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**Captured by the Totally Pedagogised Society: teachers  
and teaching in the knowledge economy**

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## Abstract

This paper makes use of one of the last concepts developed by Basil Bernstein (the Totally Pedagogised Society, TPS) to understand some of the forces and contradictions underlying today's teachers' work in Spain. In his last written work, Bernstein (2001) pointed out some arguments to illustrate the emergence of a TPS. Always interested in uncovering the sociological basis of pedagogy, Bernstein refers to the TPS as a society that introduces pedagogy in all possible spheres of life. Somewhat paradoxically, the short-termism and the constant change in the knowledge base of society, where careers are replaced by jobs, require the emergence of the TPS. The TPS appears as a crucial regulator and legitimation strategy to translate uncertainty, risk and precariousness into a socialisation characterised by endless learning. "Trainability" is referred as the key concept through which the TPS emerges. That is "the ability to profit from continuous pedagogic re-formations and so cope with the new requirements of work and life". The concept of trainability colonises educational policies and practices, and has a strong power in defining students' and teachers' work and identity.

Flexible and global capitalism –the social base that regulates the pedagogic discourse– requires a specific type of pedagogic expression that erodes commitment, certainty and that is therefore socially empty. Interestingly, as Bernstein argues, the weak state of the global economy requires a strong state in the pedagogic field. The TPS is state driven and state funded. The state uses different type of strategies to make and distribute new forms of pedagogic "knowledge" through owned or controlled agencies. Cadres of pedagogues become significant agents in the symbolic control field and produce and distribute new discourses and its ways of legitimation. That is, the official field 'captures' –through practices of co-option– key agents from the pedagogic field to construct and maintain the TPS.

This paper develops two aspects related with the construction of the TPS as it is being developed in Spain. Firstly, it shows the state practices in the process of designing, planning and implementing the latest Curriculum reform (ERA 1990) to understand the relationship between the official and the pedagogic fields and to illustrate the redefinition of teaching in this reform. Secondly, using data from two research projects, it shows some of the consequences that the TPS is having on teachers' work and identities. The capturing of teachers within the TPS has a number of implications on teachers' representations of their role in the new educational mandate, their understanding of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment and their professional identities. These movements, it is argued, have significant consequences on the relationship between teachers' practices and ideology and the reproduction and legitimation of educational inequalities.

## 1. Introduction

During the last decade the development of social theory has been largely shaped by the notion of globalisation. From an economic, political or cultural perspective, globalisation appears to be as a very complex process, the particular form of which depends on multiple factors which take place at different time and scale (Jessop, 1999). The ambiguity of globalisation as a concept and its multiple consequences reveals the need to escape from mono-causal explanations, something that has important methodological implications. Escaping from mono-causal explanations means, on the one hand, studying globalisation from a multidisciplinary perspective. That means that globalisation cannot be simply addressed by looking solely at cultural, financial or political implications of the time-space compression (Harvey, 1989; Giddens, 1990). On the other hand, the study of globalisation as a process cannot assume that convergence between nation-states is the main and exclusive effect of globalisation. Rather, as economic institutionalism has highlighted (Stiglitz, 1989), institutional factors are crucial aspects to understand national responses to global changes in accumulation regimes. That is, although the development of communication systems and new patterns of capital accumulation shape and condition national and supranational economic and social policies, the history, culture and specific organisation of institutions are key factors to understand national responses to global factors.

This last question points out the importance of the nation-state (and its political and economic institutions) as a necessary object of study to understand the consequences of global forces and tendencies. Although some approaches to globalisation support the idea of the end of the nation state (Ohmae, 1995), the complexity and heterogeneity of the process reveals that we need to study how globalisation is “recontextualised” in different territories and at different scales (see Robertson *et al.* 2001). The state is certainly transformed by the globalisation process, and it is obvious that any nation-state cannot overlook the international economic and political context. However, rather than ignoring the state this statement stands for the need to investigate how state policies are shaped and how the state mediates the interaction between global and local forces.

This paper tries to address one aspect of state's activities in a context of globalisation: that of pedagogy and teachers' work. Like all the dimensions of educational systems, both pedagogy and teachers' work are altered by changes that occur on a global scale. The development of knowledge-driven economies, the technological revolution of our times, the development of communication systems, changes in the production processes and work organisation are some of the factors that may potentially alter what is taught and how is taught. Knowledge production, its distribution and its forms of transmission change as a result of the spread of information systems, the speed of technological transformation and the different skills requested in the production process. Of course, teachers' work is not immune to these changes. The teaching profession is transformed along with changes in the structure of educational messages. Traditional teaching methods, it is argued, must disappear to allow the development of a new professional profile. The "new" teacher must become a knowledge manager rather than a knowledge expert; he/she must be capable of identifying different and diverse student capabilities and abilities and constantly update his/her knowledge to cope with fast changes in society. As we will see below, the teacher becomes also responsible not just for educating the future workers' abilities but for socialising workers as 'good citizens'. Thus, the expected role of the teacher is also important in the transmission of values and attitudes.

