

EDUCATIONAL PUBLIC POLICIES FROM A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE: DEBATES AND RESPONSES IN THE TRAINING OF ARGENTINE CITIZEN IN THE INSTRUCTION SYSTEM (1881 – 1930)

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ABSTRACT

This article is part of the ongoing research of the Amílcar Herrera Project, developed at the University of Lanús, which conducts inquiries within the framework of the Research, Teaching, and Extension Network in Education in the Central-West and Northern Regions of Brazil and in Latin America. Following the lines of inquiry developed around the political function of education and the establishment of a patriotism defined by the ruling elite during the Centennial of the May Revolution in Argentina, this article analyzes, within the policies developed by the National Council of Education, the strategies and interventions implemented through the

governmental instruments that make them function. The specific focus of this work is the official journals as driving forces behind the Council's policies. A rhizomatic approach is constructed and redesigned for its study, based on Deleuzian frameworks, which articulates categories of critical discourse analysis, tools for studying educational policies, and elements of the political trajectories of leadership in order to understand, from their relational framework, the production of government instruments from the publications of the different political cycles.

KEYWORDS: Education government; Educational public policies; National Council of Education; official magazines; historiographical perspective.

POLÍTICAS PÚBLICAS EDUCATIVAS CON PERSPECTIVA HISTORIOGRÁFICA: PROBLEMAS Y RESPUESTAS EN LA FORMACIÓN DEL CIUDADANO ARGENTINO EN EL SISTEMA DE INSTRUCCIÓN PÚBLICA (1881-1930)

RESUMEN

El presente artículo se inscribe en los avances de la investigación del Proyecto Amílcar Herrera desarrollado desde la Universidad de Lanús, que produce indagaciones en el marco de la Rede de Pesquisa, Ensino e Extensão em Educação nas Regiões Centro-Oeste e Norte do Brasil e na América Latina de Brasil. Siguiendo las líneas desarrolladas en torno a la función política de la educación y la instauración de un patriotismo definido por la élite dirigente del Centenario de la Revolución de Mayo, en Argentina, se plantea aquí, al interior de las políticas desarrolladas por el Consejo Nacional de Educación, el análisis de las estrategias e intervenciones

através de los instrumentos de gobierno que las hacen funcionar, siendo el objeto particular de este trabajo, el conocimiento de las revistas oficiales como resortes de las políticas del Consejo. Se construye y rediseña para su abordaje un enfoque rizomático desde las tramas deleuzianas que articula categorías del análisis crítico del discurso, herramientas de estudio de las políticas educativas y elementos de las trayectorias políticas de la dirigencia para conocer, desde su trama relacional, la producción de instrumentos de gobierno desde las publicaciones de los diferentes ciclos políticos.

PALABRAS-CLAVE: Gobierno de la educación; Políticas públicas educativas; Consejo Nacional de Educación; revistas oficiales; perspectiva historiográfica.

1 ESTUDY PAST EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

This work aims to share the theses of previous research on public education policies from a historiographical perspective for those who are just starting out with their own projects. It presents some of the results of previous studies and their implications in an attempt to answer the following questions: How do public education policies function in the consolidation cycle of the Argentine education system? The following questions are added to this: what intervention strategies does the leadership design to achieve its goals? And what are the strategic interventions implemented by the educational government to enforce the functions assigned to education?

From the above, the following questions emerge that define the object of study: what are the levers that drive intervention strategies and strategic interventions from official journals?

This erotic system originates in the studies developed around the National Education Council (CNE)-an organization that, since 1881, has been responsible for guiding common education (Marengo, 1991; Guic, 2023).

To more fully understand the origins of the need to study the educational policies that established the formation of citizenship, it is also necessary to establish and expose some of the tensions that promoted its study.

Around 1990, initial investigations focused on the so-called school integration.

In the 1990s, the relationship between teaching practices and institutional cultural changes led research toward the origins of special education, intended for the teaching of students with disabilities.

These initial investigations led to the establishment of a hygienist discourse, which, from the turn-of-the-century positivism (Biagini, 1986) and the first decades of consolidation of the Argentine educational system, outlined ways of being and doing in schools, diagnosing social issues and designing educational policies to address them.

Physicians began to proliferate in government positions, particularly in the area of education governance. The medical cadre (Vazzetti, 1893) constituted the leadership of the CNE (National Electoral Council) between 1908 and 1930 and administered regular education during this period. This initially presented a paradoxical scenario. The mere discourse established regarding disability was inconceivable in the present we inhabit, employing typologies such as mentally handicapped or disabled, but, on the other hand, some leaders saw school, even if was differentiated, as a place to address education in contexts of disability. In Argentina at the turn of the century and in the first decades of the 20th century, doctors, through the educational government, promoted the creation of specific educational institutions.

