Polyphonic manifestations of pedagogy: Epilog(s) that interrupt sense(s)

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Abstract

We propose four irruptions as an epilogue, they seek tensions and meanings in relation to the task of education and pedagogy that, as a conceptual record, offers us lines to inhabit and think about the world in which we live, but also the one we would like to live. Multiple claims and recipes resonate for education in the digital age. Since the end of the last century, education policies have moved between two vertices: crisis and reforms. Reforms of schooling that have been launched in the most diverse countries and regions that make up the globalized world promising answers to this question. It is in this climate of time that Biesta and Säfström propose their manifesto for education where, as they point out, moving between what is and what is not, has become the crossroads for contemporary schooling. Probably, this image is one of the most global in the globalized world. Of course, its effects and local affections are multiple and diverse. This dossier is installed there: to inhabit the educational word, to ask about it. This calls for the imperative need to be manifested by education in a way that allows us to escape a duality that has done nothing but undermine the school without offering lines with which to weave other plots. Interrupting is also the challenge for a theory of education that tries to escape destabilizing the future by recognizing its openness, opening the possibility to different future potentials.

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Manifiestaciones polifónicas de la pedagogía: epílogo(s) que interrumpen sentido(s)

Resumen

Proponemos cuatro irrupciones a modo de epílogo, procuran tensiones y sentidos en relación con la tarea de educar y a la pedagogía que, en tanto registro conceptual, nos ofrezca líneas para habitar y pensar el mundo en que vivimos, pero también aquel que quizás vivamos. Múltiples reclamos y recetas resuenan para la educación en la era digital. Desde fines del siglo pasado las políticas de la educación se han movido entre dos vértices: crisis y reformas. Reformas de la escolaridad que se han puesto en marcha en los más diversos países y regiones que compone el mundo globalizado prometiendo respuestas a esta cuestión. Es en este clima de época que Biesta y Säfström ponen su manifiesto por la educación donde, como señalan, moverse entre lo que es y lo que no es, se ha vuelto la encrucijada para la escolaridad contemporánea. Probablemente, esta imagen sea una de las más globales del mundo globalizado. Claro está que sus efectos y afectos locales son múltiples y diversos. Este dossier se instala allí: habitar la palabra educacional, preguntarse por ella. Ello reclamando la necesidad imperiosa de manifestarse por la educación de un modo que nos permita escapar de una dualidad que no ha hecho más que minar a la escuela sin ofrecerle líneas con las que tejer otras tramas. Interrumpir es también el desafío para una teoría de la educación que procure escapar a la encrucijada manteniéndose en la tensión, desestabilizar el futuro reconociendo su apertura, abrir la posibilidad a diferentes potenciales futuros.

Palabras clave: pedagogía; futuro; afección; interrumpir; crisis de la escolaridad.
We have been living for decades proclaiming the crisis of education, to the point that it became part of a daily landscape that tells us that something is not as it should be, but without clarity about how that should be. Each new beginning of the school year the mass media remind us of what the school does not manage to do that, at the same time, involves the demand for what it should do and what it does not do. Teachers called to become coaches, schools called to become places of knowledge management, students who must be located as managers of their learning, all in a scene where official agencies reserve for themselves the task of evaluating, but assume little responsibility for doing the school.

Multiple claims and recipes resonate for education in the digital age. Since the end of the last century, education policies have moved between two vertices: crisis and reforms. Reforms of schooling that have been launched in the most diverse countries and regions that make up the globalized world promising answers to this question. It is in this climate of time that Biesta and Säfström propose their manifesto for education where, as they point out, moving between what is and what is not, has become the crossroads for contemporary schooling. Averaging the fourth decade of the decree of the education crisis, this seems to have become the most stable image of our daily life. A state of affairs that functions in itself as a statement, which comes as an evaluation of what is being, but at the same time acts to weaken life in the classroom and teachers who, years ago, perform their task with that feeling of something is wrong. Probably, this image is one of the most global in the globalized world. Of course, its effects and local affections are multiple and diverse.

This state of living in instability and uncertainty is not, of course, exclusive of contemporary schooling. Without needing to remove much we would find these states that became enunciated. An enunciation that became an announcement and is part of a constant flow on which hypotheses are made that in the logic of diagnosis becomes prognosis. In very different ways, the crisis became an announcement of what it is, but also a premonition of what is to come; a present that is made in the logic of risk that overlaps with an uncertain future on which we must operate to promote the reduction of damages.