Despite the fact that all these changes may have its primary source on a global scale, it is noteworthy that education systems and policies concerning teachers' work remain largely controlled by the state. It is the state that appoints teachers, manages and negotiates teachers' work conditions and teachers' salaries. The state is also responsible for what is taught in schools and how knowledge is produced and distributed. Thus, the state level remains the key scale to observe how forces of globalisation are recontextualised at national or local levels.

This paper focuses on the crucial role of the state in the recontextualisation process of pedagogy and teachers' work. The role of the Spanish State in this process evidences how global and institutional forces interact in shaping discourses and policies in those fields. By stressing nationally specific factors this paper underlines the importance of the state in mediating global discourses and policies to cope with local realities.

The rest of the paper is structured in 3 sections. In the following one we make use of works from Bernstein's last phase to provide a description of the Totally Pedagogised Society (TPS) and some other concepts developed by him that may help to understand the consequences of globalisation in pedagogy and teachers' work and identities. In section 3 we provide an interpretation of role of the State in managing the TPS and some evidence about how these tendencies are being recontextualised by the Spanish State education policy. Finally, in the last section we use data from two research projects to account for the consequences that the extension of the TPS is having on teachers' work and identities.

## **2. Towards the Totally Pedagogised Society: pedagogy in the knowledge-driven economy.**

During the last decade, Basil Bernstein's work specifically focused on the structuring of the pedagogic discourse (Bernstein 1990, 1996, 1999, 2001; Bernstein & Solomon, 1999). Mainly, he was interested in developing the necessary theoretical instruments to uncover the social logic of pedagogy and the internal structure of the pedagogic device. Through this analysis Bernstein aimed to build a sociological theory of the relationship between modes of educational transmission and their regulatory bases, that is, a complex system of power relations and social control that overdetermined pedagogy. Each pedagogy could and should be studied by looking at the social forces that induced, maintained and legitimated it. Furthermore, the study of dominant pedagogies was, for Bernstein, a crucial aspect to understand how communication systems would structure individual and social consciousness and identity. As Bernstein states:

“Pedagogy is the focus of my theory to the extent that pedagogic modalities are crucial realisations of symbolic control, and thus of the process of cultural production and reproduction. Symbolic control, through its pedagogic modalities, attempts to shape and distribute forms of consciousness, identity and desire.” (Bernstein & Solomon, 1999: 269).

His theory highlights a number of internal rules that structure the pedagogic device.

This internal structure would permit to establish the link between, on the one hand, the dominant mode of production and the division of labour, and, on the other hand, the dominant pedagogical models that are present in different communication institutions like the education system. Bernstein referred to distributive, recontextualising and evaluative rules as principles to relate knowledge production, its distribution and its practice. These rules fix the limits of the thinkable and unthinkable (distribution rules) while at the same time regulate the specific form that the pedagogic discourse will take (recontextualisation rules) and the forms of reproduction of this discourse (evaluative rules). These rules may have “different degrees of autonomy from each other and from the state. The pedagogic device, the condition for the materialising of symbolic control, is the object of a struggle for domination, for the group who appropriates the device has access to a ruler and distributes consciousness, identity and desire. The question is whose ruler, in whose interests or for what consciousness, desire and identity (Bernstein & Solomon, 1999: 269).

By using this theoretical framework Bernstein tries to describe the relationship between specific dominant modes of production, power and control and different pedagogic modalities. For example, it is known that Bernstein linked the emergence of invisible pedagogies to the growing presence of the new middle classes in the advanced societies during the sixties and seventies (Bernstein, 1996). The increasing importance of the new middle class and its specific base of power resources and social control (especially in the symbolic control field) were the social logic behind the production, distribution, circulation and hegemony of invisible pedagogies. These pedagogies were mainly based on the concept of competence. Cultural transmission and acquisition were concerned less with the knowledge and more with abilities. A set of abilities should be transmitted and acquired in order to be successful at school. Bernstein showed the class bias embedded in invisible pedagogies, and denounced its cultural partiality. Children coming from the middle class had no interruption in their socialisation. The step from home to the school took place without changing the communication context —the regulative, instructional, inventive or interpersonal contexts (Bernstein, 1977). The experience of working class kids, on the other hand, was shaped by an interruption in their socialisation. Coming from communication contexts characterised by strong classification and framing, working class children had difficulties to cope with invisible

pedagogies, mainly because the school assumed that all children arrived at school with similar educational codes.

