

The policy of transfer of curricular reforms between Spain and Brazil. Towards the psychologisation of education

Eva García Redondo, Leoncio Vega Gil, David Revesado Carballares, Juan Carlos Hernández Beltrán

Abstract

In order to adapt the organization and functioning of the educational system to the constitutional requirements derived from the document of 1978, the Spanish educational reform of the 1980s and 90s went beyond the national borders encompassing international spaces. In its broad and firm expansion to different countries of the Latin American orbit, we want to show how it had a special impact on the reform of the Brazilian education agreed in the nineties reflecting on its development, especially, in the PCNs (National Curricular Parameters). We approach this analysis, derived from the application of the Systematic Literature Review method, which we anticipate of high value and interest, from a threefold dimension that seeks to investigate the influences of Spanish educational policies on Brazil. Firstly, we make use of the essential and classic contribution on school culture made by Professor Escolano (2000). Secondly, we advance until we approach curriculum design (what we understand as “the discourse”) and its consequent projection. And finally, thirdly, we analyze the tensions between psychologists and pedagogues both in interpretative and academic terms that were illustrated in conferences, congresses, seminars and, of course, in the publication of books, articles and reports.

Key words:

educational system; psychological and pedagogical reform; influences of educational policies; Spain; Brazil.

La política de transferencia de reformas curriculares entre España y Brasil. Hacia la psicologización de la educación.

Resumen: La reforma educativa española de los años ochenta y noventa del siglo pasado, al objeto de adaptar la organización y funcionamiento del sistema educativo a las exigencias constitucionales derivadas del documento de 1978, trascendió las fronteras nacionales abarcando espacios internacionales; dada su amplia y firme expansión a distintos países de la órbita iberoamericana, queremos demostrar cómo tuvo especial impacto en la reforma de la educación brasileña acordada en los años noventa reflejándose en el desarrollo de la misma, de manera específica, en los PCNs (Parámetros Curriculares Nacionales). Este análisis, derivado de la aplicación del método de Revisión Sistemática de la Literatura, que anticipamos de alto valor e interés, es abordado desde una triple dimensión que pretende indagar sobre las influencias de las políticas educativas de España sobre Brasil. Por una parte, nos servimos de la imprescindible y ya clásica aportación sobre la cultura escolar ofrecida por el profesor Escolano (2000). En segundo lugar, caminamos hasta aproximarnos al diseño curricular (lo que entendemos como "el discurso") y su consecuente proyección. Y, finalmente, en tercer lugar, las tensiones entre psicólogos y pedagogos, tanto en términos interpretativos como en términos académicos, que se plasmaron en conferencias, congresos, seminarios y, cómo no, publicaciones de libros, artículos e informes.

Palabras clave: sistema educativo; reforma psicológica y pedagógica; influencias de las políticas educativas; España; Brasil.

A política de transferência de reformas curriculares entre Espanha e Brasil. Para a psicologização da educação

Resumo: A reforma educacional espanhola das décadas dos anos oitenta e noventa do século passado, com o objetivo de adequar a organização e o funcionamento do sistema educativo aos requisitos constitucionais derivados do documento de 1978, transcendeu as fronteiras nacionais, abrangendo os espaços internacionais. Dada a sua ampla e firme expansão para diferentes países da órbita ibero-americana, queremos mostrar como ela teve um impacto especial na reforma educacional brasileira implementada na década dos anos 90, refletindo-se no seu desenvolvimento, especificamente, nos PCNs (Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais). Esta análise, assente na aplicação do método da Revisão Sistemática da Literatura, que prevemos ser de alto valor e interesse, é abordada a partir de uma tripla dimensão que procura investigar as influências das políticas educacionais espanholas no Brasil. Em primeiro lugar recorremos à contribuição, essencial e clássica, sobre a cultura escolar defendida por Escolano (2000). Em segundo lugar, focámo-nos no desenho curricular (o que entendemos como "discurso") e sua consequente projeção. E, por fim, em terceiro lugar, abordámos as tensões entre psicólogos e pedagogos, tanto em termos interpretativos quanto académicos, que se refletiram quer em conferências, congressos, seminários, quer em publicações (livros, artigos e relatórios).

