

# Educational Practices and Teaching Styles in Twentieth-century Spain. Reflections in the *Revista de Educación*

## Prácticas escolares y estilos pedagógicos en la España del siglo XX. Reflejos en la *Revista de Educación*

<https://doi.org/10.4438/1988-592X-RE-2023-400-574>

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### **Abstract**

Educational historiography over the last few decades, supported by the profound changes in the world of education, has focused its interest on the study of school as a social space that has been built with its own culture. The interplay of interactions between the three dimensions that make up this school culture (theory, rules and practices) has defined a set of beliefs, values, habits, ways of doing and organizing the processes that, together with the influence of socio-political contexts, explain the meaning reached by the school practices and teaching styles of each historical moment. In this cycle of more than half a century, the *Revista Nacional de Educación* (National Journal of Education, RNE), from January 1941, then under the title of *Revista de Educación* (Journal of Education, RE), from 1952 on, has been an important witness to the evolutionary genealogy of contemporary Spanish education, since not only has it only served to support and disseminate educational and cultural content, but has also played a prominent role in the generation of knowledge. The objective of the paper, in the context of the celebration of the 400th issue of the *Revista de Educación*, focuses on proposing a re-reading of the models of school practices and teaching styles developed in twentieth-century Spain, by looking at the pages of the *Revista*. It is a look outlined in two directions: on the one hand, school practices, together with teaching styles, leaving aside discourses and regulations, and on the other hand, being aware of the impossibility of exhausting the story of such an extensive period, it prioritizes a review of the key moments that are marked by the evolution of these teaching styles in the twentieth century.

**Keywords:** Education, school practices, teaching styles, *Revista Nacional de Educación*, *Revista de Educación*.

## Resumen

La historiografía pedagógica de las últimas décadas, apoyada en los profundos cambios del mundo educativo, ha focalizado su interés en el estudio de la escuela como un espacio social que se construye con una cultura propia. El juego de interacciones entre la trilogía de dimensiones que conforman dicha cultura escolar (teorías, normas y prácticas) va concretando un conjunto de creencias, valores, hábitos, formas de hacer y organizar los procesos que, junto a la influencia de los contextos sociopolíticos, explican el significado alcanzado por las prácticas escolares y los estilos pedagógicos de cada momento histórico.

En este ciclo de más de medio siglo, la *Revista Nacional de Educación*, desde enero de 1941, y bajo la cabecera de *Revista de Educación*, desde 1952, se presenta como un testigo de excepción de la genealogía evolutiva de la educación española contemporánea, por cuanto no solo ha servido de soporte y difusión de contenidos educativos y culturales, sino que ha desempeñado un papel destacado en la generación de conocimiento. El objetivo del trabajo, enmarcado en la celebración del número 400 de la *Revista de Educación*, se centra en proponer una relectura de los modelos de prácticas escolares y estilos pedagógicos desarrollados en la España del siglo XX, desde una mirada a las páginas de la *Revista*; una mirada acotada en dos direcciones: por una parte, en las prácticas escolares, junto a los estilos pedagógicos, dejando al margen los discursos y las normativas; por otra, conscientes de la imposibilidad de agotar el relato de un periodo tan extenso, prioriza la revisión sobre los momentos clave que vienen marcados por el devenir de estos estilos pedagógicos del siglo XX.

*Palabras clave:* Educación, prácticas escolares, estilos pedagógicos, Revista Nacional de Educación, Revista de Educación.

## Introduction

The educational historiography of recent decades, supported by the profound changes experienced in the world of education, has focused its interest on the study of school as a social space that has been built with its own culture, capable of reinterpreting the influence of exogenous factors and explaining much of the organization of its internal structure. The heuristic approach defined as “school culture” has been consolidated as a set of tools aimed at redirecting focus towards “the school inside” (López Martín, 2001), as a renewed dimension of hermeneutic analysis of the logic of its functioning. In this context, school practices, that compendium of interventions and didactic activities that surround the exercise of “teaching and learning”, interdependent of the teaching style that gives

it its identity, is presented as the final embodiment of the whole process of the determination of the curriculum.

The practical work carried out in our schools is explained, in large part, by the interplay of interactions established between the dimensions through which school culture is configured: the account of pedagogical ideals marked by expert theoretical reflection, normative regulation and administrative prescriptions promoted by the managers of the system, and the reality of the school practices developed by teachers. The agreements and disagreements (Escolano, 2000), reconciliations and ruptures between the trilogy of official logic approaches (theory, rules and practices), have been building a set of beliefs, mentalities, values, habits, ways of doing and organizing the processes that, together with the influence of socio-political contexts, explain the meaning reached by the school practices and teaching styles at each historical moment.

If the arrival of the Franco dictatorship, after the Civil War of 1936, would bury the efforts made by the Republic to imbue school work with technical pedagogical principles, under the teaching style of an education inspired by the hope for school improvement, post-war national-Catholicism would appeal to religion and patriotism as the new central ideas of school life (Canales and Gómez, 2015). The appearance of the 1953 National Surveys, together with the first signs of political openness and economic recovery, was to start the path towards a technocratic teaching style, where school life is valued for its search for effectiveness and performance, clearly moving away from the ideological adaptation of the regime (Viñao, 2014). The end of the dictatorship and the arrival of democracy, specified in the 1978 Constitution, would understand school as a learning workshop at the service of democratic co-existence; a comprehensive school belonging to and for everyone. The coming to power of the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE) moved towards the first major reform of our system, the Organic Law on the General Organization of the Education System, (LOGSE) in 1990, in which the cognitive teaching theories of constructivism would find their place, with a school model focused on the importance of cross-curricular values.

