of self and peer assessment stands out as an excellent strategy for formative assessment, helping students take responsibility for their learning by identifying both, their own difficulties and those of their peers (Mahlambi, 2021; Zeng & Huang, 2021). This, in turn, promotes the development of the "learning to learn" competency and self-learning (Dudeck et al., 2021). To develop these practices, studies highlight various instruments and tools used by teachers (Bernard et al., 2019; Dudeck et al., 2021; Thaçi & Sopi, 2022; Williams-McBean, 2022; Yan, 2021) like student notebooks, portfolios, assessment rubrics, and debates being particularly prominent (Bernard et al., 2019; Dudeck et al., 2021; Thaçi & Sopi, 2022; Williams-McBean, 2022). Finally, Yan's study (2021) shows how training in these processes could increase the use of these skills.

Conclusion

Of the 36 studies included in this review, 19 contained information that allowed for answering the first research question, 29 for the second, and 25 for the third.

Regarding the first research question, it has been shown that teachers perceive the same benefits associated with formative assessment that other studies in recent decades have demonstrated (Azpilicueta-Amorín, 2020; Bilbao-Martínez & Villa-Sánchez, 2019). The regulatory and improvement character stands out among the main benefits perceived by teachers in relation to formative assessment (Boström & Palm, 2019; Dayal, 2021; Mahalambi et al., 2022; Thaçi & Sopi, 2022). This is a highly relevant point given that formative assessment is not generally associated with one-off summative assessments, but rather its value is recognized to improve learning and as a more integrated element in the teaching and learning process. Those studies that reflect the summative nature of assessment do so to indicate that it is still a useful means to collect evidence of student achievement, but also criticize that qualifications should be assigned to an assessment process that should seek to improve learning only to satisfy bureaucratic aspects and to comply with external policies (Ma & Bui, 202; Ng 2021; Rahman et al., 2021).

The second research question has brought to light three types of factors (personal, interaction with others, and contextual) that influence teachers' intentions to use formative assessment strategies in the classroom and are consistent with those presented in previous systematic reviews on the subject studied (Heitink et al., 2016; Schildkamp et al., 2020; Yan et al., 2021). Among the personal factors, motivational aspects, the perception of competence, and the perception of how well-prepared they feel in these assessment processes stand out. This last element is recognized as one of the major factors influencing the use of formative assessment processes. This highlights the need for teacher literacy, both for those in training and those in active service, to provide them with tools to use these strategies and make them feel more competent in their use (Govender, 2020; Jawad, 2020; Saeed et al., 2018; Swaran-Singh et al., 2022). However, both the reality of initial and continuous training are far from achieving this goal as this is one of the elements

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that still receives less attention (Fraile et al., 2020). On the other hand, the certifying function traditionally associated with assessment processes, along with the existing social roots around grading, makes it difficult to involve and convince students of the benefits of formative assessment processes for their learning. A cultural change is needed that focuses on the importance of learning over marks as the only reference for the development of the teaching and learning process (Figa-Gurudu et al., 2020; Hasim et al., 2018; Ng et al., 2020; Rahman et al., 2021; Swaran-Singh et al., 2022; Yan, 2021). Finally, contexual factors have a significant impact on the use of formative assessment strategies. The disconnect between what the curriculum requires of teachers and the reality of classroom practice is one of the elements that hinder the use of these processes. The lack of teacher training on how to apply the curriculum, methodological aspects, and assessment can harm teachers' willingness to use these processes (Andersson & Palm, 2018; Demir et al., 2018; Figa-Gurudu et al., 2020; Govender, 2020; Jawad, 2020; Lam, 2018; Rahman et al., 2021; Swaran-Singh et al., 2022; Zeng and Huang, 2021). Similarly, it can affect teacher's feeling that their opinion is not considered in the drafting of laws and curriculum (MacDonald, 2022). Internally, educational centers, as reflected in this study, should establish appropriate conditions to facilitate teachers' work (Andersson & Palm, 2018; Jawad, 2020; Khechane et al., 2020), betting on educational improvement, promoting the use of formative assessment strategies, and creating workspaces so that teachers feel they have time to prepare the use of innovations in the classroom (Andersson & Palm, 2018; Figa-Gurundu et al., 2020; Khechane et al., 2020; Lam, 2018).

Finally, concerning the last research question, all formative assessment strategies used in the studies are consistent with the strategies of formative assessment processes collected in the literature (Wiliam & Leahy, 2015). The most frequently appearing strategy is providing feedback, followed by sharing the objectives and assessment criteria. This shows the impetus that research has given to the way formative assessment processes are understood and applied. However, its use in the classroom is still scarce (Fraile et al., 2020; Ramírez et al., 2018) and often with a one-time character (Hamodi et al., 2015; Ramírez et al., 2018). In turn, this relates to the obstacles encountered in applying formative assessment processes and the need to foster teach-

er training dynamics that allow for the practical and systematic development of formative assessment in classrooms. Therefore, and taking the results of this study as a reference, it is necessary to highlight the benefits of formative assessment processes and provide practical strategies for their use so that they are useful and do not pose an additional burden for teachers. On the other hand, solutions must be sought both from the centers and the administration to make the use of these processes more accessible.

This systematic review presents a novel study compared to previous reviews conducted, including not only the factors that condition the use of formative assessment processes but also the benefits reported by teachers in the research and the most used strategies in these studies. It also specifically focuses on the Basic Education stage without including Higher Education or College Degree in the same review, whose approach and development are very different and condition the use of formative assessment processes differently. Furthermore, the large number of studies that are part of the systematic review allows for a clear vision of formative assessment processes concerning the three research questions posed. It also offers a vision of practical aspects of formative assessment that can be useful for management teams or administrators who wish to implement actions or educational policies in this area. However, it also presents some limitations, typical of studies developed under this methodology. Despite including many studies, it is possible that some may not have been included, either because they do not use the terms of assessment and research context used, employing some synonym that has not been considered; or, because the main focus of research does not respond to some of the questions posed, being only tangentially touched upon in the studies. Another aspect to consider is that, given its breadth, only literature in English has been included, leaving the door open for future research to address articles in Spanish that meet the rest of the inclusion criteria and have not been considered in this research. Additionally, it should be noted that the order in which the results are presented within each research question does not indicate the priority or importance of each topic discussed concerning the rest, but is the order chosen by the authors to present the results.

Future research should focus on developing interventions in centres and classrooms to enhance the use of these processes and the strategies pro-

posed. This would allow for valuing the possible benefits derived from their use. This is essential for teachers to perceive that it is possible to bring these processes into practice, reducing the gap between what research identifies as beneficial and what is applicable in classrooms. Undoubtedly, among the challenges of educational research in the field of formative assessment is to analyze and systematize effective and successful formative assessment practices that serve as examples for teachers and contribute to the development of quality and impactful formative assessment.

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Article No.	Title	Author and year of publication	Country/region	Education grade	Area/subject	Methodology	No. of participants
Nº 1	Teachers' perception of factors influences adoption of formative assessment	Abdullah-Alotaibi, K. (2018)	Rivadh	SE	Different subjects	Mixed Qualitative (interview) Quantitative (questionnaire)	210 teachers 25 teachers (interview)
Nº 2	Teachers' attitudes and practices towards formative assessment in primary schools	Ahmedi, V. (2019)	Kosovo	PE	Different subjects	Qualitative (open questionnaire)	47 teachers
Nº 3	Reasons for teachers' successful development of a formative assessment practice though professional development-a motivation perspective	Andersson, C. & Palm, T. (2018)	Sweden	PE	Math	Qualitative (teacher questionnaire and interview and observation)	22 teachers
Nº 4	Integration of inquiry-based instruction with formative assessment: The case of experiences chemistry teachers	Bernard, P., Dudek-Rózycki, K. & Orwat, K. (2019)		SE	Chemistry	Qualitative (interview)	2 teachers
Nº 5	Teachers' formative assessment practices: changes after a professional-development programme, and important conditions for change	Boström, E. & Palm, T. (2019)	Sweden	SE	Math	Mixed Qualitative (observation and interview) Quantitative (questionnaire)	14 teachers
Nº 6	How teachers use formative assessment strategies during teaching: evidence from classroom	Dayal,C.H (2021)	Australia	SE	Math	Qualitative/Case study (interview)	2 teachers
Nº 7	Comparative investigation of alternative assessment methods used in Turkey and United States elementary 4th grade mathematics curriculum	Demir, M., Tananis, C.A. & Basbogaoglu, U. (2018)	Turkey and USA	4th PE	Math	Qualitative (observation and interview)	24 teachers
Nº 8	Unlocking the potential of STEAM education: How exemplary teachers navigate assessment challenges	Dubeck, M., DeLucea, C. & Rickey, N. (2021).	Canada	SE	STEAM	Qualitative (interview)	14 teachers
Nº 9	The practice of formative assessment in Ethiopian Secondary School curriculum implementation: The case ow west Arsi Zone Secondary schools	Figa-Guduru, J., Tarekegne-Melese, W. & Abebe-Kebede, M. (2020)	Etihopia	SE	Different subjects	Mixed Qualitative (observation and interview) Quantitative (questionnaire)	176 teachers 258 students 8 school principals 6 teachers (interview) 4 educative supervisors
Nº 10	Insights into Grade 2 teacher´s enactment of formative assessment in mathematics in selected priority schools in Gauteng	Govender, P. (2020)	South Africa	PE	Math	Qualitative, case study (interview and observation)	2 teachers
Nº 11	Communicating lesson objectives and effective questioning in the mathematics classrooms: The Ghanaian Junior High school experience	Graham, M.A., Staden, S.V. & Dzamesi, P.D. (2021)	Ghana	SE	Math	Qualitative/ Intervention (interview)	9 teachers
Nº 12	Analyzing formal formative assessment activities in the context of inquiry at primary and upper secondary school in Switzerland	Grob, R., Holmeier, M. & Labudde, P. (2021)	Sweden	PE and SE	Chemistry	Mixed Quantitative (questionnaire) and Qualitative (interview)	20 teachers (9 PE and 11 SE)
Nº 13	Eliciting teachers understanding and their reported practices on school-based formative assessment: Methodological challenges	Hasim, Z., Di, S. & Barnard, R. (2018)	Malasyia	Pe	English	Qualitative/Case study (interview)	6 docentes
Nº 14	Examinations of Iraqi EFL teachers' attitudes, intentions, and practices regarding formative assessment	Jawad, A.H. (2020)	Iraq	Since PE for University	English	Quantitative (questionnaire)	102 teachers
Nº 15	A study of implementation of formative assessment in three large urban districts	Johnson,C.C., Sondergeld, T.A. & Walton, J.B. (2019)	USA	PE and SE	Different subjects	Mixed Qualitative (observation) Quantitative (questionnaire)	1st Part:28 teachers 2nd Part:1097 teachers
Nº 16	Formative assessment in English language teaching: exploring the enactment practices of teachers within three primary schools in Singapore	Kaur, K. (2021)	Singapore	PE (1st and 2nd)	English	Qualitative/Case study (observation and interview)	6 teachers
Nº 17	Primary Mathematics Teachers assessment practices in the context of the integrated primary curriculum in Lesotho	Khechane,N.C., Makara, M.C. & Rambuda, A.M. (2020)	Lesotho	PE	Math	Qualitative/case study (observation and interview)	4 teachers
Nº 18	The power of context: exploring teacher´s formative assessment for online collaborative writing	Krishnan, J., Black, R. & Olson, C.B. (2020)	USA	8º SE	English	Qualitative/ Case studies (interview and observation)	2 teachers
Nº19	Teacher AfL perceptions and feedback practices in mathematics education among secondary schools in Tanzania	Kyaruzi, F., Strijbos, J-W., Ufer, S., & Brown, G. T. L. (2018)	Tanzania	SE	Math	Mixed Quantitative (questionnaire) Qualitative (interview)	54 teachers
Nº 20	Teacher assessment literacy: Surveying knowledge, conceptions and practices of classroom-based writing assessment in Hong Kong	Lam, R. (2018)	Hong Kong	SE	English	Mixed Qualitative (interview and observation) Quantitative (questionnaire)	66 teachers
Nº 21	Chinese secondary school teachers' conceptions of L2 assessment: a mixed-methods study	Ma, M. & Bui, G. (2021)	China	SE	English	Mixed Quantitative (questionnaire) Case study/qualitative (interview)	66 teachers 2 teachers (interview)

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Nº 22	Assessment for learning as a driver for active learning and learner participation in mathematics	Mahlambi, S. B. (2021)	Johannesburg o	PE	Math	Qualitative (interview and observation)	9 teachers
Nº 23	Exploring the use of assessment for learning in the mathematics classrooms	Mahalambi, S.B., Van den Berg, G. & Mawela, A.S. (2022	South Africa	6ª PE	Math	Case study (interview and observation)	9 teachers
Nº 24	Examining Elementary school teachers' perceptions of and use of formative assessment in mathematics	Matin, C.I., Mraz, M. & Polly, D. (2022)	USA	PE	Math	Quantitative (questionnaire)	62 teachers
Nº 25	Pedagogical Beliefs and learning assessment in science: teachers experiences anchored on theory of reasons actions	Namoco, S. & Zaharundin, R. (2021)	Philippines	SE	Different subjects	Qualitative (interview)	6 teachers
Nº 26	Enhancing Student Learning and Teacher Development: Does "assessment for learning" matter?	Ng, S. W., Kwan, Y. W., & Huey Lei, K. H. (2020)	Hong Kong		English	Qualitative/Case study (intervention)	4 teachers
Nº 27	Implementing a formative assessment model at a secondary school: attitudes and challenges	Rahman, K.A., Hasan, M.K., Namaziandost, E. & Sraj,P.M.I. (2021)	Bangladesh	SE	English	Qualitative (interview)	12 teachers
Nº 28	Teachers' perception about the use of classroom assessment techniques in elementary and secondary schools	Saeed, M., Hafsa,T. & Iqra, L. (2018)	Lahore	PE and SE	Different subjects	Quantitative (questionnaire)	330 teachers
Nº 29	Teachers´ reflective practices in implementing assessment for learning skills in classroom teachers	Sun-Keung-Pang, N. (2020)	Hong Kong	PE	Different subjects	Cuantitativa (cuestionario)	34 teachers
Nº 30	Challenges and needs of ESL teachers in implementing portfolio assessment as alternative assessment in teaching English	Swaran-Singh, C.K, Mastura-Muhammad, M.M., Mostafa,A.N., Noordin,N., Darmi, R., Yunus, M.M., Kiong, T.T. & Singht, T.S.M. (2022)	Malaysia		English	Qualitative (observation and interview)	5 teachers
Nº31	The differences in formative assessment evaluation between teachers and students-a non-parametric analysis	Thaçi,L. & Sopi, X. (2022)	Kosovo	SE	Different subjects	Quantitative (questionnaire)	217 teachers
Nº 32	Secondary school teachers use of online formative assessment during COVID 19 lockdown: experiences and lesson learned	Veugen, M.J., Gulikers, J.T.M. & Brok, P. (2022)	Netherlands	SE	Different subjects	Quantitative (questionnaire)	50 teachers
Nº 33	Contextual Considerations: Revision of the William and Thompson (2007) Formative assessment framework in the Jamaican context	Williams-McBean, C.T. (2021)	Tanzania	SE	English	Qualitative (interview and observation)	32 teachers
Nº 34	Assessment-as-learning in classroom: the challenges and professional development	Yan, Z. (2021)	Hong Kong	PE	Different subjects	Qualitative (observation and interview)	47 teachers
Nº 35	Predicting Teachers Formative Assessment Practices: Teacher Personal and Contextual Factors	Yan, Z., Chiu, M.M. & Cheng, E.C. (2022)	Hong Kong	PE and SE	Different subjects	Quantitative (questionnaire)	296 teachers
Nº36	Understanding formative assessment practice in the EFL exam-oriented context: An application of the theory of planned behavior	Zeng, J. & Huang, L. (2021)	China	SE	English	Mixed Qualitative (interview) Quantitative (questionnaire)	Interview: 10 teachers Questionnaire: 171 teachers

Source: Compiled by the authors

A Competency-Based Approach to Improve the Selection of Applicants for Initial Teacher Training in Early Childhood and Primary Education in Spain

Un enfoque basado en la aptitud docente para mejorar la selección de los y las aspirantes a la formación inicial del profesorado de infantil y primaria en España

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Resumen

Esta revisión conceptual explora el modelo de selección a la formación inicial del profesorado de infantil y primaria en España, con el objetivo de contribuir a su mejora. El análisis incluye un examen en profundidad de los procedimientos y mecanismos de selección existentes en el territorio, la identificación de las deficiencias encontradas y la propuesta de posibles soluciones para subsanarlas. El trabajo sostiene que la adopción de un enfoque basado en la evaluación de la aptitud o el desempeño docente, fundamentado en la teoría y la investigación aplicada, podría potenciar la calidad del profesorado y, con ello, fortalecer de manera significativa el sistema educativo español. La evaluación de la aptitud docente implicaría considerar, además de las calificaciones de la EvAU, los resultados de pruebas

específicas para el ingreso en los programas de formación inicial. Estas pruebas evaluarían tanto competencias académicas, como atributos no académicos y factores de antecedentes. Además de los exámenes competenciales de corte cognitivo, las mini entrevistas múltiples y los test de juicio situacional se presentan como los instrumentos más adecuados para la evaluación de atributos de corte no cognitivo. A pesar de que la implementación de un modelo de selección no generalista podría tener numerosos beneficios para el panorama educativo español, también guarda ciertas limitaciones que es preciso considerar. La investigación contribuye a una comprensión más detallada de aquellas estrategias que podrían resultar efectivas para evaluar y seleccionar a los mejores aspirantes a los programas de formación inicial del profesorado de infantil y primaria a nivel global, ofreciendo una hoja de ruta para la toma de decisiones informadas.

