

Didactics, temporality and teacher education*

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ABSTRACT

The didactic dimension is a key aspect of teaching education. This questions directly the professional performance and, as a consequence, the meaning of teaching and learning of new generations. Thus, to adopt one didactic perspective or another has deep implications for the configuration of subjectivity and the formation of a specific type of society. In this sense, the study approaches the epistemological reflections based on one case studied from a qualitative research in process, with the purpose to analyze the logical thinking that mobilize, articulates or/and organizes pedagogy students. The reflections revolve around the implications of the school temporality that puts pressure on an episodic didactic action, which is unable to create a sense of narrative connection and with that perpetuates the ruling order.

KEYWORDS

practical rationality; didactic time; teacher education.

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DIDÁTICA, TEMPORALIDADE E FORMAÇÃO DOCENTE

RESUMO

A dimensão didática constitui um aspecto fundamental na formação de professores, uma vez que interpela diretamente o desempenho profissional e, conseqüentemente, o sentido do ensino e da aprendizagem das novas gerações. Portanto, adotar uma ou outra perspectiva didática tem implicações profundas na configuração da subjetividade e na construção de um tipo específico de sociedade. Nesse sentido, o texto aborda reflexões epistemológicas provenientes de um dos casos estudados, de uma pesquisa qualitativa que se está realizando, cujo propósito é analisar as lógicas do pensamento que mobilizam, estruturam e/ou configuram estudantes de pedagogia. As reflexões neste artigo giram em torno das implicâncias da temporalidade da instituição escolar, que pressiona em direção a uma ação didática episódica, incapaz de gerar uma trama narrativa com sentido, pela qual se perpetua a ordem dominante.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

racionalidade prática; tempo didático; formação de professores.

DIDÁCTICA, TEMPORALIDAD Y FORMACIÓN DOCENTE

RESUMEN

Un aspecto clave de la formación docente lo constituye la dimensión didáctica, puesto que interpela directamente la actuación profesional y, consecuentemente, el sentido de la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de las nuevas generaciones. Así, adoptar una u otra perspectiva didáctica tiene profundas implicaciones para la configuración de la subjetividad y para la construcción de un tipo específico de sociedad. Al respecto, el texto aborda reflexiones epistemológicas a partir de uno de los casos de estudio de una investigación cualitativa en curso, cuyo propósito es analizar las lógicas de pensamiento que movilizan, articulan y/o configuran estudiantes de pedagogía. Las reflexiones giran en torno a las implicancias de la temporalidad de la institución escolar, que presiona hacia una acción didáctica episódica incapaz de generar una trama narrativa con sentido, perpetuando, de este modo, el orden dominante.

PALABRAS CLAVE

racionalidad práctica; tiempo didáctico; formación docente.

INTRODUCTION

Historically, didactics¹ has been configured as a discipline without a clear, defined and autonomous epistemological body. Along its development it has focused on the production of a "deontic corpus that discursively includes propositions about a 'being' and 'must be' in the praxis of teaching (-learning)" (Behares, 2004, p.13). It should be transmitted to various generations of teachers to provide the tools needed to make instructional contents *didactic*, that is, more accessible, simple, relevant to developmental stages, manageable, and able to be reduced into fragments and sequences for monthly, semi-annual, or annual units. This purpose is quite naturalized in the field and, for many; it is the key for developing teacher expertise.

The purpose of this article is not to address the issue of didactics as a science - as authors such as Chevallard (1991) propose, but to analyze its consequences as the discipline of the act of teaching. It should be noted that there has been growing concern in recent years about the epistemological status of didactics precisely because the deontic construction upon which it has been sustained is in crisis. This reflection is produced by a certain gap in the methods that sustain it as a science (Camilloni et al., 1996). In this regard, one might ask about the debts, gaps, and challenges didactics has inherited and the need for a thorough analysis to allow its rethinking.

A brief review of the construction of didactics in previous centuries can clarify and guide the above considerations. First, one must note that the concern for didactic issues has obeyed a European interest - and in recent decades a Latin American one - that is not shared by pedagogical developments in the Anglo Saxon world, which is mainly concerned with the application of the psychology of learning to teaching processes (*idem*) rather than a reflection-action that questions what, why, how, and whom to teach. This didactic reflection has been reduced and even eliminated in some teacher education programs that are oriented to the implementation of methodological strategies, according to the psychological theories in vogue. We can recall the well-known behaviorist, cognitive, or constructivist methodologies that several generations of teachers had to learn during their initial and ongoing preparation.

Second, it is necessary to note that the development of modern didactics originated in the seventeenth century, and it was Comenius who managed to materialize the perspective of his time in relation to the necessity and meaning of education. On one hand, education was understood as the search for equality for all individuals, which would be achieved by the application of effective learning strategies for teaching selected knowledge. On the other hand, it was considered

1 The Spanish concept *Didáctica* (from the Greek *διδασκτικός* [*didaktikos*]), as is the case of didactics in most non-American English-speaking countries, is defined as the discipline of the act of teaching. Among Spanish-speaking scholars, didactics is a discipline of a scientific-pedagogical character that focuses on each of the stages of the teaching and learning process. When reading this paper, readers should keep this comprehensive pedagogical meaning in mind.

as the implementation of an educational system under the responsibility of the nation state, to guarantee education for all, based on the promise of progress and social advancement for all individuals. As a consequence, developments of modern didactics have been based on the same educational proposal, which according to the scientific, philosophical or technological advances of each time period, led to what Bordoli (2005) calls the three different approaches, although sharing similar purposes: Comenian didactics, psychology-oriented didactics, and curriculum-oriented didactics.