Furthermore, throughout this historical cycle of more than half a century of changes in models of school practices and teaching styles, the *Revista Nacional de Educación* (National Journal of Education, RNE), from January 1941, and under the title of *Revista de Educación* (Journal of Education, RE), from 1952 on, has been presented as a special witness

to the evolutionary genealogy of contemporary Spanish education, in that it has not only served to support and disseminate educational and cultural content, but has played an outstanding role in the generation of knowledge, in the aforementioned three dimensions of school culture.

The objective of this paper, in the context of the celebration of the 400<sup>th</sup> issue of the *Revista de Educación*, far from being a bibliometric study of its well documented contributions, inappropriate of the limits of an article of these characteristics and the real capacities of its author, is to focus on proposing a re-reading of the models of school practices and teaching styles in twentieth-century Spain, from looking at the pages of the *Revista*. It is a view outlined in two directions: on the one hand, limiting the focus to the thematic analysis of school practices, together with the teaching style that legitimizes them and leaving aside the discourses and regulation of the teaching guidelines, and, on the other hand, being aware of the impossibility of exhausting the story of such an extensive period of our history, it prioritizes the key moments or relevant historical milestones marked by the evolution of these teaching styles.

## The post-war school. The National Journal of Education

The long-awaited end of the Civil War would give way to the birth of the “New State” framed in the context of deep economic precariousness and a necessary - for some - and unjust - for others - ideological cleansing. The school of National-Catholicism would make its way between *material poverty* and *spiritual abundance*, between the scarcity of means and resources for teaching, and the guiding of its ideological work towards the defense of patriotism and the Catholic religion, eliminating any liberal past from the previous Republican period (López Martín, 2017). The appeal to the enjoyment, playfulness or natural activity of the child, among other codes of the Republican school, had to be reversed, supplanted, by an education centered on the willpower, sacrifice, discipline, and ascetic life of the “new Spain.”

The RNE (1941-1951), both in the content of its editorials and in the pieces published in the various sections in its structure<sup>1</sup>, is a faithful wit-

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<sup>1</sup> During this first stage (1941-1951), with 103 issues published under the heading of the *National Journal of Education*, practically all of its sections show adherence to the principles of the regime: “Signs of the Falange”, “Spanish Thought”, “University”, “Notes from Abroad”, “Columns” and “Legislative Documentation” are, among the permanent ones, the most outstanding.

ness to the ideological context of Spain at the time. If the opening page of the first issue contained a full-page photograph of *El Caudillo* (The Leader), the second, under the same circumstances, would have that of José Antonio (Primo de Rivera). Moreover, the first issue, the “Carta della Scuola” (Letter on Education), an educational manifesto of Italian fascism, was published<sup>2</sup> and on the other hand, it was not until 1949 that we find one or various contributions by the minister himself, Ibáñez Martín<sup>3</sup>, as opinion articles, beyond references to and praises of the speeches or acts related to the work of the ministry. Likewise, in this way of exalting the values of the “New Spain”, it is important to highlight the selection of articles in the “Notes from Abroad” section focusing, preferentially on Italian culture and the education of German youth<sup>4</sup>.

In the first issues in the *Revista*, the member of the Falangist party, Laín Entralgo, in an article dedicated to the Spanish Teaching Service (SEM), would echo the ideals of the new school: “Religion and the military,” he writes, “are the only two complete and serious ways of understanding life”<sup>5</sup>. In the “Columns” section, under the title of “Escuela Azul” (Blue School), the task of schools is described:

To take advantage of all schoolwork by giving it a deeply Catholic and national syndicalist sense and direction. To guide children, according to the style of our revolution, in such a way and with such intensity that their Catholic and national syndicalist training lasts until adulthood. To incorporate youth into our rich and original fatherland culture (...) To incorporate the meaning and value of the imperial destiny of our people into children's consciousness. To aim for the full and total spiritual,

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<sup>2</sup> Bottai, G. (Minister of Public Instruction, Italy), “Trabajo y trabajadores en la Carta de la Escuela”, *RNE*, 1 (1941) 7-15.

<sup>3</sup> According to the theme at hand, among the most important: “El sentido político de la cultura en la hora presente”, *RNE*, 22 (1942) 7-28; “Meditación ante el milenario de Castilla”, *RNE*, 32-33 (1943) 7-31; “La nueva ley de protección escolar”, *RNE*, 45 (1944) 7-15; “La lengua hispánica”, *RNE*, 61 (1946) 9-17; “Símbolos hispánicos del Quijote”, *RNE*, 74 (1947) 9-23 y 24-34; “El padre Suárez o la cultura peninsular del Siglo de Oro”, *RNE*, 82 (1948) 11-31. In addition to the numerous speeches, he highlights his almost annual collaboration on the work of the Higher Council for Scientific Research.

<sup>4</sup> By way of example, Petersen, G., “La pedagogía en la Nueva Alemania”, *RNE*, 1 (1941) 82-92; Romojaro, T., “Orientación y sentido de la educación alemana”, *RNE*, 4 (1941) 95-99; “El Consejo Nacional de la Educación de las Ciencias y de las Artes de Italia”, *RNE*, 14 (1942) 83-91 y “Los trabajos prácticos en la escuela en Italia”, *RNE*, 16 (1942) 103-104. From minister himself, Ibáñez Martín, “La confluencia de las culturas germana e hispana”, *RNE*, 6 (1941) 7-13, transcription of his speech at the opening of the Institute of German Culture.