Palabras clave: procesos de selección, aspirantes a docentes, formación inicial, instrumentos de evaluación, políticas docentes

Abstract

This conceptual review examines the selection model for initial teacher education in early childhood and primary education in Spain, with the goal of contributing to its improvement. The analysis provides an in-depth evaluation of the current selection procedures and mechanisms across the country, highlighting key shortcomings and offering solutions to address them. The paper advocates for a competency-based approach, grounded in both theoretical and applied research, as a means to enhance teacher quality and significantly strengthen the Spanish education system. This approach would assess teaching aptitude not only through the EvAU university entrance exam but also via specialized tests designed for aspiring teacher candidates. These tests should evaluate a combination of academic competencies, non-academic attributes, and relevant background factors. In addition to cognitive assessments, tools such as multiple mini-interviews and situational judgment tests are recommended as the most effective methods for evaluating non-cognitive traits. While the implementation of a specialized selection model holds the potential for substantial benefits to the Spanish education system, it also presents certain challenges that require careful consideration. This study offers valuable insights into effective strategies for evaluating and selecting the most qualified candidates for initial teacher education programs, providing a roadmap for informed policymaking with global relevance.

Keywords: selection processes, teacher candidates, initial teacher education, assessment tools, teacher policies

Introduction

Education systems worldwide are consistently challenged with the task of attracting and selecting the best possible candidates to enter teacher preparation programs. The process of identifying high quality candidates is a historical problem: over 100 years ago, the educational psychologist F.B. Knight criticized teacher selection processes of the day, noting that 'The kind of information usually asked of a candidate does not correlate… with successful (teaching) performance' (1922, p. 216). Most current teacher candidate selection systems focus on assessing academic competencies (e.g., subject knowledge, numeracy and literacy skills) that are relatively easily derived from academic records and well-established measures. However, evaluating non-academic attributes—motivation and other personal characteristics—that are important predictors of teaching success is much more difficult, and many education systems around the world have struggled to develop reliable and valid methods to assess these important 'people skills' that are closely related to teacher success. Notably, recent developments in fields outside of education, spanning medicine, nursing, business, and civil service, have made inroads in appraising non-academic attributes in job candidates. We suggest that education can successfully build on these cross-disciplinary developments to improve the selection of prospective teachers.

In this conceptual review, we explore the selection of teacher education candidates in, Spain, a key nation in Europe and Latin America, currently undergoing a significant reform within the teaching profession. Central to these reforms is the enhancement of teacher quality, with a strong focus on policies aimed at improving the selection process for teacher education. Specifically, we focus on initial teacher education at the early childhood and primary levels, both of which adhere to a concurrent training model[1]. Our exploration encompasses an in-depth analysis of the current teacher candidate selection process, the identification of existing gaps, and the proposal of po-

1 The review does not encompass the Master's program for secondary teacher education for three primary reasons: (a) the concurrent training model at the early childhood and primary education levels (Castro & Egido, 2024), which facilitates the development of comprehensive, simultaneous teacher policies; (b) the long-term influence of early education—and consequently, early childhood and primary teachers—on students' academic and personal growth (Maulana et al., 2023); and (c) the heightened importance of non-academic attributes, such as empathy and emotional competence, during these stages (Bardach et al., 2020), which contrasts with the more academically focused nature of secondary education.

tential solutions to address these shortcomings. We argue that adopting a competency-based approach, grounded in theory and research, could strengthen teacher quality and, consequently, the country's education system.

Our goal is to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of effective candidate assessment and selection strategies at these educational stages, with broader implications for teacher education systems globally. While our primary focus is on the Spanish context, the insights garnered possess broad applicability to diverse educational settings grappling with fundamental questions such as, *How can we identify the best possible candidates to enter our teacher education programs? What can we do differently to ensure that the methods we use for selection reflect the latest research? How can we implement these changes?* Recognizing the pivotal role teachers play in the overall success of education systems, we acknowledge the complexity and multifaceted nature of the teacher candidate selection predicament.

The importance of teachers and teacher selection

Teachers are pivotal in shaping individual lives and influencing a nation's intellectual and economic well-being. It is clear that the role of teachers extends far beyond the classroom; they leave an indelible mark on students, influencing not only their immediate learning but also their long-term development. Teachers are not just educators, but also mentors and role models, providing behavioural examples that resonate with their students' future roles as citizens. They play a pivotal role in developing life-necessary qualities and skills, enhancing or impeding both their current opportunities and their life-long motivation for learning (e.g., Edward, 2021).

Influencing roughly 30% of the variance in student outcomes—and up to 60% for those with additional educational needs—teachers can significantly level the playing field for students from less privileged backgrounds (Maulana et al., 2023). The distinction between the impact of proficient and underperforming teachers is stark, with some research indicating a variance of up to one academic year's learning between highly effective and less effective teachers over a single school year (Hanushek et al., 2019; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2012). This influence is not fleeting; it accumulates over a lifetime, af-

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fecting students' educational and social prospects in profound ways (Bardach et al., 2020; Chetty et al., 2014; Hattie & Zierer, 2019; Klassen & Kim, 2021).

The calibre of educators, therefore, must be held to the highest standard, encompassing not only pedagogical skills but also the intrinsic qualities that foster a transformative educational experience. A teacher is not merely a conduit for transmitting information or knowledge; rather, they are responsible for nurturing the full spectrum of human development (Gusdorf, 2019). The teacher's role extends beyond imparting cultural knowledge and intellectual understanding, encompassing the socio-emotional domain as well. This requires treating students with respect and care, fully engaging in their learning process, and fostering environments that encourage meaningful educational influence (Martínez et al., 2020). Consequently, it is essential to focus on this socially significant role through measures designed to ensure educators' effective performance.

Identifying the most effective teachers implies several interventions throughout the career span, beginning with recognising and selecting prospective candidates who exhibit a strong foundation of desirable attributes for the teaching profession. Researchers and policy-makers emphatically state that the 'long-term success of an education system depends on the "raw materials" that enter the system because there are significant individual differences in the developmental trajectory of new teachers' (Atteberry et al., 2015, p. 3). These differences are largely conditioned by the entry qualities of the candidates, particularly considering that some attributes are more influential in future performance and that their capacity for change varies over time. While academic attributes such as cognitive or verbal skills are modestly predictive of teaching prowess (Bardach & Klassen, 2020), traits like motivation and self-efficacy tend to have greater predictive power (Bardach et al., 2020). The selection process, therefore, is crucial, aiming to recruit candidates with optimal characteristics for future teaching while filtering out those whose personal characteristics are less aligned with the profession's demands. Examining and improving selection processes promises to cultivate a robust and capable teaching workforce, vital for the future of education.

In addition, high-quality selection processes are advantageous even when selection itself is not the primary goal (e.g. when the 'selection ratio'

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of applicants to available places is low). These procedures have the potential to optimize costs and resources by the implementation of standardised processes; they enhance the social image and prestige of the profession by conveying that not just anyone can become a teacher; and most importantly, they can provide valuable insights into the entry profile of candidates—especially about the non-cognitive or non-academic attributes—which can guide the design of policies aimed at improving initial training, professional development, and even recruitment strategies.

Teacher selection in Spain

From an international perspective, models for selecting teacher education candidates can generally be categorized into two primary types (Castro & Egido, 2024): (1) those employing general entry criteria similar to other fields of study, with standardized requirements for teacher education, and (2) those utilizing specialized selection processes specifically designed for teacher training. The first model typically evaluates secondary school grades, university entrance exams, or a combination of both, with a focus on proficiency in core subjects such as mathematics and language, alongside skills relevant to specialized areas like physical education or music. In contrast, the second model adopts a multi-stage selection process, beginning with standardized assessments and advancing to more specialized evaluations. Within this framework, two distinct approaches emerge: (a) systems that assess applicants' cognitive abilities, knowledge, and aptitudes, and (b) systems that prioritize the evaluation of non-cognitive attributes critical to teaching, such as motivation, interpersonal skills, and professional dispositions. While the first model emphasizes cognitive skills, the second incorporates psychological assessments to evaluate non-cognitive traits, aligning more closely with the diverse demands of the teaching profession.

In Spain, early childhood and primary education teacher training is primarily offered by the country's leading higher education institutions: universities. The primary mechanism for selecting candidates for early childhood and primary teacher training programmes is the national university entrance examination, known as EvAU (Evaluación de Acceso a la Universidad in

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Spanish). This assessment evaluates the academic knowledge that candidates acquire during secondary education. While a section of the EvAU is tailored to the candidate's chosen field (e.g., Social Sciences), it maintains a universal character applicable across all disciplines. Notably, the specialized section is optional, allowing applicants to decide whether or not to complete it. Those who opt out are eligible for a maximum score of 10 points, while those who take the specialization exams can achieve up to 14 points. Admission to any program, including teacher training, requires a minimum score of 5 out of 10. However, in practice, acceptance is contingent upon the number of available seats and the scores of other applicants. As a result, admission is determined by the "entry score," which is established based on the performance of other candidates and the availability of places..

Although Spain generally follows the first of the models outlined, there are some regional exceptions that must be addressed. Since 2016, Catalonia requires an additional competency exam for those aspiring to enter teacher training programmes. This examination, specifically designed to meet the demands of the teaching profession, assesses communicative and critical reasoning skills, as well as logical-mathematical abilities—collectively referred to as CCiRC and CLOM. The primary aim of this assessment is to evaluate the acquisition of these crucial competencies through problem-solving exercises, acting as a barometer of candidates' preparedness for teacher training programmes. Success in this examination is mandatory for admission, regardless of the candidates' scores in the EvAU. The implementation of this measure followed the identification of several deficiencies in the basic competencies of individuals entering these programs, as well as the largely cognitive and non-competency-based nature of the EvAU (Martínez et al., 2015).

Following Catalonia's lead, the Balearic Islands introduced a specialized entrance exam for teacher training programmes in 2020. This exam also evaluates CCiRC and CLOM skills and incorporates non-academic attributes, such as interpersonal skills, motivation, previous professional experiences, personal beliefs, and adaptability. After successfully passing these cognitive assessments, candidates are required to complete a video presentation and participate in a group interview. In the video presentation, applicants are en-

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couraged to reflect on questions like *Who am I? What are my interests and hobbies? Why do I wish to become a teacher? and What qualities do I bring to the future educator role?* The group interview obliges candidates to reach a consensus on a relevant educational issue, fostering dialogue, reasoning, and the expression of their viewpoints in a collaborative environment (Oliver-Trobat et al., 2021). In addition to achieving a favourable score on the EvAU, successful completion of all these stages is a prerequisite for securing a place in the programme.

Finally, some private institutions in Spain impose additional admission criteria beyond the EvAU for entry into initial teacher training programs (Valero, 2023). However, these additional requirements generally reflect the institution's broader admission policies and are not specifically tailored to teacher education. Only a limited number of universities—namely Universidad de Deusto, Universidad Atlántico Medio, Universidad Internacional de Valencia, and Universidad Internacional de la Empresa—refrain from assessing non-academic attributes, instead focusing on prior academic knowledge or proficiency in a foreign language, typically English. Nonetheless, the first two institutions acknowledge the importance of non-academic attributes in their admission profiles.

The majority of universities offering these programs (a total of 10) employ a more comprehensive assessment approach, evaluating both cognitive abilities—such as logical, spatial, and verbal reasoning (e.g., Universidad Nebrija)—as well as personal characteristics related to motivation, attitude, and interpersonal skills (e.g., Universidad Francisco de Vitoria, Universidad Loyola, and CEU Cardenal Herrera). These personal traits are assessed through a range of methods, including personal interviews, psychometric tests, and personal statements or video presentations. Notably, only Universidad Camilo José Cela has established specific admission requirements for early childhood and primary education programs. Two other universities—Universidad de Navarra and Universidad Pontificia de Comillas—apply specific criteria for Social Sciences. The remaining universities do not differentiate their admission requirements for initial teacher education programs.

What's missing in the Spanish selection process?

With the exception of the previously mentioned cases, it is challenging to assert that Spanish selection processes are fully aligned with international trends—whether in policies, practices, or research—that advocate for establishing specific requirements for entry into early childhood and primary teacher training programs (Castro & Egido, 2024). These requirements should not only reflect the multidimensional nature of teaching but also acknowledge the importance of early effectiveness in shaping long-term teacher success (Klassen & Kim, 2021). In practice, however, the Spanish education system relies heavily on selection processes that are largely based on EvAU scores, without incorporating the rigorous application of current research in teacher training programs. As a result, it is challenging to describe this approach as a true selection process, as candidates are admitted to initial teacher training programs solely based on their EvAU scores, provided sufficient places are available. This reflects a broader lack of attention to policies that target the early stages of the teaching career, including attraction, recruitment, and selection, which ultimately results in a relatively low threshold for entry into teacher training programs. The following sections will explore the challenges associated with the current selection model, as well as the deficiencies that could be addressed by implementing more specific selection processes tailored to the teaching profession.

Implications of lacking a specific selection process: two main issues to address

The initial concern centres on the insufficient academic and motivational profiles of individuals applying for early childhood and primary teacher training programmes in Spain. For the 2023-2024 academic year, entry scores for early childhood education programs averaged around 7.7 out of 14, while for primary education the average was 8.2. These scores, while moderate and consistent over time, are significantly lower when compared to more demanded fields such as Medicine (13,3) or Mathematics and Statistics (11,3) (Ministry of Universities [MU], 2024). Additionally, a dearth of STEM back-

ground among candidates results in lower achievements in disciplines such as Language, Mathematics, Science, History, and Literature, where STEM students typically excel (Asensio et al., 2022). These academic gaps frequently manifest throughout teacher training programs (Fernández-Mellizo & Constante-Amores, 2020; Jiménez et al., 2021), further contributing to the societal perception that the teaching profession lacks highly qualified individuals (Valero, 2023).

The proportion of students opting for early childhood and primary teacher training programmes remains modest. For the same academic year, the preference rate (first-choice applications per available place) for these programmes was 147.4 for early childhood education and 166.3 for primary teachers, surpassing fields such as Engineering (122.2) and Business (137.5). However, these numbers fall significantly behind more sought-after fields like Health Sciences, led by Medicine (1066.4), and Social Services (457.4). Additionally, the suitability rate (the percentage of students who were able to enrol in their first-choice program) was 67.1% for early childhood education and 75.7% for primary teachers. Despite these figures, teacher education programs rank as the fifth most in-demand nationwide (MU, 2024), indicating that a considerable percentage of students admitted to these programs did not select teaching as their first choice. This suggests that the motivations of many applicants do not fully align with the ideal aspirations for pursuing a teaching career (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training [MEFP], 2022).