The image of living always at risk is associated with a flow that functions as the given course of events, of a life situation, a being of the things to which we must adapt to develop and improve ourselves. It is not about overcoming them or avoiding them but about learning to be at risk, to manage ourselves. We live in a world that is far from power or pretend to leave behind uncertainty; it became as stable as desirable. In other words, it is an era that returned to *lei motiv* change. It is clear that probably all of us would agree on the need to operate reforms in our social life as individuals. This is not about putting that in question, but rather dwelling on its effects. One of them perhaps the most stable is that as long as it should be, it throws us into the constant flow of the ephemeral: the change itself appears as the good, we cannot stop, stay still, we must keep moving. It is at that moment, when the content of change gives way and change becomes objective, action itself. We discuss little about the content of what we should change and a lot about the change itself. This is in a social as well as educational scene, which since the end of the 20th Century has not stopped changing and not always in a sense that seems to please us. In fact, social polarization and growing inequality are undoubtedly key notes of change.

Crisis and change became regulatory technologies of social life in general and educational in particular (Grinberg, 2008). Education and even more the school was associated with an institution that seems to have remained identical to itself in the last 200 years, where reformist rhetoric gives us back the criticism of the discipline to show us the way forward. A claim that often remains more like a phantasmagorical image that runs through the debates about school than as an experience of educational life in contemporary societies. Traditional education vs. innovative education are pairs of reform proposals that work operational truths difficult to grasp in doing school.

It is at this point that we need to get out of the dilemma between “what is not and what is”, with which Biesta and Säfström address their manifesto for education, becomes a key debate to escape (fly away) from the contradiction in which schools and the reforms of schooling.
are involved since the end of the last century. Doing this does not mean denying the need to deal with education or even denying the need for changes, rather the opposite. This dossier settled there: to inhabit the educational word, to ask about it. This calls for the imperative need to be manifested by education in a way that allows us to escape a duality that has done nothing but undermine the school without offering lines with which to weave other plots.

A manifesto in front of an education decreed between what it has to stop being and a must be that it becomes difficult to understand and to do in the daily life of the schools. It is at that moment that Biesta and Säfström propose that manifesting as an interruption. To interrupt the flow of what is accepted, of the given by procuring a pedagogy that is capable of stopping to speak in and for education. This is the invitation of the manifesto and the line in which this dossier tried to settle.

II

Next, we propose four irruptions that we try to approach as an epilogue to continue thinking tensions and senses in relation to the task of educating, and to pedagogy as a field of conceptual record from which we (co)inhabit the world we live.

First irruption: Manifest to interrupt what is. Excursus on education and its contemporary crises

The idea of crisis of living always already in crisis became, as we have pointed out, common currency. The need to adapt education to changes is, we believe, part of the rhetoric of crises that Biesta and Säfström call popular and that leave us living with the daily sensation of fragility. A sensation that as we live it and crosses us overlaps between that old image of the extraordinary event, traumatic (or both), which generates a break in the course of events and forces us to stop along with the daily sensation of living in a state of unstable equilibrium. Returning to Berlant (2011) the current way of living in crisis is more like this second that called “ordinary crises”: that which becomes current and defines some already-not-so-new rhythms of life that become standard, form, institution. This state finds in the management discourses of schooling the proposals to return to the locus school of learning management producing subjects capable of reviewing themselves permanently. Monitor and intervene (Rose, 2010) about our egos becomes the norm.

In very different ways, the crisis of the school became ordinary and leaves the institutions in a state of cruel fragility that in many cases becomes a dead end. On the one hand, because of the cruel optimism (Berlant, 2011) that it carries, but also because of the instability in which the school is called to educate. An optimism that in the school becomes particular because it falters between the diagnosis of what is (not) and the promise of what should be, but without the conditions to do so. Optimism is the one that pushes teachers and students to arrive every day at the institution. But also and especially, in our region, it permanently returns the effects of an optimism that is faced daily with conditions of schooling that are in themselves cruel, result of a crisis that became norm.

The crisis impacts the historical sense we have of the present (Berlant, 2011) as well as past and future. Living always-already in crisis leaves us faced with accepting what is and developing skills to adjust to the pressures that proliferate when events are stacked on top of each other. This, in a context where the past appears as the traditional thing to flee from and images of the future unfold as a catastrophe that we must manage. This is where a ge-
nealogy fits that, in the century XXI to the saying of Rose (2007), no longer worry so much about destabilizing the present as the future. In a present where everything flows, a cartography becomes key that manages to destabilize the future recognizing its openness. Demonstrate that it is not a single future that is written in the present, open the possibility to different future potentials, that we live in the middle of multiple stories: a "cartography of an emergent forms of life, and draft of a history of the potential futures it embodies" (5). In this search the manifesto for education can be located. Interrupting that flow. Open the options of what is and what is not, it is also the challenge for a theory of education that tries to escape to the crossroads, perhaps as Biesta and Säfström point out and Di Paolantonio retakes, staying in tension. This, we believe, in several ways.