<sup>5</sup> Laín Entralgo, P., “Educación del ímpetu. Revisión de un ensayo de Ortega y Gasset”, *RNE*, 4 (1941) 7-26, citation taken from p. 16.

intellectual, and physical development of pupils (...) To keeping in mind the positive and negative characteristics of schoolchildren (know the child), taking advantage of them and exploiting them to achieve maximum performance”<sup>6</sup>.

The new guidelines that would direct school practices are set out in the Primary Education Act 1945. The editorials of that year<sup>7</sup> praised the service of schools to “the Christian, patriotic and intellectual education of childhood”, for which it had to “dig deep into our traditions for all the religious spirit that saturates the field of teaching in the best imperial centuries”. In the words of the minister, in the face of “dark pedagogy and impiety”, Spanish school “must be, above all, at the service of Religion and the Fatherland”<sup>8</sup>. School life, therefore, was marked by activities aimed at the training of the National and Catholic spirit: the “patriotic readings”, which, as Onieva writes, are energizing since they “stir our consciences and keep the patriotic ideal tense”; the “commemorative lessons”, which sought to exalt outstanding characters and moments of our history; the “historical story” by way of example, where discipline, sacrifice or respect for authority shine with their own light; the making of “wall-length posters” alluding to great episodes of the Spanish Empire; or the “class diaries”, in which teachers and students had to reflect on what is happening in pious school life<sup>9</sup>. To all this, we must add, a series of practices and activities proposed by the Falange Movement, of a marked aesthetic nature, which complemented the educational work of the youth. These were more present during the first moments of the dictatorship and were not without friction between the different factions that made up the group in power.

The traditional absence of guidelines prescribed by the administration, from the very gestation of the education system - an unfulfilled promise restated in the 1945 Law, art. 38<sup>o</sup>-, made possible, in the best case, a school universe marked by a routine nature and textual dependence on the guild

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<sup>6</sup> RNE, 3 (1941) 109-112. References to work in schools are frequent, for example, Valls, M.R.D., “Una mañana en la escuela primaria española”, RNE, 68 (1947) 61-64.

<sup>7</sup> RNE, 54 (1945) 5-9 and 55 (1945) 7-10.

<sup>8</sup> Ibáñez Martín, J. (1945), “Entorno a la nueva Ley de Enseñanza Primaria”, RNE, 55, 11-34. The article includes the speech of the minister in the presentation of the text of the Law to the Courts.

<sup>9</sup> Laín Entralgo himself, in the article cited (see note 4) exhorts teachers to use stories based “on our beliefs in the Fatherland and in God”, as well as “wall posters referring to the heroic and exemplary events of our Revolution”. “The teacher”, he writes in the conclusions of the article, “before the class arranged in view of the poster, should tell an exciting, enthusiastic story, in tune with our poetic style and with the soul of the child, about what is represented by it.”

tradition of the teaching profession itself. The teaching profession, deprived of all methodological support, would entrust the practice of its office to the texts and encyclopedias of the time, together with the notebooks for the preparation of lessons, now obligatory since the Ministerial Order of 1939. Supplements in the professional press such as *Magisterium Español* (Spanish Magisterium), *Escuela Española* (Spanish School) or *Mandos* (Journal of the Youth Movement), where lessons are planned and set out to be applied in the classroom were published, becoming guides for practical activities.

A. Maíllo (Mainer and Mateos, 2011), a faithful contributor to the *Revista*, denounces the absence of the promised Surveys, which he describes as “an innovation worthy of all praise”. The then Central Inspector of Teaching Practice understands that these Surveys must be completed “through Didactic Guides, published by the Ministry, which duly guide teachers in the development of the lessons and exercises indicated in the Guides, and which must then be given provincial nuances in the appropriate Programs”<sup>10</sup>. Methodological reflection undoubtedly already heralded a new stage in school practices and teaching styles.

## The School of Technocratic Modernization. The *Revista de Educación*

In January 1952, the *Revista de Educación*, underwent a profound transformation, not only in its main title, but in its entire structure.

“The *Revista Nacional de Educación* - as read in C. Lascarís<sup>11</sup> column - has not been, until today, a journal of education, but rather, leaving aside its title, a cultural, literary, artistic magazine, etc., that has relegated the topic of education to the meager space given to current affairs, inaugurations, etc.”

However, in the future, as its new permanent sections revealed<sup>12</sup> and the first editorial states, “it aims to cover the range of problems posed by Spanish education, not only from an organizational and administrative

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<sup>10</sup> Maíllo García, A., “Problems of Primary Education”, RE, 3 (1952) 257-263.

<sup>11</sup> RE, 1 (1952) 66.

<sup>12</sup> The first would address relevant and current educational issues; the second, what happens abroad on education; the third important events in the educational field and legislative references; the fourth review of professional journals; the fifth news of interest in the Spanish press; finally, a section would alternate aimed at offering bibliographic information, with another aimed at foreign legislative texts (RE, 1, 1952, 7).

point of view but also from a didactic point of view". Undoubtedly, the *Revista* also criticizes the end of the post-war authoritative stage and the beginning of an initially timid opening process that, following political changes and new economic scenarios, would lead to the need to introduce criteria of pedagogical rationality into the school environment. The Church and the Movement would give way to science and technology to support the political legitimization of the regime; schools would now seek the effectiveness and performance of their processes, in a clear move from the ideological adaptation of Francoism (López Martín, 2005: 242-47).