Furthermore, a mismatch exists between the number of teacher training graduates and the available teaching positions. This imbalance can be attributed to two main factors. First, the number of available places in teacher training programs is determined primarily by applicant demand, rather than the actual needs of educational institutions. Given the high demand for these programs, the number of places offered is also considerable. Second, the high rate of enrolment (typically above 95%), the absence of rigorous selection mechanisms, and the relative ease of completing the programs (also with a completion rate above 95%) have resulted in an oversupply of early childhood and primary education graduates (MU, 2024). According to the MEFP (2022), this situation has led to an oversupply of qualified teachers, contrib-

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uting to limited job prospects and the devaluation of the teaching profession. Additionally, the ease of programme entry and completion perpetuates the perception that teaching is accessible to anyone, regardless of their suitability for the profession (Valero, 2023). Therefore, a rebalancing of supply and demand is recommended, along with increased academic stringency in teacher training.

The issues outlined above highlight the need to improve the current selection model. This improvement requires the establishment of specific admission criteria for early childhood and primary teacher training programs that assess candidates' suitability for the teaching profession. The following section will seek to identify the existing gaps in the adoption of this model.

Identifying gaps

To effectively address the challenges identified, the selection model for teacher training must evolve from a "minimum standards" approach to one focused on "maximum potential" (Hirschkorn et al., 2016). This means transitioning from a generalized framework to one specifically designed for the teaching profession. Currently, institutions responsible for early childhood and primary teacher training primarily admit a set number of applicants based on criteria that bear little relation to their actual suitability or aptitude for teaching. Present university policy prioritizes broad access to education for individuals who meet basic requirements—such as passing the EvAU—and relies on these institutions to provide high-quality training. Nevertheless, universities are permitted to establish their own additional admission criteria for specific fields where necessary (Boletín Oficial del Estado [BOE], 2023).

In the field of teacher education, this approach reflects the belief that "good teachers are made" (incremental view), emphasizing the transformative power of training and professional development, as well as the adaptability of certain attributes in predicting teaching effectiveness. In contrast, the entity view—arguing that "good teachers are born"—suggests that certain traits are innate and unchangeable, making it critical to identify and select the most naturally gifted candidates. A more balanced perspective is offered by the dynamic interactionist view, which asserts that teaching competence

arises from an interplay of personal and environmental factors, placing equal importance to recruitment and selection processes, as well as to training and professional growth (see Klassen & Kim, 2017). According to this interactionist approach, the role of educational institutions extends beyond delivering high-quality training to also include the identification and selection of the most suitable candidates for the profession. In the Spanish context, adopting this paradigm would necessitate a significant transformation of the prevailing selection model, aligning it with the more advanced procedures already in place in regions such as Catalonia and the Balearic Islands, where results have been reported as favourable (Valero, 2023).

The second shortfall refers to the absence of an competency-based framework for selection processes. Although the MEFP has been working on such a framework, the specific competencies it encompasses remain unclear. With the exception of Catalonia and the Balearic Islands, selection processes are largely generalized across most degree programs and do not align with the specific demands of teacher education and the teaching profession. It is therefore crucial to move towards a well-defined competency framework that includes both cognitive and non-cognitive attributes, which will serve to inform and shape a more effective selection model.

Furthermore, assessing the attributes most relevant to successful teaching performance demands the careful selection of appropriate assessment instruments—one of the most pressing challenges in both the theory and practice of teacher selection (Klassen & Kim, 2021). The competency-based assessments employed in Catalonia and the Balearic Islands offer a strong starting point for evaluating academic attributes. However, the true challenge lies in developing accurate and equitable methods for assessing non-academic qualities. It is essential to continue evaluating the effectiveness of the multiple interviews used in the Balearic Islands, while also exploring additional tools that can address or eliminate their current limitations.

The gaps identified in the existing selection processes draw attention to potential solutions that could be implemented to enhance the recruitment of candidates for early childhood and primary teacher education. The following sections will outline several strategies that have been widely recognized in international educational research and practice as promising approaches to

improving teacher selection.

How to strengthen the Spanish selection process?

After identifying the principal issues and gaps in the Spanish selection process, we suggest potential solutions and measures that could enhance the robustness of the model. We propose that adopting a competency-based approach, informed by theory and research and encompassing the assessment of non-academic attributes, could significantly strengthen the quality of teachers and the education system.

A competency-based approach

Adopting a competency-based approach prompts several important questions: Does the quality of the selection process of individuals for teacher training significantly influence how people perform in the classroom? If so, what are the competencies and attributes that we should search for in a screening or selection process?

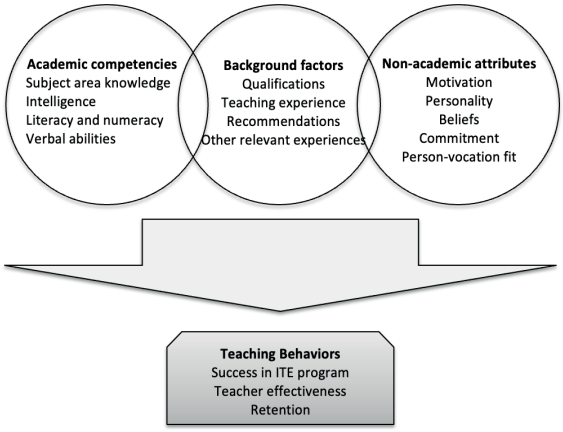
Research consistently indicates that teaching effectiveness encompasses a broad spectrum of personal traits and contextual factors that should be integral to the selection process (see Klassen & Kim, 2021). However, an education system is faced with a range of challenges in this assessment process. First, there are a very wide range of personal characteristics (e.g., academic competencies and non-academic attributes) and contextual factors to consider, making the determination of (a) the most crucial competencies and attributes and (b) reliable evaluation methods difficult. Second, making decisions regarding the selection of prospective teachers at the very beginning of their careers is inherently challenging, steeped in a substantial degree of uncertainty about making predictions of future teaching success even before applicants step into the classroom. Teacher selection is a complex and multifaceted issue, requiring strong, evidence-based support to justify decision-making. Grounding selection models in robust scientific evidence not only enhances the likelihood of identifying the most capable individuals for

the teaching profession but also contributes to the long-term goal of ensuring a high-quality teaching workforce.

In Figure I, we graphically portray a competency-based framework for teacher selection that takes into account three factors: academic competencies, background factors, and non-academic attributes. Included in the academic competencies and background factors domains are the kinds of factors traditionally assessed in education systems: academic achievement as an indicator of subject knowledge, intelligence, literacy and numeracy skills, and verbal abilities, and perhaps a review of background factors that might include past experiences and recommendations from knowledgeable referees. The assessment of academic competencies and background factors is relatively straightforward, as records of academic achievements, such as transcripts and employment records, are readily available. If additional data is needed, standardized tests measuring subject knowledge and literacy/numeracy are available. However, the factor of non-academic attributes is much more difficult to assess, and might include motivation, personality, beliefs, occupational commitment, and the candidate's 'fit' with the teaching profession. Research suggests that this latter category is at least as important as academic competencies and background, but much less frequently assessed in selection processes (Klassen & Kim, 2021).

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FIGURE I. How competencies, attributes, and background factors influence teaching behaviours



Source: Compiled by the authors

While teacher selection methods may reference teaching standards as behavioural benchmarks indicative of various competencies and values (e.g., Casey & Childs, 2007), the chosen methods may not consistently and reliably assess these competencies. In any domain, selection methods must undergo regular evaluation for their reliability (consistency over time), validity (demonstrated predictive utility), and fairness toward all applicants, irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, or socioeconomic status.

An evidence-supported, competency-based approach to teacher selection involves first identifying a framework of desired competencies based on theory and research, followed by the development of reliable, valid, and unbiased methods to assess these competencies.

The importance of non-academic attributes

In reflecting on their school experiences, individuals often recall their teachers' personal attributes more vividly than their specific teaching practices (Pajares & Urdan, 2008). These attributes significantly influence students' engagement and interact with how teachers teach in complex ways. Select-

ing the best possible teacher candidates involves aiming to identify individuals possessing the right mix of personal attributes and teaching knowledge. However, there are challenges involved when selecting questions arise: Can these attributes change, and is it crucial for applicants to exhibit them during selection, or can they be cultivated over time?

Teacher effectiveness involves a dynamic interplay of personal attributes and contextual factors. Interactionist approaches propose that traits and attributes are manifested based on the interplay between individuals and their specific situations. While individual attributes underlying teacher effectiveness may evolve, their patterns of expression remain consistent within individuals. Identifying and evaluating these attributes, particularly during entry into the teaching profession, is crucial due to the potential benefits of recognizing individual variations in teacher effectiveness (Atteberry et al., 2015).

Recent research has explored how the factors related to teacher effectiveness—emphasizing background factors, academic abilities, and non-academic attributes- predict teaching effectiveness. Academic abilities, often considered crucial at the selection stage, are relatively easily measured through proxies like college entrance scores. However, the 'bright person hypothesis', asserting that effective teachers possess high levels of intellectual capacity, is challenged by findings suggesting that general cognitive ability is unrelated to student achievement and enjoyment (Kunter et al., 2013). Our recent research indicates that non-academic attributes—motivation, personality, and person-environment fit—may offer more promising insights into teacher selection.

Non-academic attributes present challenges in assessment during teacher selection. While attributes like self-efficacy are robustly linked to effectiveness, evaluating them in high-stakes situations can be problematic. Applicants may respond in socially desirable ways, potentially skewing results. Research has expanded to explore various non-cognitive attributes, including motivation (especially self-efficacy), personality, and emotions. However, the challenge lies in reliably and fairly assessing these attributes during selection processes.

In summary, teacher effectiveness is a complex interplay of academic and non-academic factors, and their interaction with background factors

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and experience. These personal competencies and contextual factors all play roles in shaping effective teaching. The dynamics of these factors vary, with non-academic attributes holding promise for future research and development in teacher selection processes.

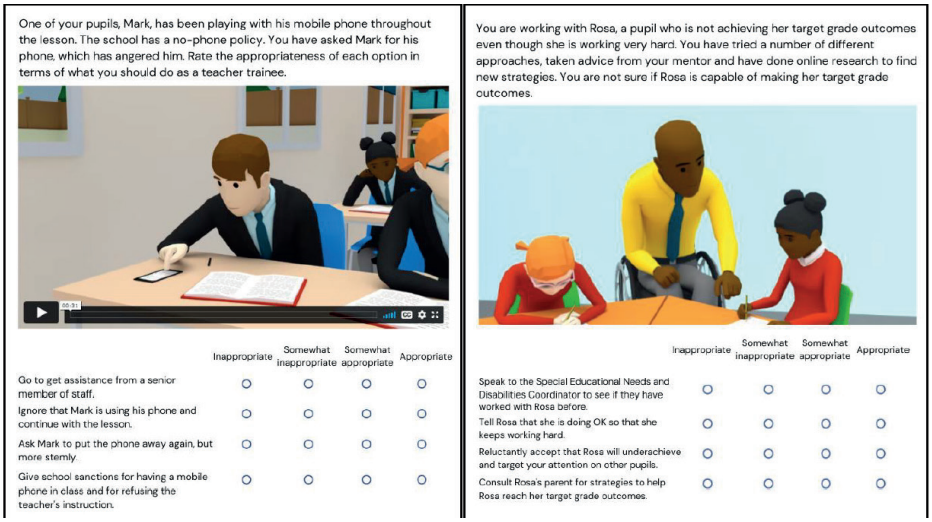
Assessing non-academic attributes in teacher selection

Selecting teachers involves predicting their performance in both short-term training and long-term professional practice. A robust and defensible selection process becomes crucial when the number of applicants exceeds available positions, necessitating the screening of unsuitable candidates and identifying strengths and weaknesses for future development. While competency-based selection methods have been extensively researched in various fields, they have not been widely applied in teacher selection. Traditional methods like academic records, personal statements, group interviews, reference letters, and structured interviews often lack predictive power and may exhibit harmful biases. In contrast, two competency-based methods, Situational Judgement Tests (SJTs) and Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs), have recently been adapted and tested for use in education settings.

SJTs and MMIs

SJTs have gained popularity in the last two decades due to their high predictive validity compared to other selection tools. They are based on desired competencies and typically present a challenging workplace scenario with response options, delivered in text-only or video + text formats. See Figure II for an example of a computer-administered SJT. Originally developed in World War II, SJTs were initially used to assess officer candidates and were later adopted in medical training, civil service, and large corporations. The underlying theory, implicit trait policy, explores individuals' beliefs about expressing personality traits in specific situations. SJTs aim to capture how competencies like empathy, adaptability, and commitment can manifest in diverse contexts.

FIGURE II. Example of a computer-administered situational judgment test used in the UK.



Source: Compiled by the authors

Research indicates that SJTs, administered at the start of training programs, robustly predict job performance and exhibit lower susceptibility to group biases than other methods (Nadmilail et al., 2023). Developing SJTs for teacher selection offers advantages such as clear links to competencies, efficiency in implementation, especially for screening numerous applicants, and effectiveness, as SJTs are among the most predictive selection tools. Despite these benefits, SJTs can be expensive to produce, and revisions can be time-consuming and costly. Furthermore, SJTs are relatively new in teacher education, possibly due to historical reluctance to move away from less effective but more intuitive selection approaches.

SJTs for selecting candidates into teacher education or the teaching profession have, until recently, not been implemented in education systems. However, there has been a notable increase in their usage in recent years, in particular through the research conducted in the UK through the Teacher Selection Project and the TCAT group in Australia (e.g., Bowles et al., 2014). According to Klassen and Kim (e.g., 2021), teacher education programs rare-

ly implement selection methods with a published evidence base, such as SJTs, MMIs, or other evidence-based approaches. Research on the use of SJTs for teacher selection is gradually emerging, with growing evidence of their effectiveness in identifying high-quality candidates. In the UK, research on teacher selection tools revealed that SJTs administered to primary and secondary teaching applicants accurately predicted performance in subsequent stages of selection (Klassen et al., 2020) and up to six months into teacher training (e.g., Klassen & Rushby, 2019).

Another approach to measure the non-academic attributes of prospective teachers is multiple mini-interviews, or MMIs, particularly in use in Finland (Metsäpelto et al., 2022; Vilppu et al., 2024), a country that typically ranks highly in international education system comparisons. Traditional interviews, characterized by a low-to-medium structured format with significant interviewer flexibility, are widely employed for selecting candidates into teacher training in certain contexts (Davies et al., 2016). However, these interviews are generally labour-intensive and have proven to be poor predictors of subsequent performance (Dana et al., 2023). A more recent advancement in recruitment research is the emergence of MMIs, a method extensively utilized in medical education (e.g., Eva et al., 2018) and more recently adopted for teacher education selection (Metsäpelto et al., 2022; Salingré & MacMath, 2021; Vilppu et al., 2024). MMIs designed for teacher education selection are built on core competencies and have demonstrated superior reliability, validity, and fairness compared to traditional interview methods. Although the implementation of MMIs demands more extensive planning, preparation, and additional interview spaces, these costs are mitigated by the reduced requirement for personnel hours.

Distinguished from traditional interviews, MMIs employ independent, highly-structured stations with corresponding scoring protocols. MMIs inherently feature multiple stations, typically ranging from 3 to 10, each targeting specific non-academic competencies. Notably, these stations operate independently, with interviewers unaware of candidates' profiles or performance in other stations. The content and scoring protocols of each station are meticulously structured, employing standardized scoring schemes. MMIs are typically collaboratively developed by experts and a diverse group of program

staff who identify key target competencies, subsequently crafting and testing stations designed to assess these competencies (see Table I for a description of stations and attributes in a 3-station MMI used for selecting candidates for teacher education in the UK).

TABLE I. Attributes assessed at each of three stations in a teacher selection MMI

Station	Activity	Description
Station 1. Values and beliefs	*Teacher profiles:* picture profile stimulus and discussion	The task requires candidates to show an understanding of a range of approaches to teaching, an appreciation of the value of diversity in teaching, and a commitment to exploring and establishing their own teacher identity.
Station 2. Diversity and social justice	*School play*: Discussion with picture and text stimuli	The task assesses candidates' understanding of issues related to social justice, equality and inclusion in day-to-day teaching.
Station 3. Professionalism	*Always, sometimes, never*: Card-sorting activity	The task evaluates candidates' awareness and understanding of a range of teacher professional values and behaviours.
Communication	Assessed at all three stations	Defined as the ability to articulate well-reasoned arguments and to respond effectively to new information.