Palavras-chave: sistema educativo; reforma psicológica e pedagógica; influências das políticas educacionais; Espanha; Brasil.

La politique de transfert des réformes curriculaires entre l'Espagne et le Brésil. Vers une psychologisation de l'éducation.

Résumé: La réforme éducative espagnole des années 80 et 90 du siècle dernier, afin d'adapter l'organisation et le fonctionnement du système éducatif aux exigences constitutionnelles dérivées du document de 1978, a transcendé les frontières nationales, englobant les espaces internationaux; Compte tenu de son expansion large et ferme dans différents pays de l'orbite ibéro-américaine, nous voulons montrer comment il a eu un impact particulier sur la réforme de l'éducation brésilienne convenue dans les années 1990, en réfléchissant sur son développement, en particulier, dans les PCN (Curricular Parameters National). Cette analyse, dérivée de l'application de la méthode de révision systématique de la littérature, que nous prévoyons être de grande valeur et d'intérêt, est abordée à partir d'une triple dimension qui cherche à étudier les influences des politiques éducatives espagnoles sur le Brésil. D'une part, nous utilisons l'apport essentiel et désormais classique sur la culture scolaire proposé par Escolano (2000). Deuxièmement, nous marchons jusqu'à ce que nous approchions de la conception curriculaire (ce que nous comprenons comme le "discours") et de sa projection conséquente. Et, enfin, troisièmement, les tensions entre psychologues et pédagogues, tant en termes interprétatifs qu'universitaires, qui se sont reflétées dans des conférences, des congrès, des séminaires et, bien sûr, dans des publications (livres, articles et rapports).

Mots clés: système éducatif; réforme psychologique et pédagogique; influences des politiques éducatives; Espagne; Brésil.

Introduction

The thesis of the comparative research work that we present here focuses on the interpretation-explanation-foundation of the policies of educational reform transfers as networks or systems of operations to shape, transform and transport educational products from the context of origin to other destinations, in this case the Brazilian education system. The idea is to interpret education as an industry and/or producer of goods and services in the framework of open or post-modern societies (Verger et. al., 2016), a thesis that is intended to be supported by three academic components. First, the comparative literature on policy transfer as a stream of comparative education research, which addresses concepts, theoretical models, typology, actors, content (Benson & Jordan, 2011; Steiner-Khamsi & Waldow, 2012), discourses, and politics as a mode of governance (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2012). Secondly, we also find it interesting to rely on the contributions of Escolano (2000) to the conceptualisation and expression of the theory of school cultures (political, academic and practical). And, thirdly, the methodological foundations are based on the contribution of Barlett and Vavrus (2017a; 2017b) on the CCS (Comparative Case Study approach) in its horizontal dimension, which requires us to investigate, understand and explain the relationships between the actors as components of a group or network framework. Our approach to transfers and their forms and content of curricular action does not deal so much with the confrontation and power relations in the reform processes, the interrelations between “pilaristas”, “UGTistas” and “renovators”, in the case of Spain), but rather focuses on the academic discourses and practices and, above all, on the connections between psychologists and pedagogues in the process of transporting and expanding the influences of educational policies, in this case more of a curricular nature.

Curriculum reforms in their Iberian context

The political frameworks of Spain, Brazil and Portugal are defined through a phase of post-dictatorships of a military nature (Brazil, 1985; Spain, 1975; Portugal, 1974). These annulled the “formal” participation and reception/dissemination of European educational currents and movements. The “political” actors of these reforms, constituted as advisors or members of the ministerial commissions in charge of the elaboration of the educational and curricular proposals, were a small group of university psychologists and pedagogues, plus some trade unionists and some teachers from the non-university education system. In the case of Spain in particular and taking into account the reformist transfer to Latin America, we should highlight César Coll (Director General of Pedagogical Renewal 1992-1995), A. Marchesi (Director General of Pedagogical Renewal 1986-1992 and Secretary of State for Education 1992-1996) and J. Delval (advisor