In this "sepia-colored" Spain of "chiaroscuro", in other words, that was to take us from the black and white postwar to the colorful tones of the sixties, the new section "Education in Journals" is especially interesting<sup>13</sup>, where "articles and studies published in Spain on topics of organization and politics of teaching" were brought together. Likewise, another novelty is the dedication of some editions published to specific topics, as monographs, from 1953 on.

*"La Revista de Educación* - reads the editorial - has so far addressed teaching topics, which are its own subject, in a dispersed and unfocused way. With this issue, a different method is being tried: taking a discipline from the table of subjects and studying it from all points of view"<sup>14</sup>.

The *National Surveys for Primary Education* (1953), the first official document on school history in Spain that regulated teaching activities (Rodríguez Diéguez, 1990: 259), show us a faithful reflection of that time of chiaroscuro by incorporating more modern approaches into primary school, as a guide for school activity, where each lesson "must end with a series of activities or exercises", without this being an excessive criticism of the traditional models of past eras. They meant, in part, the possibility, which was not always exercised, as highlighted by A. Maíllo<sup>15</sup>,

<sup>13</sup> According to the first report that appeared in the issue that opens the new stage, the main specialized journals and professional press on first teaching analyzed for the development of this ranges of references are: *Atenea*, *Bordón*, *Consigna*, *El Magisterio Español*, *Escuela Española*, *Estudios Pedagógicos*, *Gerunda*, *Revista Española de Pedagogía* and *Revista de Pedagogía Española* (RE, 1, 1952, 69-75).

<sup>14</sup> RE, 10 (1953) 117. The first, on the occasion of the promulgation of the Law on Secondary Education of 1953, is dedicated to the teaching of philosophy.

<sup>15</sup> Maíllo, A., "Elaboración, elección y utilización de manuales en la escuela primaria" (Ginebra, 1959), RE, 109 (1960) 41-47. The text, included in the "Columns" section, is an account of his participation in the Geneva International Conference. Particularly interesting are his brief comments on Piaget's inaugural lecture.

co-author in the development of the Surveys, for the teacher to overcome dependence on manuals and encyclopedias or to move away from individualistic criteria based on experiential knowledge<sup>16</sup>, when planning and executing his or her teaching work, now composed not only of instructional lessons (“pieces of the textbook to memorize” or “simple set of ideas to explain”), but of practical training activities<sup>17</sup>.

This defense of the configuration of more active methods compared to verbal and memory teaching had a wide-reaching impact on the *Revista*, aimed at highlighting the need to specify the Surveys in school programs<sup>18</sup>. The teaching body is challenged on the need to use the development of the programs for each year, even for each school day, as a guarantee for the planning of activities. Fernández Huerta's definition should not be forgotten: “I understand by program the set of personal experiences that can and should be guided from school”<sup>19</sup>. The truth is that we find concrete evidence of the resistance to incorporating modern programming methodologies under the pretext, in Maíllo's words<sup>20</sup>, of being foreign invasions: “The centers of interest,” he writes, “the projects, the objective tests and the percentiles are instruments that pedagogical progress gives us and it would be stupid for us to deny ourselves them, using the excuse that they are not of national origin.” Furthermore, in this work of promoting the teaching values of more active methodologies, of the effort of curricular rationalization, the *Revista* would pay special attention to its development in the small one-teacher schools<sup>21</sup>, mainly in rural environments and still very numerous in the Spain at that time.

<sup>16</sup> There are numerous pieces collected in the *Revista* on the dependence/comfort of the teaching body when it comes to entrusting the result of daily work to what is suggested by school manuals. Sanz Barrionuevo, H., “Libros y documentación en la enseñanza”, RE, 72 (1958) 1, is an example. This author denounces the comfort of the teacher by becoming a simple “lesson-taker”, which is a “plague of teaching, since the lesson is not given or taken: it is ‘built’ by the students in collaboration, guided, oriented and helped by the teacher”.

<sup>17</sup> Dirección General de la Enseñanza Primaria (1953), *Cuestionarios Nacionales para la Enseñanza Primaria*, Madrid, Ministerio de Educación Nacional, “Introducción” (pp. 9-15).

<sup>18</sup> By way of example, Romero Marín, A. “El método activo en la enseñanza”, RE, 106 (1959) 25-33.

<sup>19</sup> Fernández Huerta, J., “El programa escuela”, RE, 102 (1959) 10-13 and 103 (1959) 37-41.

<sup>20</sup> Maíllo, A., “Los problemas de la educación popular (II)”, RE, 12 (1953) 11-16, we cite p. 14. It is a series of 4 articles: (I), RE, 11 (1953) 256-261; (III), RE, 15 (1953) 13-17 and (IV), RE, 16 (1953) 83-87.

<sup>21</sup> Among other references, mention should be made of the Course on Complete Unitary Schools, developed under the direction of CEDODEP, in collaboration with UNESCO (Iglesias Marcelo, J., “Curso sobre Escuelas Unitarias Completas”, RE, 116, 1960, 66-70). Of the more than a hundred interventions of pedagogical figures of the time (M<sup>a</sup>. A. Galino, Raquel Payá, Fernández Huerta, Arturo de la Orden, Maíllo himself, López del Castillo, C. Borreguero, Esteban Villarejo, etc.), the *Revista* would collect a significant number of them.