Interestingly enough, Bernstein's last works focused on how recent changes related to flexible capitalism framed and conditioned the rise and fall of pedagogic modalities. As far as the social logic of production and domination would change, so would the dominant pedagogy. How, then, does the reorganisation of capitalism impact on dominant pedagogic modalities? If communication systems shape consciousness and identities, what kind of consciousness and identities are produced by dominant pedagogic modalities and how do they relate to flexible capitalism?

Bernstein refers to this as a change from a competence model of pedagogic practice and context to a performance model (Bernstein, 1996: 57). Competence models are characterised by a great measure of control of the acquirer over selection, sequence and pace and by implicit recognition and realisation rules. On the contrary, performance models place emphasis upon a specific output of the acquirer and upon the specialised skills necessary to the production of this specific output, text or product (Bernstein, 1996: 58). The difference between these two models reminds the one Bernstein established between visible and invisible pedagogies, the former characterised by strong classification and framing and the latter by weak classification and framing. However, Bernstein identifies a new and emergent modality within performance models: 'generic performance' (Bernstein 1996: 66). Generic performance presents some characteristics, which give interesting particularities to this pedagogic modality: its recontextualisation location, its focus on extra-school objectives and its genuine concept of trainability. These characteristics distinguish the generic performance model from simple visible pedagogies.

With regard to the recontextualisation location, "generic modes are constructed and distributed outside, and independently of, pedagogic recontextualising fields (PRF). In other words, the official recontextualising field (ORF) (state agencies) dominates the PRF. The process of appropriation, distribution and circulation of educational theories and discourses are mostly controlled by the state. A process of incorporation of certain groups and intellectuals of the PRF into the ORF reduces the relative autonomy of the

PRF. In contrast with the competence models, where the PRF used to be largely autonomous from the ORF, generic performance involves directly state agencies in the recontextualisation process. The question of the focus refers to which aspects of knowledge acquisition are the central ones. Here Bernstein identifies generic performance as a model focused on preparing the acquirer for 'work and life'. Again, if competence models focused mainly on the educational experience of the subject (producing an *introjected* type of identity), generic performance focuses in an external objective (which produces a *projected* type of identity). Finally, the concept of trainability is closely related to the concept of 'work and life' As Bernstein describes it:

“Generic modes are not simply economic pedagogic procedures of acquisition but are based on a new concept of work and life, a concept of work and life which might be called 'short-termism'. This is where a skill, task, area of work, undergoes continuous development, disappearance or replacement; where life experience cannot be based on stable expectations of the future and one's location in it. Under these circumstances it is considered that a new vital ability must be developed: 'trainability', the ability to profit from continuous pedagogic re-formations and so cope with the new requirements of 'work' and 'life'" (Bernstein 1996: 72).

Now we are capable to understand the notion of the Totally Pedagogised Society. Bernstein used this concept to reflect the idea of continuous pedagogy, of a non-stop process of re-forming the worker to cope with new requirements of work and life. It is a Total pedagogy because it does not only relate to specific activities or abilities to learn. On the contrary, 'trainability' means a continuous disposition of the subject to be trained for the requirements of his/her entire life. The dominant pedagogic model focuses in performance, because knowledge has to be closely related to a specific output or product; but pedagogy is, at the same time, generic, because it is volatile, it changes very fast and does not produce a sense of certainty in the acquirer. The acquirer never knows enough and never will be able to develop enough abilities to learn. The notion of trainability condenses perfectly this idea of a process permanently open.

It is now quite easy to establish the relationship between this emergent pedagogic mode and the social base that regulates it. In flexible capitalism rapid production and



circulation of knowledge becomes a crucial input for economic performance. Knowledge becomes a raw material for the production process and earns tangibility. Although knowledge changes rapidly, it becomes an instrumental input for capital accumulation. The market shapes what is considered worthy or useless knowledge and also underlies the presence and the absence of its specific forms. Invisible pedagogies – or competence models of pedagogy– incorporated expressive and intangible forms of knowledge. Knowledge learned in educational institutions did not have to be necessarily linked to ‘work and life’ but to a specific *habitus*: that of the new middle class. Thus, in this pedagogic model the market can have only an indirect (and invisible) impact on *what* is learned at the school and *how* is learned. The form of domination lies more in having access to a specific *habitus* than in possessing the necessary knowledge required by the market. Therefore, a competence model is a weak pedagogic modality for a type of economy that is (or wants to be) knowledge-driven and performance oriented.

