

References

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Curriculum and curriculum contextualisation: Theory and practice of student teachers

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With the economic, social and cultural changes in the globalised world today, the school becomes a stage and a place of encounters among different cultures. It needs to be viable with regard to training individuals with cognitive and social skills, preparing them to face the reality of everyday life and to be able to produce their own stories. The required educational paradigm must be capable of providing individual(s) with a set of abilities and competences which will enable them to learn continuously throughout their lives. For this to happen, the teaching-learning processes must be centred on the students such that they may become the builders of their own knowledge and not focused on processes of accumulation and reproduction of knowledge from the perspective of a uniform curriculum. The curriculum should not, therefore, be considered from a normative and prescriptive perspective, but rather as a project covering the different interests of the educational agents participating in the process.

Consequently, we will talk of curriculum contextualisation, a polysemous concept which needs to be clarified in conceptual terms. We associate this concept to the territorialisation of the curriculum proposed at national level,

which favours activities and learning experiences that are familiar to the realities of students, so as to increase successful outcomes for all.

In geographical education, one of its key concepts is space. The originality of geographical reasoning resides in exercises of conceptualisation and confronting problems at several scales, preparing students to better “know how to think about space” and to consistently “act in the environment in which they live”.

The problems studied should be approached in an active manner, because students, when confronted with concrete problems, should be able to idealise solutions, employing geographical knowledge, procedures and techniques. It is important that the students’ territories be taken as the point of departure and arrival for the didactical pathway, alternating learning in specific spaces and different territories throughout the world, at different scales. In other words, when studying geographical themes, one should go from the local to the global and from there back to the local. The concern with attributing meaning to contents studied in the classroom, relating them to their daily lives and experienced reality, also encompasses the idea that elements of a broader, more global reality can be found in the local place.

This paper intends to present a study we have been conducting into the extent to which the practices followed by geography student teachers are interpretations of the geography curriculum guidelines, aimed at developing geographical education. To what extent do they contextualise the curriculum, or not, when developing geographical education. Even though their training has been directed at promoting such a contextualisation, the truth is that, in practice, it has not really been applied.

Introduction

In today’s globalised world, the school has become a stage for encounters among different cultures and for intense transformations in the social sphere. Education therefore should be regarded as a training process that serves to foster the personal, social, cultural, educational and professional development of young people, allowing them to develop the ability for continuous lifelong learning. This means each individual should be given the possibility to develop their specific abilities, so as to integrate and act in an increasingly complex society, embedded in a wealth of knowledge. In this rapidly changing society, the interests of young people are no longer those they once were, which may explain the rejection of many in relation to school. Schools and their teachers are confronted with the need to find different paths to stimulate their interest in learning, which also requires a different form of professional teacher training.

Thus, the teaching and learning processes need to be rethought and will necessarily have to be contextualised and centred on the students, leading them to be the builders of their own knowledge. This is a difficult task for teachers who, given the diversity of school publics and easy access to countless sources of information, are forced to consider learning as continuous construction.

Consequently, the curriculum can no longer be approached from a normative and prescriptive perspective, but should rather be regarded within the logic of a project that encompasses the different interests and characteristics of the educational agents involved in the process, particularly the students.

Although many institutions and even society still consider that learning is receiving, decoding, understanding and storing information of different orders which should be reproduced when solicited, our conception of learning involves better understanding the environment in which each individual lives and knowing how to make use of that knowledge. As advocated by Zabalza, we believe “learning is a process of individual empowerment that enables each subject to adapt to their environment and integrate it as competent individuals capable of making, to the best of their abilities, pertinent decisions” (2012, p.19).

If the concept of curriculum contextualisation is polysemous, it can be considered according to different dimensions or perspectives. It is still a concept in development, which has not yet completely stabilised, but which is gradually achieving a level of consolidation.