Source: Compiled by the authors

In this case, the attributes chosen for each station developed following a multi-step process of: (a) identifying key attributes to assess, (b) considering the logistics of the MMIs (e.g., how many applicants, how many assessors, etc.), (c) station writing and review, developing a scoring guide, and pilot-testing with existing students. For a further look at the development of MMIs (and SJTs), see Klassen and Kim (2021). Overall, these two examples of research-based teacher selection processes—SJTs and MMIs—provide some insights of how to revise traditional selection methods that lack a strong evidence base. In the Spanish context, research on the applicability of MMIs in the selection processes could provide valuable insights for decision-making, particularly when exploring a shift towards a new selection model.

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Discussion

This study underscores the urgent need to enhance the selection process for candidates entering early childhood and primary teacher training programs in Spain by adopting a competency-based approach. Our analysis critically evaluates the current selection model and proposes potential improvements, including integrating recent scientific evidence and international trends. These trends advocate for evaluating a broad spectrum of attributes during the selection process, reflecting the multifaceted nature of teaching and the well-documented influence of certain variables on teaching effectiveness. Ultimately, this paper argues that reforming the selection model will raise the quality of the teaching workforce and strengthen the education system as a whole.

A competency-based approach requires moving beyond reliance on EvAU scores alone and incorporating specific assessments tailored to prospective teachers. This entails the development of a clear competency framework to guide the selection process, aligned with international research and encompassing both academic competencies and non-academic attributes linked to teaching effectiveness. Drawing on research such as Alonso-Sainz (2019), which identifies desirable characteristics for entry into teacher education programs, and Valero (2023), which emphasizes the importance of socio-emotional dispositions in selection, would provide a more contextually informed model. The selected attributes should focus on those most critical at the point of entry, either because of their direct impact on teaching effectiveness or their limited potential for significant development over time.

Equally important is the selection of appropriate assessment tools for a competency-based model. Spain could look to the competency-based assessments used in Catalonia and the multiple mini-interviews (MMIs) adopted in the Balearic Islands as models for evaluating non-cognitive attributes such as interpersonal skills, motivation, personal beliefs, psychosocial adaptability, and communication. A potentially more effective and equitable approach could involve the use of situational judgment tests (SJTs), which assess candidates' dispositions towards teaching. However, designing and implementing these tools will require substantial material and human resources, a responsibility that would fall primarily to universities. The key question is

whether the benefits of improving the selection process outweigh the associated costs, or if resources should be allocated elsewhere. This study advocates that the long-term benefits of improving teacher quality outweigh concerns about increased expenditure.

Another challenge involves the potential consequences of raising admission standards for teacher education programs. Such a shift could disproportionately affect candidates from disadvantaged backgrounds, who may have had fewer educational opportunities, potentially undermining the principle of equity (Childs et al., 2011). While there is a risk that more stringent selection processes could exacerbate social inequalities, this is a concern inherent to any entrance exam. Therefore, equity concerns should not deter the adoption of a competency-based model. Instead, the challenge lies in designing tools that can fairly evaluate a broad range of attributes—both academic and non-academic—while mitigating the negative impacts of selection processes and consistently measuring teaching aptitude (Klassen & Kim, 2021).

The proposed selection model must also account for the coexistence of public and private universities within the Spanish education system. In Catalonia, private institutions saw reduced enrolment when students failed to meet selection criteria, prompting a relaxation of entry requirements. In a context of underfunded public universities and an expanding private sector, there is a risk that less motivated or less qualified candidates could gravitate towards programs with less rigorous selection processes. This could diminish public university funding, which is tied to student demand, ultimately harming teacher quality. A unified selection process across both public and private institutions would help mitigate this risk.

Furthermore, the shift towards a competency-based selection model could create a market for preparatory services aimed at helping candidates navigate the selection process, potentially undermining equal opportunity and the integrity of the system (Klassen & Kim, 2021). Additionally, raising admission standards might result in psychological pressures on candidates, leading some to abandon the teaching profession in favour of alternative career paths (Mankki & Kyrö-Ämmälä, 2022).

While fluctuations in the supply and demand of teacher candidates are a key factor, the selection model proposed here would better align the

number of trained teachers with the actual demand for teaching positions in Spain. However, it is essential to recognize that such fluctuations are influenced by broader teacher policies related to recruitment, training, and professional development, as well as cultural factors, including the social status of the teaching profession. To address this, measures must be taken to attract top secondary school students, raise the standards of teacher education programs, improve school conditions, and create better career progression opportunities for teachers (Castro & Egido, 2024). As the attractiveness of teaching increases, selection processes must ensure that only candidates with the necessary aptitude are admitted into teacher training programs. Meanwhile, the state should adjust the number of available places in these programs to align with the needs of the education system. Such measures would link training opportunities more closely with the actual practice of teaching (Valero, 2023). In Catalonia and the Balearic Islands, these initiatives have improved both the competency and motivational profiles of teacher trainees and better balanced the supply and demand for qualified teachers. These regional experiences could serve as models for implementing an alternative selection process at the national level.

The significance of this competency-based approach, which is fully compatible with existing university legislation, is clear. However, it is crucial to expand the limited body of research focused on the Spanish context. Further theoretical studies are needed to explore key competency frameworks and the implications of implementing a teacher aptitude-based selection model. Applied research could investigate the outcomes from Catalonia and the Balearic Islands to inform decision-making, develop and validate instruments for assessing non-cognitive attributes, and study the predictive power of specific variables in selection processes. Additionally, it is essential to consider other teacher policies, as improving teacher quality and educational outcomes depends on a coordinated set of measures—not just those focused on selecting the best candidates for teacher training programs.

Conclusions

If Spain aims to address current challenges in its educational sector, a focus on strengthening selection processes for early childhood and primary teacher education is indispensable. By adopting a nuanced, holistic approach—encompassing academic competencies, non-cognitive skills, and other key attributes—the country could significantly enhance the quality and professional standing of its teaching workforce.

The findings from analysing the teacher selection process in Spain greatly contribute to a better understanding of effective candidate assessment and selection strategies. These insights have broader implications that go beyond the specific context of Spanish education. The lessons learned are applicable across various educational settings worldwide, providing valuable guidance. As we tackle the challenges of identifying the most suitable candidates for early childhood and primary teacher education, the strategies discussed in this analysis offer a roadmap for informed enhancements in teacher selection processes on a global scale. This, in turn, supports the development of a more robust and effective approach to shaping the future of education.

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Predictors of civic competence in Spanish students in Compulsory Secondary Education

Predictores de la competencia cívica de los estudiantes españoles de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria

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Abstract

In recent years, adolescents' acquisition of civic competence to function as active and participatory citizens has gained importance. This study analyses the influence of student- and school-associated predictors on civic competence performance among students in Compulsory Secondary Education (ESO). The sample comprised 3,487 Spanish students in the second year of ESO (50.2% boys; 49.8% girls) who participated in the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS 2022). A hierarchical model was employed to analyse the effect of a set of predictors on the dependent variable at two levels: students and school. At the student level, the results show that girls score higher than boys. The socioeconomic context of students has a significant impact on performance. Moreover, student participation in community groups or organisations, as well as engagement with digital media activities, has a considerable effect on student performance. Significant differences in performance have been found between native and immigrant students in favour of the former. At the school level, students from independent schools score higher than those from state schools. The predictors in the final model explain 27% of the differences between students and 53% of the variability between schools. These findings suggest the need to promote collaboration between families and schools in civic education activities, encourage partnerships between schools and community organisations, develop improvement plans to enhance civic education among immigrant students, and increase the use of technology in schools to support civic education initiatives.

Keywords: Civic competence, gender gap, citizenship education, civic education, Compulsory Secondary Education, hierarchical model.

Resumen

En los últimos años, ha cobrado importancia la adquisición de la competencia cívica de los adolescentes para actuar como ciudadanos activos y participativos en la sociedad. El objetivo de este artículo es analizar la influencia de los predictores asociados al estudiante y al centro sobre el rendimiento en la competencia cívica del alumnado de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria (ESO). La muestra está formada por 3.487 estudiantes españoles de 2º de la ESO (50,2% chicos; 49,8% chicas) que han participado en el Estudio Internacional sobre Educación Cívica y Ciudadana (ICCS 2022). Se ha utilizado un modelo jerárquico, en el que se analiza el efecto de un conjunto de predictores sobre la variable dependiente en dos niveles: Estudiantes y Centro. En el primer nivel, los resultados muestran que las chicas obtienen más puntos que los chicos. El contexto socioeconómico del alumnado tiene un gran impacto sobre el rendimiento. La participación del alumnado en grupos u organizaciones comunitarias y en actividades con medios digitales tienen un efecto significativo sobre el rendimiento. Se han encontrado diferencias significativas en el rendimiento entre el alumnado nativo e inmigrante, a favor de los primeros. En el segundo nivel, los estudiantes que proceden de centros privados tienen más puntos que los de centros públicos. Los predictores del modelo definitivo explican el 27% de las diferencias entre los estudiantes y el 53% de la variabilidad entre centros educativos. Estos resultados sugieren la necesidad de promover la colaboración entre la familia y la escuela en actividades sobre educación cívica, fomentar la colaboración entre los centros y diferentes grupos comunitarios, diseñar un plan de mejora en los centros a fin de reforzar el conocimiento del alumnado inmigrante sobre la educación cívica, así como promover el uso de las tecnologías en los centros en actividades sobre educación cívica.

Palabras clave: Competencia cívica, brecha de género, educación ciudadana, educación cívica, Educación Secundaria Obligatoria, modelo jerárquico.

Introduction

The International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) aims to understand how adolescents are prepared for their role as active and participatory citizens in society (Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports, 2024a). Civic competence is defined as 'the body of knowledge about political and social issues, critical thinking skills, and values, which are reflected in participation in the community' (Guérin et al., 2013, p. 437).

The significance of ICCS 2022 lies in its uniqueness as the only international study to analyse how students engage with contemporary societal

issues, such as social justice (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2024).

Isac et al. (2019) and Pereira et al. (2015) have identified several key predictors of students' civic competence, including gender, socioeconomic context, immigrant status, participation in community groups or organisations, and engagement with digital media.

Regarding gender—the first predictor—research has revealed significant differences in civic competence between boys and girls. Gómez and Suárez (2023) examined the relationship between educational practices and students' civic knowledge in the ICCS 2016 across five Latin American and Caribbean countries (Chile, Colombia, Peru, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico). They found that girls consistently outperform boys in the cognitive component of the test, suggesting that girls possess a level of civic knowledge higher than that of boys. Similarly, Solhaug and Kristensen's (2020) research on secondary school students in Denmark and Norway showed that girls scored higher in civic competence, suggesting greater engagement with social issues and increased participation in school activities that promote equity and social justice (Juanes & Jacott, 2020; Ten Dam et al., 2020). However, some studies (Cicognani et al., 2012; Marta et al., 2006) found no significant gender differences in civic competence, implying equal participation in school activities that promote social justice (Manganelli et al., 2014).

With regard to the second predictor—socioeconomic context—research has demonstrated its significant impact on academic performance (Berkowitz et al., 2017; Coleman et al., 1966). Deimel et al.'s (2020) study on the impact of socioeconomic context on civic education in Belgium, Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands revealed that students from advantaged backgrounds received more civic education than those from disadvantaged contexts. This translated into a deeper understanding of democratic institutions and processes (Ye, 2018), as well as a greater intention to vote in adulthood (Castillo et al., 2015). Miranda (2023) assessed the relationship between socioeconomic context and civic participation among young people in the 2016 edition of the ICCS. The findings indicated that students from advantaged backgrounds are more willing to participate in society than those from disadvantaged backgrounds. This includes voting, attending demonstrations,

and solving community problems (Carrasco et al., 2020). This research highlights the importance of factors determining students' socioeconomic context, such as the number of books at home.

Regarding the third predictor—immigrant status—research has revealed a performance gap between native and immigrant students (Guerra et al., 2019; Teltemann & Schunck, 2017). Zhu and Chiu's (2020) analysis of Danish students who participated in the ICCS 2016 showed that native families demonstrated higher civic knowledge than immigrant families, attributed to a stronger attachment to their country of residence (Azzolini, 2016; Choi & Cha, 2021). Conversely, Zhu et al. (2019) found that in Hong Kong, immigrant students exhibited greater civic knowledge than native ones, owing to higher parental expectations for academic progress. This emphasises the importance of family environment and school resources, such as textbooks (Goodman, 2021), in developing immigrant students' civic literacy.

The fourth predictor—student participation in community groups or organisations—has been shown to impact civic competence performance (Maurissen, 2020; Myoung & Liou, 2022). Blaskó et al. (2019) analysed data from the ICCS 2016 and found that students with higher civic knowledge are more likely to participate in community groups and hold positive attitudes towards ethnic minorities and immigrants. In the German context, Deimel and Abs (2022) demonstrated a correlation between civic education and youth societal participation (Feitosa, 2020), emphasising the importance of student engagement in achieving transferable learning and competencies (Granizo et al., 2019).

The fifth predictor—student participation using digital media—indicates that Internet use favours the acquisition of civic competence. This process includes sharing information on social issues posted by others (Gleason & Von Gillern, 2018), searching for information on social issues, conducting responsible online research (Cabero-Almenara et al., 2019; Lauricella et al., 2020), and publishing content on specific topics such as climate change (Pangrazio & Sefton-Green, 2021), gender equality (Estanyol et al., 2023), and political news (Kim & Ellison, 2021; Ohme, 2019).

School ownership—the sixth predictor—has been shown to influence student performance significantly (Park & Holloway, 2017). The type of

school and the approach to teaching social issues impact civic competence (Keating, 2016). Collado et al. (2015) analysed Chilean students' performance in the ICCS 2009 and found that students from private schools outperformed those from public schools (Mizala & Torche, 2012). Nevertheless, Dijkstra et al. (2023) examined Dutch students' civic competence in the ICCS 2016 and found no significant differences in performance between state and independent schools (Gil-Flores & García-Gómez, 2017).

International studies have synthesised these predictors' influences. Kuang and Kennedy (2018) analysed Asian countries in the ICCS 2009 and found that the profile of a citizen with greater civic knowledge corresponds to a girl from a favourable socioeconomic background with high participation in community groups or organisations. Similarly, Trunk et al. (2022) focused on European countries in the ICCS 2016 and identified students' socioeconomic level and immigrant status as significant predictors of civic education outcomes.

This theoretical foundation suggests the need to advance our understanding of the variables influencing civic competence in students at the Compulsory Secondary Education (*Educación Secundaria Obligatoria*; ESO) level. This knowledge is crucial as it affects how students comprehend and prepare for citizenship in a world where civic participation is continuously evolving (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2024). Therefore, this research investigates the influence of student- and school-associated predictors on the civic competence performance of ESO students.

Method

This research employed a non-experimental design, as the variables could not be manipulated, and the participants could not be randomly assigned. It was an *ex post facto* study, analysing the phenomenon after it had occurred, without the ability to manipulate the independent variable (Kerlinger & Lee, 2002).

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Sample

In the 2022 edition of the ICCS, each country selected a nationally representative sample to represent the study's target population (14-year-old students) and make 95% confidence estimates. The participating sample comprised 3,519 Spanish students in the second year of ESO from 157 schools (Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports, 2024b). The treatment of missing values included eliminating cases with one or more missing values. This study considered the Socioeconomic Index variable (Murillo et al., 2023), which comprises the mean of three variables (the highest educational level of the parents, their occupation, and the number of books at home). Substituting a lost value for an estimate affects the exact value of the Socioeconomic Index (Enders, 2010). The final sample comprised 3,487 Spanish students in the second year of ESO (50.2% boys; 49.8% girls).

Instruments

This study utilised the two ICCS 2022 assessment instruments: the student questionnaire and the school questionnaire. The first comprises 121 Likert-type, multiple-choice, and open-ended items on various aspects related to civic competence, such as student participation using digital media and in community groups or organisations. The second, completed by the headteachers, comprises 26 questions on the characteristics of the schools, as well as contextual variables related to civic participation at school (Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports, 2024b).

Procedure

The ICCS establishes four levels of performance (A = 563 points or more, B = 479 to 562 points, C = 395 to 478 points, D = 311 to 394 points) (Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports, 2024b).