On the other hand, the fast transformation of knowledge and the rapid changes in their economic applications require a generic rather than a specialised orientation of performance. Specialised discourses appear and disappear as fast as the market values them. At the same time, their content and form change because specialists themselves redefine them constantly and because the production of new knowledge and its access become crucial aspects for market access and competitiveness. In sum, generic forms of knowledge appear to be more suitable to knowledge-driven economies. Nevertheless, the generic dimension of a performance-oriented pedagogy is also related to work relations, work conditions and the type of expected identities in the knowledge-economy. Here, the key aspect to consider is the social consequences of economic ‘short-termism’: replacement and disappearance, as Bernstein points out, are the main characteristics of work content. Traditional forms of knowledge do not inform work content anymore and the crucial aspect of worker’s socialisation is trainability. Again, in Bernstein’s words:

“The concept of trainability places the emphasis upon ‘something’ the actor must possess in order for the actor to be appropriately formed and re-formed according to technological, organisational and market contingencies. This ‘something’, the key to

trainability, which is now crucial to the survival of the actor, crucial for the economy, and crucial for society, is the ability to be taught, the ability to respond effectively to concurrent, subsequent and intermittent pedagogies” (Bernstein 2001: 11).

This concept of trainability, the mode of socialisation into the TPS, “erodes commitment, dedications, coherent time, and is therefore socially empty” (Bernstein 2001: 11). A generic pedagogic model allows for constant and intermittent pedagogies, which produce uncertainty and emptiness. Somewhat paradoxically, this is the necessary socialisation for the requirements of ‘work and life’: precariousness and uncertainty for the majority of the working population. It is not only that people can lose their jobs, but also their professional identities can be hollowed out. So, to ‘survive’ in the TPS it is necessary to show constantly everyone’s disposition to be taught and trained.

Although the influence of globalisation on pedagogy is not well-known yet, Bernstein’s analysis suggests crucial insights to explore it. Of course, if we assume a multi-causal notion of the whole process, it is not plausible that it carries an automatic homogeneity of school discourses and practices. But it cannot be overlooked that certain global trends entail some elements of the TPS. At least, the available strategies for education reform and the official use of ‘lifelong learning’ underpin this thesis. Firstly, governments are constrained to choose between finance-driven, competitiveness-driven and equity-driven school reforms (Carnoy, 1999). But in spite of the multiple possibilities, immediate goals have been overemphasized inasmuch as the finance-driven ideology has become widespread. Secondly, official discourses expect to foster competitiveness and equity at the same time by means of ‘lifelong learning’ (UNESCO, 1996). As a consequence, the social basis for short-termism and a continuous pedagogy is broadened and reinforced.

So far we have illustrated the relationship between the type of socialisation needed by flexible capitalism and its pedagogic expression in the TPS. We have still to look at how the TPS is managed and its impacts on teachers’ work and identities. We will address these issues by looking at the pedagogic role of the Spanish State and its consequences on teachers’ work. The following sections address these issues.

### **3. The State and the management of the TPS**

A key characteristic of the TPS is that it is state-driven and state-funded.. The weak state of the global economy requires a strong state in the pedagogic field. This was not the case when competence modes hold dominant positions in the pedagogic field. In the case of Britain in the late 1960s and early 1970s, for example, the pedagogic recontextualising field (PRF) enjoyed a considerable autonomy with respect to curriculum design and the training of teachers (Bernstein 1996: 70). Indeed, the weakening of classification generated a space for pedagogic appropriations not subject to direct state regulation.

As it has been mentioned above, one of the characteristics of generic performance modes of pedagogy is the dominance of the ORF over the PRF. The separation between official and pedagogic discourses tends to disappear through a process of intrusion of state agencies into the pedagogic field. This process does not happen without struggle and contradiction. As Stoer and Magalhaes (2001) have argued for the Portuguese case, the ‘gap’ between political and pedagogic discourses widened as a direct consequence of the attempt of the ORF to colonise the PRF and the resistance of some pedagogues and teachers to be captured by the ‘performance’ model of pedagogy.

Spain, as other countries, is currently experiencing a certain movement towards the introduction of performance-oriented pedagogies. However, some particularities of the Spanish education system and of its recent history illustrate the specificity of the Spanish case with regard to the emergence of the TPS. Since the mid eighties, the Spanish state has permanently intended to colonise the PRF by a process of appropriation of specific pedagogic discourses and the production of a new curriculum policy (see Bonal 1995; Bonal & Rambla 1996, for an account of these processes). Interestingly enough, this colonisation of the PRF at that time did not have the objective of introducing performance-oriented models. Rather, curriculum and education policies focused on the introduction of invisible pedagogies (or competence-based models) to overcome old-fashioned teaching methods that characterised schools during the Franco period.