This paper thus begins by exploring the concept, its meanings and senses. Different curricular subjects can contribute greatly to the development of curriculum contextualisation. Geographical reasoning and the objects of study in school geography allow students, when confronted with real problems, to idealise solutions and apply their knowledge, taking as points of departure and arrival their didactical paths, their territories and alternate the acquired understandings in specific spaces, different territories and at different scales. The study of geographical matters should go from the local to the global and from there back to the local. Thus, the second point addressed in this paper is the conceptual renovation of school geography. The third point focuses on the approach to initial teacher training developed by geography teachers within the Master's course in Teaching History and Geography offered by the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto. In order to frame this research, brief references will be made to the National Geography Curriculum for Basic Education and the recent changes operated. Finally, the methodology applied is described and the study's final considerations are put forward.

1. Curriculum contextualisation: meanings and senses

The concept of curriculum contextualisation in Portugal has been broadened in educational language. As stated by Zabalza (2012, p.2), “this concept has gained greater strength among academics than among politicians”, but it appears as an alternative discourse to rethink the school, its very territory, local culture and the needs and resources of the context.

When we explore the meaning of curriculum contextualisation, its polysemous nature becomes quite evident. Seen from different angles, political, curricular, social, cultural and educational, according to Mouraz *et al* (2012, p.33), “the contextualisation of knowledge [or curriculum contextualisation] is linked to the perception each individual has of teaching and learning, as well as of the social function it is attributed”. Consequently, curriculum contextualisation can also be understood as “a set of didactical-pedagogical guidelines and practices that intend to work on curriculum contents such that they become more cognitively and socially relatable to the students and the contexts in which the teaching-learning processes unfold, making them more familiar and consequently more meaningful and understandable”(ibidem). Although it is difficult to find a concrete definition, curriculum contextualisation seems to be related to the idea that the curriculum has to be appropriate to the context in which it is applied but, above all, appropriate to the students (Fernandes *et al*, 2011) it is targeting.

Curriculum contextualisation thus enhances the interconnection between scientific knowledge (the curriculum defined nationally) and the students' knowledge (acquired in the local context), with room to intersect official

knowledge with the students' experimental knowledge and the school's local culture. This opens the way to implementing pedagogical strategies that can be used systematically in the teaching-learning process.

In line with Fernandes *et al* (2011) and Machado *et al* (2012), we consider curriculum contextualisation as a "mode of pedagogical work that intends to relate the teaching-learning processes, the curriculum and the students' social and cultural realities, their prior knowledge and cognitive styles, so as to give learning orientation and meaning. The main goal consists in the students being able to give meaning and sense to the leaning taking place at school."

Accordingly, instead of teaching contents separated from the students' contexts, hoping they discover how to transfer what they have learnt to their lives outside schools, teachers are obliged to implement teaching-learning processes based on their real-life contexts and use them in each stage of the process.

Contextualising the curriculum thus means adjusting it to the teaching-learning process according to the personal, sociocultural and professional characteristics, needs and interests of the students and represents the necessary condition for each student to make sense and use of what they learn, thus appropriating the meanings of the contents. This is possible if the students' prior experiences and conceptions are taken into account, as well as their motivations and paces of learning.