to the MEC- Ministry of Education and Culture - and director of the CIDE - Centre for Educational Research and Documentation), all three specialists in educational psychology and genetic psychology (Piaget, Vigotsky, Ausubel and Bruner). In the group of pedagogues, also advisors to the MEC, we should mention, among others, J. Gimeno, A. Pérez, J. Torres, M. Peryra and J. Varela, who were teachers and researchers in the fields of Didactics and Curriculum, Sociology of education and International education. All of them had received basic philosophical training and had participated in international stays, especially in Geneva. The group carried out political action first (in the eighties, which were the temporary epicentre of the psychological and pedagogical reform of Spanish education) and then academic action (in the nineties) under the influence and direction of José María Maravall. He was the Minister of Education in the Socialist government between 1982 and 1988 (the experimental phase of the reform) and had international legal and sociological backgrounds.

The key issues of the educational reform were materialised in the following actions: the permanent training of teachers (it was expressed in the creation of the CEPs, in line with the teacher centres in the UK, without connection to the university fabric: the “field of daisies” as some university students came to call them, whose reception and diffusion in Spain is the work of Pereyra (Groves, 2016)); the social participation in education (the network of school councils that had already initiated the LODE); the real commitment to public schools; the pedagogical innovation (student-centred practices); the extension of compulsory schooling; the graduation of teachers; the automatic promotion; the curriculum structure by levels; etc. These policies had to be explained through a new discourse that demanded many conferences, publications, talks, courses, tools, and resources, since neither society nor the teaching staff understood it. The “jargon of the reform” (Rodríguez, 2001) presented a double dimension: the administrative one (*Centros de Profesores -CEP-, Diseño Curricular Base -DCB-, Cajas Rojas, Cuadernos de la Reforma, etc...*) and the school one (continuous and comprehensive evaluation, requires improvement, progresses adequately, automatic promotion, educational project, curriculum design, leisure segment, significant learning, comprehensive school, cycles, areas, etc.). In its administrative implementation, it became a vertical reform; bureaucracy was imposed through the reform documents and the red and green boxes (the booklets).

In the academic order, we must not overlook the fact that the bulk of the reformist collective came from the university sphere; the reception, research, and dissemination of genetic and developmental psychology mainly performed through the university fabric. Their texts were the object of curricular attention in pedagogical careers during the 1980s. Something similar was to take place in Brazil, a few years later. Genetic psychology expanded through the formation of different university nuclei such as those formed in Brasília, Pernambuco, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais or the so-called “gaúcho” (Vasconcelos, 1996). However, it is necessary to refer to the reception

of the New Education or Progressive Education movement in the thirties and a certain revitalisation in the sixties as the precedents and the germ of the Brazilian pedagogical renewal. It should also be pointed out that there is a certain “reciprocal” nature to transfers, given that not only did Spanish reformers frequently travel to Brazil (they also did so to other Latin American countries such as Argentina, Colombia, and Venezuela), but some Brazilian academics remained in Spanish universities for varying lengths of stay, as was the case with Mario Sergio Vasconcelos. Nonetheless, we can ask ourselves the question of the time in which the reforms were implemented; that is, why were “pedagogical” transfers between Spain and Brazil intensified in the 1990s? The possible approach to the answer has to do with the contexts of both countries. On the one hand, these were times of intensified political and economic relations, within the framework of the European Union. On the other hand, times of democratic construction of both societies in post-dictatorship periods. And, thirdly, because the Spanish educational reform that was legitimised in the LOGSE (*Ley de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo*, 1990), was being an academic, political and international success (not so much pedagogical); this was due to the fact that it was a social-democratic commitment to public schools, to the universalisation of education, to the compensation of inequalities from the point of view of education, and also due to the socio-pedagogical contribution of the “comprehensive school” (with a certain delay).