The average performance in civic competence in Spain (510) is 73 points behind Taiwan, the highest-scoring country (583). Spanish students fall within Level B—they are familiar with the broad concept of representa-

tive democracy and understand the influence of citizenship on local communities, society, and the world.

The percentage of Spanish students at the higher achievement level (29%) is lower than expected due to the percentage of students at lower levels (60% with a medium level and 11% with a low level) (Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports, 2024b).

The ICCS employs item response theory to assign scores to students, expressing achievement levels on a scale with a central benchmark of 500 points. For each student, the *a posteriori* distribution of the measured skill was obtained, from which five plausible values were extracted (Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports, 2024b).

To calculate the dependent variable (civic competence performance), independent estimates were generated for each of the five plausible values available in the database, and average risk values were calculated.

From the ICCS 2022 database, the independent variables with the greatest impact on the dependent variable were selected by means of decision tree analysis. This approach reduces the number of independent variables and identifies those affecting civic competence. To this end, two methods were employed. The first was classification and regression trees (CART) (Strobl et al., 2009), a recursive partitioning procedure based on the 'divide and conquer' rule, which includes binary segmentations and a measure of independent variables' relevance (Asensio et al., 2018; Hernández Orallo et al., 2004). The second was a chi-square automatic interaction detector (CHAID) used complementarily to identify the predictor with the strongest interaction with the dependent variable at each step.

The procedure comprised five phases. In the first phase, initial models were estimated using CART, with the five plausible values treated as dependent variables, while items from the student and school questionnaires served as independent variables (2 questionnaires x 5 plausible values = 10 models). Average risk values were calculated for each questionnaire, yielding 3,120.43 for the student body and 721.19 for schools. In the second phase, initial models were estimated using CHAID (another 10 models) to identify variables from each questionnaire interacting with the dependent variable. In the third phase, variables with a normalised importance of at least 10% were selected

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and identified in the CHAID models. In the fourth phase, predictive values for each questionnaire were calculated (0.65 for the student questionnaire and 0.52 for the school questionnaire). In the fifth phase, variables meeting the described criteria and endorsed by research referenced in the theoretical framework were selected.

This study used a hierarchical model to analyse the effect of a set of predictors on the dependent variable, respecting the nested structure of the data: students and schools (Tourón et al., 2023).

TABLE I. Variables included in the model

Variable	Variable Type	Codification	Model level
Gender	Dummy variable	0=Male 1=Female	Level 1 (Students)
Socioeconomic context of students (ISEC)	Standardised variable	Index calculated from the educational level of the parents, their occupation, and the number of books at home	
Immigrant status	Dummy variable	0=Native 1=Immigrant	
Student participation in community groups or organisations	Standardised variable	Index calculated from student involvement in a range of organisations (0=I have never done it; 1=Yes, I have, but it has been more than a year; 2=Yes, I have done it in the last 12 months): -A youth organisation affiliated with a political party or union. -A volunteer group that works to help the town. -A group or organisation that campaigns for a particular cause (e.g. environmental protection, human or animal rights). -A global campaign for a particular issue (e.g., climate change). -A community youth group (e.g., Scouts). -A sports team. -A religious group or organisation.	
Student participation using digital media	Standardised variable	Index calculated from the frequency with which students conduct 11 activities (0=Never or almost never, 1=Monthly (at least once a month), 2=Weekly (at least once a week, 3=Daily or almost daily): -Watch television to stay informed about national and international news. -Read newspapers (including online versions) to learn about national and international news. -Discuss political or social issues with your family. -Talk to your family about events happening in other countries. -Discuss political or social issues with friends. -Talk to your friends about events happening in other countries. -Use the Internet to search for information on political or social issues. -Publish own content online about a political or social issue. -Share content about a political or social issue posted by someone else. -Comment on an online post related to a political or social issue. -Like an online post about a political or social issue.	
School ownership	Dummy variable	0=State 1=Independent	Level 2 (Schools)

Source: compiled by the author

Table II shows the measures of centralisation and dispersion of the variables analysed.

TABLE II. Measures of centralisation and dispersion of variables

Variable	Median	D.T.	Minimum	Maximum
Gender	0	0.5	0	1
Socioeconomic context	0.005	0.996	-2.389	1.948
Immigrant status	0	0.37	0	1
Participation in community groups or organisations	50.018	9.705	40.316	85.023
Participation using digital media	69.853	9.817	41.172	91.033
School ownership	0	0,48	0	1

Source: compiled by the author

According to the data in Table II, the typical student who participated in the ICCS 2022 edition was male and native-born and hailed from a middle socioeconomic background. This student had been involved in community groups or organisations for over a year, used digital media at least once a week to engage with political and social issues, and attended a state school.

Two programs were used to perform the analyses: SPSS 29 to calculate the measures of central tendency and dispersion of the variables as well as the decision trees and MLwiN 2.36, which allowed the calculation of the estimates using the iterative generalized least squares procedure (Goldstein, 2003).

Results

The results of the Student's t-test showed significant differences between the average scores for boys (504 points) and girls (519.66 points), with a critical

level of 0.019.

The modelling process begins with the formulation of the null model, which does not include predictor variables but is essential because it establishes the basis for comparing it with the final model and reports on the initial variance at the two levels (Tourón et al., 2023). The null model is represented as follows (Martínez-Garrido & Murillo, 2014):

$$\begin{aligned} Y_{ij} &= \beta_{0j} + e_{ij} \\ \beta_{0j} &= \beta_0 + \mu_{0j} \\ \mu_{0j} &\sim N(0, \sigma^2_{u0}) \\ e_{0j} &\sim N(0, \sigma^2_e) \end{aligned} \qquad (1)$$

- Y_{ij} is the civic competence performance of student *i* in educational centre *j*.
- $_0$ is the overall average performance among schools.
- $_{0j}$ is the average performance of the j-th school.
- $\sigma^2_{\mu_0} u_{0j}$ is the mean deviation of the educational centre *j* with respect to the actual score, assuming a normal distribution of mean 0 and variance
- $\sigma^2_{e_{ij}}$ is the residual variance at the first level or effect that expresses the deviation in student performance, which assumes a normal distribution of mean 0 and variance

Table III shows the results of the null model. The fixed parameter reports the value of the intercept or the average performance observed in civic competence for the students who constituted the sample (507.62 points).

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TABLE III. Null model estimation

Fixed Part	
Parameter	**Estimation (Standard Error)**
Constant	507.62 (5.63)
Random Part (Variance of Performance in Civic Competence)	
Level 1. Students	5,605.13 (137.42)
Level 2. School	1,799.81 (236.25)
Likelihood Ratio	40,318.25
Number of Parameters	3
Akaike Information Criterion (AIC)	40,323.25
Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC)	40,339.646

Source: compiled by the author

The random part of the null model revealed the variances of the residuals at the two established levels. A parameter is considered significant (alpha = 0.05) if the ratio of the parameter estimate to its standard error is greater than 1.96 (Gaviria & Castro, 2004). In this analysis, the parameters were statistically significant at both levels, as demonstrated by the ratios between students (5,605.13/137.42 > 1.96) and between schools (1,799.81/236.25 > 1.96). These significant parameters indicated the existence of unexplained variance at both levels, which justified extending the model to account for as much of its variance as possible (Rodríguez-Mantilla et al., 2018).

The likelihood ratio for the null model is 40,318.25 with three parameters. The Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) for this model is 40,323.25, while the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) is 40,339.646. These three values will be compared with those of subsequent models to assess improvements in goodness of fit.

The intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) represents the degree of variability between schools compared to that between students in the same school (Pardo et al., 2007).

$$ICC = 1.799{,}81 \,/\, (5.605{,}13 + 1.799{,}81) = 0{,}2430 \qquad (2)$$

This value indicates that 24% of the variance is inter-school variance—the percentage of the variance not explained by the predictors can be

attributed to the clustering variable at level 2. Table IV presents the results of estimating the model with the first-level explanatory variables.

TABLE IV. Model with explanatory variables at level 1

Fixed Part	
Constant	481.39 (4.97)
Gender	10.23 (0.81)
Socioeconomic context of the students	19.47 (0.89)
Immigrant status	-16.09 (0.74)
Participation in community groups or organisations	5.13 (0.56)
Participation using digital media	3.58 (0.34)
Random Part	
Among students	4,852.34 (82.03)
Among centres	1,302.75 (67.22)
Likelihood ratio	28,172.04
AIC	28,177.04
BIC	28,198.31

Source: compiled by the author

According to the data in Table IV, the value of the constant is 481.39 points, slightly lower than that in the null model. This is because the reference group in this model differed from that of the null model; it represents the expected performance of children from an average socioeconomic background in the sample. The explanatory variables included in the random part were significant for civic competence, as the standard error was greater than 1.96.

In terms of gender, girls outperformed boys in civic competence, with the estimated average increasing by 10.23 among females. For every unit increase in socioeconomic status, performance improved by 19.47 points.

Immigrant status also impacted performance, with immigrant students scoring lower than native ones. Specifically, being an immigrant resulted in a decrease of 16.09 points in performance.

Participation in community groups or organisations influenced performance. Students who engaged with a group, organisation, or team scored

higher than those who did not. For each additional level of participation, performance increased by 5.13 points.

Similarly, participation in digital media activities affected performance. Students who regularly used digital media to engage with social issues performed better than those who rarely did or never used it. Each increase in frequency corresponded to a 3.58-point improvement in performance.

The values of the likelihood ratio, AIC, and BIC were lower compared to the null model, indicating an improvement in the model's goodness of fit with the inclusion of level-1 explanatory variables. Table V presents the fixed and random components of the final model, including parameter values with standard errors shown in parentheses.

TABLE V. Final model with explanatory variables at levels 1 and 2

Fixed Part	
Constant	488.81 (4.52)
Gender	8.87 (0.74)
Socioeconomic context of the students	15.74 (0.91)
Immigrant status	-13.45 (0.66)
Participation in community groups or organisations	3.08 (0.32)
Participation using digital media	1.26 (0.17)
School ownership	10.35 (0.82)
Random Part	
Among students	4,076.65 (71.86)
Among centres	841.35 (59.47)
Likelihood ratio	15,036.48
AIC	15,041.48
BIC	15,057.23

Source: compiled by the author

According to the parameters of the fixed part of the model, the average civic competence score was 488.81 points. This represents the expected performance of children from a socioeconomic context that is average for the sample. All parameters in the final model were statistically significant, as the

ratio between the estimate and standard error was greater than 1.96 in each case (Gaviria & Castro, 2004).

In terms of gender, girls outperformed boys in civic competence, which explains the gender gap in favour of girls (boys = 504; girls = 519.66). Being female was associated with a performance boost of 8.87 points compared to boys.

Students from more advantaged socioeconomic backgrounds performed better in civic competence. For every point increase in the socioeconomic context, the average performance improved by 15.74 points. Immigrant status had a negative impact on performance, with immigrant students scoring 13.45 points lower than their native peers.

Participation in community organisations or groups had a positive effect on civic competence. For each additional point of participation, students' scores increased by 3.08 points. Students who frequently used digital media to engage with social issues performed better than those who rarely or never did. For each increase in the frequency of digital media use, performance improved by 1.26 points. School type significantly affected performance—students attending independent schools scored 10.35 points higher than those from state schools.

To assess the model's goodness of fit, the likelihood ratio of the null model was compared to that of the final model. The chi-square difference of 25,281.77 with six degrees of freedom was significant at the 0.01 level, confirming that the final model had a better fit. Additionally, the AIC and BIC values decreased, further validating the model's improved fit.

The R^2 coefficient indicated the proportion of variance in the dependent variable explained by the predictors in the final model. Upon comparing the random parameters of this model with those of the null model (Snijders & Bosker, 2012), we found that the final model explained 27% of the variance between students (R^2= 0.2726) and 53% of the variance between schools (R^2= 0.5325). This highlights the substantial influence of school ownership on civic competence outcomes.

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Discussion and Conclussions

This research analysed the influence of student- and school-related predictors on the civic competence performance of students in ESO. To this end, six key predictors were identified based on the theoretical framework and the CART procedure, as they had the greatest impact on the dependent variable.

The first independent variable—student gender—emerged as a significant predictor of civic competence. The results indicated that girls outperformed boys, aligning with prior research (Gómez & Suárez, 2023; Solhaug & Kristensen, 2020) and demonstrating that girls tend to have higher levels of civic knowledge and are more likely to participate in activities promoting equity and social justice at school (Juanes & Jacott, 2020; Kuang & Kennedy, 2018; Ten Dam et al., 2020). However, Cicognani et al. (2012) and Marta et al. (2006) found no significant gender differences in civic competence. These findings suggest a need for educational practices to address and reduce the gender gap to promote education based on social justice.

The second independent variable—students' socioeconomic context—was also a significant predictor of civic competence, corroborating the results of previous studies (Berkowitz et al., 2017; Coleman et al., 1966), which found that students from advantaged backgrounds tend to perform better than those from disadvantaged backgrounds (Castillo, 2015; Deimel et al., 2020; Trunk et al., 2022). This may be due to the greater availability of resources in privileged households, which better support learning about democratic institutions and processes (Ye, 2018), leading to a higher willingness to participate in social justice activities (Carrasco, 2020; Miranda, 2023).

The third independent variable—immigrant status—revealed significant differences between native and immigrant students, with immigrant students performing worse in civic competence. This finding is consistent with other research (Guerra et al., 2019; Teltemann & Schunck, 2017) and is often attributed to native students having greater familiarity with the democratic processes of the country in which they reside (Azzolini, 2016; Choi & Cha, 2021). Nevertheless, these results vary across countries. For instance, Zhu et al. (2019) found that in Hong Kong, immigrant students outperform native students in civic competence, largely due to high parental expectations and

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a strong educational background at home and school (Goodman, 2021). This finding highlights the importance of civic education in fostering the inclusion and integration of immigrant students within schools.

Regarding the fourth independent variable—student participation in community groups or organisations—the results showed that it is a significant predictor of civic competence performance (Maurissen, 2020; Myoung & Liou, 2022). This is in accordance with the results of other studies (Blaskó et al., 2019; Deimel & Abs, 2022; Feitosa, 2020; Granizo et al., 2020), which demonstrated that students with higher levels of civic knowledge tend to have more positive attitudes towards ethnic minorities and immigrants and are more likely to engage in community groups or organisations.

The fifth independent variable—student participation using digital media—also proved to be a significant predictor of civic competence performance. This supports other research demonstrating the influence of various digital activities on civic competence, including sharing information on the Internet about social issues posted by others (Gleason & Von Gillern, 2018), searching for information safely and responsibly (Cabero-Almenara et al., 2019; Lauricella et al., 2020), and publishing content on the Internet on specific social issues, such as climate change (Pangrazio & Sefton-Green, 2021), gender equality (Estanyol et al., 2023), and politics (Kim & Ellison, 2021; Ohme, 2019).

The fourth and fifth conclusions underscore the critical role schools play in encouraging student participation in groups that promote civic education, with digital media serving as a key tool to drive engagement.

As for the sixth independent variable—school ownership—the results showed that it is a significant predictor of performance, consistent with other studies (Keating, 2016; Park & Holloway, 2017). The data revealed significant differences between state and independent schools, favouring the latter (Collado et al., 2015; Mizala & Torche, 2012). Nonetheless, some research suggested that there are no substantial differences between the two in terms of civic competence (Dijkstra et al., 2023; Gil-Flores & García-Gómez, 2017).

This study presents a series of conclusions and proposals aimed at enhancing civic competence among students in ESO in Spain. First, the disparity in civic competence between boys and girls highlights the need for

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further research into the gender gap in civic education. Second, the significant effect of socioeconomic context on civic competence suggests a strong need for collaboration between families and schools in promoting civic education. Third, the performance gap between native and immigrant students highlights the importance of developing targeted improvement plans in schools. These initiatives should aim at strengthening immigrant students' understanding of civic processes and encourage their active participation. Fourth, the positive impact of student participation in community groups or organisations on civic competence suggests that schools should actively collaborate with local organisations. This would raise awareness of the benefits of involvement in groups aligned with students' interests and concerns. Fifth, the influence of digital media in civic education activities indicates the need for schools to promote the responsible use of technology. Activities could include researching current events online and creating digital content that fosters civic engagement. Sixth, the significant differences in civic competence between students in state and independent schools highlight the need for increased resources in state schools, particularly those in disadvantaged areas, to strengthen civic education.