Interestingly, education policy during Francoism —mainly focused on the social control and ideological role of education— generated considerable resistance against official education and pedagogy. A number of teacher and parents' organisations mobilised in order to struggle for different modes of schooling, trying to escape from a low quality and ideologically biased education (Monés, 1984). Thus, the PRF, especially in the late Francoism, became quite autonomous from the ORF. Teacher training institutions and schools themselves played a very active role in producing and distributing alternative curriculum and teaching methods. This model of pedagogy opposed that of the official education, still shaped by the objective of inculcating the necessary ideology to legitimate the political regime.

During the eighties, education policy started to break the separation between official and pedagogic fields. From 1982 to 1987 the Minister of Education was actually a scholar, and scholars continued to hold key positions in the early nineties. These scholars were successively incorporated into the State apparatus up to the approval of the 1990 Curriculum Reform. Thus, the relative autonomy of the PRF was weakened by the ORF through co-option practices. This process started when the Ministry of Education invited some education experts (sociologists, psychologists and pedagogists) to debate the current situation of the education system and to discuss the first proposal for a curriculum reform written by César Coll, a well-known Spanish education psychologist (Coll, 1994). The commitment of the Ministry of Education with Coll's proposal did not give room to different and critical views and made some experts to abandon the debate group. Since then, only scholars that shared the same education principles and theories (Cognitive models, Piaget's theory) were incorporated as advisory experts into the Ministry of Education and participated in the process of designing, planning, piloting and evaluating an experimental reform process which started in 1986 (Bonal & Rambla, 1999).

This process culminated in the approval of two Education Reform Acts passed in 1990 (*Ley de Ordenación General del Sistema educativo*, LOGSE 1/1990) and 1995 (*Ley Orgánica de Participación, Evaluación y Gobierno de los Centros Docentes*, LOPEG 9/1995). The following list summarises the most significant aspects brought about by these

laws:

- Compulsory education was extended until 16. Primary education was fixed from 6 to 12 years old while secondary education was divided into a compulsory track (from 12 to 16) and a post-compulsory one (16 to 18). The division between the academic and the vocational track was postponed until the age of sixteen. In addition, it was assumed that, although not compulsory, infant education (3 to 6) should be universally provided.
- The Vocational Education and Training (VET) system was conferred with a new value. In the former system, basic education finished at 14 and provided different credentials for achievers and under-achievers, VET being the only option for those who could not pass this basic educational level. In these circumstances, VET was a valuable and serious option neither for family expectations nor for employers' job selection. The 1990 Education Reform Act suppressed the double qualification system and established the new compulsory secondary education (12-16). At the present, beyond the age of sixteen there is no qualification condition to follow the academic or vocational track.
- The curriculum structure and content, especially in compulsory secondary schooling, underwent a significant reform. The LOGSE secondary curriculum structure has included a basic common core and a variable (optional) part. Students have been allowed to choose 35% of their subjects from the options offered by their schools. Schools have had the autonomy to decide what type of content can be offered as part of this variable curriculum. School decisions on curriculum have been allegedly based on pupils' needs and interests. The possibility has been open to design some of the variable subjects so as to reinforce basic content (which are called remedial units), whereas other subjects have aimed to widen some aspects of the common curriculum and others were to introduce new specific content. In addition, the following cross-curriculum subjects have drawn the official links between academic areas: education for equal opportunities, peace education, health education, environmental education, consumer education, moral education and traffic education.
- Schools have been awarded a major autonomy in curriculum and economic decisions.

With the 1995 ERA schools are allowed to decide on the variable curriculum and have also more freedom to allocate resources. The deregulation policy makes the school able to be flexible in searching for supplementary funds to the public ones. The 1995 ERA also introduced changes in school organisation: headteachers' responsibility was broadened and teachers were expected to be knowledge-managers. The former mechanisms of school decision-making (mainly teacher-based –School Council Bodies–) were considered to be less effective in comparison with professional school direction.

- A new teaching culture has been introduced. New official and pedagogic discourses introduced a new reform language and the need to overcome former “anti-pedagogic” teaching styles. Schools were encouraged to change their teaching strategies towards a more child-centred education. Cognitive models (called Constructivism) as Piaget's have been used to guide schools towards invisible pedagogies. Concepts like curriculum adaptation, attention to diversity, continuous assessment and evaluation, pupil context-based content, cognitive skills and so on redefined the teaching style and claimed for a significant retraining of teachers.