Comenian didactics focused completely on the transmission of knowledge; psychology-oriented didactics, on students' learning; and curriculum-oriented didactics, on the planning of teaching and learning. In moving from one approach to the other, strong criticisms emerge, as if each were a new paradigm and not an emphasis within a single paradigm. Thus, the Comenian didactic' scholarship was heavily criticized, with the development of the psychology of learning. It was at this time that the Anglo-Saxon approach became strong in pedagogy, installing a didactic perspective according to which teachers should be very knowledgeable about learning theories, to place the student as the focus and be able to teach what they must learn. Later, this psychology-oriented didactics was displaced in favor of an emphasis on a technological curriculum - understood as instructional planning - which sought to guarantee the quality of education through teachers' neutral implementation of the same rigorously designed programming.

However, despite the differences among these three approaches, they share the view that individuals, regardless of their culture and history, must learn certain content -skills, abilities, and competencies - selected as valid for them. Possessing this content would, somehow, provide equality among individuals who could thus aspire to a better quality of life and social advancement. These ideas have remained unscathed until today, supported by certain logics and production interests that seek to configure a certain type of subject and subjectivity.

If we inquire into the episteme of modern didactics, i.e., in the "set of relationships capable of uniting, in a given epoch, the discursive practices of sciences" (Foucault, 1982, p. 323) - in this case, didactics - it is possible to find the same logic of construction, which is naturalized by those of that time. This didactic logic, according to a number of authors (Behares, 2004; Bordoli, 2005; Camilloni et al., 1996), would be characterized by:

- Providing objectivity to knowledge by de-historicizing it and removing it from the context in which it was created. This implies transforming it into packaged knowledge, closed to itself, fragmented, able to be sequenced and transmitted at a given time.
- Providing objectivity to school knowledge, so that it can pass neutrally from one subject to another, without being re-signified by the experiences, biography, emotions, and interests of those who learn and teach.
- Acting as if the information is processed in the same way in the human cognitive system, thereby developing the same mediation strategies and

sequences - for example using progress maps - for the same group of students, without considering individual or cultural differences.

- Acting so that all the individuals (in a class, school level, country) achieve the same results/outcomes, resulting in the well-known expected learnings and various learning objectives measured by standardized tests and whose results are used to establish school rankings.
- Transmitting certain cultural referents that are specific to the legitimized culture. In Latin America, this has implied not considering teaching ancestral knowledge or making it invisible.

These characteristics work as theoretical and practical assumptions that are instrumentalized through the notion of process, which serves as a vehicle and catalyst for the modern didactic perspective. Thus, in name of the need for educational *process*, the practices of knowledge are implemented that obey a naturalization of political and epistemological ideals of modernity. However, they are seen as innovations and even as critical reviews. In the name of the teaching and learning process, a lineal, causal, and stable perspective of human learning is being validated. This process is understood as "a temporal continuum governed by the cause/effect relationship" (Behares, 2004, p.16), and as such, it involves the same progression in increasing levels of complexity for all subjects.

[...]It assumes the existence of a linear psychological development ... in which there is a sequence in *just one direction* ... through the temporal concatenation of causes and effects ... going from the most simple to the most complex. Although formulations may vary ... behaviorist, psychogenetic, cognitive, socio-interactionist, etc., it can be said that Didactics governed by the proposition of 'mediation' [...] begins with the acceptance of that postulated by the process. (*idem*, p.17)

This perspective about process contradicts human diversity and the incapacity to design and implement a single learning process that allows all individuals to effectively learn the same thing and at the same time, as if they were artificial intelligences. In this vein, Chevallard (1991) points out the impossibility of isomorphism between planning time or legal didactic time and the learning time of students. This seems to be an obvious issue, but it is made invisible within the logic of linear processes, which also implies the belief that one can manage, measure, and intervene in the reality of the classroom as if masterminds were able to foresee the future and accommodate it to the curricular programming' needs. This type of belief implies that the process no longer refers to real life which is uncertain, uncontrollable, complex, and changing by nature, and is transferred to a parallel world characterized by stability, order, simplicity, and sequence, where it is possible to intervene. Such a conception belongs to the "modern rationality and does not tolerate uncertainty, because it is a conception that seeks clarity and distinction, linearity [and] time control" (Méndez, 2010, p.142).

Accordingly, traditional didactics - through school and, more specifically, learning-teaching mechanisms - fulfills the function of forming a hegemonic vision of knowledge and values, thus trying to establish a certain type of timeless and unhistorical subjectivities. In this framework, the scope, consequences, and relationships of didactics praxis - which are intimately related to the political context in which they take place - are overlooked. In this regard, the logic that underlies how subjects act in the world is not an empty form of understanding. On the contrary, it is built from historical and cultural contents that shape temporalities, which are not considered from the ideology of the school and modern didactics.

Temporalities are social constructs that shape us. They are loaded with worldviews and anthropologies that guide our actions and our relationships. This is to say that our subjectivities and worlds are built on temporalities. (Méndez, 2010, p.141)

We cannot escape the time, culture, or history that shape us. Consequently, temporalities imposed by schools are not neutral but penetrate and help shape our subjectivity. At this point, puzzling questions arise, since the only way for schools to configure other subjectivities is by thinking from other symbolic territories. But how can we do that? How can didactic actions be implemented outside the logic of linear and progressive process if teachers have configured their subjectivity from the same modern episteme? Is it possible for us to accept uncertainty, the flux of classrooms, the temporality of human subjects, beyond school time and programming if, as teacher educators, we have also been educated by the same logics?

Therefore, to overcome a modern didactic education, it becomes important to broaden our understanding about temporality, to analyze the way this logic is made concrete and the way individuals in teacher education adapt to and or resist this rationality. In this vein, it is essential to locate the discussion by considering the concrete individuals live in the world of schools, specifically trying to act in that space using a didactic approach that escapes the hegemonic episteme. Accordingly, this reflection is made while working with a young preservice teacher (graduated with accreditation in Spanish Literature, who will be referred to as RR) during his third and last semester of a post Bachelor's teacher education program. This preservice teacher is one of six case studies in an ongoing study that aims to interpret the logic of thinking that mobilizes, articulates and shapes secondary education preservice teachers during their practicum.