Education is the institution that has had the function of preserving, of transmitting, of stopping in the course of events to bring to the present the threads of the past with which to make the future possible. Since the end of the twentieth century we are left in the alley that throws us to criticism not only of what is but of what is not and that often is the prelude to the images of catastrophe that tend to be thrown on the future of young people, both in their social and school life. The questions that from the bibliography of management and effective management is made to the schooling that the authors call popular, works in that logic.

Next, the instability to which the ordinary crisis throws us leaves schooling living in a cruel fragility that composes an important part of what happens between what is and what is not. As we have witnessed over years of work in the field, it is very difficult in the daily life of schools to act as teaching as management of learning. In this scene, manifesting, interrupting, breaking into the flow of ordinary crises, stopping to think is probably the bastion for the (theory of) contemporary education.

Second irruption: Manifest in education. The appearance of the subject and the problem of freedom

As Arendt (1996) points out, the diagonal of the present opens at the point where the lines of the past and the future meet. It is there, in that encounter—in that collision between past and future that the present is made and makes possible—; that moment when the subject can appear in the scene. Without that point we are thrown into the indifferent flow of temporality, says the author.

The insertion of man is one that breaks the unidirectional flow of time through that oblique force that occurs between the infinite past and the infinite future: a force that is born in the clash between the two and that, at the same time, has no end. It is here, we believe, that the problem of freedom in which the authors place the manifesto places us in the place where that stop, that interruption can occur in education. This is in that collision of forces that Arendt (1996) refers to: “that little timeless path that the activity of thought travels within the temporal space of mortals and where the sequences of thought, memory and des premonition save everything that touch of the ruin of historical and biographical time. This small timeless space within the very heart of time, unlike the world of culture in which we were born, can only be indicated but not inherited and transmitted from the past, each new generation, each new human being, without a doubt, insofar as it is inserted between the infinite past and an infinite future, to discover it again and pave it with industriousness” (19). In other words, the interruption of the indifferent flow of temporality occurs at the moment of the collision and, that is the moment in which the subject appears in the scene. This is the infinite opportunity of education. It is education that occupies a key place in this collision. It is that paradoxical place that it possesses, where at the same time that it has to build the new, the future, it must do so with the forces of the past. Only there, in that minute, in that place of shock is that the gap opens and the subject finds himself in the possibility of appearing.

Now it is at school (let us talk here about school and not about education in a more abstract sense) that it appears daily. An appearance that occurs with and in front of the others that, as Di Paolantonio takes up through Blanchot, recalls the key place of the other in that manifestation, here in / for education.

School in the digital age is probably one of the few places we meet every day, we look, we touch with others, with the other. That space / moment in which one stands in front of the other, goes in encounter with the other, the
other. It is in this locus that the appearance of the subject can occur. Here I am, the hineni, that here I am that Derrida resumes his farewell to Levinas. Traumatism, he says, of the other that can only come from the other and that we propose becomes possible only when the subject appears and can say here I am.

This is the point of freedom to which Biesta and Säfström lead us in the manifesto; it is the appearance in front of the others, that traumatism that makes school possible and that, if we aspire to live in a society with others, we undoubtedly need to continue doing so. To be, to stop, to speak, to speak in front of and with the other is a key place for contemporary schooling. To manifest. One appearance of the other that claims to that other one that is the word, the speech, Arendt (1996a) would say, with which the subjects appear in the public scene. An appearance that claims the concepts with which we think and think the other, the other. In the 21st century, in the era of crisis and change, when education seems to disappear in the task of teaching how to surf the sea of information, we need to remind ourselves that man manifests himself in discourse. The school is the key locus of realization of that image of the hineni, I am here in front of you. One being with the others, before the other.