In any case, clear signs of progress or technical-pedagogical rationalization cannot be denied: together with an increase in school attendance in Spain in the mid-fifties and sixties, promoted by the creation of the Central Board of School Constructions, in January 1957<sup>22</sup>, we must cite the creation of the Didactic Orientation Center in 1954<sup>23</sup>, the celebration of the First National Congress of Pedagogy<sup>24</sup>, the re-establishment of the Centers of Pedagogical Collaboration (1957), the birth of the Documentation and Didactic Orientation Center of Primary Education, (CEDODEP) (1958), in charge of the "technical improvement of this level of teaching" or the publication of the journal *Vida Escolar*, as a means for the expression of administration and exchange of experiences among all schools in Spain<sup>25</sup>.

This process of modernization would culminate in the sixties, under the technocratic pedagogical approach (Cuesta et al, 2011) which would have remarkable consequences in school practice: the use of the notion of "school year" as a measure for the distribution of school work times and global curricular strategy for the design of teaching objectives, according to Order 22-IV-1963, this would allow the ordering and rationalizing of the organization of school life; the establishment of the "Minimum Levels" to be achieved in each of the disciplines, according to the Resolution of 20.04.1964, with the design of knowledge, habits and skills, and would regulate the course years. Finally, the Primary Education Reform Law of 1965<sup>26</sup> would promote a school model that exalted the technical approach as a driver of effectiveness and performance<sup>27</sup>, shifting the

<sup>22</sup> It is a recurring theme; either in the section of "Columns" or in "Educational Current Affairs", there is no number that does not echo this theme. Overall, RE, 233-234 (1974), monograph "Construcciones Escolares".

<sup>23</sup> Among other references and presences of the Center in the *Revista*, it is worth highlighting: Maíllo, A., "Los Centros de Orientación Didáctica y el perfeccionamiento del Magisterio", RE, 131 (1961) 52-59, where he reviews his work as "one of the most qualified technical elements and advisors" of the Ministry.

<sup>24</sup> At this congress, Maíllo, A referred to., "Algunos males de nuestra pedagogía", RE, 30 (1955) 192-201

<sup>25</sup> The speech of the Minister to the Plenary of the National Council of Education offers details about these creations ("La Educación Nacional Española, 1957-1961", RE, 134, 1961, 60-69).

<sup>26</sup> The "Columns" section includes the speech of the Technical Secretary General of the Ministry of National Education in defense of the opinion of the National Commission on the reform of the law (Tena Artigas, A., "Reforma de la Enseñanza Primaria", RE, 177, 1966, 177-185). Also, the traditional annual report of the General Technical Secretariat of the Ministry can be seen, where the fundamental changes of the new legal provision are analyzed and exposed ("La Educación Nacional Española, 1965-1966", RE, 185, 1966, 95-106).

<sup>27</sup> From the sixties, the defense of the pedagogical technique as a lever of effectiveness and performance of our schoolchildren will be a constant in the pages of the *Revista*. Its outreach role will include the publication of works by advisors and education policy makers. A. Maíllo, once again, now as director

control of the educational system from the purely ideological to school results (Beltrán, 1991: 153).

However, it would be the publication of the new *Surveys in Primary Education*<sup>28</sup>, 1965, the reform that would consolidate the curricular change; in the words of Rodríguez Diéguez (1990: 259), the model of didactic units would mean the most profound, perhaps disruptive, change in Spanish educational history, definitively abandoning the old concept of lesson as a curricular measure. The didactic units, mandatory for all public and private schools in Spain, were presented as “a collection of knowledge and instructional activities learned and carried out in schools around a central theme and of great significance and usefulness for the child”.

The globalizing and interdisciplinary nature of the new curricular approach, not exempt from a certain covert ideology, as we say, would be supported by a whole arsenal of didactic tools, among which the “didactic guides” stand out. These would now mark the new rhythm of school work: the teacher would have an instrument (*Levels*) that specified the general provisions and objectives (*Surveys*) by years, marking the guidelines to follow for the correct organization of school work (*Programs*), with which his or her work must focus on the adaptation of these regulations to the specific reality of his or her classroom. “Setting objectives, determining activities and experiences, assigning teaching materials and resources, temporarily guiding learning and providing a system of evaluation”, as A. de la Orden (1966: 13) writes, would be the teacher's tasks when drawing up the school program.

The ministry itself, through the Spanish Teaching Service (SEM), in a laudable attempt to seek the complicity of teachers as a guarantee of the success of the reform, would convene a teaching course in the summer of 1966, within the framework of the International University “Menéndez Pelayo”, aimed at explaining the central points of the reform, with the participation of teaching specialists and technicians from the ministry, preferentially inspectors: J. M. Moreno, now director of CEDODEP, A.

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of CEDODEP, will be one of the most prolific. As an example, “Cuestiones actuales de educación y enseñanza”, RE, 149 (1962) 114-118, or “La supervisión Escolar”, RE, 179 (1966) 105-110 y 180 (1966) 12-18. Likewise, due to its importance in school issues, it is worth noting: De la Orden, A., “La promoción de los escolares en la Enseñanza Primaria. Situación actual y previsiones para el futuro”, RE, 187 (1967) 33-37 and Rodríguez, M<sup>a</sup>. L., “Cara y cruz de las novísimas técnicas didácticas”, RE, 190 (1967) 63-68.