A limitation of this study is its exclusion of cases with one or more missing values, particularly when dealing with complex variables, such as the Socioeconomic Index of the students, which relies on averages of three independent factors. Analysing only complete cases ensure accurate and unbiased results.

This study opens new avenues for research, particularly on the gender gap, which disadvantages boys. Future studies should explore the reasons behind this inconsistency, such as the civic education received at home and boys' participation in civic-promoting activities. Additionally, there is scope for further research into the differences between state and independent schools in terms of civic competence, focusing on factors such as the civic education activities conducted within each institution.

In conclusion, this work demonstrates the influence of various student- and school-level predictors on the civic competence of Spanish students in the second year of ESO who participated in the ICCS 2022. The findings contribute to understanding how these factors shape students' roles as active

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citizens in society.

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Inclusive Teaching Practices in Primary School Bilingual Programmes: Student Perceptions and Associated Factors

Prácticas Inclusivas en los Programas Bilingües de Educación Primaria: Percepción de los Estudiantes y Factores Asociados

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Abstract

The integration of inclusive practices in bilingual programmes encouraging language learning for all students is an essential 21st-century educational challenge. An initial

step in addressing this issue is to discover what students think about the extent to which teaching practices in the bilingual classroom cater to diversity. This study analyses the frequency with which students perceive the use of inclusive teaching practices in primary bilingual programmes and examines whether these perceptions vary according to student and school characteristics. A total of 2,714 primary school students (years 4, 5, and 6) in Castile and Leon (Spain) completed an anonymous paper-based questionnaire comprising sociodemographic questions and the Student Perception of Inclusion in Bilingual Education (SPI-BE) scale. Students rated the frequency with which teachers of subjects taught in English used 16 inclusive teaching practices. According to the analyses, students generally considered inclusive practices to be relatively frequent in primary schools. By dimensions, practices related to support and feedback were perceived as significantly more frequent than those related to methodology and resources. Also, perceptions differed according to sociodemographic characteristics. Female students, students in lower years, students without Special Educational Needs (SEN), students in semi-private schools, and students in state-run schools with a MEC-British Council (BC) programme perceived the use of inclusive practices as being more significantly frequent. The fact that students regard individual support and feedback as being more commonplace than personalised materials and tasks supports our conclusion that more work is needed regarding teacher training in active methodologies and on the design of educational resources that cater to diversity in the bilingual classroom. Likewise, it seems necessary to pay preferential attention to SEN students, students in higher years, and state-run schools without a MEC-BC programme.

Keywords: inclusion, bilingual education, primary school, students, teaching practices

Resumen

La integración de prácticas inclusivas en programas bilingües que fomenten el aprendizaje de idiomas para todo el alumnado es un reto educativo esencial del siglo XXI. Un primer paso es conocer la opinión del alumnado sobre la medida en que las prácticas docentes en el aula bilingüe atienden a la diversidad. Este estudio analiza la frecuencia con la que el alumnado percibe el uso de prácticas docentes inclusivas en los programas bilingües de primaria y si estas percepciones varían en función de las características del alumno y del centro. En total, 2.714 escolares de Educación Primaria (4º, 5º, 6º curso) de Castilla y León (España) completaron un cuestionario anónimo en papel con preguntas sociodemográficas y la escala Student Perception of Inclusion in Bilingual Education (SPI-BE). El alumnado valoró la frecuencia con la que los maestros de asignaturas impartidas en inglés utilizaban 16 prácticas inclusivas. Según los análisis, el alumnado consideraba que estas prácticas eran relativamente frecuentes. Por dimensiones, las prácticas relacionadas con el apoyo y la retroalimentación se percibieron como más frecuentes que las relacionadas con la metodología y los recursos. Asimismo, las percepciones diferían en función de las características sociodemográficas. Las niñas, el alumnado de cursos inferiores, sin Necesidades Educativas Especiales (NEE), de

colegios concertados y en programas del MEC-British Council (BC) percibieron frecuencias significativamente más altas de prácticas inclusivas. El hecho de que el alumnado considere más habitual el apoyo individual y la retroalimentación que el uso de materiales y tareas personalizadas apoya nuestra conclusión de que resulta preciso profundizar en la formación del profesorado en metodologías activas y en el diseño de recursos educativos que atiendan a la diversidad en el aula bilingüe. También, resalta la necesidad de atender mejor al alumnado NEE, a los de cursos superiores y a los de centros públicos sin programa BC.

Palabras clave: inclusión, educación bilingüe, primaria, alumnado, prácticas docentes

Introduction

Since the 1990s, the Council of the European Union has adopted various measures to support language proficiency in different countries and encourage bilingualism and multilingualism in populations from an early age (Jiménez-Martínez & Mateo, 2011). Among these actions, bilingual education programmes have been widely promoted across Europe (Eurydice, 2017), with Spain being one of the leading countries in implementing bilingual learning in compulsory education (Lasagabaster & Ruiz de Zarobe, 2010).

As Spain is a highly decentralised country, legislation governing bilingual programmes changes among autonomous communities, giving rise to a variety of models with individual characteristics. Each region develops its own programme, in which a high percentage of students participate. In fact, in many of these bilingual sections, around half of the primary school students in each school are enrolled: Madrid 51.3%, Navarra 55.8%, Asturias 39.9%, and Castile and Leon 63.7% (Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional, 2022). Additionally, the national government has its own bilingual programme - the Spanish-British Primary Integrated Curriculum - which was established through an agreement between the Ministry of Education (MEC) and the British Council (BC) (Jover et al, 2024). This programme has been in operation since 1996; however, fewer schools participate in this initiative (10 in Madrid, 6 in Navarra, 2 in Asturias, and 19 in Castile and Leon).

In the case of both types of bilingual programme, in addition to learn-

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ing a foreign language as a separate subject, other non-linguistic subjects (usually Natural and Social Sciences, Physical Education, Music, or Arts and Crafts) are taught in a foreign language following the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach (Coyle & Meyer, 2021). Teachers involved in these programmes are mostly Primary teachers with a specialisation in English language. All of them are required a B2 or C1 accreditation in English, in compliance with the criteria established by the regional authorities. They are provided with various options for specific CLIL training at a regional level, including voluntary summer courses abroad, specialised postgraduate programs, and mandatory three-month CLIL courses.

In recent years, the exponential growth of bilingual programmes in Spain has arisen to meet this social demand for students to learn a foreign language. Also, this reality converges with another 21st-century educational requirement, which is the need to cater to student diversity in the classroom, embracing students with Special Educational Needs (SEN), learning difficulties, as well as socially and culturally disadvantaged students and immigrants (Azorín & Sandoval, 2019; Durán-Martínez & Martín-Pastor, 2023; Reindal, 2016; UNESCO, 2017). Starting from the inception of bilingual programmes, it has been clear that it is essential to support all types of students, under European egalitarian, democratic, and inclusive language policies (Lorenzo et al., 2021).

Therefore, bilingual education and attention to diversity are two complex educational realities that make the integration of inclusive practices in bilingual programmes essential yet extremely challenging (López-Medina, 2024; Lova et al., 2013; Pérez-Cañado, 2023; Romo, 2016). Concerning this, Martín-Pastor and Durán-Martínez (2019) found that among the bilingual primary schools that mentioned attention to diversity in their official documents, the inclusive actions described were rather limited, generalized, and open to multiple interpretations. Consequently, it is not surprising that a subsequent study showed that SEN students tend to abandon bilingual programmes as they progress throughout their education. Also, when the reasons for exclusion are analysed, they are often related to the learning difficulties of students and ignore issues regarding school management or educational practices (Durán-Martínez et al., 2020).

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There is a large number of studies addressing how teachers, parents and students generally perceive the bilingual programmes in which they participate (Broca, 2016; Madrid et al., 2018; Oxbrow, 2018; Pladevall-Ballester, 2015; Ruiz, 2021; Smith et al., 2022). However, not much research has been conducted assessing how students perceive the inclusive practices used in their classroom environments (Subban et al., 2022). Moreover, those studies that do exist on attention to diversity in bilingual programmes usually compare the perspectives of stakeholders (Barrios & Milla, 2020; Bauer-Marschallinger et al., 2023; Casas & Rascón, 2023; Nikula et al., 2023; Ramos, 2023; Pérez-Cañado, 2023; Siepmann et al., 2023). That is, they do not solely examine the views of students, which results in a less detailed analysis.

Similarly, although previous studies on attention to diversity in bilingual education have explored different European contexts like Austria, Finland or Germany (Bauer-Marschallinger et al., 2023; Nikula et al., 2023; Pérez-Cañado, 2023; Siepmann et al., 2023) and Spanish regions such as Andalucia, Murcia, Aragón, Madrid, Extremadura or Valencia (Barrios & Milla, 2020; Bolarín et al, 2019; Casas & Rascón, 2023; Pérez-Cañado, 2024; Ramos, 2023), there are many other issues that require further consideration. Firstly, as previously mentioned, the variety of bilingual education programmes existing in Spain makes it difficult to extrapolate findings from other learning contexts (Ruiz, 2021). Secondly, the studies that have been carried out tend to focus mainly on secondary education (Bauer-Marschallinger et al., 2023; Casas & Rascón, 2023; Gómez-Parra, 2020; Nikula et al., 2023; Pérez-Cañado, 2023; Siepmann et al., 2023), although some have been conducted on primary school students (Barrios & Milla, 2020; Pavón-Vázquez & Vinuesa, 2024; Ramos, 2023).

Additionally, in terms of data measurement, most studies have used original or adapted versions of the questionnaires developed by the European project Attention to Diversity in Bilingual Education (ADiBE), which is also addressed towards secondary education (Barrios & Milla, 2020; Bauer-Marschallinger et al., 2023; Casas & Rascón; Nikula et al., 2023; Ramos, 2023; Pérez-Cañado, 2023; Siepmann et al., 2023). On a similar vein, there are other instruments available such as the Perceptions of Inclusion Questionnaire (Venetz et al., 2015) that analyses how 4th- to 9th-grade students (Year 1 to

Year 6 in the UK) feel about school or the Inclusion Climate Scale (Schwab et al., 2018) which measures the perceptions of secondary students regarding "their sense of being included in mainstreamed classrooms" (p. 37). However, these instruments do not specifically assess how students perceive the teaching practices implemented in their classrooms or they are designed for secondary school students. Thus, the present study, as addressed later, uses the Student Perception of Inclusion in Bilingual Education (SPI-BE) scale, which aims to measure how students perceive inclusive teaching practices implemented in bilingual primary schools in Spain.

Lastly, most previous studies tend not to consider the effects of individual and/or school-related factors. There are two exceptions, though: Ramos (2023), who examines the effects of student gender and socioeconomic status and Schwab et al. (2018), who examine how individual and school-related variables (gender, grade level, SEN, and school type) influence how German secondary school students feel about inclusion in their classrooms. These authors determined that the most significant predictor was the participants' educational level since students in lower school years perceived their environment to be more inclusive (Schwab et al., 2018).

Pérez-Cañado's (2023) study, which serves as a comprehensive summary of the studies conducted by the ADiBE Project, compares the perspectives of teachers, students and parents on attention to diversity in CLIL programmes in secondary schools across Europe. The research was conducted using a questionnaire divided into five dimensions—*linguistic aspects*, *methodology*, *assessment*, *materials and resources*, and *collaboration*—and includes several interviews and focus groups. According to the results obtained, students consider, in general, that their teachers provide them with language support and have their linguistic knowledge in high regard. Their more negative views towards methodology and groupings highlight the lack of variety in the methods and strategies used, which hampers peer support and personalised attention. In addition, the students state they are not fully satisfied with the materials and resources used. For example, they feel their textbooks are not adapted to different ability levels. In terms of assessment, the students' perspectives are rather negative, as they feel exams are not designed to be inclusive, providing extra time, grading criteria, and activities adapted to

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different ability levels. They also highlight the lack of collaboration among teachers and the need for more multi-professional teams.

It is in this context that the project Bilingual Education and Attention to Diversity (EBYAD, for its acronym in Spanish) was launched, which aims, among other objectives, to evaluate the frequency of the use of inclusive practices in bilingual programmes in primary education from the perspective of the agents involved: teachers, students and families. It should be noted that EBYAD assumes that diversity in bilingual education should not only include students with SEN but also those with differing learning styles, levels of linguistic competence, levels of knowledge attainment, degrees of motivation, forms of engagement, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, among other characteristics.

Specifically, this study aims to analyse a key aspect of the EBYAD project: how students perceive the inclusive practices used by Primary teachers in the classroom. Similar research on attention to diversity in bilingual programmes records significant findings but also shows a primary focus on the perceptions of teachers or, in other words, an underestimation of students' views (Pérez-Cañado, 2022, 2023; Subban et al., 2022). Hence, the objectives have been formulated as follows:

- To describe and compare the frequency of various inclusive teaching practices used in bilingual programmes based on student opinion.
- To examine whether the perceived frequency of inclusive teaching practices varies according to different student sociodemographic and school characteristics.

Method

Participants

A total of 2,714 primary school students enrolled in bilingual education programmes (76.2% Bilingual Sections and 23.8% MEC-British Council) in the

Spanish monolingual region of Castile and Leon participated in the study. Gender distribution was almost equally balanced, with 50.5% of the sample being male and 49.5% female. The age of the students ranged from 8 to 13, with a mean age of 10.2 years (SD = .92). They were either in 4th, 5th, or 6th grade (30.1%, 35%, and 34.9%, respectively) of primary education at state-run schools (82.3%) or semi-private schools (17.7%). SEN students represented 3.3%, a percentage comparable to the latest data available from the Spanish administration for 2022-2023 (Ministerio de Educación, Formación Profesional y Deportes, 2024).

Instruments

All participants completed a survey that first presented sociodemographic questions regarding gender (male vs. female), age, and grade (4th, 5th, or 6th). Additional sociodemographic information, not included in the survey but considered for analyses, was gathered by the research team: special educational needs (yes vs. no), type of school (state-run vs. semi-private), and type of bilingual programme (MEC-British Council vs. Bilingual Section).

The survey then presented the SPI-BE scale comprising 16 items representing diverse teaching practices used to cater to diversity in CLIL contexts. This scale was designed *ad hoc* based on expert criteria and previously published literature regarding practices fostering student learning and participation in terms of inclusion as well as effective didactic strategies in bilingual programmes.

In terms of the psychometric properties of the SPI-BE scale, unrestricted factor analysis and Rasch modelling revealed the existence of an essentially unidimensional latent structure conformed by a general dimension compatible with two or more correlated dimensions. In a preliminary analysis, a first dimension called *Methodology and Resources* (9 items) is considered, which refers to the use of diverse resources and materials, the implementation of teamwork, and assessment strategies. A second dimension, *Support and Feedback* (7 items) is related to the provision of help, motivation, and feedback by the teacher. The statistics to assess the goodness-of-fit, the dimensionality of the competing factorial solutions, the construct replica-

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bility, and the quality of the factor score estimates were adequate to justify the use of a total score and two subscale scores. In this sample, the SPI-BE scale provided measures with invariant properties across gender, year, type of school, and special educational needs.

Students were asked to respond how often their teachers of subjects taught in English used these teaching practices. Three response options were offered: never, sometimes, or always, and, for the analysis, these options were coded as 0, 1, and 2, respectively. A total score was obtained by averaging the scores for each item. Higher scores mean the students perceived the use of inclusive teaching practices to be more frequent.

Procedure

Data collection took place during the 2022-2023 academic year. Prior permission was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of the University of and the Department of Education of the Regional Government of Castile and Leon.

Participants were recruited through convenience sampling. The research team contacted via email and telephone every primary school in Castile and Leon with a bilingual programme to explain the purpose of the study to the corresponding management team. A total of 27 schools agreed to participate and provided access to their classrooms. The application of the survey was anonymous, paper-based, and taken in class during school hours, under the supervision of a member of the research team and/or the school, to address possible questions or difficulties and ensure that students had parental consent. Participation was voluntary and could be refused at any time. The estimated duration for completing the survey was 8-12 minutes. The teachers helped identify those students with special educational needs by discreetly marking their surveys.