This proposal arises from some research (Buitrago, 2008; Gaete; Castro, 2012; Gilroy, 1997; Mercado, 2002; Montero, 2001; Tardif, 2004; among others) noting that teachers configure from experience a certain practical rationality by which they filter knowledge received during their university education. This practical rationality seems to start taking shape in preservice teachers even before they finish college and earn accreditation. Thus, it is consolidated from experience where certain logics of thinking come into play, with which they resignify the rules of didactic action in the way that they work. In this regard, it is relevant to question not only the content that should be taught to those working towards accreditation but also

about "the logics of construction of subjects presented to understand the world" (Buitrago, 2008, p.65).

In the case of RR, the configuration of temporality as a key dimension in his construction as a teacher appears clear and problematic in its didactic *staging*. The setting: A 10th grade class for 15 to 17-year-old boys and girls at a municipal technical vocational high school – labeled as vulnerable – in a community in the periphery of Santiago, Chile. He is a student teacher in a program that seeks to educate teachers, who are reflexive about and researchers of their own practice. The configuration between setting and staging of his practice is conducted by observing his instruction for 3 months, listening to the narration of his practical experiences, interviewing the school actors that condition his actions, that is, the university tutor, the cooperating teacher, and students.

The logic with which subjects operate in this setting is complex and not completely attributable to the modern episteme. This is critical because RR is learning to think as a teacher in relationship with others that demand certain forms of action from him. These demands are dissimilar and similar, concordant and discordant among themselves and for him. This is an issue that requires a phenomenological perspective, allowing a hermeneutic understanding of how the dimension of temporality operates in shaping a pedagogical-didactic rationality in a subject who is trying to become a teacher.

INSTITUTIONALIZED DIDACTIC TIME: LIFE AS STATE OF PAUSE

As stated above, the concept of process – understood as the set of successive phases of a phenomenon – represents an important epistemological pillar in the construction of modern didactics, and as such, requires a more extensive reflection on its relation to the notion of time. In this regard, it is necessary to note that the conception of time as a *continuum* of the flow of events is the product of the human ability to remember and synthesize, which facilitates relating two or more events, establishing one as a standardized measure of the other. Examples may be the sunrise, the tides, the seasons, or others that are "more accurate and reliable... This is precisely what clocks are: nothing more than a man-made physical continuum flowing, normalized as framework of reference and measure[...]" (Elias, 1989, p.56).

In this regard, throughout history, not all peoples have shared the same sequential notion of time as uniform flow, equal, and continuous. What happens is that "temporalities that are peripheral, ancestral, of an eternal return, circular, etc., are made invisible by moving at other rhythms or in other directions ... so they do not impede the linear development of time" (Méndez, 2010, p.144). Even scientifically, the concept of time has been thought of differently throughout history. While for Newton, time was an objective flow, for Einstein it was a form of relationship. What is clear, according to Elias (1989), is that the need for to temporalize human activities is the result of the requirements of social organization, which requires establishing and standardizing certain references – for example, before and after Christ – to allow coinciding for example, when determining what year it is, or what age one has. Thus, the notion of time is not an *a priori* category

of human understanding. If so, all peoples would develop the same notions, even a human being without social contact.

One only needs to think of industrialized societies where time is highly regulated, acquiring a coercive nature, and dominates the lives of its subjects. Thus, humans live controlled by hours, by production sequences, running all day long, always late as they pass through a kind of irreversible time tunnel. Obviously, this also permeates education and didactic developments. The biological clock is replaced by the social and school clock. At schools, everything is determined by exact times: entry and exit, feeding, going to the bathroom, learning, and recreation. Accepting and living these times implies accepting and naturalizing the logic of schools. This is because, "time cannot be grasped without assuming, in like manner...the forms of life, the institutions and the social functions that constitute the concrete dimension[...]" (Kraemer, 1999, p. 154).

A teacher must learn to think and live according to these new temporal determinations: how long a class is, which can be up to 45 or 90 minutes, how long does it take for students to do a learning activity or an assessment, what are the didactic implications of a monthly, semiannual, or annual plan. Her experience is limited to the synchronization of personal time, not didactic time. Similar to the inhabitants of a tribe that expect the priest to determine the right time for harvest, festivals, or initiation rites, students expect the teacher to determine the timing of activities, assignments, and tests. It is the teacher who must take responsibility for determining the flow of educational events in the classroom. This implies, among other things, synchronizing with national curricular programming, the annual school calendar, dates for each grade level testing, and national assessments, among many others activities.

Consequently, the didactic knowledge of teachers is permeated by the synchronization of their thinking to the requirements and control of the temporality that is imposed on learning, which is conceived as a linear, continuous, and progressive process. Under this procedural logic, it is believed that students acquire knowledge in a cumulative way, in exact sequences, which can be determined *a priori* for all of them. In this logic, possibilities of setbacks, reversals, or stagnation are never posed. The same logic clearly arose during RR's practice. For one of his classes, he prepared a systematization of student work along with a presentation with audiovisual support. In this 90-minute lesson, students did not bring their assigned projects and the computer did not work. RR then spent the class time explaining the need to respect the programmed sequence, insisting that each session has a purpose within the writing process. Paradoxically, the students did not analyze, write, or do the appropriate work in that lesson. Later, when RR was asked why he addressed the problem in that way, he said:

If you look at the lesson itself, it is super objective because, at its core, it was a preview to the lesson that we will have the following week ... from my perspective, it provided a foundation to say: Well, this is literature! -... In the context of the process, this lesson maybe had a foundation, but if I look at it now, it seemed not to have it. (Interview RR: April 24)

This type of didactic situation and the reasoning behind it were recurrent for RR, who constantly expressed the need for students to recognize progress in the lesson, in a continuous path towards a long term work. It is a continuity that, paradoxically, he did not place into each lesson. Indeed, when students were interested in certain planned topics, he did not cover them in depth or give continuity to them given the self-imposed need to not get stuck and move towards the final product. Moreover, any decision involving a change in the linearity of planned activities is considered by RR as a schizophrenic practice.