Curriculum contextualisation is seen in different dimensions and from different perspectives. In the process to develop the curriculum, the environment, the context, is a structural element in the organisation of pedagogical work. The environment in which the school is located becomes an open and problematic didactic resource. It necessarily presents diversities, disparities and particularities in terms of culture, traditions, customs and economic potential, comprising a fundamental element in more significant learning on the part of students, because it is focused on the reality which is most familiar to them. Educational work on the environment requires systematisation, logical diligence, and selective attention, which leads students to work on situations that are real and significant to them. The study of real situations leads us to scientific and linguistic aspects, as well as to the possibility of developing logical-conceptual concepts to describe and explain the phenomena students face in their daily lives. This pedagogical practice instigated by the teachers should involve the students, making them the centre of decision and empowering them to provide quality answers to the challenges they are posed. It is about making the student the centre of school life. The development of differentiated pedagogical practices fosters learning and classroom dynamics that respond to the different needs, expectations, paces and styles of the students. From the classroom experience, based on a process of effectively contextualised curriculum development, each educational institution can design their own projects, essential to implementing a flexible organisation aimed at adapting the curriculum to the characteristics, needs, interests and learning paces of students and, consequently, to the diversity and heterogeneity specific to each territory. Hence, curriculum contextualisation can be regarded as the intention to give schools and teachers autonomy to develop the curriculum based on collective and individual decisions. They can thus relate the contents worked in the classroom to the environment in which they are located and address the demands of their learners. Furthermore, curriculum contextualisation means teachers are no longer merely the executors of decisions taken outside the school, but become rather the curriculum designers and decision-makers, taking their pedagogical practice as a structural dimension of curriculum contextualisation. Therefore, the intention of "giving voice" to the students is present, responding also to the diversity within the school, whether it be cultural, cognitive or ethical diversity. Interlinked to pedagogical practice, subject fields are also a reference, particularly with regard to the pedagogical modes of work

developed and the manner in which they are developed. Understood as an articulated and integrated approach to the contexts of several disciplinary subjects, it serves not only to provide a comprehensive view of the knowledge acquired at school, but also gives students the means to appropriate the reality they experience.

2. Conceptual renewal of school geography

Many authors have developed studies on school geography focused on its conceptual and methodological renewal. A few differences separate the proposals presented by the different scholars, but they all endorse a conceptual renewal of school geography, recommending that geography should be “anchored (...) in the learning of fundamental concepts and key questions around which the subject structures its identity” (Cachinho, 2000, p.75). It is thus important to define topics, contents and techniques which “are able to develop the ability to think about space in students, so that they can, conscientiously, act in their environment, which, given growing globalisation, today intersects very distinct geographical scales, ranging from the neighbourhood where they reside to the far reaches of the globe” (*ibidem*). Space is the key concept for all. Space as the object of geographical analysis conceived of not as an object in itself to be described in detail, but rather as abstract form, “a theoretical construct, a category of analysis, which allows students to learn about the dimension of the spatiality of/in the things in the world” (Cavalcanti, 2011, p.195). It should thus become an intellectual tool used to analyse reality.

In order for young people to develop the ability to know how to think about space, so that they can conscientiously act in the environment in which they live, the teaching-learning process developed at school has also to undergo a methodological renewal (Cachinho, 2000; Merrene-Schoumaker, 1999). The goal is to develop geographical thought that can lead students to understand the complexity of the reality of daily life, helping them to form spatial reasoning so they can understand the world around them.

In line with Pinchemel (1982a), more than teach geography, we should educate people geographically. Consequently, we should focus on developing real, social, spatial, and dynamic problems, which can be applied in practice (Hugonie, 1989). In his turn, Merrene-Schoumaker (1999), citing L. Cornu and A. Vergonioux, advocates a didactical path as a methodology to teach geography that includes concepts placed in a network, which then provides a real research model to read the territories. It is thus possible to “unite the most dispersed knowledge acquired, making the students’ conceptions coherent and making them evolve, [and] concepts are also research tools since they relate phenomena which can then form the basis for new research”. Cachinho (2000) defends that learning is all the more significant the closer the students are to reality and to situations that affect their daily lives and the society in which they live, ultimately serving to establish relationships with what is happening in the space of others. Consequently, “it is by reflecting on the major social and environmental problems that today affect mankind, teaching students to raise questions and formulate assumptions and hypotheses on those same problems, as well as critically question the information they receive about them, that we can truly develop the geographical reasoning that is fundamental to raising responsible, geographically competent citizens” (Cachinho, 2000, p.77).

