Time, power, and education. Rethinking the construction of personal identity and educational policy decisions

Tiempo, poder y educación. Repensando la construcción de la identidad personal y las decisiones de la política educativa

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Abstract:

Social conditions of current life do not exactly constitute an ideal framework for the serene implementation of a balanced temporal perspective in the educational system. The article tries to contribute to: 1) substantiating the anthropological value of time, showing the decisive character that, in the current circumstances of accelerated change, the time domain has in the configuration of personal identity; 2) with a more applied nature and awareness of the interaction between time, power, and educational action, rethinking the meaning and scope of today's educational policy decisions.

Methodologically, we adopt a hermeneutical approach in which we critically analyse the temporal perspective as a coordinate of personal and social experience, as well as the predominant patterns that explain and justify the connections between time, power, and education.

We show how, within our individual possibilities, the balanced organisation of time contributes to achieving a successful personal identity, strengthening the ethical impetus of the educational task and transforming our lifestyle. However, the encounters and dis-

agreements between time and education also depend on the horizons of meaning that we adopt at the collective level, which leads to power being seen as an explanatory variable.

Rethinking time and education leads us to reconsider educational policy decisions, in which we simultaneously notice obstacles and innovative possibilities. The change in individual and collective lifestyles, linked to a balanced temporal orientation, is associated with complex interactive and not merely unidirectional socio-cultural dynamics.

Keywords: education, time, school time, change in attitude, personal identity, lifestyle, power, educational policy.

Resumen:

Las condiciones sociales de la vida actual no constituyen precisamente un marco idóneo para la serena implementación de una perspectiva temporal equilibrada en el sistema educativo. El artículo pretende contribuir a: 1) fundamentar el valor antropológico del tiempo, mostrando el carácter decisivo que, en las circunstancias actuales de cambio acelerado, tiene el dominio del tiempo en la configuración de la identidad personal; 2) con carácter más aplicado y conscientes de la interacción entre tiempo, poder y acción educativa, repensar el significado y alcance de las decisiones políticas educativas de hoy.

Metodológicamente, adoptamos un enfoque hermenéutico mediante el que analizamos críticamente la perspectiva temporal como coordenada de la experiencia personal y social, a la vez que los patrones predominantes que explican y justifican las conexiones entre el tiempo, el poder y la educación.

Mostramos cómo, dentro de nuestras posibilidades autónomas, la organización equilibrada del tiempo contribuye a alcanzar una identidad personal lograda, fortaleciendo el impulso ético de la tarea educativa y transformando el estilo de vida. Ahora bien, los encuentros y desencuentros entre tiempo y educación también dependen de los horizontes de sentido que adoptemos a nivel colectivo, lo que conduce a revisar el poder como variable explicativa.

Repensar el tiempo y la educación nos conduce a la reconsideración de las decisiones políticas educativas, en las que advertimos simultáneamente obstáculos y posibilidades innovadoras. El cambio de los estilos de vida individuales y colectivos, vinculados a una orientación temporal equilibrada, se encuentra ligado a complejas dinámicas socioculturales interactivas y no meramente unidireccionales.

Descriptores: educación, tiempo, tiempo escolar, cambio de actitud, identidad personal, estilo de vida, poder, política educativa.

1. Introduction

In the first part of his *Criticism of Pure Reason*, Immanuel Kant (1781) defined time as an intuition, the precondition of all experience, and a priori form of sensitivity. As Louis Lavelle (1945)

stated, inapprehensible and irreversible, time emerges where the absolute of existence and non-existence seem to be confused. Although we have been able to act prodigiously in space, shortening distances in a way that was unsuspected until not long ago, we cannot do the same with time and instead debate between a glimpse of the eternal and the pain of its impassive, inexorable flight, even if it goes at a different speed — to paraphrase William Shakespeare in his well-known comedy *As you like it* (1599, act III, scene II) — walking, trotting, galloping, or stopping.

Subjugated by consumption or by its appeal, most individuals nowadays inhabit a society characterised by fluidity and movement, by the haste of the typical life of the effects of globalisation, progressively distanced from the founding principles of modernity that illuminated the preceding two centuries. This restlessness extends unlimitedly, emanating from a life disconnected from tradition and uncertain in the face of the future. These are the "hypermodern times" to which Gilles Lipovetsky (2006) referred. Anxiety, fear, or anguish often win the battle against the small pleasures of everyday existence.

Faced with the postponement of gratification as a classic sign of self-control, the most representative behaviours of the contemporary world could be considered to be affected by the "syndrome of impatience", invoking Bauman (2011, p. 109): "In the volatile world of liquid modernity ... walking is better than sitting, running is better than walking, and surfing

is better than running." Human existence thus flows through hundreds of scenarios, without the pursuit of any purpose in which the various temporal dimensions could find some point of equilibrium.