- I feel that the process should be a continuous one, we have an objective, we have a purpose, we are going to learn this, we learn it and continue using it...
- I say let's consciously advance, advance in the logic that we are doing things and not get stuck, it is a super linear logic...
- [The reason] I decided to change [the lesson], has to do with a fear, a fear that they feel that we are not moving forward...
- [I wondered] What do I do, what do I do?! And then I collapsed because I started thinking about today's class, because the class was meant to continue the process. [Since I could not do it]... I went ahead with the content. The problem now is that it will have an insert... again doing kind of schizophrenic things [...]. (Interview RR: May 29)

From RR's words, we can clearly interpret the split between teaching events occurring in the flow and developments of the class and the programming designed in a linear and sequential *continuum*, which served as support for decision-making. Finally, the linearity of the process to which RR appeals is on a mental level; that is, he needs students to perceive the logic of planning, but without stopping to think about the logic behind the experience of the lesson. In this vein, the experience of the classroom is episodic and fragmented, the opposite of RR's intentions and his tutor's requirement of a project-based work. For their part, students often say they do not understand the thread of the classwork, and they generally do not do the proposed tasks. The cooperating teacher also emphasizes continuity, understood as the application of the planning logic, reinforcing the logic in which RR operates.

I told him he was very imprecise and students make him aware of this. They even tell him that he has to get to the point. He extends the issue too much, so he wasted a lot of time. But today I congratulated him because the class was very good, because he focused very well on the annual planning... [But in other sessions]... I do not see progress. (Interview Cooperating Teacher: May 15)

While thinking from a *continuum*, is characteristic of human beings who inhabit complex societies and to do so develop the ability to synthesize the flow of events, it is striking to see RR's orientation towards the future and the product, while he does not stop to see what happens in the classroom, to the puzzling point of devoting entire sessions - or part of them - to justifying their sequence but without associating them to any pedagogical activities.

This raises the question: Why does RR not take advantage of each point in the *continuum's* sequence as *potential present* (Ricoeur, 1995), despite his recognizing the importance of sequence to attain the expected products? In other words, why does he not have understand that the future is a construction made of the present, assuming ethical and political responsibility for the moment, as an unrepeatable encounter, charged with meaning and with the future? To understand this supposes instilling teacher education with the ethical responsibility involved in present actions, and not only final products that, without present or past, have no historicity and, therefore, are not meaningful for either students or teachers. This question is important, especially when considering that one of the least emphasized lessons for teachers is *when to do what*. This issue can take a number of years to register, and allows many experienced teachers to have future results with, the milestones and sequences of their lessons. They can manage the beginnings, endings, and duration of the teaching units monthly, semiannually, and annually, developing a linear, ahistorical, fragmented and future-oriented logic of thinking.

However, it is important to differentiate between units of measurement: pedagogical hour, monthly, semi-annual, and annual units, and temporal orientations of the past, present and future, with which these units are assumed. This is because "in the flow of events, there are no intervals ... What is past, passes unbroken to present and this to the future[...]" (Elias, 1989, p. 93). Therefore, RR's orientation to the future is an experience that may or may not be shared by other subjects, but undoubtedly responds to certain epochal and formative settings.

RR lives in Chile, in a society guided by concepts like progress, development, entrepreneurship, economic growth, overcoming poverty, boom, social promotion, competitiveness, achievement indicators, etc. He studied at the best schools and universities of the country. His family education is marked by their overcoming their social economic status. Thus, during primary school he aimed to get good grades to effectively pass the tests to get into a prestigious secondary school, which in turn would allow him to go to the university in the future. It seems that he lives out of time, always living in the future that promises to be better than the present and where social mobility, as an educational promise, acts as a naturalizing motor. But, at the same time, he studied literature – through which he travels in other temporalities - and pedagogy in a program that helps him - according to his own words - to reflectively look at the problems of school, and above all, to experience the alterations in time caused by strikes led by student movements in 2006, when he was a high school student, and in 2011 and in 2013 when he was a university student.

The social context is essential for understanding the temporality of school and the epistemological configuration that individuals have been building in the course of a life, and to identify the logic from which the classroom developments are thought of and articulated. In this regard, it is important to analyze the relationship between the time of a life and the institutionalized teaching time. Although the latter cannot be isolated from concepts of time in the society in which education takes place, it has its own specificities related to the type of synchronization that the education system and schools themselves require. They may be expressed in "school rhythms," which are markedly different between different types of schools.

For example, in those where the pace is dizzying, the feeling is that one is always late to fulfill the objectives and subject matter. This type of school usually has a lot of schoolwork, homework, and lots of tests. It is usually guided by performance, and is characterized as success-oriented and competitive. On the other hand, there are schools with a more leisurely pace, more oriented to the formation of subjects, not consuming all the time of teachers' and students' lives with academic tasks. In both institutional realities, teachers must develop different temporal logics to present their lessons. Otherwise, they will always be untimely or too long.

RR fails to synchronize his logic of temporal thinking with the institutional logic of time, which constantly demands progress, linear sequences, and products. This results in an erratic practice and in a confused verbalization of his experience, which he is unable to organize in a meaningful story. On the one hand, he assumes the institutional logic every time he applies planning time to the classroom time, so he is congratulated by the school. On the other hand, he turns away from them every time, willingly or not, he leaves his class *in pause*:

RR: Then, in that regard, we paused to talk about students' rights and responsibilities in the classroom.

I: So, you understand that Monday's and Tuesday's lessons were a pause...

RR: Considering the whole project, yes... because I gave a space [to what was happening in the class] within the lessons' space... (Interview RR: April 24)

The *state of pause* is interesting because it allows RR to narratively organize the ambivalence of the various temporalities with which he operates and of which he is not absolutely conscious. On one hand, he operates from the logic of institutional planning, which he has internalized from his school years and which is required by the center that coordinates this student teaching practice. On the other hand, he tries not to act from that logic and consider students' realities. However, when he tries to act didactically from a historicized logic, he does not know how, and without noticing, he replicates the modern logic. Therefore, students *read* in the didactic action the same institutional logic and respond with the same disinterest as in any lesson.