<sup>28</sup> *Cuestionarios Nacionales de Enseñanza Primaria* of 1965, in *Vida Escolar*, 70-71.

de la Orden, E. Lavara Gros, N. Jiménez, among others. As it could not be otherwise, the *Revista* would bring together a good number of these interventions, especially referring to the "globalized didactic units"<sup>29</sup>.

These methodological innovations and didactic references, as we have written elsewhere (López Martín and Mayordomo, 1999: 41-103), would confirm a "pedagogical orientation that moved from the imperative search for militancy to the call for didactic effectiveness", from the dogmatic calls for school work focused on the "renationalization" of society to the insistent demand for the "rationalization" of school tasks, from a call to teachers as "generals of peace" to another that considers them cooperators in the development of a "peaceful and silent revolution".

Thus, this would precisely mean the general reform of our educational system, through minister Villar Palasí's General Law 14/1970 of Education<sup>30</sup>: a *revolution*, because not only did it involve the modernization of our school structures, but also the democratization of education, its public character, equal opportunities, school coexistence, comprehensive training, personalized education, tutorial orientation, educational performance and quality, creativity, continuous evaluation, and globalization of learning<sup>31</sup>. It was *peaceful*, since it did not involve an abrupt break with the regime, trying to make political authoritarianism compatible with the economic and social developments of the new times; and, in addition, *silent*, since it would subtly facilitate the transition to a democratic educational system. Puelles (1992: 24), in this sense, would give the description of "hybrid character" to the interplay of synergies between the traditional and the modern<sup>32</sup>; a reform "carried out from above, without democratic participation", in the purest regenerating style.

<sup>29</sup> See the general chronicle of the course, in Abbot Asenjo, A., "Cuestionarios y Programas de Enseñanza Primaria", RE, 184 (1966) 54-58 and 185 (1966) 104-108.

<sup>30</sup> The minister himself would call the law a "peaceful and silent revolution." In his presentation of the bill to the Full Session of the Parliament he argues: "A law of peace. A law called to integrate Spaniards from the base, from school" (RE, 209, 1970, 29-34). In his speech to the Committee on Education, in this case on its application, he would again insist on it (RE, 218, 1971, 70-81).

<sup>31</sup> Most of these pedagogical principles were the subject of published works, and even monographic issues: "El CENIDE y las investigaciones sobre educación" (RE, 290, 1970); "Enseñanza individualizada y evaluación" (RE, 214, 1971); "Educación personalizada" (RE, 247, 1976); "Participación y democracia en la enseñanza" (RE, 252, 1977); "Constitución y educación" (RE, 253, 1977); "Educación y crisis económica" (RE, 261, 1979).

<sup>32</sup> The RE, on the occasion of its 20th anniversary, published an extraordinary issue (1992), "La Ley de Educación veinte años después", coordinated by A. Tiana, with the participation of a good number of specialists. Subsequently, on its 50th anniversary, it would do the same *Historia y Memoria de la Educación*, 14 (2021) and *Cuestiones pedagógicas*, 29 (2020), among others.

We are facing a change of epoch: social, economic, educational, and also political. The *Revista* added to that moment of changes, not only with a new image, including its logo, but with renewed intentions. “The new educational - as the 1969 editorial stated<sup>33</sup> - policy requires a renewed magazine that devoted preferential attention to the dissemination of the aims of the same, of its orientation and achievements, of the diverse opinions and criticisms that its conception and application arouses”. A new stage for a new Spain, in which “the results of national and foreign educational research”, the resources of modern technology, educational experimentation, “the application of new methods and didactic techniques or systems of organization and evaluation”, would be, broadly speaking, the purposes of the *Revista*<sup>34</sup>. Moreover, we cannot ignore, perhaps the most decisive political principle: the *Revista* would echo the positions that were publicly supported on educational plans and problems “without excluding those that reflect criteria opposed to those that guide official action in this field.” Subsequently, in a special edition in 1972, a new format would be released and these “opening principles” would be consolidated<sup>35</sup>.

The new educational reform, with underlying teaching principles of undoubted value, responds to the debate waged with the publication of the Reform Project, submitted to public opinion through the “White Paper”<sup>36</sup>. A good number of the pages of the *Revista* of that year, 1969, are dedicated to the analysis of its content. Thus, the first issue, in its “Studies” section<sup>37</sup>, transcribes the preamble of the minister and the second part of the book, the one addressing the proposals, leaving the first, the most extensive (a demolishing criticism, out of sync for the political moment they were going through), for the analysis of articles and collaborations. The appeal to modern technology, the use of audiovisual media, devices for teaching, self-instructive materials, the profound renewal of programs<sup>38</sup>, among other aspects, were proposed for the improvement of classroom practices.

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<sup>33</sup> RE, 201 (1969) 5-6.

<sup>34</sup> Beyond studies and articles, numerous monographs would respond to these topics. “Nueva Tecnología Educativa” (RE, 263, 1980); “La administración del centro escolar” (RE, 266, 1981); “La orientación escolar” (RE, 270, 1982); “Innovación educativa” (RE, 286, 1988).

<sup>35</sup> RE, 1972, no. Extr., p. 3.

<sup>36</sup> La educación en España. Bases para una política educativa, Ministerio de Educación, Madrid, 1969.

<sup>37</sup> RE, 201 (1969) 7-35.

