

Editorial

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The school as a territory for other pedagogies

Over seventy years have gone by since education was established as a human right and, beyond the rhetorical institutional discourse, education is still one of the social mechanisms to which more qualities and scope are attributed for the creation and maintenance of more just and democratic societies less prone to the reproduction of asymmetries.

It is perhaps due to the currency or legitimacy of these political attributions that, when we gauge public opinion, education also continues to be one of the main answers of conventional wisdom to the problems of our societies. When people are asked for the cause or an explanation of phenomena such as violence, poverty, or corruption, their answer is still usually “a lack of education”, although paradoxically there are now more schools and alumni than at any other moment in history. The guarantee of the right is proven by institutional agents in high income levels, blurring the fact that the right to education is not fulfilled only by access to it but also by the strengthening of mechanisms that allow it to be permanent, achievable, and complete.

The universalization and democratization of education as a public and free social institution responsible for preparing children and youths brought with it questions and challenges about the meaning of education. Although the progress in educational coverage in most countries of the world is undeniable, the possibilities that the traditional school can include historically excluded groups and individuals have been the subject of debate. As French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has shown, the educational system contributes to reproduce and perpetuate social inequalities through time.

Schools, in particular, instead of being spaces of social mobility, tend to maintain and reinforce current differences, helping the children from privileged social strata to maintain and improve their social positions while those of the working classes remain in situations of disadvantage, which sometimes deepen. In this respect, an important part of the debate are the different qualities, qualitatively differentiated, between public and private education. The school is therefore not – as assured since its constitution – a neutral agent that offers equal opportuni-

ties by itself: it entails intentionalities that respond to economic and cultural models that must be scrutinized critically.

If efforts to extend the right to education by ensuring its access are insufficient to revert processes of social marginalization and segregation, we speak of an “exclusive inclusion” that does not allow all the actors to exercise their right to education and participate actively in teaching and learning processes. Within this framework of ideas, not only pointing this out but considering epistemic proposals and pedagogical practices that regard the school as a territory has gained importance. This means recognizing the school not as not only a physical space but also a place where identities, relationships, and sense of belonging are constructed. This understanding is achieved through the alternative pedagogies that conceive the school as a dynamic, critical space where relationships of power, knowledge and affect converge and are transformed.

Adopting this perspective implies transcending the traditional function of the school, turning it into a place where social inequalities are questioned and transformed, difference is valued, and a sense of community, belonging, and collaboration in the construction of knowledge is cultivated, making room to integrate social, political and cultural dimensions that historically and frequently are made invisible by traditional pedagogies. These other pedagogies, alluded to by the thematic axis presented here, point out that the traditional educational system materialized in the school entails notions of social class, gender, and ethnicity that need to be discussed, disregards learning skills distant from the norm, and fails to recognize the heterogeneity of the socio-cultural contexts where the subjects of education coexist.

This is why, beyond the instrumental approach that restricts us to thinking about structural or digital gaps, discussing the current challenges of education is an exercise that invites the full recognition of the new subjectivities and the different contexts in which schools exist, as well as the own interests, skills and knowledge that have little or nothing to do with the hegemonic model of urban, literate and professionalizing education. We must therefore think about the school territory.

The expansion of educational systems and the exponential growth of schooling in societies are two processes that have not taken place in a linear way but that have historically, in many cases, entered into tension and conflict with the different actors and contexts that school education aims to reach, which is why the school has also become a fertile territory for the emergence of other pedagogies and relationships with knowledge which are critical, insurgent, popular, and emancipating, and often opposed to traditional educational practices founded upon the dynamics and needs of the market. For all of these reasons, *Diálogos sobre Educación. Temas actuales de investigación educativa* presents its Issue 31 on “Education, territory, and other pedagogy”.

gies” as a space in which you will find empirical research papers, critical essays, and reviews that address through different disciplines, dimensions, and contexts the current tensions in which the interactions between education, territory, and other pedagogies take place. We hope it will be an interesting issue as well as an opportunity to participate in the debate.

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