RR's attempt to act according to what happens in the classroom fails and disorients him. In this state, he seeks explanations rather than attempting to problematize the situation. For him it is more comfortable to transfer the responsibility to the students, and believe that the failure is caused by students' habituation to the school logic, which makes them unable to understand and accept other ways of managing the classroom. He does not realize that, to the degree his performance is a "pause," he has not installed a new didactic logic but a parenthesis in the *continuum* of the school logic. This becomes a kind of excuse or recess to discuss other issues, and like any pause it should end to be able to return to the path. This is what RR often does and which keeps his lessons disjointed.

Somehow I feel, in relation to my other colleagues [in pedagogy], that they installed certain logics and then continued to work with [them]. I feel I was very abrupt. So now I'm aimless, not knowing what to do, because from the beginning I tried to break this logic [and couldn't]. The students were not used to something new. (Interview RR: April 24)

In this regard, it is important to note that institutions tend to normalize behavior, especially an institution like the school. For this reason they are quite resistant to allowing alternative logics to operate. The institution's aim is for those who pass through its doors to adopt its logic and not vice versa.

The institutional mindset does not give particular importance to novelty and originality itself ... Instead, the person who thinks institutionally has entered into a preexisting normative field that aims to guide actors' choices within the institution, regardless of their private preferences." (Hecló, 2010, p. 162)

RR has no interest in adapting to the institutional logic of the school. However, his school and social experiences shape him in a linear, sequential, and progressive temporality, which acts as a category of understanding and performance in the reality of the school. Both situations place him in an ambivalent condition when trying to articulate a didactic proposal in his own time. According to Chevallard (1991), didactic time is a necessary fiction needed to deploy the knowledge taught. Thus, to organize the traffic and rhythm of knowledge in school time, it is necessary to set a certain norm "that *prohibits detours in duration*, whether there is progress or delay [...]" (*idem*, p. 97). This is precisely what RR fails to achieve, the establishment of this norm based on the fluctuations in his practice. This is very important to analyze because, although the dominant paradigm may tend to alienate the subject in a developmental and progressive temporality, the human being escapes from those configurations in many ways: human and loving relationships, aesthetic enjoyment, pleasures of life, festivities, rituals, myths, and many others can act as vanishing points that humanize, immortalize, or minimize time.

In the world of life, temporality is experienced in complex ways and not just from dominant logics; we live experiences of de-synchronization from cultural referents, establishing logics of resistance. It is not a coincidence, that RR is consistently late to school, does not deliver lesson materials to his university tutor and cooperating teacher on time, and, in general, is late for almost all his university duties, in a time that does not coincide with the academic times. In a sense, these practices of temporary resistance involve a need for rebellion, which is rarely allowed by schools. Therefore, learning to think didactically from the institutionalized time demanded by the school is a difficult task for RR, who refuses to internalize institutional logics and transition from "thinking the institution" to "thinking institutionally" (Hecló, 2010). The latter is crucial because teacher education makes it possible to reflect and criticize – even harshly – the school, but always from the outside.

By contrast, during the student teaching practice, one is obligated to abide by the school rules. Moreover, it appears that the purpose is to learn to do so, and if one does not: Is there really any chance that the school would allow acting based on another rationality? Apparently not because its interest is to capture the thinking of subjects to make them think institutionally.

The complex point in the case of RR is that this resistance is not conscious and, consequently, he tends to replicate in the classroom the same didactic logics experienced in his prior school education. Thus, the tension between adaptation and resistance to the institutional logic and didactic time results in an erratic, episodic, disoriented action that makes him feel like he lacks tools to face the teaching job.

I think the problem is because I feel that I lack the tools... I feel that I understand where I am and what happens to the students... but do not know what to do now. (Interview RR: April 24)

The problem involved with teacher education that aims at a reflective and critical preparation of preservice teachers is that it is preparing them to join an institution in which they do not believe. In this context, preservice teachers seem disoriented between criticizing the institution and the work needed to belong to it. In this regard, Hecló (2010, p.56) asks: "among so much destabilization ... disorientation, questioning of assumptions ... How and when will preservice teachers get the promised help to find ways to reorient?" RR expresses the same tension between a reflective teacher education and the reality of the institutional logic to which he is subjected in his practice, and to which he will be held accountable as a teacher in the future.

It seems, that teacher education teaches to develop critical discourses about the school, but it does not teach how to live those discourses as practices. In fact, most professors that teach in teacher education programs take a comfortable distance from the school experience, either because they have never lived under such institutional logics or because they see them as a surpassed stage from past times.

The program raises questions without having any answers, I feel there are no material mechanisms to make this transition ... and often criticism has to do with a critical discourse that remains in the air, as a personal reflection of what happens to me or what I feel. But I have to be in the school, with the curriculum, with the head of the Technical-Pedagogical Unit. How can I do this in this reality that is concrete, material, where there are social interactions operating, and ... do so from the action. (Interview RR: March 17)

In this context of constant tension between being critical, responding to the institutional logic, and his own subjectivity, RR does not realize that he conducts the same practices he has often criticized.

For me, it was the worst, it depressed me, I felt the worst in the world, because I did not want to be like that, [imposing an activity and topic on them] ... My choice was to try something attractive, but I struggled to sustain it in time, and

the kids were fighting each other while others were still working. I took a long time with everything, so they felt they had already done it; for them it, was the same thing, but not for me. (Interview RR: March 17)

RR found it very difficult to act didactically within a logic whose temporality goes beyond the configurations of his own school education. This is especially difficult if one considers the context of student teaching practice under the institutional logics and a teacher education that, although centered on a reflective discourse, provides little experience to overcome the logic of the school. Thus, from the beginning to the end of his student teaching practice, RR perceived that future teachers end up validating and surrendering to the logic of the school, without causing the changes about which they once dreamed.