These changes illustrate the fact that those measures promoted by successive Socialist governments during the eighties and early nineties were intended to define a model of curriculum and pedagogy capable of, on the one hand, modernising the education system and, on the other hand, responding to social demands of democratisation. Claims for a real equality of opportunity policy in education were finally translated into the creation of comprehensive secondary education for the first time in the Spanish history. In these circumstances, the pedagogic model had to be flexible enough to respond to the goals of comprehensive education and to the extreme differences between schools and students, both between public and private schools and within the public school system. That explains why invisible pedagogies were seen as a very appropriate pedagogic discourse. Invisible pedagogies incorporated sufficient symbolic power for producing social representations of change and modernisation. At the same time, invisible pedagogies were exceptionally suitable for the Spanish State to deal with the contradiction of opening the system to new students through comprehensivisation and hiding the potential dimensions of educational

failure and performance differences among different social groups. Since in Spain there is *de facto* an educational market (the private sector representing more than 30% of the system) a policy towards comprehensive education would have the likely effect of extremely polarising educational demand (something that is actually happening). So, competence-based models of pedagogy, with their emphasis on curriculum adaptation, flexible evaluation and different teaching methods, appeared to be a pedagogic discourse that responded to the legitimation needs of the Spanish State education policy. These needs would have rarely been addressed by promoting a performance-based model of pedagogy, which outcomes would have made contradictions more difficult to manage.

It has not been until the late nineties that a performance-oriented mode of pedagogy has been promoted by the official pedagogic discourse. The politics of education of the current conservative government are producing discourses and policies to define specific educational outputs, especially for secondary education. Discourses about the lack of educational quality, discourses on educational violence and disruption in secondary schools and a strategic policy of evaluation of school and student performance, are used as political tools to promote a new educational mandate. This policy has the latent goal of transforming the comprehensive system into a two or three-track secondary education. Some results are already visible: more school segregation and the institutionalisation of different educational tracks. Currently Parliament has just passed an Education Quality Act that will implement this new policy.

The above arguments account for a quite exceptional process of interaction between the ORF and the PRF in the recent evolution of Spanish education policy. The promotion of a TPS is taking place when comprehensive education has been scarcely completed in the Spanish territory and yet, has not been internalised by teachers, parents and students. It is interesting to look now at the effects of this exceptional process on teachers' work and professional identities. The last section will address this question by using data from two research projects.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Xavier Bonal has directed the two mentioned research projects. The first one was *La recontextualización de la diversidad en los centros de enseñanza secundaria obligatoria* (The recontextualisation of educational diversity in compulsory secondary education). It was sponsored by the Centro de Investigación y Documentación Educativa (CIDE) of the Spanish Ministry of Education (1996-1999). The second one was *Els tres eixos de la identitat: classe, gènere i ètnia en l'espai social juvenil* (The three axes of identity: class, gender and ethnic relation in youth social spaces), and was sponsored

### ***What am I supposed to do? The TPS and teachers' discourses.***

The consequences that the processes described in the previous sections may have on teachers' work and identities are multiple and of different nature. On a global scale, one of the clearest consequences of current official discourses is the tendency to blame teachers for some of the structural 'diseases' about the lack of quality of educational systems and hence their implications for 'the low level of human capital'. The World Bank, for instance, tends to accuse teachers of resistance to change and to innovate in teaching methods (Carnoy, 1999). Without this change, it is argued, education systems won't be able to prepare students for the new requirements of work and life in the global economy. However, the expected role of the teacher within the TPS is never specifically described. This is not a genuine oversight; it seems to be quite deliberate. The generic performance that characterises the TPS escapes from defining which content, teaching methods and evaluation strategies are considered to be the ideal ones for socialising students for the needs of work and life. The requirements of flexible capitalism are translated into pedagogic ambiguity. Teachers are made responsible for implementing the necessary innovations to cope with social and economic changes (after all they are experts in teaching and learning). They must show capacity to interpret the future requirements of work and life and to constantly update their knowledge and teaching methods.

However, as it has been described in section 2, "trainability", the force driving the TPS, is a socially empty concept. Which identity can be projected in the acquirer if work is characterised by replacement and disappearance? Which role is assigned **to** the teacher if the goal of education is external to the education system (generic performance) but there is no concrete definition of projected professional identities? Thus, the role of the teacher is not defined simply because it can't be defined. There is a structural contradiction between simultaneously promoting a TPS and defining the content of the 'best teaching'. Official and pedagogic discourses identify the teaching profession as a key input for a successful socialisation for work and life. However, since work and life

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by the Fundació Jaume Bofill (Barcelona), 2000-2001. Both of them included a number of interviews to secondary school teachers.



is shaped by intangibility, uncertainty and short-termism, a consequence of that is that the TPS carries the elimination of concrete definitions of teaching. This fact leads to a final paradox: the more important knowledge is for economic performance, the more pedagogy colonises life and the lower the content definition of that pedagogy.