The problems that comprise the objects of study should be analysed in a comprehensive and systemic manner, in their elements and relations, confronting analyses at different scales and recognising that spatial relations and processes vary with changes in geographical scale (Lacoste, 1980; Cachinho, 2000). According to Cachinho

(*ibidem*), the originality of geographical reasoning resides in the exercises of conceptualisation and confrontation of problems at several scales, preparing students to better “know how to think about space”, and to conscientiously “act in the environment in which they live”. Furthermore, the problems studied should be addressed in an active manner, because students, when confronted with concrete problems, should be able to idealise solutions, employing geographical knowledge, procedures and techniques.

Furthermore, as defended by Merrene-Schoumaker, It is important that the students’ territories be taken as the point of departure and arrival for the didactical pathway, alternating learning in specific spaces and different territories at different scales throughout the world. In other words, when studying geographical topics, one should go from the local to the global and from there back to the local (Calai, 1999).

There is however great difficulty in successfully articulating the scales involved in apprehending reality, often falling back on “teaching based on the local, the experienced, the lived” (Cavalcanti, 2011, p.197), without changing the modes of pedagogical work in which knowledge is facts, concepts and objects. The processes are not addressed, and the intention and opportunity to help students form, on the basis of theoretical reasoning, broad concepts which will take them farther, beyond their immediate world.

Merrene-Schoumaker (1999, p.105) defends that “knowing how to think about space means understanding the world better so as to act in it more efficiently” aspects that are essential to the planning and development process of any space.

We are thus dealing with a school subject that, due to its fundamental concepts, key questions and teaching methodology can contribute to curriculum contextualisation practices in institutions.

3. Training teachers for curriculum contextualisation

Students of the Master’s in Teaching History and Geography of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Porto, are first introduced to teaching these subjects for basic and secondary education in the 1st year modules, ‘Geography Teaching Methodology’ and ‘Teaching Resources in History and Geography’. Students become familiar with geographical and pedagogical discourse, coming into contact with the theoretical concepts that guide curriculum development, which highlights the role of the teacher as researcher and promoter of autonomy, and the concepts of planning and evaluation in the teaching-learning process. Students are encouraged to master correct and original forms of fostering the didactics of geography and become teachers in this subject.

It is believed that students come to school with prior knowledge based on which they build new knowledge and are far from being empty vessels. There is a need to put into practice a teaching of geography based on cognitive and metacognitive strategies, intended to make students aware of their own knowledge. From a methodological point of view, we believe teachers should promote cognitive conflict and apply activities based on discovery.

We have proposed methodologies anchored in the use of different languages, verbal, musical, that of images, cartography, and technological resources, which link the classroom to reality and the students’ daily lives. We believe that they help students identify the contents studied and adapt them to a meaningful learning. Teachers should not however stop only at raising students’ awareness, but go further, and use the contents to foster the students’ intellectual development, based on training in geographical reasoning.

This geographical reasoning shall always imply links with the territory, highlighting the answer to the question(s) “Where?” and “Why there and not somewhere else?” (Merrene-Schoumaker), as well as learning to confront analyses at different scales and select the best spatial level to deal with the question, that is, it is multiscale and necessarily dynamic. Dynamic in the retrospective and prospective sense, seeking to find, in the evolutions of the past, the explanations for the spatial structures of the present and, based on current trends, separate the elements to conceive scenarios of the future. Geographical reasoning is rooted in a scientific path and includes the representations each individual conceives of the territory.

In this constructivist context, the planning of the teaching-learning process should depart from pre-concepts and focus on conceptual maps, bearing always in mind that new concepts will only be appropriated by the students if they are meaningful and if they are perceived in light of the conceptual frameworks they possess.

A planning model is developed, a conceptual planning, which is based on the students' prior conceptions from which problem-situations are proposed. The students are guided through successive stages, until these situations are resolved, thus promoting meaningful learnings and consequently the construction of knowledge and conceptual change. Given this view, planning should include a process of curriculum development, which conceives, implements and evaluates the educational act. To embrace this approach, teachers have to become more involved with and committed to the school community in general and to their students in particular, so as to understand their prior conceptions and thus help them to build upon their knowledge. “Planning is assumed as a method and a work instrument, always open to new experiences and any type of innovation, being thus a flexible, interactive, open and incomplete activity” (Braga, 2004, p.29). Planning “involves creating stimulating environments that provide activities which are not predictable at the outset and which, (...) address the diversity of situations and different points of departure of students. This assumes that activities should be planned that present the contents in such a way as to make them meaningful, helping to develop competences in *learning how to learn*” (*ibidem*, p.27).