Data analysis

First, descriptive analyses were conducted on the perceived frequency of inclusive teaching practices, both overall (mean total score) and by item

and dimension, as well as on student characteristics. Repeated measures t-tests examined the presence of significant differences between the mean scores of the dimensions. Subsequently, Student's t-tests for independent samples and one-way ANOVAs were performed to check whether there were significant differences in the perceived frequency of inclusive teaching practices, both overall and by item and dimension, as a function of student characteristics. The final step was to perform two-way ANOVAs between groups to look for interactions between sociodemographic characteristics. Analyses were conducted using SPSS-28 and the level of significance was set at .01.

Results

The SPI-BE total score averaged 1.36 (*SD* = .25) and ranged from .19 to 2. Table I shows the percentage of students endorsing each of the three response options per item, as well as the mean item and dimension scores.

According to the repeated measures t-tests, there were significant differences between the mean scores obtained for the two dimensions of the scale [$t_{(2713)}$ = -65.371, $p < .001$]. On average, students perceived that inclusive practices related to support and feedback (*M* = 1.60, *SD* = .32) were significantly more frequent than those related to methodology and resources (*M* = 1.17, *SD* = .29).

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TABLE I. Descriptives of the SPI-BE scores grouped by dimension

Description	Never (%)	Sometimes (%)	Always (%)	M (SD)
Methodology and Resources				1.17 (.29)
3. We work in groups or pairs and help each other [...]	6.1	58.7	35.2	1.29 (.57)
4. The teacher suggests different tasks so that everyone can participate	28.1	55.2	16.7	.89 (.66)
8. The teacher uses different materials to help us understand them (e.g. images, videos, diagrams, songs, etc.)	7.1	44.1	48.8	1.42 (.62)
9. When we do tasks, the teacher gives materials to help us (e.g. pictures, texts, diagrams, dictionaries, cards, word lists, etc.)	16.9	53.2	29.9	1.13 (.67)
10. When we work in groups or pairs, we change partners	23.3	46.8	29.9	1.07 (.73)
11. The teacher uses ICT applications in the classroom (Kahoot, Plickers, ClassDojo, etc.)	26.3	48.0	25.7	.99 (.72)
13. When assessing, the teacher gives some students more time or they do different tasks	34.5	51.8	13.7	.79 (.66)
14. When assessing, the teacher asks about the topics that have been covered in the classroom	9.9	25.0	65.1	1.55 (.67)
15. The teacher asks us to do different activities to give us a grade (e.g., a presentation in English, an outline, a test)	6.9	46.7	46.4	1.40 (.61)
Support and Feedback				1.60 (.32)
1. The teacher encourages me to participate in class	3.5	54.4	42.1	1.39 (.55)
2. If I don't know how to do an activity, the teacher helps me (e.g., clarifying how to do it, giving me examples, giving me more time, translating words, etc.)	2.7	27.2	70.1	1.67 (.52)
5. The teacher helps us to speak in English, giving us useful words and phrases	3.8	27.9	68.3	1.65 (.55)
6. When I don't understand something, they explain it to me again using easier words in English	6.8	31.6	61.6	1.55 (.62)
7. When I don't know how to say something, the teacher helps me say it in English	4.1	27.1	68.8	1.65 (.56)
12. The teacher explains what we've done wrong [...] and how to do it right	3.8	27.0	69.2	1.65 (.55)
16. The teacher congratulates us when we do the tasks correctly	4.2	26.1	69.7	1.65 (.59)

Source: Compiled by the authors

According to the t-test and the ANOVA analyses (see Table 2), there

were significant differences in the overall frequency of the use of inclusive teaching practices perceived by the students (SPI-BE total score) according to all sociodemographic characteristics studied. Specifically, female students, students in lower years, students without SEN, and students attending semi-private schools perceived the use of inclusive teaching practices to be significantly more frequent than boys, students in higher years, students with SEN, and students attending state-run schools, respectively. These significant differences were also observed by dimensions, except for the variable of gender. In addition, the students attending state-run schools enrolled in a British Council programme perceived the practices to be more inclusive than those in a non-BC programme.

TABLE II. Descriptives *(M, SD)* of SPI-BE total and dimension scores by sociodemographic characteristics. T-test and ANOVA results

	n	**Methodology and Resources**	**Support and Feedback**	**SPI-BE Total Score**
Gender		$t_{(2712)} = 2.25$	$t_{(2712)} = 1.93$	$t_{(2712)} = 2.55$**
Male	1371	1.16 (.30)	1.59 (.32)	1.35 (.26)
Female	1343	1.18 (.29)	1.61 (.32)	1.37 (.25)
Primary School Year		$F_{(2,2711)} = 7.53$***	$F_{(2,2711)} = 6.08$**	$F_{(2,2711)} = 9.76$***
4th	817	1.20 (.26)	1.62 (.31)	1.38 (.23)
5th	950	1.17 (.31)	1.61 (.31)	1.36 (.26)
6th	947	1.14 (.29)	1.57 (.34)	1.33 (.26)
Special Educational Needs		$t_{(2709)} = 3.40$**	$t_{(2709)} = 3.24$**	$t_{(2709)} = 4.00$**
Yes	90	1.07 (.36)	1.49 (.40)	1.25 (.33)
No	2621	1.17 (.29)	1.61 (.32)	1.36 (.25)
Type of School		$t_{(2712)} = -6.31$***	$t_{(2712)} = -5.43$***	$t_{(2712)} = -7.13$***
Public	2234	1.15 (.30)	1.59 (.33)	1.34 (.26)
Charter	480	1.25 (.26)	1.67 (.26)	1.43 (.21)
Type of Bilingual Programme[1]		$t_{(2232)} = -4.73$***	$t_{(2232)} = -1.18$	$t_{(2232)} = -3.71$***
Bilingual Section	1589	1.13 (.30)	1.58 (.34)	1.33 (.27)
MEC-British Council	645	1.20 (.29)	1.60 (.31)	1.37 (.24)

[1]Note: participants from state-run schools
**p <.01 ***p <.001

Source: Compiled by the authors

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Table III in the Supplementary Material shows comparisons of the item scores according to sociodemographic characteristics. It is worth noting that 13 inclusive teaching practices were reported by students in semi-private schools vs. state-run schools to be significantly more frequent.

Finally, the two-way ANOVA analysis between groups showed some significant interactions between SEN students and the type of school [$F(1,2707) = 8.47$, $p = .004$, $\eta 2p = .003$], as well as between year and type of bilingual programme [$F(1,2228) = 6.29$, $p = .002$, $\eta 2p = .006$]. In both cases, however, the effect size did not reach the cut-off for a small effect, according to Cohen (1992).

Discussion

In this study, significant differences were observed between the two dimensions of the SPI-BE scale. Students perceived that inclusive practices related to Support and Feedback were more frequently used than those related to Methodology and Resources. The overall more positive view of teachers' use of language support strategies (e.g., simpler explanations in English, translating into Spanish, etc.) to help students is consistent with reports from primary students in Valencia (Ramos, 2023) and secondary students in other Spanish monolingual communities (Casas & Rascón, 2023). Pérez-Cañado (2023) also reported that their sample of secondary school students across Europe believed their teachers in CLIL programmes provided them with linguistic support.

In contrast, students tend to have a less positive view of the frequency of inclusive practices related to methodology and resources, a result that is in line with previous findings (Casas & Rascón, 2023; Ramos, 2023). Also, in the work by Ramos (2023), the sample of primary students felt that the materials used did not cater to diversity by considering different learning abilities. This situation is even more pronounced in terms of assessment, as students considered that they were not offered the possibility of taking different versions of the same test. Similarly, secondary students in Pérez-Cañado (2023),

in addition to sharing a less positive view of methodology and groupings, reported dissatisfaction with materials and resources (e.g., they thought their textbooks did not cater to the diversity of ability levels) and assessment (e.g., they perceived a lack of different versions of tests according to ability level).

In relation to the influence of students' sociodemographic characteristics, a significant association with perceived inclusive teaching practices was observed. The association of perception and gender, although significant overall, was non-existent for each dimension and only observed for a few items (only 3 out of 16). Therefore, the non-significance of this association is in line with that reported by Ramos (2023) but is different from that observed by Schwab et al. (2018), who show that females perceive inclusion slightly more positively.

Concerning the relationship of primary school level (e.g., year) with perception, the fact that students in lower years perceive inclusive teaching practices to be more frequent in comparison with their older peers may be related to greater curricular pressure of the latter. This in turn may lead teachers to focus more on explaining content, leaving aside attention to diversity. In addition, students in higher years tend to be more aware of their own learning process, something that directly leads to a more critical view of the teaching system. This finding is consistent with the study by Schwab et al. (2018), who found that year was a significant negative predictor of students' sense of inclusion. This suggests that "as grade levels increase, the focus of teaching shifts more towards covering subject matter and the mechanics of completing the curricular content makes it difficult for teachers to include students with a range of diversities" (p. 37). This result is also in accordance with the significantly lower presence of SEN students observed in the later years of primary school (Durán-Martínez et al., 2020).

SEN students did not perceive that inclusive teaching practices were carried out as frequently as compared with non-SEN students. This may be because SEN students have more needs and/or difficulties and, therefore, are more sensitive to the presence and/or absence of support. In contrast, Schwab et al. (2018) did not report significant differences for students with and without SEN in different years and interpreted their results as a positive indicator of high-quality inclusive education catering to all students.

Among primary students in state-run schools, those enrolled in a BC programme perceived inclusive teaching practices to be more frequent than those students participating in a non-BC bilingual programme. This may be partly explained by the fact that the former is usually considered to be more demanding, where the use of English is more compulsory, there are more language assistants, and the students are provided with more scaffolding strategies and other learner-centred methods.

In terms of the type of school, primary school students attending semi-private schools rated most of the inclusive practices (13 out of 16) as being more common than their peers attending state-run schools. Two explanations may help to interpret these results. On the one hand, teachers at semi-private schools tend to be more explicit about their inclusive values and practices, as observed in the focus groups and interviews conducted within the EBYAD project. On the other hand, the profiles of students in semi-private versus state-run schools can be quite different. The vulnerable students (SEN, students with a lower level of linguistic competence, motivation, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, or different learning styles) tend to more frequently attend state-run schools (Ministerio de Educación, Formación Profesional y Deportes, 2024). A more homogeneous group of pupils is likely to consider that the measures implemented by their teachers to cater to attention to diversity are suitable because they do not perceive that there are students who are clearly lagging behind the rest of the group.

Conclusions

Today, teaching several languages from an early age as a response to an increasingly multilingual and multicultural society and including everyone in the learning process are two educational challenges that converge, particularly in primary school bilingual education. Thus, one measure to start to address this issue is to seek the opinions of the stakeholders involved. However, above all, obtaining the perspectives of the real protagonists, the students, is essential for discovering to what extent teaching practices are truly inclusive.

Firstly, this study aimed to explore how primary school students perceive the frequency of the use of inclusive teaching practices in their bilingual context. Based on the findings, it appears that, in general, primary school students consider inclusive teaching practices to be relatively frequent in the classroom.

Concerning *Support and Feedback*, the most frequent inclusive practices observed by the students involved teachers offering help to perform an activity by clarifying the task, providing examples, or translating words. This support was followed by other common practices such as teachers helping the student to communicate in English, providing feedback on how to improve, congratulating the students on their work, and providing easier explanations in English. Within this dimension, the practice that was observed the least was encouraging student participation in class. These results suggest that students perceive the effort made by their teachers to involve all students using the abovementioned support and feedback strategies. However, the findings also suggest that students perceive that teachers could better foster their participation, thus supporting the need for a more student-centred approach.

As to the dimension of *Methodology and Resources*, the three most frequent inclusive practices observed by students involved the teacher asking about topics covered in the lessons when assessing, using different materials (multimodality) to facilitate understanding, and asking students to do different activities as part of the assessment. In contrast, according to students, the least frequent classroom practices used by teachers were the use of ICT applications, using different tasks to foster the participation of all students, and providing some students with more time or different tests when assessing. As in the previous dimension, students perceive that teachers aim to engage all students through a multimodal approach and using different materials and activities. However, apart from a greater use of ICT, students lack more individualised attention during collaborative activities and assessment tests. In addition, high student/teacher ratios and resulting time constraints make it difficult for teachers to prepare communicative activities that are adapted to their specific context, and which facilitate the participation of all students (Nikula et al., 2023). Time constraints also have an impact on the ability to provide personalised assessment tests tailored to individual learner needs.

Secondly, this research examined whether the perceived frequency of inclusive teaching practices varied according to student sociodemographic characteristics and found that, overall, both individual and school-related factors were significantly associated with the inclusion perceived. In particular, female students, students in lower years, students without SEN, students in semi-private schools, and students in state-run schools with a BC programme perceived that inclusive practices occurred more frequently.

In conclusion, this analysis of the perspectives of primary students on inclusive teaching practices in their bilingual classes emphasises the need to improve, above all, the methodological strategies and resources that could favour attention to diversity. Also, the fact that primary students perceive individual support and feedback from their teachers to be more common than the use of personalised materials and tasks reinforces the need for additional work regarding both teacher training and the use of active methodologies (CLIL, collaborative learning, problem/project-based learning, flipped classroom, etc.) and on the design of open educational resources that provide teachers with a wide range of ready to go materials that cater for diversity in a bilingual classroom. This finding also provides evidence that there is still room for improvement in terms of a more personalised approach to education (Durán-Martínez & Martín-Pastor, 2023), particularly in the area of assessment. This would be greatly enhanced by the decisive support of the education authorities in aspects such as reducing student ratios, promoting coordination between teachers, implementing in-service training programmes, or organising inter-school workshops that allow teaching experiences in bilingual programmes to be shared.

This study also highlights the importance of considering the socio-demographic characteristics of students when addressing inclusion in bilingual programmes. Specifically, it seems necessary to pay preferential attention to students in higher years, students with SEN, students in state-run schools, and students in non-British Council bilingual programme since these are the students who perceive there is less attention to diversity on the part of their teachers.

Concerning the limitations of this study, the reader should bear in mind that only quantitative correlational findings are provided that do not allow for

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causation to be inferred. In addition, the sample of students was recruited in a specific autonomous community and thus may not be representative of the Spanish population because of the different bilingual education regulations existing across regions, among other reasons. Therefore, mixed-method national studies are encouraged to enrich and deepen the understanding of students' perspectives. Future studies may apply the instrument in non-bilingual schools. If different results were observed, it would be evidenced that the factor "bilingual teaching" is relevant when examining the inclusive teaching practices developed in the classroom.