<sup>38</sup> The body of monographic studies would be dedicated to the provision of programs and curricula, guidelines generating the activities of centers, teachers and students, to the “internal metabolism of the

Until then, primary education and part of secondary education, was configured in the section of General Basic Education (EGB)<sup>39</sup>, in levels of eight years of study - between 6 and 13 years -, divided into two stages - from 6 to 10, and then from 11 to 13 -, of a globalizing and formative nature in the first, with the moderate diversification of teaching in the second, in a commitment to an integrated and comprehensive school. The contents, on the other hand, were configured around large areas of learning, trying to avoid fragmentation in subjects. The curriculum approach of the *New Teaching Guidelines* was easy to implement: effective teaching consisted of formulating objectives (scientifically verifiable goals), exploiting means (dynamic and modern), developing activities consistent with the proposed goals, evaluating the results obtained and modifying the process according to the deviations detected<sup>40</sup>. The Tylerian approach to curriculum and pedagogy by objectives (Gimeno, 1982) would definitely take over the sense of practical work, which is the culmination of the techno-bureaucratic character of pedagogy. As Juvenal de Vega pointed out<sup>41</sup>, the arduous enterprise into which the Ministry has launched itself has turned “pedagogy into politics and making politics a pedagogy”.

## The democratic school. A school belonging to everyone and for everyone

A few years ago, we published a research paper with this same title (López Martín, 2002), in which we tried to analyze how that “revolution” that the 1970 Law had supposed, together with the fall of the dictatorship and the change of political regime, would blur the technocratic character of teaching, to give way to a new context in which education

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system”, as stated in the editorial, RE, 207-208 (1970) will dedicate the body of monographic studies. The basic programming criteria (M<sup>a</sup>. A. Galino), the formulation of plans and programs (Evaluation Cabinet, Audiovisual Methods and Methods) and the taxonomy of education objectives (V. García Hoz) were analyzed among others.

<sup>39</sup> Buceta Facorro, L., “La nueva estructura educativa”, RE, 214 (1971) 64-70.

<sup>40</sup> Ponce, F., “Jornada de trabajo sobre orientación de la EGB”, RE, 212-213 (1970-1971) 102-107. The article is the chronicle of the days organized by the Ministry, in collaboration with the Inspection, Normal Schools and Institutes of Education Sciences, for the explanation of the new situation to the teaching body.

<sup>41</sup> De Vega, J., “El contenido de la nueva educación básica”, RE, 202 (1969) 12-22.

would be understood as an instrument at the service of democratic coexistence, under the construction of a Social and Democratic Rule of Law. The 1978 Constitution was the definitive consolidation of the democratic approach: a school, now really, “belonging to everyone” and “for everyone”. “Belonging to everyone”, given that the active participation of the different sectors involved in the educational process is assumed, in an effort to democratize organizational structures; “for everyone”, insofar as it is committed to sufficient investment to move towards a network of public, private and private state- subsidized centers, ensuring full schooling with decent levels of education quality.

This transition towards the full democratization of the educational system would also be reflected in the pages of the *Revista*. Since 1974 a “Classical Studies” section has been started, where articles by Giner, Costa, Posada and other *institutionistas*, preferentially published in the *Boletín de la Institución Libre de Enseñanza* (Bulletin of the Free Institution of Education, BILE) are printed, something unthinkable at other historical moments, leading to a special article dedicated to the *Institución Libre de Enseñanza* (Free Institution of Education, ILE), as a “tribute to the Institution, but also to all those who have dedicated their concern and their efforts to the advancement of education in Spain”<sup>42</sup>. The attempt to reconcile the “two Spains” was underway and the fact that this is reflected in our publication is more than evident.

In this context, it is essential to rethink the central points of a renewed school<sup>43</sup>: the validity of its knowledge (“what is taught”), the appropriateness of the methods (“how this is taught”) and the values to be transmitted (“what is education for”). Although it is difficult to separate or change one without altering the others, the contents were the first to be modified. The *Renewed Programmes*<sup>44</sup> recognised that “rigidity in the criteria of automatic promotion of the student”, confusion created by an “immoderate development of school manuals”, excesses in the use of certain work techniques such as “worksheets”<sup>45</sup>,

<sup>42</sup> RE, 243 (1976), we cite p. 4.

<sup>43</sup> De la Orden, A., “La escuela en transición”, RE, 266 (1981) 133-149. The article is inserted in a monograph, “La administración del centro escolar”, especially interesting.

<sup>44</sup> “Documento Base de introducción a los Programas Renovados de la EGB”, Vida Escolar, 206 (1981), 15-page supplement.

<sup>45</sup> This methodology will be widely accepted in the *Revista*. By way of example: Fernández, A., “La enseñanza individualizada en la EGB”, RE, 221-222 (1972) 9-13 and Rodríguez Moreno, M<sup>a</sup>. L., “Coordination trial between individualized and team teaching”, RE, 223-224 (1972) 33-41.

or excessively broad formulation of objectives and contents, in addition to their indicative character,, among other aspects, had not produced the expected effects and, on the contrary, caused some disorientation in teaching staff.