In the school context, teachers can devise several types of planning according to the different moments of the teaching-learning process. It is common to talk of long-term, mid-term and short-term planning. In terms of the teacher training we defend, when we talk of long-term planning, we mean devising an annual plan. Although there are several models, it should cover the topics and contents to be developed (thematic, procedural and attitudinal), presented throughout the year within the time available to work, defining the number of classes necessary for each topic. It is also framed by the national and local legal documents, namely, the National Curriculum, the School's Educational and Curriculum Projects, and the Class Curriculum Project. Given its time range, the annual plan is generic and undetailed, but should serve as the basis for all the other plans developed during the academic year.

Mid-term planning, which is the case of the Didactical Unit Plan (DUP), allows the teachers to develop each teaching unit, interlinked to the Annual Plan. It is a working tool which allows the teachers to organise their educational practice, adjusting the teaching-learning process to the students' needs. The students, future teachers, are encouraged to design the DUP to include all the structuring elements (initial evaluation, thematic, procedural and attitudinal contents, educational and evaluation situations), which can serve as an organisational vector. They are encouraged to take decisions of a didactical nature so as to organise teaching-learning situations anchored

around an Aggregating Educational Situation (AES)³⁵. In this way, they students should make an integrated management of the geography curriculum, that is, conceive of the teaching of the subject “not in an automated manner, not centred on or dedicated to concept a, b, or c, and not in a linear sequence, class after class, concept after concept, etc.” (Martins, 2011, p.237). It is our goal “to show that it is possible to conceive of planning in an integrated manner, so that it can be used in the field, break with routines and yield new practices, as well as appropriate news ways of developing geographical education” (*ibidem*).

4. The National Geography Curriculum for Basic Education

At the beginning of the 2010s, the National Geography Curriculum for Basic and Secondary Education was changed. Up until then, school geography for basic education favoured specific competences in the subject and their appropriation should make young people geographically competent. That is, it was believed that a geographically competent citizen could master spatial skills and prove he was capable of spatially visualising the facts, interrelating them, of correctly describing the environment in which he lived or worked, of elaborating a mental map at different scales, of understanding spatial patterns and comparing them and of finding his way on the earth’s surface.

It was also thought that, apart from these spatial skills, a geographically competent citizen should also “be able to critically interpret and analyse geographical information and understand the relationship between territorial, cultural and heritage entity and regional individuality” (ME, p.6).

Thus, during the teaching and learning process, teachers were expected to promote educational experiences that aimed to develop, among others, research skills. Teachers should develop experiences and create situations in which students would learn to observe, record, and process information, raise hypotheses, formulate questions, and present results. At the same time, geographical skills should be developed both at the level of fieldwork and group work, which were believed fostered the promotion of ideas and the production of conclusions.

Based on the different learning experiences suggested, geography teachers could organise the teaching-learning processes as they considered most appropriate to the contexts of their school(s) and their class(es), creating the conditions for their students to undertake activities which would enable them to develop the ability to know how to think about space and be able to act in the environment in which them lived.

As mentioned earlier, at the beginning of the 2010s, the National Curriculum changed. Today, it has come to be understood as a “set of contents and aims that, adequately intersected, comprise the basis on which teaching and the students’ performance evaluation are based” (D.L. nº. 139/2012). The curriculum is implemented in study plans and knowledge and abilities to be acquired and developed by the students, taking as their reference the subjects’ programmes and the learning goals each student is required to achieve in each school year and educational cycle. The goals establish that which can be considered as the essential learning the students should achieve and comprise the reference which teachers and tutors/parents should take as their reference (*ibidem*).