I still think that [it's difficult] to make a change in traditional schools ... So, I feel it's not pessimistic ... to think that, since we are validating the current logic, we are doing nothing. (Interview RR: March 17)

I've always had a discourse based on theory... I was interacting with a group of humans for three months and I don't know if I really took advantage of that space as an enhancer, or got stuck in ranting and insecurities. Finally, I just thought of myself and not of them. (Interview RR: June 27)

TEMPORALITY OF THE DIDACTIC HAPPENING: POSSIBILITIES FOR CONSTRUCTING THE PLOT

Is it possible to penetrate the school from other didactic temporalities or are we condemned to reproduce the dominant logic? This question is key to interpreting RR's difficulties and those of many other teachers who want a different school. Is this really possible considering that the school is a web of resistance to transformation and those who try to make changes have been educated by and permeated under the same rationale? Is it possible to stop thinking of the school from the notion of institutionalized temporality and to live within the temporalities of subjects in relation?

Considering what has been discussed, it seems pertinent to return to and go deeper into the concept of time underlying the school logic. According to Elias (1989), this concept involves substantiating the flow of events, suggesting for example that we inhabit time, that we can measure time, that time passes by, etc. This way of thinking leads to an objectified treatment of time, as if it was something external to the individual and, therefore possible to manipulate, control, and intervene. Such a conception makes the temporality of events invisible, that is, humans perceive events separately and we organize them into a *continuum* thanks to much more elaborated perceptions in relation to certain frameworks. This is evident when young children learn – with difficulty – what day is today, its relationship to the preceding and the following day, under certain frameworks such as the school,

free days, or others. If they lose those frameworks, for example during extended vacations, they also lose track of time.

The individual does not invent the concept of time himself, but he learns from his childhood both the concept of time as well as the social institution of time, which is inseparably linked to it. This [involves] growing up in a society to which this concept of time and this institution belongs [...]. (*idem*, 1989, p. 20)

School, as an institution, has been shaped from an objectified and didactic sense of time, and a didactic – which is functional to that perspective – has established the planning of time as the organizing principle of classroom events. It is a kind of virtual reality that, often has nothing to do with what actually happens to the subjects of learning. While authors like Chevallard (1991) have pointed out this distinction, they have considered the fiction of institutionalized didactic time as necessary, to the degree that it emphasizes the didactic of knowledge, which in order for it to become teachable, must meet certain rules for temporary deployment that do not always coincide with times of learning. Thus, didactic time would be the time of knowledge in conditions of teachability. That teachability has to serve as a framework for the didactic action. This is a crucial point because, ultimately, time is not an objective category. To the contrary, its determination depends on the frameworks we use, and these frameworks must be built according to the problems of social practice, in this case, problems of didactic practice.

It is thus important to identify the problematics that individuals must confront in the classroom and know if the time reference, in this case the planning of the teachability of knowledge, is relevant as a framework for addressing these problematics.

I could not continue business as usual and continue with what I had planned about literary work knowing the violence happening there... I feel like what I did was okay, but the issue is that I have no tools to anchor the content and make sense of it, not for me but for them. And say: 'OK kids, we are going to include discussion in the language class, reading the context of what happens in the classroom!' But the students thought I was not teaching a lesson. (Interview RR: April 24)

The didactic problem to which RR refers creates tension between the planning time and the actual classroom events that are impossible to consider when planning learning activities. His dilemma is whether to continue with his planning, turning his back to the students, or attend to the temporality of events. While he seemed to opt for the latter, he did so off the register of the time of the teachability of knowledge, and students perceived it that way. During one class, a student asked him: "Teacher, what about the content?" RR faced the problem of not knowing how to consider the events of the classroom – which have their own time and dynamic – and at the same time remain in the register of teaching the

language lesson. In practical terms, he wound up leaving the latter and addressing the former, but without articulation, just as a parenthesis.

Overcoming the modern notion of didactics necessarily implies an epistemological shift in the conception of time that constitutes that notion. It also implies changing the temporal frameworks, moving from the time of planning to the timing of action. Therefore, it is imperative to historicize the didactics and pay attention to the action instead of the planning. In other words, we need to understand the didactics from a didactic perspective, that is, from the event that occurs in the relationship between individuals. This implies that the didactic action "is not produced in a continuum of causes and effects, of processes and products, but in what we cannot apprehend, where the subjects... put in play... their being..." (Buitrago, 2008, p. 62).

This is no mystery to any teacher who has entered a primary or secondary school classroom: Everyone is screaming or running, several students are hitting each other, others listen to loud music; nobody sees or wants to see the teacher. The questions arise: What happens in this case with the planning of time? Is it really a necessary fiction? Necessary for whom? At least, in these generally low-achieving schools, it is not clear for whom the planning has been necessary because the time of learning has not arrived for many of those students. Specifically, in the case of RR, most of the boys and girls have limited reading comprehension and some cannot read fluently. This is a complicated situation, considering they are only two years from finishing high school.

A didactics synchronized with the temporality of subjects and what happens to them -which is the goal of RR- is subject to other problems that go beyond the possibilities of the teachability of knowledge. It is a didactics subjected to the historicity of individuals who are living in present times. Therefore, it is necessary to move away from this linearity, fragmentation, sequencing and de-historization of knowledge, ready to be taught to the world of classroom life, which involves developing a hermeneutic understanding of the subjects and their actions, that is, addressing "the questions of 'what,' 'why,' 'who,' 'how,' 'with whom,' or 'against whom' of the action... [which implies] having the competence that can be called *practical understanding*" (Ricouer, 1995, p. 117).