**Third irruption: Manifest in the aesthetics of the affections**

That hineni, that being with and facing the other involves a mode of affection that puts us at the crossroads and at the challenge of experiencing the world again, again and again, as a way of “interrupting what is of the world, here and now”, Di Paolantonio says. The question opens up to the affective power of the exercise of teaching as a way of thinking educatively affirms Mario Di Paolantonio in this dossier. Through Le Breton (2010) we must return to the question of the “teacher of meaning”,

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**“Forest landscape in La Pampa”, mix technique Claudia Espinosa**
or, better still, the teaching of the teacher of meaning that helps us to weave (and unravel), the problem of freedom, where Sebastián Plá is positioned. It resides in a relationship with the world, in a moral attitude rather than a collection of truths wrapped in immutable content; points to a particular truth that the student discovers in himself, an opening of sense and of the senses in which the student himself becomes the artisan. Something like the record analyzed by José Yuni and Claudio Urbano, associated with the “confluence between reason and passion” or that “return to the pedagogical” that allows us to think of education as “performative act”. As Coccia (2011) points out “sensible life is not only what the sensation awakens in us. It is the way we give ourselves to the world, the way we are in the world (for ourselves and for others) and, at the same time, the environment in which the world becomes knowable, feasible and livable for us” (11).

Affection and act of becoming knowable becomes the face of a coin. Here is where manifesting involves recognition, seeing the other: we must learn to look, because we are looking at little. In a society with a very high level of exposure, the paradox is that we see little or we encourage each other to see each other and that is perhaps what we need most: to attend to a word that comes before us, listen to its claim, trust in its poetic possibilities, this is to trust in your possibilities of action. The centrality of “other areas of knowledge production” in the words of Matos de Souza, Casťano Gaviria and de Souza call us, in this dossier, to “go against” finding in the negative Philosophy, the “piece of resistance” that allow us to intercept “Other corporeities”.

It is at this point that the question is asked about education, in general, and, for teaching in particular, as a linking plot that allows the production of that warp so that the other can be incorporated into the learning experience, in a way of José Tranier’s proposal, as “disruptive experiences” that refer us to the construction of “colonial and impertinent court” meanings: a “situating and manifested pedagogy”. This is the empathic sense that implies re-knowing and re-knowing oneself in the other as part of oneself and where the teaching acquires the fundamental ethical-political sense. This implies that Day (2006) rejects the minimalist approaches to teaching that consist of simply completing the work, while the task of educating is the bearer of an ethical-political commitment that entails its intellectual and emotional involvement. Even more, when we live in a time when the word as a common good, that resilient stubble, and the absence of the question of meaning seem to be in retreat: the word and the sense, those that have determined that landscape of anthropological vulnerability. A sort of de-subjectification that fragments, anonymizes and despots the subjects, making them vulnerable. Here it is possible to manifest participating in a task that per se is collective and therefore does not stop questioning the linking plot that involves the other and the possibility of being incorporated as another. A creation of knowledge from the words of Alves, Louzada, Chagas and Nunes Caldas “the many—in collective terms— it is not still in education.”

The educational fact is a cultural fact that can offer “soil and shelter” for the inclemency and the restlessness; this is “an education that recovers the link with the other implies an educational model that prioritizes the affective relationship as a way of constituting adequate spaces for the transmission, reception and circulation of knowledge” (Colombani, 2014, p.)

“Existing with others”, explains Julieta Armella, in terms of “Community as a possibility”. It is there where something of the verb therapeuo appears in the scene. An action to the cure that also involves the idea of caring, watching over the other, watching over the other, taking care of the other. Take care and take care of yourself. Education certainly has something of it, that cure that involves care: “if there is something that can protect and care for us, it is the affection”. The encounter with the other, with the word, which is education itself, demands to take care of that tension.

Fourth irruption: To manifest in pedagogy

One issue that education faces on a daily basis is that in its development it is necessary every day to find some idea of the future that will allow it to stop in today, thinking not only that there is a tomorrow, but that this can be better than today. From that image of the paideia, the task of educating has shaped different edges of that ideal. Now, as Biesta and Säfström point out, that standing on what is not yet, leaves us closer and closer to an ideal that works more as a claim than as an ideal.
Education, perhaps like no other action, can dispense with a promise that can only be made by pronouncing itself regarding tomorrow. It is at this point, that the manifesto perhaps installs one of the key tensions of this dossier. How to work a promise for education that can escape the crossroads to which, as Biesta and Säfström point out, throws us to think about education in that contradiction. That is why we must remain in tension, insists Mario Di Paolantonio. A tension that we can take care of if we follow a track that Deleuze and Guattari offer us. As they point out in their development of a geo-filosofía, the notion of utopia⁴ refers to a place that has no place, no-where. The authors propose how a word game reposition this question in the now-here, here and now. It is in that place that the notion of freedom acquires a different thickness. Not as what we do not have and must give or achieve, but in line with Biesta and Säfström, as the full exercise of freedom in the here and now; In the here I am with and in front of you, we point out in this epilogue.