³⁵ Identify a situation (an idea, a sentence, a motto) which gives each unit coherence, aggregating the knowledge to be learnt, as well as the students’ and teachers’ interests, the potential of the people involved and the environment in which they live, as well as the available materials and resources.

The focus is once again placed on the students' cognitive development, taking as a reference the aims and formal learning contents established by the programmes and learning goals.

With the institutionalisation of curriculum goals for geography in basic education, the topics are now organised hierarchically and sequentially, which was not the case before. The domains are divided into subdomains and general aims which are specified into rigorous descriptors of cognitive performance which serve to evaluate the aims formulated. Many aims and descriptors have been hierarchised to be taught in only three academic years. It will be very difficult in Portuguese schools for students to learn geography based on a teaching-learning process where the student, by discovery, is motivated to become geographically educated. That is, to learn how to discuss real, social, dynamic problems which can be applied (Hugonie, 1989). It will be very difficult to provide students with teaching-learning situations which will allow them to respond to basic questions for which geographers have always tried to find answers. What we foresee, rather, is a teaching of geography based on simple memorisation of facts and concepts, distanced from what today is widely understood as that which should be taught to young people. What we also predict is a teacher as consumer of the curriculum rather than its designer.

However, we intend to continue providing initial teacher training based on modes of pedagogical work that encourage curriculum contextualisation with regard to the contribution made by geography. To this end, we continue to promote the geographical education that should be developed with young students and to endorse the contribution the subject can give to the integrated education of young people today.

5. Research methodology

In the measure that the National Geography Curriculum for Basic Education changed so radically in recent years, we intended to understand how it has been interpreted by future geography teachers in initial training. We should highlight that these young people had been secondary school students three years earlier, and that their perception of the teaching process was still closely tied to the descriptive process. For them, the concept of learning was intimately connected to receiving, decoding, understanding and storing information that was to be reproduced afterwards.

We thus asked the 19 students attending the subjects of Geography Teaching Methodology to design a DUP of a conceptual type. Thus, during the 2013/2014 academic year, each student was required to design a DUP, bearing in mind the teaching methodology developed and the school context. Based on the official and local documents of each school selected (Educational Project, School Curriculum Project), each student planned a didactical unit at their school. It was a complex task given the diversity of topics and each student's points of view on the conceptions of teaching-learning. At the end, we obtained 19 unit plans. These were analysed according to the content analysis technique, based on pre-established categories.

From the 19 plans developed, 14 were indeed plans of a conceptual type. Not only did the students take into account the official national documents but also the local ones, having identified an AES and proposed educational situations that were truly problem-situations. They proposed a pedagogical practice involving the participation of the students making them the centre of the decision-making and leading them to accomplish tasks related to the research. In this way, they were able to plan diversified educational situations that were truly innovative, which led

the students to observe the environment, record the phenomena, process the information, raise hypotheses, formulate conclusions and present results. These plans presented an open, dynamic and flexible scheme.

Only 5 students opted for a different type of didactical unit plan. Their plans were of a linear type, structured into sequential stages of teaching that were the same for all the students and, in the educational situations, the student was hardly considered as the centre or focus.

As we intended to understand how the students who had designed the DUP of a conceptual type interpreted the Geography Curriculum Guidelines and Curriculum Goals in the school context (2nd year), that is, in a real situation in the environment in which they were located, the school, we once again asked them to design a DUP that would be the object of content analysis.

Hence, the following academic year (2014/2015), these students were accomplishing their teacher training internships at different schools. In their Supervised Teaching Practice course unit, they were required to design didactical unit plans related to the topics they were going to teach in their classes. Each student completed 3 unit plans, some quite extensive given that the topic thus required it. For this reason, we selected 10 students among the 19 teacher trainees, who has likewise prepared conceptual plans the year before. We thus obtained 30 DUPs which were analysed according to the content analysis technique, following the same categories applied in the first stage of the study.