So, while time has shown that there are no paradoxes, but rather issues that converge in a single context, the conditions that make it possible to investigate them have become a genuine problem, understood as a lack of knowledge, in relation to the governmental perspective.



From there, the figure of physician José María Ramos Mejía (1849-1914) emerges. Through his political interventions, he diagnoses the immigrant problem (Guic, 2019) and, from his presidency to the CNE, provides an eminently patriotic response to the problem of citizenship. Therefore, the dynamics of the studies carried out are highlighted as a development, always seeking clues to understand the reason for the integration, now school inclusion, of legal subjects who, since Law 1420 of 1884, were required to attend school.

Thus, educational programs are recovered, which can be understood as public educational policies (Guic, 2023), from two constitutive dimensions of policy: intervention strategies and strategic interventions, such as government design and implementation.

For the study of the patriotic function of education, the following categorical dimensions of educational policies are selected:

Intervention strategies will consider training and information for curricular content, such as patriotic knowledge, and will bury the diversity of those subjects to be governed. Strategic interventions build, transmit, and act on training and act on training and information as part of a system of educational political legitimatization (Guic, 2023, pp. 215-216)

Continuing the study of public education policies from a historiographical perspective, and in successive entries, it was possible to reconstruct, from the biographies of those who govern common education, the political trajectories and different interventions through various writings such as: books, articles, minutes of sessions, reports, government memoirs, etc. Moreover, in subsequent periods, continuities and some ruptures were found in the successive educational programs, beginning the journey of the radical cycle (1916-1930) and moving towards the so-called "infamous decade" (1930-1943), where evidence shows a shift from the patriotism of the May centenary to different forms of nationalism.

A review of categorical constructions led to the implementation of the analysis of public education policy based on the instruments produced by the government in pursuit of resolving problems that require answers, such as the issue of citizenship.

To explain it another way, educational policy, based on its regulatory frameworks, involves diverse processes simultaneously and at different stages of its development: debates, agreements, competing ideologies, interests, practices, and perceptions-among many other issues-in pursuit of the establishment of regulations. From this, policy actions, specifically educational, emerge for its implementation; intervention strategies define government instruments to execute strategic interventions in achieving objectives, which are the answers, those that can remedy the problems that the leadership, we would say today, places on the agenda. So, how do we investigate these past educational policies and the establishment of certain rationalities and aesthetics, paying special attention to those that established a discourse that is still prevalent in many ways?

It was necessary to begin search for sources that reflected the government's perspective, documents that had not been thoroughly investigated:

The document that slumbers in the archives is not only silent but also orphaned; the testimonies it conceals have been separated from the authors who "created" them; and they are subject to the care of those who have the authority to interrogate and defend them, providing them with the help and assistance they require (Riveros, 2015, p. 4).

In line with the previous statement, the question arises as to how to undertake the collection of sources in an archive. This archive often contains, separately, documents that can be investigated together. This adds to the aforementioned division, a certain fragmentation, produced in part by the excessive classification of the specializations required in newspaper publications.

To cite an example, documents that are questioned as literary sources, or specifically educational sources, such as Lugones's *Didáctica*. This document could now be classified as a publication that the educational government- Lugones, a government official at the time of the publication-established to consolidate the contents of so-called Patriotic Education.

With the mere intention of attempting to repair, even if only briefly, the segregation between discourses and the instigators of discursiveness (Foucault, 1991, 1996); The publications and other writings were studied alongside the biographical trajectories of their authors, strengthening the research and always embodying discourses and founders, in the contexts of production, where the constitutive bases of politics in general and of educational policy in particular are always present.

The studies of official documents were articulated: educational laws, minutes of CNE sessions, digests reports, memoirs, publications, and among them, *El Monitor de la Educación Común* from the cycles studied. These are sources that, when investigated relationally and from a governmental perspective, offered an opportunity to study educational policies, exploring different aspects of their constitution.

Simply put, and to give an example, the programs and their contents are plausible to be questioned as part of this lush and complex framework.

Problematizing educational programs as public policies, recognizing their founding elements, and opening up dimensions and variables linked to the educational government's responses require a mode of questioning that does not destroy this constitutive framework. Therefore, a rhizomatic approach is employed, which is briefly described below.

2. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

If the study undertaken involves a diversity of documentary supports and non-hierarchical dimensions, then the rhizomatic approach is a form of multidimensional treatment, as agreed upon in the following definition:

The rhizomatic approach enables the construction of research tools that foster the questioning of public education policies in different production contexts. In the case of this long-standing study,



significant progress has been made in reconstructing the educational programs of the National Education Council, which, during the Centenaries (1910-1916) and into the 1930s, reveal a patriotic and nationalist educational policy function that has become naturalized throughout the various subsequent political cycles (Guic, 2023).

For this occasion, some aspects of its use are proposed to share its strengths and strengthen some elements of its implementation. A slightly more precise definition, if you will, of the rhizomatic approach:

[...] the rhizomatic methodological approach is, in principle, a process that involves placing a problem resulting from theoretical and practical construction in locis (in zones) and in focus/focorum (in the focus or foci), delimiting a fragment of a complex, diverse, and incomprehensible totality that must be investigated; directing attention toward a path enables the systematic and non-hierarchical study of certain procedures for making the problem in question visible (Guic, 2019, p. 66).

This approach to the past, which challenges educational governance, seeks to address sources in an articulate manner to explore the educational functions required of education, the functions that civil servants in the various government spheres perform, or fail to perform, and the resulting objective functions.

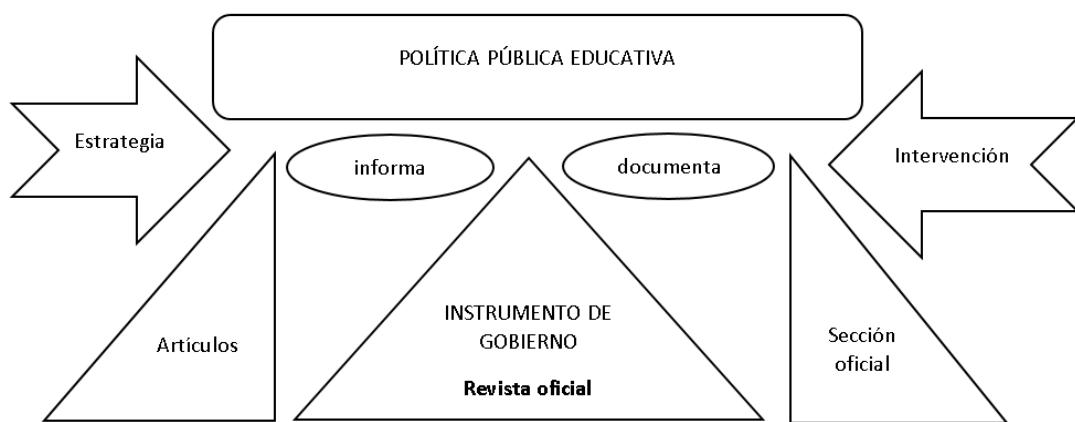
Thus, the law is addressed as a framework instrument of government, which, in turn, contains elements specific to its origins-ideological, axiological, pragmatic debate, etc.-and its analysis reveals clues to distinguish the declarative nature of its articles from those of evident concreteness.

For their part, the session minutes are a source for reviewing the issues addressed by the CNE, the budget for achieving its objectives, and the ways in which decisions were justified. In their connection with Law 1420, CNE members outlined the powers assigned to them by the regulations and, from there, produced resolutions as a normative framework for their policies. They used the law as a starting point for producing law.

The lines of continuity between the concern for school integration, which was once systemically inaugurated in the 1990s but inaugurated in the 1900s, reveal a connection, not always visible, between the medical origins of the government of common education and its current expressions.

Finally, the analytical category constructed to articulate intervention strategies and strategic interventions is incorporated, based on a construction that focuses on the instruments of government and the official journals that promote educational policies, in order to delve into the drivers that drive them. Below is a chart that summarizes the dimensions and categories of policy research.