There are three pillars of change that this reform introduced, although for some authors (Beltrán, 1991: 216) it would be nothing more than “a renewal of the curriculum”: the configuration of the EGB (General Basic Education) into cycles, renewed Basic Reference Levels with greater structuring and degree of programming and the need to contemplate certain contents that respond to the current demands in society. The eight EGB courses established by the General Law were structured in three major cycles: initial (1st and 2nd), middle (3rd, 4th and 5th) and higher (6th, 7th and 8th), which meant a profound variation with respect to the previous curriculum organization; the reference levels, perhaps excessively rigid and hierarchical, would be parceled out into thematic blocks, programmed in operational objectives or scientifically verifiable goals. Finally, the constitutional concept of a school as a “practical citizenship workshop” required designing new content: education for democratic coexistence, for health, consumer training, care of the physical and social environment, road safety, or inclusion of new technologies, would be essential basic references to be integrated into the various areas of learning.

The coming to power of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE), in what some have understood as the end of the Transition, at least in its educational aspect, posed new challenges:

“Modelling a public service of basic education in a way consistent with the specific configuration of what the school offers (...) Carrying out reforms in the educational system that would neutralize its function of reproducing social inequalities (...) Reforming methods and contents, programs and teaching methods” (Maravall, 1984: 6)

The 1983 Royal Decree on Compensatory Education and the Organic Law on the Right to Education (LODE, 1985) addressed these challenges. However, the global reform of the education system, the third in our history, became preferential objective. *The Education Reform Project. Proposal for debate*, a new *White Paper for the Reform of the Education*

*System*<sup>46</sup> would see the light in 1987, which would then become in 1989 specified in the Organic Law of General Organization of the Educational System (LOGSE), 3 October 1990. These were times of reform aimed at cementing the educational pillars of the 21st century.

The *Revista* in our opinion, would take a qualitative leap by adding to national writers international experts of recognized prestige in the field of teaching, curriculum theory or educational policy: I. F. Goodson, A. Chervel, H. Silver, A. Hargreaves, D. Hamilton or K. Freedman, among others. In any case, the *Revista* continued in its role as an active witness of the times, trying to generate knowledge, in this case, on the reform processes. Two monographs in 1990 on “General training, school knowledge and educational reform”<sup>47</sup>, with authors such as N. Luhmann, R.E. Young, M. W. Apple, Th. S. Popkewitz, among others, is an example of this<sup>48</sup>.

The LOGSE would bring with it the school model that we have called “school of values and transversality”, under the constructivist parameters of the principles of *cognitive pedagogy*<sup>49</sup>. Comprehensiveness<sup>50</sup>, as its banner, attention to diversity, teaching approaches focused on student learning, theories of constructivist alignment, meaningful learning, the development of skills and not objectives as a measure of school achievement, the autonomy of schools, quality discourse (the first law that dedicates a specific section to quality) and transversal issues would now be the pedagogical clothing of the new school (Bolívar and Rodríguez Diéguez, 2002). Judged as an ambitious law, it significantly reconfigured the structure of the education system, by extending compulsory education

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<sup>46</sup> MEC (1987), Proyecto para la Reforma de la Enseñanza. Educación Infantil, Primaria, Secundaria y Profesional. Proposal for debate, Madrid, Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MEC); MEC (1989), Libro Blanco para la Reforma del Sistema Educativo, Madrid, MEC.

<sup>47</sup> RE, 291 and 292 (1990).

<sup>48</sup> We cannot forget, likewise, the monograph “La escuela como centro de cambio” (RE, 304, 1994) and, above all, the one dedicated to “Reformas educativas”, under the coordination of A. Tiana and M. de Puelles (RE, 305, 1994); the first focused on the processes of change from micropolitics, to focus the second on the macro-reform of the educational system.

<sup>49</sup> Coll Salvador, C., “Acción, interacción y construcción del conocimiento en situaciones educativas”, RE, 279 (1986) 9-23. The article is inserted in a monograph, “Desarrollo del niño en la escuela primaria”, which includes the presentations of a “Pedagogical research workshop”, within the framework of the “Project 8” of the Council of Europe on “Innovation in primary education”.

<sup>50</sup> RE, 289 (1989), monograph “La enseñanza comprensiva y sus reformas”, with a wide review of the situation in different European countries.

from 6 to 16 years, as a common training period, organized in a comprehensive and inclusive way, covering both primary education (6-12 years) and compulsory secondary education (ESO), at a new educational level (12-16 years), which brings to end the segregating double certification at the end of the EGB.

In addition to the areas of learning, beyond the contribution of the Autonomous Administrations and the centers themselves, by virtue of the decentralization of the curriculum designed in the Constitution<sup>51</sup>, a series of “transversal issues” are highlighted, understood as a set of values and elements of attitudinal awareness that permeate all the content and objectives of the areas or disciplines in the curriculum, as cohesive central points of the teaching-learning processes in the Educational Projects of the Center<sup>52</sup>. The school, which had given collective responses (equal for all) based on the individual work of the teachers, was required, from the opposite point of view, to offer individualized responses from the collective work of the teaching teams. In any case, and despite a certain sense of failure in the carrying out of the reform whose theoretical and normative proposals had moved too far away from the empirical culture of the school, the LOGSE showed that schools cannot ignore the axiological formation of a series of values and attitudinal contents proper to and necessary for the performance of the personal and social life of citizens in the democracies of the twenty-first century.

A twenty-first century in which the *Revista* will continue to play its role as an active witness, the analysis of which will have to be the subject of further work.

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<sup>51</sup> RE, 299 (1992), monograph “Decentralization and evaluation of educational systems”.

<sup>52</sup> In addition to articles and references, you can see the monographic “Transversalidad en el currículum”, with the coordination of J. C. Tedesco (RE, 309, 1996).

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