It is here that we discovered that none of the students designed a DUP of the conceptual type. On the contrary, all had plans of a linear type, configuring educational situations much more centred on the transmission of didactical contents and each topic's goals and descriptors, often stated and prescribed by the school textbooks used, and much less on the national legal norms.

Final considerations

As we mentioned previously, curriculum contextualisation is seen as a pedagogical mode of work which intends, through the teaching-learning process, to interrelate the curriculum, the environment, the students' social and cultural realities, their cognitive styles and prior knowledge, so as to attribute meaning and sense to the learning taking place at school.

This means teachers should structure the teaching-learning processes based on the real-life contexts of their students, such that can be used in each stage of the teaching-learning process, giving them autonomy to develop the curriculum and thus become curriculum designers.

In terms of teaching school geography, reconceptualising the curriculum is based on making young people aware of the ability to think about space in order to be able to act in the environment in which they live and, as such, understand the complexity of daily reality, helping them to develop spatial thinking and understand the world around them.

If in the 2000s, this was the focus of the National Geography Curriculum for Basic Education, in the 2010s, teacher is no longer centred on the student, but rather on the formal learning contents established by the curriculum goals. Even with this curricular inversion, the initial training of teachers continued to develop a geography teaching methodology and didactical practices involved reconceptualisation of teaching in this subject. But from the data

collected in our research, we found that curriculum contextualisation in schools is not being accomplished. The teacher-students who had been able to devise pedagogical modes of work that included learning situations that intersected the curriculum, the environment, the students' social and cultural realities, became the mere executors of decisions made centrally and outside the school.

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The curricular demands of the Penguin Revolution in Brazil fighting for quality education

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Identify and analyze the articulate curricular demands in the discourse of the social movement known as Penguin Revolution, who struggles in order to achieve a free, egalitarian and quality education for the Chilean. Based on the curricular theory developed by A.Lopes and B.Macedo, and the theory of the discourse developed by Ernesto Laclau in society with Chantal Mouffe. Understanding that these demands are inserted within a broader group of distinguishing demands whose antagonists are the government's neoliberal project, represented by the "Concertación de partidos por la democracia". In this way, there are two discursive chain: on one hand, the student's discourse is built on the demands of quality and equality of the education, specifically the curriculum reform demand. On the other hand the Chilean government that has hegemonized temporarily certain discourse on what is quality education.

They both try to establish their own meaning for "quality" in education, developing a war of representations. I sustain that the broadening of the discourse chain, due to the incorporation of the new demands representing different social actors, has allowed strengthening the movement of the Penguin Revolution, which has permitted the articulation of a chain of equivalences between the demands which has led this discourse to remain hegemonic through time

Among the curricular demands of the student movement, we can point out the demands to the curriculum that should have been implemented, aiming to replace the previous curricular model, which was considered to be functional to the neoliberal model, situation that was debated within the movement itself, mainly among those who proposed a centralized and standardized curriculum at a national level, model proposed by the most conservative wing of the movement (CONES) and those who reinvidicate a decentralized curriculum with emphasis in the community, led by the most radical wing of the movement (ACES). The full school day (JEC) also starts to be questioned, to reformulate the technical-professional curriculum for one more in line with the market demands, one which would offer real possibilities of employment. In addition, reforms to the main systems of centralized evaluation were proposed; SIMCE and PSU, even the elimination of the last one as college selection system, as well as the return of the subject of civic education in the curriculum, curriculum reforms to physical education, or the incorporation of content related to the exercise of democracy across the board in the curriculum.

Precisely thanks to the constant addition of new social demands. In this sense the signifier "quality" of the education has turned into a empty signifier, unable to represent temporarily the totality of the social movement. This is, the totality of the demands registered in the articulatory chain. In this way, the political struggle of the Chilean student movement for a quality education has put on the national debate the issue of the education, periodically setting in motion the society, and achieving important transformations within the structure of the national education system.