My first focus was working from the technique of open questions, but during the third class they said to me: "Teacher, why do you ask so many questions?" So, there was a tension, and it was necessary for them to see the clarity of what they were doing. Sometimes I can fall into doing this and then doing that ... I have some difficulties with order and saying what I want to say. (Interview RR: June 12)

RR stated those words two weeks before finishing his practice and graduating from his teacher education program indicating that he had not developed a practical understanding of events in the classroom. This appears clearly because he had an episodic practice, focused on doing various activities, with no clear connecting thread. He interprets these activities as different, in his desire to maintain some

control and clarity about "what we are doing." The confusion of his discourse is striking, to the degree that he fails to explain what "it is" that his activities are directed at. Thus, the clash between the logic of planning and logic of the events of the classroom emerges, which is not satisfactorily solved. This is because he does not synchronize his work to the classroom time but to the planning time which is clear, distinct, sequential, episodic, and removed from reality. Therefore, RR fails to narrate what happens with his educational intentions. And without narration, there is no understanding of experience (Ricoeur, 1995).

The following question is raised: How can RR develop an understanding of the educational events so that he can develop a narrative of them? For Ricoeur (2006, p.18), action can be narrated... [because it is] articulated in signs, rules, norms; that is, action is always mediated symbolically."

This is an important point because RR does not know the culture of the school and the students'. His school experience was very far from that of his students'; the life and symbols he incarnates belong to a social class and cultural circle far from the lives of the students at that school. In this regard, it must be noted that Chile has high levels of social and educational fragmentation, to the extent that social class and cultural circles are very small and do not intersect. RR recognizes in various occasions that it is very difficult to understand the boys and girls, their behaviors and interests, and therefore to think of a lesson that makes sense not only for him but also for them. What happens with a teacher who is not able to read the signs, norms, and rules of actions? He simply cannot synchronize with the structure of the action's temporality – which could allow him to narrate the events. Thus, he tends to take refuge in the episodic logic of planning time. During that time, he goes from unit one to unit two just because it is in the program, where the focus is not on what is happening but on the knowledge taught that does not claim historicity but mere reproduction.

For RR, a problem that was present during the entire period of practice had to do with continuity. He could not clearly read the events and organize them into a meaningful thread. This led him to move in two parallel dimensions, each one with its own temporality, unable to articulate them. On the one hand, there was the time and planning sequencing, which he referred to as process. On the other hand, there were classroom events. At times, he tried to stick to a planning logic, then a parenthesis, and then he continued with the logic of the world of classroom life. But the two logics are not articulated, resulting in an erratic, episodic practice without continuity; in short, there is no story.

The problem is how to install the theme of process. How? If this is planned long ago, some things happened in between, and then the day comes and you say: Where is the research? It's like: Oh surprise! I feel that I tried to explain the planning process. But it was as if it was it no longer here, the time had passed [...]. (Interview RR: May 7)

Teachers are educated to operate from the logic of institutionalized time; public policies demand academic achievement from them; schools endorse

dehumanizing alienation. Teachers are not prepared to develop a practical understanding of the classroom - which is itself a narrative - or to synchronize their work with the temporal structure of events. A reflective teacher is not one who repeats the critique of the hegemonic reproduction system, but one who is able to hermeneutically read the classroom and his own didactic action, de-synchronizing himself from the planning logic to move to a dual construction of the plot. This is because the didactic plot is built within a two-fold interplay. On the one hand, it involves *fictionalizing the plot*, on the other, reading the various events of the classroom and integrating them into a meaningful whole. Both, in a dialectical relationship that feeds one another and that implies organizing very distinct and diverse aspects in an intelligible order or narration, because the plot:

[...] organizes and unites components as heterogeneous as the encountered and unwanted circumstances, agents of the actions and those who suffer them passively, the casual or desired encounters, interactions that put the actors in relationships ranging from conflict to collaboration, the means more or less adjusted to the ends and, finally, unwanted results. The joining of all these factors into a single story makes the plot a totality [...]. (Ricoeur, 2006, p.11)

Synchronizing the didactic action with narrative time requires that the teacher, build a plot or create a fiction. The latter, not understood as simulation, fantasy, figment or appearance, far from the world of life, but as creativity, imagination, staging. The teacher must imagine with anticipation *an open project*, and as such, does not think of predicting actions or results, but from a potential present. This means that the task of giving meaning to the didactic action cannot be performed from the planning logic or from the vagaries of improvisation. Teaching implies having an ethical responsibility with future generations. We cannot act according to the reproduction of the dominant logics or abandon the possibility of constructing a new story, giving in to the mere developments of the classroom. The educational task requires much more than these two alternatives, it requires new projects.

The dominant logic has taken over the concept of "plan" and has removed its temporality, tossing it into the future, as a sign of progress, development, and production. But a project - of life, of teaching - is anchored to the present and the past. "There is no future time, past time, and present time, but a triple present - a present of future things, a present of past things, and a present of present things" (Ricoeur, 1995, p. 124). Nevertheless, RR is only oriented towards the future, which affects his conception of planning.

We proposed the same inquiry for the 4 schools. The idea was to mount a plan [so they could generate a product] ... I think this has results in an educational context in which the children are indoctrinated, where you tell them to stand upside down and they do it ... But in other contexts it is not possible because it implies that I think in one way, but that way only works for some [...]. (Interview RR: May 29)

Given this conception of the project, RR abandons the possibility of carrying it out and chooses - according to his own words - *to split up* the themes and activities (Interview RR: June 27). Thus, his orientation towards a linear process and to the future makes it difficult to construct a didactic plot since he is not concerned about triggering formative experiences in each lesson, understanding that each one must develop on its own, as chapters that make sense in the whole. But to the contrary, each of his lessons constitutes scattered pages that are not establishing a plot that make sense. It is important to recognize that we human beings are interpretative beings; we make sense and give meaning to experience through story. The school, however, is based on the explanatory transmission of fragmented and ahistorical information. It is unlikely to make sense for students and teachers, making it difficult for them to make sense of their own lives. This is precisely what the dominant metanarrative is looking for. Education is not intended for subjects to think of themselves and their reality, awakening their consciousness. To the contrary, it is conceived for the learning of a series of legitimated and hegemonic contents that make individuals competent for adapting to society.