Education and, as the authors point out in the manifesto, also the theory of education, must deal with these issues. In the region, the question about the theory of education is signaled, as Yuni and Urbano propose, since the Sixties by the imprint of the debate between pedagogy and education sciences. In fact, since the developmentalism of the hand of the alliance for progress and in a sui generis reception of the theory of human capital have taken place in Latin America, that instrumental struggle goes through debates and policies. More specifically, the reforms that have been underway since the Sixties of the last Century, as well as specifically the changes that brought us to the sciences of education, have had us as protagonists and witnesses of the ways in which those views Biesta and Säfström called popular and instrumental have oriented, with some swings, programmatically to education. This is a framework of debates that, since the end of the last Century, has been gaining strength in the search for a theory of education.

Again in the region, in that line, Pedagogy has been gaining space. As Di Paolantonio points out, recovering Derrida, education “asks us shouting invitingly: ‘if you want to read and hear me, you must understand me, know me, interpret me, translate me, and from there, when you answer me and talk to me, you must start talking in my place, and therefore begin to quote, change and extend me through interpretive multiplication (Derrida, 1991: 201-202)⁴. It is here, where the manifesto interrupts seeking a word that listens.

Probably a lot is about that. After years of crisis and reforms, what we have left is to listen, read and listen to education and to those who make school every day. The question is whether we will get a pedagogy that manages to do it, find a voice for education that is capable of a promise in the here and now; that is able to put a word where the management of knowledge returns to education an impossible mission and throws us into the sea of information and teachers become search engines.

It is in this flow that we need to meet with pedagogy, talk / talk to us. Not so much to tell the school what it does not do or should do, but to listen and stop in the flow of diagnoses that become forecasts and do nothing but weaken the daily task of educating. In it meanwhile, we find adults and young people who renew their commitment to schooling that they hope that something that happens there brings them closer to know and know. To manifest, interrupt, procure some place in which it is possible to stop to think, hoping that in the flow of crisis-change the school has some possibility to interrupt, produce a difference.

III Blues and Reds

These polyphonic manifestations (Porta and Flores, 2018) that we proposed, from the re-read-
ings of the manifest crystallizes senses. Senses that put affections in the center of the scene. If we could represent the colors of the affections, these would not be the same for everyone: the sea could be blue and we could associate love with the sea. The two works that accompany the end of this text belong to Yves Klein who created a blue tone that had never existed before. Sookie states that, one summer day in 1947, three boys were sitting on a beach in Nice in southern France. To kill time, they decided to make a game and spread the world among them. One chose the animal kingdom, another the kingdom of plants. Before lying down and contemplating the infinite blue of the sky, the third young man chose the mineral kingdom. Then, with the joy of someone who has suddenly decided what destiny to give his life, he addressed his friends and announced: “The blue sky is my first work of art.” That man was Yves Klein (Sooke, 2014).

Klein’s monochromatic blue paintings “are not paintings, but experiences, passages that lead to emptiness”, says Kerry Brougher curator of the great retrospective Yves Klein: With the Void, Full Powers, at the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington DC in 2010 (Sooke, 2014). In the same way that these passages lead us to the void in Klein’s work, to inhabit the experience of readings and re-readings of the manifesto puts us in the greatest experience of a human being. To immerse ourselves in those passages, to walk through these labyrinths makes us emerge a little better to the world. A trip, a journey in which the sea is not necessarily blue in its representation. And the passion is not inevitably red.

Notes

1 Schools whose infrastructure, both edilicia and pedagogical, ceased to be a crisis to become an ordinary landscape of the daily life of institutions (Grinberg, 2011) and which leads teachers to become super-teachers (Busi and Grinberg, in press).

2 Italic is ours.

3 Interview with Cecilia Colombani, Professor of Ancient Philosophy. Faculty of Humanities. National University of Mar del Plata within the framework of an investigation linked to teaching practices from a biographical-narrative perspective. 2017

4 It should be noted that it is a term created by Moro at the beginning of the Sixteenth Century. Utopia is the name given to an island, then “new world”, which according to Rafael, the book’s protagonist, was proof of the functioning of a just society. Paradoxically the name of that island Utopia in English no-where, no place.

Bibliography


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“Olivillos del medanal”, mix technique. Claudia Espinosa