Figura 1*Representación gráfica de las dimensiones y categorías*

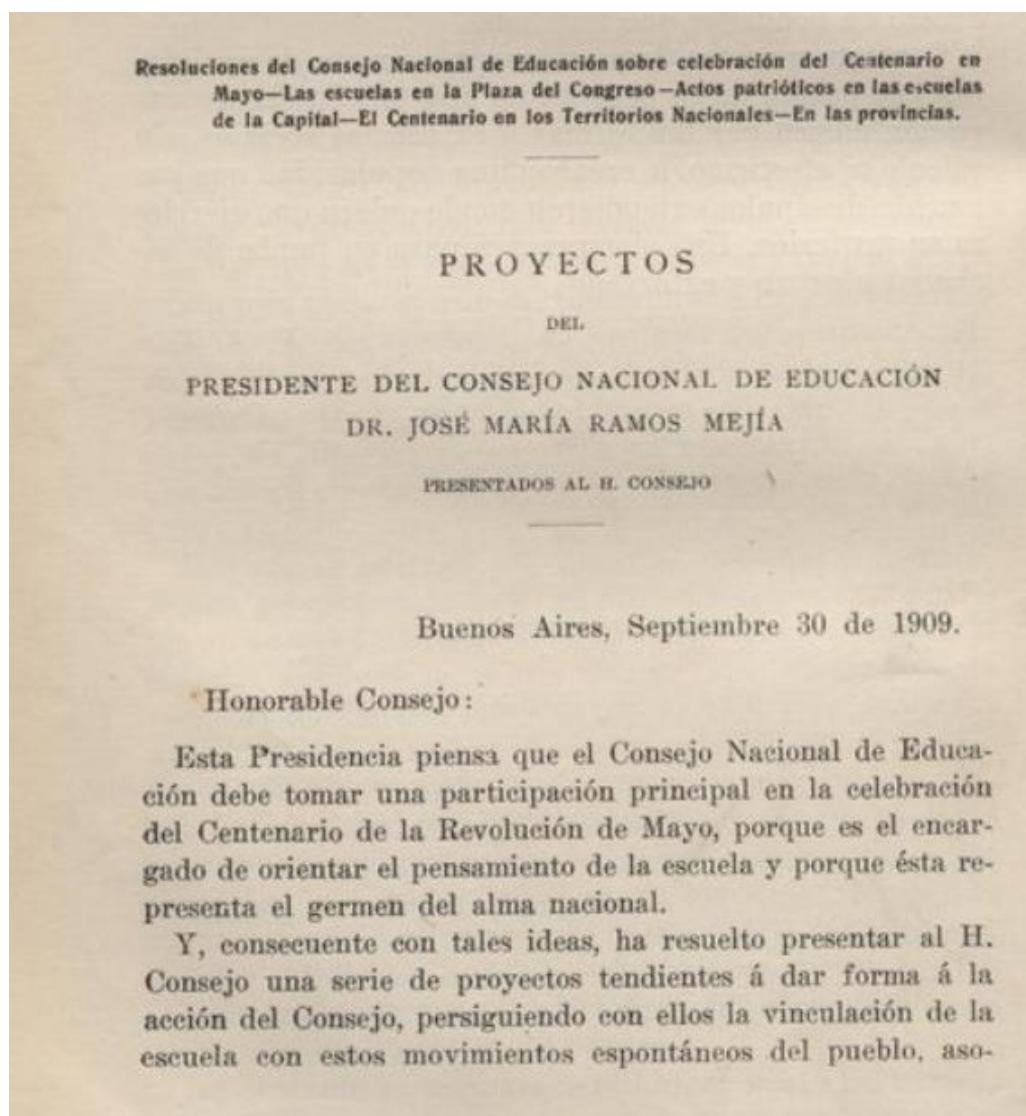
Nota. Elaboración propia.

A distinction is observed in the journal's sections, which deal with both communicating the contents of policies and documenting the practices collected from educational institutions.

Figura 2*Altar patriótico en las festividades del Primer Centenario de la Revolución de Mayo*

Nota. El Monitor de la Educación Común, 1910, Biblioteca Nacional del Maestro

As an illustration of the research graph, it shows how the implementation of a defined regulation for patriotic education, established in the Patriotic Education Project of September 30, 1909, is displayed.

Figura 3*Proyecto de Educación Patriótica del Consejo Nacional de Educación*

Nota. Biblioteca Nacional del Maestro 2022

A problem that requires a systematic approach is the government's perspective on so-called common education. Its responses in the form of educational policies and the elements resulting from those responses. Marengo calls them transcendence.

Figura 4

Revista oficial del Consejo Nacional de Educación: El Monitor de la Educación Común



Nota. Biblioteca Nacional del Maestro (2025)

As a summary of the methodological section, the CNE's official journal is a government instrument (Guic, 2024) that internally contain the resources that promote the implementation of the educational policies established by the governing body.

The following is a study of a section of the *El Monitor* magazine, which shows the government's action within the proposed relational framework.

3. INSTRUMENTAL RESOURCES

Here are some research advances related to the deepening of the instrumental resources that reveal the mechanisms for establishing leadership discourse.