Of course, this basic contradiction produces risk- awareness, uncertainty and dislocation among teachers. Teachers are captured between the contradictory forces of the TPS and become a target group for the official and pedagogic discourses. It is therefore quite common to collect opinions of frustration and a sense of deterioration of their professional identities. The rest of this section briefly explores some consequences of the TPS for Spanish teachers' work and identities.

#### *Captured between knowledge and pedagogy*

Bernstein (1996) uses the expression “pedagogizing knowledge” to refer to the transformations of specialised forms of knowledge under the TPS. If knowledge production and distribution become crucial factors of economic performance, ensuring students' knowledge acquisition must be a central task of teaching. Therefore, knowledge is a central input of the teaching process. This fact contrasts with the expected outcome of teaching under competence-based models. Under competence-based models of pedagogy knowledge is only conceptualised as a *means* for achieving the goal of learning to learn. That is, the important factor of the teaching process is to develop student abilities to have access to different forms of knowledge. In contrast, under generic performance, knowledge becomes an expected outcome of the teaching process. However, this outcome can be only achieved if knowledge is pedagogised, that is, if the rapid transformations of knowledge for economic performance are quickly recontextualised, translated into pedagogic discourses and rules.

Teachers are expected to be key actors in this process. They are called to rapidly update their specialised forms of knowledge and have to be capable of teaching them, even before other agencies of recontextualisation produce and distribute new pedagogic discourses. This locates teachers in an uncertain position between knowledge and pedagogy. There are knowledge objectives to be achieved, but it is a matter of teacher

responsibility to innovate teaching methods, to maximise knowledge acquisition. Pedagogic autonomy is the vehicle for educational quality and efficiency in a performance-based model. Self-responsibility and flexibility are the means for a very specific end: to ensure that the knowledge taught at the school is worthwhile and has economic value. Here we have another paradox: teachers are expected to be pedagogically autonomous, but this pedagogic autonomy does not have value in itself. It is a type of pedagogic autonomy that has to be knowledge-oriented under the official scrutiny, since its validity eventually depends on its alleged utility for developing the necessary knowledge required by the market. Thus, it is an autonomy that nobody wants.

In Spain the 1990 reform settled the first manifestations of the TPS at the same time as it transformed teachers' professional positions and identities. Its 'Child-centred' principles were to be implemented by a corps of primary teachers, a unified corps of formerly academic and formerly vocational secondary teachers and a new corps of psycho-pedagogists. As to primary teachers, although some of them believed in the former authoritarian pedagogy, many others had learnt and shared 'Child-centred' principles, since both initial and in-service training had been transmitting them for many years. Unlike them, secondary teachers lacked this professional training and polarised their reaction, since the vocational group welcomed a reform that promoted them, but most secondary academic teachers resented the changes on the grounds they were charged with an excessive responsibility. The official discourse offered all of them the opportunity to re-make their professional expertise and status by means of new tools such as curriculum design or flexible grouping, that is, proposed them to become the managers of knowledge in the classroom. Finally, the organisational position of 'psycho-pedagogist' was defined in quite a symbolic way. Whereas their professional responsibilities included the leadership of pedagogic change in secondary schools, their actual place constrained their work to remedial courses in many schools. Even worse, at the same time as some specialities, such as philosophy or classical languages, suffered an important reduction of their teaching hours, a new corps was created who had to lead an expected radical change of their profession (Bonal, Rambla & Rovira, 2000).

As a consequence of their contradictory structural location and this conflictive micro-

politics, the new (unified) secondary teachers have reacted with a mixture of reluctance and passive compliance.

1. They have felt that pedagogic autonomy transforms easily into uncertainty and isolation. A selection of their comments can illustrate this point:

“Last week the psycho- pedagogist came to our school to give a speech on teaching strategies after reform. He was so abstract. It was only theory, theory and more theory. Nobody really tells us what are the specific learning objectives and how they have to be achieved” (Secondary school Science teacher).

“They are just worried (Department of Education) about us having all the paperwork done. They don’t really care if you have problems in the classroom with students that simply don’t want to be taught” (Spanish Language teacher).