In the pedagogical (practical) dimension, it was the moment of recognition, support, and political and educational influence of the movements and associations for pedagogical renewal. It was also a time for a commitment to public education and comprehensiveness, to schooling and to reducing levels of school failure (Llorent-Bedmar & Cobano, 2018). At that time, the protagonists of these movements had the opportunity, through the educational administration, to put into general operation a school model that responded to the social and political demands of a democratic nature demanded by both societies. However, most teachers in public education (primary and secondary) not only remained on the margins of the reforms, but they did not fully understand them and were even less able to apply them in school practices due to the new nature of education (as opposed to the content or the teacher, the psychology of the learner was then important, as the New Education had already proposed many years earlier). This break with the pedagogical tradition would be difficult to achieve. Hence, the prominence of the reformers is more about the processes of adaptation than to the content of the reform itself.

Curricular reforms from within. The psychologisation of education

In the analysis of the content of transfers we will pay attention to the “red boxes” (the reform documents published by the MEC) in Spain (the “green boxes” would be

the curricular documents produced within the Autonomous Communities), and to the National Curricular Parameters (PCNs) in the case of Brazil. The analysis is based on four analytical categories: structure, narrative (discourse), foundations (psychology), and writers (authors). It is however true that, in the case of Spain, this analysis is based on the reform of the 1978 Constitution and, for Brazil, on the reform of the 1988 Constitution, the 1990 Children's Statute (Vega & de Pauli, 1999) and the Guidelines and Bases Act (LDB) of 1996.

The materials for the educational reform in Spain, designed throughout the eighties and published by the MEC in 1992-93 as the curricular basis of the LOGSE of 1990 - in charge of the "social democratic" restructuring of the educational system (participation, public school, compensation, comprehensiveness, automatic promotion, expansion of schooling, permanent education, etc.) - are embodied in the so-called "red boxes", a block of curricular documents elaborated by stages and levels. Each box included a list of documents or books; in total, more than a thousand pages each (López, 2020). To these, should be added the "green boxes", created by the Autonomous Communities. All in all, it was a vortex of documents that caused a lot of uncertainty and uneasiness not only in the administrative organisation of the centres, as it multiplied the school "bureaucracy" but, above all, in the practice of teaching in schools. The discomfort was not so much because of the documents, which were very exhaustive in terms of guidelines, subjects, procedures, evaluation, etc., but because they called for a new, largely incomprehensible "pedagogical discourse". And, to a large extent, because the guidelines "annulled" the teaching function in school practices, given that it would then be limited to "creating conditions" and "guiding learning". For some sectors, these documents were a form of transparency and equality, but for others they were interpreted as an obstacle to school practices; some academic sectors even published documents on the "limits" of education.

With regard to the analysis of the boxes, we must first of all point out that their structure was somewhat "chaotic", without any order or academic or pedagogical logic. We had the opportunity to handle the document referring to materials for the second cycle of primary education (1993) and we observed that the "box" consisted of the following five volumes (a total of 813 pages): didactic orientations; cross-cutting issues and curricular development; official texts for preschool and primary education; keys to teaching foreign languages; and documentary guide: foreign languages (a list of texts by publishers). The first document consisted of four chapters: psycho-pedagogical characteristics of the students; sequence for the second cycle; classroom methodology and organisation; and basic bibliography for classroom intervention. In relation to the discourse, we found a "glossary" of terms in the "red box" dedicated to preschool education (1992). We have grouped the 54 terms that appeared in it into three blocks: learning, programming, and evaluation. In the learning block, we can gather the

following terms: attitude, curriculum adaptation, learning to learn, mechanical learning, learning by discovery, significant learning, curriculum areas, pedagogical aid, ability, concept, cognitive conflict, previous knowledge, school curriculum, curriculum development, diversity, compensatory education, sources of the curriculum, curriculum materials, special educational needs, didactic objectives, general area objectives, curricular project, cross-cutting, didactic unit, and values. In the programming/planning category, we include procedures, classroom programming, general programming of the centre, promotion, globalisation, integration, and LOGSE. In the evaluation category, we recorded continuous and comprehensive evaluation, and formative assessment. However, to these terms we should add others such as automatic promotion, adequate progresses adequately, requires improvement, leisure segment, construction of knowledge, participation, etc.; a whole “semantic jargon” for educational reform (Rodríguez, 2001). Thirdly, the educational reform was based on psychology (genetic rather than educational) since the leading role in the reform was played by the aforementioned psychology professionals, led by César Coll (Marchesi, 2020). Therefore, education was left at the mercy of psychology (Prieto, 2018) both in educational practice and academic research and development. The psychologisation of education and teaching continued throughout the following decades not only in Spain but also in the countries of the Ibero-American orbit, although with less intensity, due to the strong reaction of certain academic sectors, as we will have the opportunity to see later on. The “red boxes” do not include the writing team, but we know that they were teachers, professors and university students led by the figures we have listed above, both from the perspective of psychology and pedagogy.