The profuse production of journals is reflected in a section of the publication *El Monitor de la Educación Comun*, a journal of journals whose objective is the dissemination of journals and bulletins. The authors are generally officials from various spheres of government in general and from the educational government in particular, which seeks to strengthen the ideological and argumentative framework of citizen education from a patriotic perspective (Guic, 2023).

To understand the drivers that drive these government intervention strategies and strategic implementations, some journals from the period studied and some modalities are selected, exemplified by the cases below.

The publication in the main body, as shown in Figure 1, consists of two parts: one containing articles and the other an official section. In seeking answers to the relational framework, it is clear that the magazine's management uses diverse work as input for writing articles for *El Monitor*. This is the case with "History in Argentine Schools" written by Ernesto Bavio, who is cited in this section of the "Review of:

In the issue of *El Monitor de la Educación Comun*, corresponding to the months of August, in the section entitled "Review of Reviews", we find the following assessments on the subject, taken from the Pedagogics Reform: "The child lacks an intimate relationship with the past as well as the notion of time in general. He does not understand what the great communities are, which are the pillars of history, because he ignores what popular sentiment is (Bavio, 1910, pp. 713 y 714).

Inspector Ernesto Bavio (1896-1976) uses a foreign publication to support his arguments regarding the importance of studying history in elementary schools.

For the sole purpose of revealing how the publication network is produced from this section aimed at officials and teachers, a table is shared below that provides at least some of the ways in which the relational network of publications is evident. This section is found in the *El Monitor*, *Revista de revistas* (Review of Magazines) section, where only those Argentine publications accepted by the Council are detailed in a section.

Cuadro 1
Lista de revistas argentinas elaborada desde la sección Revista de revistas en El Monitor

Revista	Año	Tomo	Mes	Número
ARS (Revista de Arte)				13 y 14
Revista Militar			octubre y noviembre	213 y 214
Boletín de Ministerio de Relac. Exteriores y Culto		XXVIII		1
El Estandarte Evangélico	XVII			46 al 49
Athinae Revista Argentina de Bellas Artes				25
El Economista Argentino				167 y 168
Revista Musical				108
La Semana Médica	XVII			46 al 49
Constancia				121 al 123
Éxito gráfico				59
Boletín de la Unión Industrial Argentina	XXIV			503
Revista del Centro de Estudiantes de Ingeniería				99 y 100
Revista de Policía				324 y 325
Anales del Patronato de la Infancia		XVIII		10
Unión y Labor				14
La Reforma	X			11
Boletín de instrucción Pública			octubre	23
Boletín de Sanidad Militar			junio	6
El Comercio Exterior Argentino				147
Boletín Mensual de Estadística Municipal	XXIV			10
La Odontología Argentina				15
Revista de Derecho, Historia y Letras			diciembre	
Revista de la Sociedad Médica Argentina			septiembre y octubre	604
La Reforma Argentina				269
La Universidad Popular				2 al 7
Revista de Instrucción Primaria de La Plata				131
Revista del Notariado			octubre	156
Revista de la Asociación de Maestros			diciembre	6
Revista de Sordos mudos argentinos			diciembre	3
Anales del Instituto Argentino de Artes Gráficas			diciembre	12

Nota. Lista de revistas argentinas promovidas por el CNE elaborada desde la sección Revista de revistas en EL Monitor de elaboración propia Fuente: El Monitor de la Educación Común (1910).



It can be seen that each of the governmental and non-governmental agencies has a publication as an instrument of government. While the journals received by the CNE vary across issues, the details in this section adequately reflect the diversity of journals from institutional sources, state agencies, various associations, etc.

Since the promotion of the other journals, both in the body of *El Monitor*'s articles and in the Official Section, surveys have been systematized that strengthen the hypothesis of the functionality of these instruments of government as a resource for the transcendence of the policies developed over time.

4 IN CLOSING

While the research continues, some final considerations are shared regarding the study of official journals as drivers of public education policies.

This opens the discussion in two directions: first, regarding the study of cycles, as a consistent cycle between 1908 and 1930 seems to be defined, which should be explored in greater depth.

Following the metaphors of the rhizome, pivotal root projections can sometimes be considered, which, due to their versatility, facilitate a deeper study of policies, particularly those of each cycle. Second, we can continue with rhizomatous projections, which, due to their horizontal, somewhat hidden growth, allow us to expand the research and explore other periods, thus establishing continuities and ruptures in the system's educational policies.

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