Therefore, to fictionalize a didactic plot involves writing an open book, like those plays where improvisation from the audience is permitted. The plot fictionalized by the teacher puts a forced starting point or the hinge issues (Freire, 1997). The teacher poses questions, problems, plans for dialog, so the student as a reader/actor in the plot is able to give it meaning. There is no plot without purpose. RR is aware of this and for this reason he is constantly interested in determining the purpose of classroom work. However, because he conceives of this aim as a product - to write literary texts based on everyday media - and not as a narrative that organizes classroom activities, he feels compelled to constantly explain the purpose of each task to the students. He conceives of each task as a sequential process necessary to achieve the final product. However, the students do not perceive that purpose during didactic events; the goal is not intelligible from the proposed activities because the connections between the didactic events are not relevant in relation to a purpose that gives meaning to the whole. The intention or purpose would provide "the criterion for order of these events [...] [which] are significant only insofar as they are connected to other events within a plot [...]" (Castro, 2011, p. 13).

During the process of student teaching, RR fails to connect one lesson activity to the next or to the previous one, or to give each lesson meaning in the whole. Although he addresses this issue with his tutor, he is not able to clearly identify it as a problem of constructing a didactic plot. This issue arises despite the existence of a lesson preparation device based on the construction of classroom projects rather than planning. However, by not addressing the logic in which both proposals are based, RR does not achieve the clarity needed to generate a project. He is absorbed by the logic of planning.

We have never problematized the idea behind lesson planning and project development. This question has never been systematized in the didactics or any other course, and this has created my confusion. (Interview RR: June 27)

Another important aspect of this double game is that the construction of the plot through the generation of open projects is neither universal nor necessary, but contextualized to the history and culture of subjects who will participate in the didactic story. Therefore, a project suitable in one school, may not be appropriate in another one. For this reason it is necessary to learn to decipher the cultural messages and rules that mediate the learning of subjects in different cultures. This is not to impose the narrator/teacher's perspective, but to allow the didactic narrative to make sense to subjects, and to transform it into life experience. Otherwise, narratives often are incomprehensible to the community that participates in this didactic action and, thus, school is meaningless for many children and youngsters.

Consequently, it is not a question of a teacher temporarily delivering curricular content or teachable knowledge, but about asking *what story* is she telling in selecting that content, activity, and didactic material. For example: Is she saying that literature, philosophy, science, is only written by white, Western, European men? Is she saying that only the teacher knows and not the students? Is she teaching that popular knowledge has no truth or value? To fictionalize the story also involves a hermeneutic reading of her own fiction and of each action that constitutes that fiction. To paraphrase Ricoeur (2006, p.15) we can affirm that:

[...] the process of composition, of configuration, does not end in the text [or didactic project], but in the reader [student] and, under this condition, enables the reconfiguration of [classroom] life via the [didactic] story. More specifically: the meaning or significance of a [didactic] story emerges at the intersection of the world of the text [didactic project] with the world of the reader [student]. Thus, the act of reading becomes the crucial moment of the analysis. The ability of the [didactic] story to transfigure the reader's [student's] experience rests in that moment.

In that sense, the plot configuration cannot be synchronized with the time of planning but with the time of action. The plot should be a permanent construction that allows the incorporation of students/subjects in both the reading and the action. This is because "to follow a story is to update once again the configuration act that shaped it" (Ricoeur, 2006, p.16). Thus, the double dialectic game - between fictionalizing the story and understanding the events of the classroom - enriches the fictionalized project in the narration. It is a plot that students are able to decipher and resist.

In this staging, the teacher creates with his students a plot of signifiers ... seeking to create a common fabric... The students, for their part and from their constant world configuration only support certain threads, certain modes of weaving that gradually form their own texture in the event. (Buitrago, 2008, p. 63)

Therefore, the didactic preparation of future teachers should provide them with experiences to elucidate the logics that are structured in the action, providing opportunities for teachers to synchronize their thinking to classroom events,

learning to read their messages. In this way, teacher education will not be constrained to the repetition of the dominant culture's knowledge. On the contrary, it will be oriented to the construction of a living plot, weaved with students from the world of life. In other words, it is not about educating future teachers to think of the institution or think in institutional terms, but to help them to find the gaps, cracks and breaking points, allowing them to synchronize themselves to the temporality of the subjects.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Some of the significant implications of RR's experience are related to the sense of belonging to a school and the development of the identity of a teacher. Can RR feel proud to belong to the ranks of teachers? Can he feel he is part of something, a school project, a society, a teacher education program, when he has gone through a pedagogical preparation that has taught him to critically observe the school system, living in a social context that devaluates the teaching job, and witnessing public demonstrations against the prevailing education system? Can he have the intention of adapting to the system and to think as a school teacher, that is, to think institutionally? Can he clearly perceive that it is possible to re-signify the didactic action, beyond the institutional logics generated by certain power interests, so the school can be a place of openness, rather than of domination?

We need teacher education programs and teachers with ties to the reality of the classroom so that they can bring new meaning to school, not from the logic of the school system but from the education of subjects. In this vein, to didactically consider classroom developments involves thinking about others and their socio-historical realities and not about the teachability of knowledge and its temporal programming. It also involves not thinking of expected learning where the student is placed at the center of a sequential, fragmented, and uniformed process. Overcoming the modern didactics -which is centered on the pedagogical triad teacher-knowledge-learner, involves giving life to the formative relationships, accepting that in the didactic encounter not only do knowledge, skills, or competencies come into play, but also the life stories, socio-historical and political contexts, dreams, and expectations of the subjects involved.

This possibility implies that educators de-synchronize themselves from the institutional didactic time and synchronize with the classroom temporality. It means that teachers build - along with students - a new story, a new plot that allows them to think of themselves from the historic place they inhabit. This would create a possibility for criticizing the school not only from an academic detachment but from a commitment that emerges when immersed in the school reality, understood as the *lived* world of life. Only in that way, can preservice teachers feel prepared to face the responsibility of transforming the school and themselves. This is the question that afflicts RR and many other teachers.

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