The PCNs (1997), devoted to the first stage of basic education (*ensino fundamental*), consist of 10 volumes, published by the Secretariat of Fundamental Education, devoted to the curriculum design, and covering the following thematic areas: introduction, mother tongue, mathematics, natural sciences, history and geography, art, physical education, cross-cutting issues and ethics, environment and health, and cultural plurality and sexual guidance. We focus our analysis on the first volume (the introduction) as it is the one with the theoretical, political and methodological foundations. Its structure -somewhat “anarchic” in the sense of not following an academic sequence with a dose of logic- includes (in this order): considerations, the context of fundamental education, principles and foundations (the historical stages of Brazilian pedagogy, according to a political reading, which are framed in traditional pedagogy focused on the teacher and the contents), renovating pedagogy (New School and Active School), educational technicality (which revalues technology and focuses on behaviorism), Liberating or Liberated Pedagogy (school as an instrument of Popular Education that focuses the curriculum on social and political issues), and the critical-social pedagogy (interprets the school as an instrument of social and political reproduction; it gives more importance

than the previous one to “elaborate knowledge”, so last two pedagogical trends are common to the eighties), the organization of the PCNs (opt for the cycles and not the series as a curricular organization system; thematic areas and other cross-cutting themes), objectives, contents, evaluation (criteria, results, bulletins) and, finally, the didactic orientations (the great aims of education: autonomy, diversity, interaction / cooperation, availability, organization of time, organization of space and didactic resources).

The discourse - the narrative - is full of expressions typical of the period at an international level; it is the discourse of the social democracy of the time and which, in Spain, had become concrete and structured in terms of a network a few years earlier. This “semantic jargon” includes constant references to “improving the quality of education for all”, “democratic society”, “social stratification”, “distributive justice”, “social participation”, “the exercise of citizenship”, “equal rights”, “solidarity”, “respect”, “non-discrimination”, etc., in the “political” framework. The “pedagogical” discourse includes terms such as “cycle”, “area”, “cross-cutting issues”, “curricular project”, “educational project”, “construction of knowledge”, “mental activity”, “programming”, “teamwork”, “significant learning”, “constructivist perspective”, “area of close development”, “the teacher as mediator”, etc. Thirdly, we must stress that the foundation of classroom practices is based on genetic psychology; this is a reform that is more psychological than pedagogical. It is expressed “pedagogically” in constructivism, according to which, knowledge in school is the product of the interaction of three forces: student-teacher-content (Chuquilin, 2002).

The human team included in these documents published by the Secretariat of Fundamental Education with the support of the UNDP of UNESCO and the FNDE (National Fund for the Development of Education) includes coordinators, writers, advisors, graphic designers, reviewers, and “Consultants”. In the last case, two names are mentioned: César Coll and Délia Lerner de Zunino (Argentinean, graduate in Educational Sciences, specialist in reading and writing processes and teacher training). Therefore, the epicentre of the curricular transfer from Spain to Brazil is concentrated in the figure and work of Coll. Furthermore, in the seven pages of bibliographical support included in the document, the names of Spanish authors that appear are those of C. Coll, Delval (1983, 1990), Enguita (1995), Gimeno (1991, 1996, 1998), and Torres (1991). In addition, the MEC document (1992) on the curriculum of the primary education stage is quoted. The Spanish influence on the Brazilian education reform was such, in Gimeno’s words, that “the Brazilian government had copied the Spanish curriculum design on diskettes and translated it as it stood and intended to apply it”; the “boxes were green and yellow instead of red and blue, because of patriotism” (Varela, 2007, p. 38). However, Coll himself interpreted in an interview that he had only been a technical advisor in Brazil whose mission was not so much to design the curriculum (which had to be left in the hands of specialists), but rather its architecture (the form) (Lauand & Alabi, 1991).