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Annex

TABLE III. Descriptives *(M, SD)* of SPI-BE item scores, by sociodemographics. Significance of t-test and ANOVA

Item description	Gender		Primary School Year			SEN		Type of School		Type Bilingual Programme	
Methodology and Resources	Male	Female	4th	5th	6th	Yes	No	Public	Charter	MEC-BC	Bilingual Section
3. We work in groups or pairs and help each other [...]	1.26 (.58)	1.32** (.56)	1.31 (.55)	1.28 (.57)	1.28 (.59)	1.11 (.63)	1.30** (.57)	1.31 (.57)	1.20*** (.57)	1.45 (.55)	1.25*** (.57)
4. The teacher suggests different tasks so that everyone participate	0.89 (.66)	0.88 (.66)	0.88 (.64)	0.90 (.67)	0.88 (.66)	0.94 (.71)	0.88 (.66)	0.86 (.65)	1.00*** (.68)	0.83 (.63)	0.87 (.66)
8. The teacher uses different materials to help us understand them	1.38 (.63)	1.45** (.61)	1.45 (.61)	1.39 (.62)	1.41 (.63)	1.24 (.68)	1.42** (.62)	1.40 (.63)	1.50*** (.57)	1.40 (.60)	1.40 (.64)
9. When we do tasks, the teacher gives materials to help us	1.10 (.67)	1.16 (.67)	1.16 (.66)	1.14 (.70)	1.10 (.65)	1.04 (.66)	1.13 (.67)	1.09 (.70)	1.34*** (.64)	1.13 (.64)	1.07 (.68)
10. When we work in groups or pairs, we change partners	1.04 (.73)	1.10 (.72)	1.06 (.69)	1.10 (.76)	1.03 (.72)	.84 (.75)	1.07** (.72)	1.06 (.73)	1.11 (.70)	1.33 (.69)	.95*** (.72)
11. The teacher uses ICT applications in the classroom	.99 (.71)	1.00 (.73)	1.11 (.74)	.99 (.70)	.90*** (.71)	.93 (.72)	1.00 (.72)	.97 (.73)	1.10*** (.65)	.98 (.71)	.97 (.74)
13. When assessing, the teacher gives some students more time or they take different tests	.80 (.67)	.79 (.66)	.82 (.66)	.76 (.67)	.80 (.66)	.83 (.62)	.79 (.66)	.77 (.67)	.88** (.63)	.60 (.62)	.84*** (.67)
14. When assessing, the teacher asks about the topics covered in the classroom	1.55 (.68)	1.55 (.66)	1.61 (.65)	1.55 (.67)	1.51** (.68)	1.38 (.74)	1.56* (.66)	1.53 (.67)	1.64*** (.63)	1.58 (.63)	1.52 (.69)
15. The teacher asks us to do different activities to give us a grade	1.39 (.62)	1.40 (.61)	1.38 (.60)	1.41 (.63)	1.39 (.61)	1.27 (.67)	1.40* (.61)	1.39 (.62)	1.44 (.56)	1.50 (.56)	1.34*** (.64)
Support and Feedback											
1. The teacher encourages me to participate in class	1.38 (.57)	1.39 (.54)	1.41 (.56)	1.36 (.56)	1.39 (.54)	1.28 (.64)	1.39 (.55)	1.37 (.56)	1.45** (.54)	1.40 (.53)	1.36 (.57)
2. If I don't know how to do an activity, the teacher helps me	1.64 (.55)	1.71*** (.49)	1.66 (.51)	1.68 (.53)	1.68 (.52)	1.59 (.58)	1.68 (.52)	1.66 (.53)	1.74*** (.46)	1.61 (.57)	1.68** (.51)
5. The teacher helps us to speak in English, giving us useful words and phrases	1.64 (.55)	1.65 (.55)	1.70 (.52)	1.66 (.53)	1.58*** (.59)	1.56 (.67)	1.65 (.55)	1.63 (.57)	1.73*** (.47)	1.63 (.55)	1.63 (.57)
6. When I don't understand something, they explain it to me again using easier words in English	1.54 (.62)	1.55 (.62)	1.54 (.64)	1.56 (.60)	1.54 (.62)	1.48 (.64)	1.55 (.62)	1.53 (.63)	1.64*** (.58)	1.55 (.61)	1.52 (.63)
7. When I don't know how to say something, the teacher helps me say it in English	1.62 (.57)	1.67 (.54)	1.64 (.55)	1.68 (.54)	1.61 (.58)	1.49 (.62)	1.65 (.55)	1.64 (.56)	1.68 (.53)	1.67 (.52)	1.63 (.58)
12. The teacher explains what we've done wrong [...] and how to do it right	1.66 (.56)	1.65 (.54)	1.68 (.53)	1.65 (.56)	1.64 (.56)	1.53 (.60)	1.66 (.55)	1.64 (.56)	1.73*** (.50)	1.66 (.52)	1.63 (.57)
16. The teacher congratulates us when we do the tasks correctly	1.64 (.57)	1.67 (.54)	1.74 (.49)	1.67 (.55)	1.57*** (.61)	1.53 (.69)	1.66 (.55)	1.63 (.57)	1.76*** (.47)	1.69 (.51)	1.61** (.59)

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Reviews

Reviews

Transformation of Knowledge and Educational Reform, by Zhongying Shi, Springer. 2023. pp. 286.

Demands for knowledge have increased in the 21st century, prompting the adoption of transformations in the system to help change the way people live. The book *Transformation of Knowledge and Education Reforms* by Zhongying Shi focuses on discussing the concept of knowledge transformation, the historical procedure of knowledge transformation, and the way it influences educational theory and practice by virtue of various discipline resources. The author kicks off by acknowledging that knowledge and education are strongly connected; they do not compete but complement each other. This is evident when the author states, "From the perspective of the individual, only through education can the individual acquire systematic knowledge, understand, and uphold the value of knowledge." This connectedness is therefore imperative, as it forms the foundation upon which social education at any given period can be clearly understood. The author touches on practice and knowledge, arguing that practice is a key constituent of knowledge. Human beings require knowledge for their practices and knowledge for their education. The chapter moves ahead to fault various entities and individuals, including educational reformers, for undermining the factual connection between knowledge and education. They argue that, in this era, the most paramount aspect is not gaining knowledge but developing students' quality and capacity. Some even suggest that "capacity-oriented teaching" should replace "knowledge-oriented teaching."

The author uses the better part of chapter two to introduce various important terms that are considered critical to addressing the connection between education reforms and knowledge transformation. Knowledge, knowledge transformation, and knowledge form are the main terms defined in this chapter. Ideally, the author notes that people are conversant with what knowledge is but know little about knowledge transformation and knowledge form. Knowledge form is equated to the standpoint or view of knowledge that dif-

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ferent people have. For instance, some people have the view that "knowledge is power," while others believe that "knowledge is objective." The bottom line is that these concepts deepen on each other; they interact and promote each other. They also serve as conditions for each other while endorsing advancements, developments, and the success of human society. Knowledge transformation has been influential on social transformation, as people's way of life and social identity are determined by the knowledge they possess. The careers that people practice are grounded in the knowledge and education they have on the field, which determines the social class they belong to in terms of the social problems they are likely to encounter. The author has asked several questions to understand education reforms and their relationship with knowledge transformation. Some of the questions include, but are not limited to, "What new demands for knowledge should be embraced by the new development of society and the individual? It must reflect anew on such questions: What kind of knowledge has more educational values? How do I obtain the knowledge as such for the sake of educational significance? What roles should teachers and students play in the activities of such knowledge, and on what epistemological basis? What kind of new teaching mode, particularly the mode of teaching assessment, should be developed in accordance with the new demands for knowledge?" (28).

The book mentions the major forms of human knowledge that are believed to have existed since humans came into existence. The first knowledge form that humans experienced was the primitive knowledge form. However, it is difficult to determine how it was acquired as there is no evidence and their knowledge is "mythical" and not "experiential." The second is the ancient knowledge form, which the authors state is "metaphysical," and it ushered in the modern knowledge form that is common in western countries. The author faults the previous scholars for not studying the stages of the progression of human knowledge but instead focusing on its enlargement by amount. This fact results in the overlapping of current and previous knowledge, creating the impression that the progression of knowledge has been constant or less important to understand. Based on these facts, this chapter tries to illustrate the stages of the progression of human knowledge throughout human civilization. The author presents the history of human knowledge forms and categorizes

them in four main stages spanning from ancient times to today: primitive knowledge form, modern knowledge form, ancient knowledge form, and postmodern knowledge form. The chapter analyzes the features and power of these four forms in order to bring to light the process human knowledge has undergone since its inception.

The author also talks about the connection between the changes in the features of postmodern knowledge and education reforms, as the previous shortcomings influence the future. The major purposes of education are to control and influence individuals and society's development. Although education influences individuals' development, the content and direction of development are regulated by economic, social, cultural, and political factors (Kehdinga and Rahming 2017). On the other hand, society's development relies on the qualities of particular individuals and specifications. The book does not consider qualities of knowledge as specific knowledge like folk knowledge, historical knowledge, or mythical knowledge but as general features of all kinds of knowledge regarded as the features shared by all forms of knowledge surpassing the distinctions amongst their specific spheres, disseminating modes, stating modes, and so on. According to the author, a period or individual perspective of the features of knowledge contributes to their main perspective of knowledge. In this case, the alteration of knowledge results in a change in the views on knowledge in a specific period or an individual influencing their entire intellectual life, spanning from their statement, defense, production, control of knowledge, and judgment.

The change in knowledge-increasing modes and education reform differs among different eras. According to the authors, in the modern era, individuals have a common belief about how knowledge increases. This is evident when the author states that some of the beliefs among modern-era individuals are that "knowledge increase is promoted by some intellectuals or scientists in each sphere," "knowledge increase is the result of people's constant observations and experiments." "Knowledge increase is the result of the work of the intellectuals and scientists in each sphere, and there is not a smooth avenue to science" (147). The author discusses the philosophical stands on the knowledge increase, with Locke disagreeing with the tradition-

al ideas about knowledge and methods of acquiring it. Locke states that the external world is the source of knowledge, and people should preserve ideas emanating from the outside world. The ideas are proposed to be preserved in the mind. The author proposes changes that should be adopted to promote the change of the knowledge-increasing mode and education reforms. One of the changes is to help students understand the importance of acquiring fundamental knowledge and methods as well as emphasize the development of their critical, cooperative, and comprehensive awareness about the knowledge they are acquiring. The other change proposed is in the curriculum, which should be precise, comprehensive, and artistic. The change will help students learn everything included in the curriculum and grasp all the information presented therein. The author also proposes changes to the teaching style, where reflective and cooperative teaching should be adopted. These teaching techniques help teachers determine whether the lesson was understood, and students communicate with their educators through questions and answers. Such teaching techniques ensure knowledge is effectively grasped. The research by Gillies (2015) agrees that there is a need for teaching strategies to be changed, citing palliative coping strategies as ineffective.

The book is significant for different groups as it contains information that can be used to make changes in various sectors. First, the book can be read by educators as it informs them about the changes they should adapt to ensure students are educated in a way that they become knowledgeable. For instance, it informs them about changes in curriculum structure and content, as well as teaching strategies. Educators can also use the information presented in the book to determine the changes that have taken place in knowledge acquisition and education and the way they should adopt them. The book is also significant to society as it shows them the way their cultural and social aspects can be influenced by educational reforms, where they can encounter both positive and negative implications. Society can also understand how knowledge transformation and education reforms have contributed to the grouping of social classes among different individuals. Most importantly, the book is a good academic source that can be used by scholars studying the same topic, as it has offered detailed explanations about different aspects. It will help scholars grasp information on the historical perspective of knowledge transformation

and education from the primitive era to the pre- and post-modern eras.

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Ribera, M. & Díaz, O. (Eds.) (2024). ChatGPT and University Education: Possibilities and Limitations of ChatGPT as a Teaching Tool. Barcelona: Octaedro. 134 pp. I.S.B.N: 978-84-19900-58-6.

The idealist philosopher Henri - Frédéric Amiel (1821 – 1881) maintained – and he was not wrong – that intelligence is useful for everything, but sufficient for nothing.

In the 21st century, however, with the arrival of the Information Society and Artificial Intelligence -AI-, it may be necessary to reconsider this reflection, since there is no aspect that the latter does not cover, although it may not always be truly effective, given its current limitations.

The arrival of this technology represents a profound revolution in every sense, being of special relevance in the pedagogical sector, where it threatens to shake the fundamental pillars of the educational system, not only by autonomously generating content that must be critically reviewed, but also by allowing itself the luxury of calling into question the very figure of the teacher, whose work is already beginning to be questioned by some experts and authoritative voices in the field.

In this sense, the analysis of the work that is the subject of this review, *ChatGPT and University Education: Possibilities and Limits of ChatGPT as a Teaching Tool*, from the Octaedro publishing house, represents an added value to the exercise of social debate that is currently taking place around the role that AI is going to play, both in our daily lives and in future training processes, especially at the higher level, where for at least two decades now, there has been clear public discontent regarding the role that universities are playing in training qualified professionals, who never seem to be properly prepared to take on the ephemeral and draconian demands of a constantly changing labour market.

Thus, the first three chapters, aimed at the reader's initial contact with the concept, technical specifications and basic forms of practical use

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of chatbots, in particular ChatGPT, do nothing but familiarize us, in a very accessible way, with notions such as *prompts* or *neural networks*, moving on, ultimately, to the main characteristics of this tool as a conversational agent, text generator, translator/rewriter, and, of course, without forgetting many of the barriers that AI still has to overcome such as knowledge restrictions in specific domains, the lack of logical sense or the bias in responses to users.

However, the greatest appeal of the text lies in its final chapters, especially the fourth and sixth, which cover, to begin with, the moral implications and risks arising from the didactic use of this type of resources in university classrooms, more specifically: misinformation based on hoaxes or the existence of a large amount of AI-generated material that does not show its authorship and also does not include solid reference sources that allow its veracity to be effectively contrasted. In this way, it seems quite evident that the adoption of these instruments in higher education can indeed be an opportunity, but it is highly conditioned by the different educational, cultural and institutional contexts that we can currently find in our society, and that is something that cannot be ignored.

It is worth highlighting, for example, the importance of ethics in relation to policies and strategies for generating ideas, something that both teachers and students must assume in order to guarantee academic and scientific honesty and integrity. And it is also necessary that large *ed - tech* corporations that manage the transition of teaching - learning processes towards virtual platform models, and that handle a lot of data from our personal lives that must be treated with the utmost respect and professional confidentiality, adhere to this principle, not to mention the challenges that will have to be assumed in terms of the digital divide, transversality or cognitive deterioration of our natural capacities for problem solving when so much responsibility falls on machines.

Despite this reality, the authors clearly advocate experimenting with the educational possibilities of chatbots with responsibility, open - mindedness towards uncertainty, and avoiding supervising students. The answer lies in providing information in an effective and controlled way, but with useful

learnings that promote the construction of meaningful, contextualized and complex knowledge. That is the first step towards a much more promising future…

Francisco Raso Sánchez

Rodríguez, J., Area, M., & San Martín, Á. (2024). Children and digital transformation of education. Diverse Perspectives. Dykinson. 292 pp. ISBN: 9788411704359

The book "Childhood and the Digital Transformation of Education: Diverse Perspectives" examines certain approaches and relevant questions in order to present a series of reflections and suggestions that facilitate the formulation of an appropriate understanding regarding the meaning and importance of digital educational resources in educational work. The purpose of the book is to analyze these concerns and offer reflections and proposals that help to understand the sense and significance of digital technologies in educational practice.

The importance of this book is emphasized for researchers, pre-service teachers, and families wishing to delve deeper into the topic, as well as for those seeking practical examples of how to effectively utilize digital educational resources in classrooms.

The work follows a discourse and structure typical of a research paper and is organized into two main sections: "Food for Thought," which provides reflections on early childhood education in the digital age, and "Hands-on Practice," which presents examples of valuable practices related to the appropriate use of resources in the early childhood education stage.

In the first part of the book, "Food for Thought: Early Childhood Ed-

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ucation in the Maze of the Digital Society," a profound and reflective look is provided on the relationship between digital technologies, childhood, and early childhood education. The significant increase in the presence of these technologies in both the school and home environments is highlighted, as well as the adoption of educational policies to regulate their use. Furthermore, the growth in the sale of digital resources and educational discourses addressing upbringing in a consumerist culture is noted.

The book highlights the lack of understanding regarding the importance of digital competence in early childhood education, both among families and educators. Despite children being immersed in the digital age, the responsibility falls on adults to mitigate the risks. For this reason, within the educational realm, there is an emphasis on the need for more reflective and critical training for teachers, as well as the implementation of educational projects that explicitly consider the use of technologies. Likewise, various opinions regarding the use of digital technologies in childhood are mentioned, ranging from advocating for their inclusion in early childhood education classrooms to rejecting their use before the primary education stage.

The second part of the book, "Hands-on Practice: Experiences of Digital Education in Childhood," is particularly interesting as it proposes, across ten chapters, strategies aimed at the optimal utilization of resources in early childhood education. All of these strategies constitute a fundamental pillar in the development of educational environments that strive for effectiveness and richness in student formation. They are strategies that make it possible to optimize the use of tangible and intangible resources, such as didactic materials, pedagogical tools, and educational technologies, with the purpose of fostering meaningful learning.

Among the proposals, it is worth mentioning the incorporation of educational robotics from a programming perspective for learning, which represents a liberating approach in education, going beyond mere traditional literacy. This approach enables students to understand and actively participate in the digital world in a critical and responsible manner.

Furthermore, it provides concrete examples of how to apply other in-

novative approaches in educational practice. These include the use of online training courses aimed at both teachers and families, the employment of video games for educational purposes, and the analysis of television series with pedagogical content. These practical examples illustrate how the mentioned resources can be effectively integrated into the educational environment to enhance the learning and development of early childhood education.

Therefore, reading the book "Childhood and the Digital Transformation of Education: Diverse Perspectives" is an essential requirement for individuals committed to the integration and efficient application of technologies in the educational sphere. Given the increasing relevance of digital tools in the teaching and learning process, this book not only constitutes recommended reading but also an indispensable resource for those aspiring to understand the complexities, implications, and potential benefits of this digital transformation in the educational context.

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The meaning of teaching history

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