“The [1990] reform requires us to hold many meetings. (...) For instance, I ask teachers to prepare their qualification marks before evaluation meetings, but they always take many hours, even after our labor timetable” (School Director)

“I am afraid that planners of compulsory secondary education are only theoretical educationalists. They are completely ignorant of school organisation. I started to prepare next year’s timetable in december but did not finish until july. Sometimes such organisational complexity doesn’t let me sleep. It’s horrible; it even thought I could not stand it” (School Director)

This frustration can lead also to another reaction: that of resistance to change and disengagement.

“I am a maths teacher, and it’s nothing to do with me (cross-curriculum subjects)” (Maths teacher)

“I have been a teacher for more than twenty years, and I never felt like this. My work has been transformed. The worst part is that nobody respects you: students, families or even the school inspection” (Science teacher).

Teachers also complain about the lack of resources to develop the ‘nice’ words of educational discourses. This appears clearly with regard to dealing with educational diversity. Having to adapt curriculum content and teaching methods for a very diverse classroom appears to be an impossible task.

“If the teacher has three groups in the same classroom (those doing well, those with a middle level and underperformers), he has to overwork. This is the best way to ‘kill’ teachers. The best solution would be to separate the best group and to educate the others apart” (Social Science teacher)

“You have at-risk children, who cannot read or write, normal and advanced students. How can I divide myself in order to tend to so many students? It is impossible. Attention to diversity is a fallacy: either there are two teachers in the classroom or we have single-ability groups, or it is a fallacy” (Catalan Language teacher).

“We cannot teach Technology with this ratio. There is no problem with theory, but an only teacher cannot deal with practical activities that imply using tools” (Technology teacher)

2. They have adopted their common practices to the new requirements in a superficial although complex way. The CIDE 1996-99 research involved a systematic observation of teachers’ classroom practices in a sample of four comprehensive schools, two of them coming from formerly academic schools and two of them coming from formerly vocational schools. The results depicted a common general outline: almost any of the so-called ‘reform strategies’ (active search of meaningful learning, flexible grouping, using other materials besides the textbook, etc) were actually implemented. However, many observations found out that some teachers made an effort to personalise transmission by attending patiently to doubts or distributing different tasks according to ability. In all cases teachers’ authority depended on students’ dispositions. High performing groups were quiet and efficient, whereas other groups either resisted to mere teacher talk or put a strong pressure on teacher patience.

Thus, available evidence shows some key unintended effects of the TPS on the teaching profession. The ‘inclusive’ dimension of the TPS locates the teacher as a professional expert that must adapt his/her task to different profiles, interests and abilities of students. However, teachers can hardly manage an extremely heterogeneous classroom including 25-30 student. Moreover, since there is no definition about which teaching strategies are the most appropriate for dealing with such situations, the most common response is the search for alternative forms of delivering two or three speed forms of teaching within the same group. Streaming and occasional separation of some students from the ordinary classroom is the most likely decision made by teachers dealing with that sort of problems.

## **Conclusion**

As Basil Bernstein suggested, flexible capitalism fosters the extension of a Totally Pedagogised Society, inasmuch as it induces schools to attain a desired performance and to instil the ethos of continuous trainability. Teachers and students become captured by this process, as probably parents and policy-makers do. However, it would be misleading to package this conclusion by assuming that school (local) practices are completely determined by global forces. These forces are recontextualised in quite different forms depending on dominant ideologies, the range of state autonomy, the ways education and pedagogy influence nation- building, the fractures resulting from class and gender inequalities or even regional imbalances. In this sense, the change from content-centred performance pedagogy to child-centred competence pedagogy, and then to a new performance pedagogy aiming to make trainable workers, has followed different paths. Bernstein looked for its roots in long-time processes and middle-term transformations of post-war British society. A more rapid and contradictory path can be spelt out in Spain.

It seems reasonable to assume that an intended effect of the TPS is the colonisation of the pedagogic field by the official field. Both of them eventually recontextualise knowledge and the external constraints of education. The pedagogic field was allowed a broad relative autonomy when competence ideals prevailed, when significantly the very state activity was quite autonomous from pressures arising from the market. This equilibrium has dramatically changed after school management has been widely institutionalised, education systems have been blamed for labour problems, national pride has been redefined in terms of competitiveness, neoliberal ideologies have spread, and to put it in a nutshell, globalisation has impinged on educational policy. Later on, not only that autonomy has been limited in practice but also its very restriction has become a political goal.

In Spain secondary teachers' resistance has been an unintended effect of the first attempts to implement a Totally Pedagogised Society during the nineties. The sharp change of their structural location and the emergence of new agents and interests within

school life have spread reluctance and passive compliance. Paradoxically, nowadays this situation holds out an important source of legitimation for a new reform, focused on quality, that is even more explicit with regard to the objective to ‘pedagogise’ society.

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