Two opposing pressure groups in the academy

The Spanish educational reform was also a time and space of “tensions” between the two networks of political and pedagogical action: psychologists as protagonists and creators of the new educational language and pedagogues as followers, interpreters and adapters of the discourse and psychological abstraction to the school practices in the classroom. The design of the curriculum was taken away from the pedagogues and was based on the psychological abstraction coming from genetic psychology and its derivative, constructivism, and it was imposed hierarchically in the educational actions of the centres both to the directors and to the teachers, students, and parents. Coll himself answered in Buenos Aires a question about whether the social context influenced constructivism or not; his answer was no, since intellectually well-armed knowledge becomes an educational practice. As a pedagogical reaction to this psychological abstraction, Gimeno published, in 1991, the book entitled *El Currículum. Una reflexión sobre la práctica [The Curriculum: a reflection on practice]* (which in 2007 was already in its ninth edition); there, he argued the social foundation in the construction of the curriculum and the importance and influence of the student’s background as a basic condition in the processes of knowledge acquisition. The team of pedagogues acted, therefore, as an instrument of mediation between psychological theory and school practice.

Nevertheless, it was not only Spanish pedagogues who reacted against the “psychologisation of education”; Brazilian teachers and educators did too. As an example, we rely on the contributions of Barbosa (1997) to the critical theories of the curriculum; in a study on the curriculum according to Coll, starting from the four sources of the curriculum (sociological, psychological, epistemological, and pedagogical) he states, based on Gimeno, that diversity is a question more related to the individual characteristics of the students than to the socio-cultural context. Thus, it is more a question of adapting the curriculum to individual differences than of combating inequalities (Barbosa, 1997). In relation to the epistemological source, Coll’s curricular theory reduces the contents of the disciplines to “things of logic” (concepts, generalisations, principles), which Popkewitz questioned later by arguing that “things”, on moving from the social space to the school space, undergo a process of “alchemy” that involves new forms that have no place outside the school. Therefore, “Coll overestimates psychology and, in doing so, impoverishes the very model that inspired it (Tyler’s rational model)” (Barbosa, 1997, p. 103).

The material dimension of the transfer was expressed through travel and mobility to participate in conferences, congresses, lectures, seminars, technical advice, etc., but also in the translation and publication of books, book chapters and articles. We pay special attention to the “psychological” epicentre of transference, which is the

contribution of Coll. The following works were translated into Brazilian Portuguese in the 1990s: *Desenvolvimento psicológico e educação* (1996); *Psicologia da educação* (1999); *Psicologia do curriculum* (1995) y *Psicologia do ensino* (2000). Some of these works were re-edited in the first decade of the 21st century and some new ones were also translated, such as *Psicologia da educação virtual* (2010), *Construtivismo na sala de aula* (2006) or *Aprendizagem escolar e construção do conhecimento* (2008). All these works were published through one of the publishing houses of Grupo A Educação, one of the largest Brazilian education and training publishing emporiums, founded by Henrique Kiperman in 1973 in Porto Alegre. The publishing houses comprising the group are Penso, Artmend, Bookman, McGraw Hill, and Artes Médicas. This is a family group that was partly acquired by the private fund Kinea (40%) in 2018; control of the group with the majority of the shares remained in the hands of Celso Kiperman, as chairman of the board of directors. It was a sale whose value was not disclosed in the press.

In the framework of the “outbound pedagogical transfer”, we have to highlight the great influence and contribution of Gimeno (also of Varela or Torres); an influence that not only affected the field of education policy but, above all, academic life and school practices. Evidence of this are the translations into Brazilian Portuguese of three works: *A educação obrigatória. Seu sentido educativo e social* (1996); *Comprender e transformar o ensino* (1998, 4ª ed.) (reprinted in 2007); and *O currículo. Uma reflexão sobre a prática* (1998.). All of them were published in Penso and Artmed.

Conclusions

A first conclusion has to do with the conformation of the actors as a network of political and curricular action in the 1980s (the actor-network), within the administrative structure of the Spanish Ministry of Education, in the framework of the post-dictatorship education reform. Both networks (one of a “psychological” nature and the other more “pedagogical”) acted with the same purpose - the adaptation of the Spanish school system to the constitutional requirements from political approaches of a social-democratic orientation and the defence and protection of public schools -, but by different means and tools. The horizontal analysis of both networks allows us to verify that the psychological one was more theoretical, abstract, cognitive and based on constructivism as a consequence of the application of the cognitive schemes to the functional appropriation of the contextual reality. The pedagogical network, in turn, addressed the didactic perspective and how to proceed for an appropriation of knowledge by students taking into account their history and culture; the background became the foundation of learning. In the latter network, the sociological dimension of learning was to be crucial in transforming “social things” into school forms and contents.

A second synthetic reading goes hand in hand with the socio-pedagogical (also psychological) reaction against the psychologisation of teaching and education, both in Spain and Brazil. This reaction in Brazil was also a transferred component, as it was supported and based on the Spanish “pedagogical network” (Gimeno, Varela, Torres, etc.) which insisted, time and again, on the functional importance of the student’s socio-cultural context and that the student’s school constructs depended on their “background”. It is possible that the transfer was more “rhetorical” and “formal” (ornamental) than real and effective for the change of didactic methodologies and classroom school practices, since it could support and ground internal educational reforms and improvements; perhaps this reading is more true in the psychological dimension of the reform than in its pedagogical version. However, we believe that the “formal” nature of the transfer is not compatible with the organisation of a whole production system and the interpretation of education as an “industrial” organisation chart.

Finally, on the basis of the foundation we have referred to, we can interpret the Spain/Brazil curricular transfers throughout the 1990s, especially in the debate and construction of the PCNs (1997), as a “production network” or a production system, in which the actors of the “industry” express themselves through four vectors. These are the products (the goods), which are materialised in the reform documents as is the case of the PCNs; the production relations, which are concretised in a whole range of talks, conferences, congresses, seminars, meetings, etc.; the improvement of professional status, expressed through professional promotion in the respective jobs; and the production dissemination agencies, through publishing houses, academic circles, the press, etc.

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Eva García Redondo

Profesora Contratada Doctora en la Universidad de Salamanca.
Sus líneas de investigación están vinculadas a la Política Educativa,
la Educación Comparada y la Historia de la Educación,
siendo autora de diversas publicaciones.

E-mail: evagr@usal.es

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8025-9861>

Leoncio Vega Gil

Catedrático de Educación Comparada en la Facultad de Educación
de la Universidad de Salamanca. Miembro del Grupo de Investigación (GIR)
de Educación Comparada y Políticas Educativas (ECPES). Coordinador del
Programa de Doctorado en Educación de la Universidad de Salamanca.

E-mail: lvg@usal.es

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5579-2963>

David Revesado Carballares

Profesor Ayudante en la Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca.
Doctor en Educación y Graduado en Pedagogía
por la Universidad de Salamanca.
Autor o coautor de distintas publicaciones
en el ámbito de la Educación Comparada y Políticas Educativas.

E-mail: drevesadoca@upsa.es

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0121-6957>

Juan Carlos Hernández Beltrán

Profesor Titular del Departamento de Teoría e Historia de la Educación
en la Universidad de Salamanca,
con línea de investigación en formación
de profesores y educación comparada internacional.

E-mail: jchb@usal.es

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7171-7573>

Correspondência

Eva García Redondo
Facultad de Educación. USAL.
Despacho 30. Edificio Cossío.
Paseo de Canalejas, 169.
37008, Salamanca.

Data de submissão: Janeiro 2022

Data de avaliação: Março 2022

Data de publicação: Setembro 2022