In this society of instantaneous change, frequently erratic, the configuration of identity remains intimately linked to the temporal dimension. To the extent that people have the ability to reason, remember, and imagine, our welfare depends on a broader view of our lives that integrates its particular moments into a narrative. Our story-thinking contributes significantly to our welfare in a way that cannot be reduced to other characteristics that provide value (de Marneffe, 2013). This narrative gives form and texture to our existence, enabling the various events to connect with each other and granting them meaning and value, while our life story continues to develop (Ricoeur, 1988). The temporal orientation we adopt, our awareness of and attitude towards time, together with other factors (traits of the historical-cultural age in which we live, conditions related to the generation of membership, family lifestyles, living conditions, concrete possibilities...) constitute a fundamental axis of the configuration of our identity.

Although their relevance is often unnoticed, our attitudes towards time have a profound influence on our lives and our environment. Research on the psychology of time has highlighted our ability to strengthen, promote, and change our behaviour by directing it towards goals of greater human fullness. Savater (1997, p. 39) states that with education "we

are not born to the world but to time." Certainly, although we live in time like fish in water, our attitudes towards time can be transformed, giving rise to a new awareness of the value and meaning of existence through which we can fully embrace the temporal dimension while recognising its fleeting nature: "Our time is short and it will pass, whatever we do. So, let's give it a purpose. Let's use it so that our time is important to each of us and to all those whose lives we touch" (Zimbardo & Boyd, 2009, pp. 311-312). Within our individual possibilities, together with their rapid course — reminding us of the classic Latin phrase "Tempus fugit" —, the government of time fosters a decisive ethical and plenary impulse towards educational action.

Different signals lead us to reveal the decisive nature of time as a transversal axis for understanding educational action, sensing how agreements and disagreements between time and education also depend on the horizons of meaning that we adopt at the collective level. The consideration that time is an adjustable aspect within institutional spaces is still evidence of its link with power as an explanatory variable, making an in-depth examination of the meaning of educational policies more relevant.

In a time of uncertainty and complexity and in the face of threats of chaos, democratic societies need to educate their members as free citizens, capable of participating in political deliberations and decisions. Therefore, current pedagogy (SI(e) TE Group. Education, 2018) cannot give

up delving into the different rationalities that make it possible: creative and critical, and not just instrumental. Such a purpose seems unfeasible to us without reconsidering the temporal dimension in the area of political decisions.

In the context of qualitative research, we take a hermeneutic approach (Callejo, 2010), seeking to critically analyse (Fairclough, 2010; Luke, 2001) the most relevant scientific output on studies in which attitudes towards time are seen as configurating personal identity, as well as on the systemic link between time and education from a policy-development perspective.

We carried out a study to contribute to furthering the specific focus on time as the coordinate of personal experience as well as the environment in which we live our individual and collective existence. We also analysed the predominant patterns, aiming to highlight key elements for explaining and justifying the connections between time, power, and education in today's educational systems.

In this regard, we propose the following main objectives: 1) To reflect and provide a basis for the anthropological value of time, specified in the attitudinal realm, showing the decisive role that its domain currently plays in configuring the personal identity achieved and in one's lifestyle; 2) to analyse the interaction between time and power, revealing the main potential elements of change and points of controversy, as well as the influence of the episode, the conjuncture,

and the long duration on the priorities, mechanisms, and agendas of current educational policies.

2. Attitudes towards time. Critical review

Contemporary research on the psychology of time has specified the *temporal perspective* as the personal attitude, often unconscious, that we have towards time and towards the process through which the continuous flow of life is structured into categories that give order, coherence, and meaning to our existence. A given temporal perspective projects certain time-related attitudes, beliefs, and values. Zimbardo and Boyd (2009) found six well-known temporal perspectives: negative past, positive past, fatalistic present, hedonistic present, future, and transcendental future. In addition, a temporal model of subjective well-being has been proposed, influenced by the contributions of Zimbardo, such as 3P (Durayappah, 2011), which, in addition to providing an explanation, seeks to unite disparate theories and measures, under the three temporal states of the present, past, and future. This model indicates how each state is relevant to the comprehensive assessment of subjective well-being and how each state is different but connected to the rest.

Based on decades of research on the psychology of time, it is inferred that an optimal combination of temporal perspectives facilitates the choice of the most appropriate one for each situation, extending our gaze and attention to the full range of human experience. According to the most contrasted studies (Zimbardo & Boyd, 2009), a balanced and flexible temporal perspective brings together the following relationships: strong positive past, moderate future, moderate present, weak negative past, and weak fatalistic present. Such a combination offers: roots that connect us with family, tradition, and our cultural legacy; confidence in our ability to face the challenges of the path without turning away from our destiny; energy to appreciate the goodness of existence and to experience the joy of living; and resistance to diverse pessimistic influences that can affect us throughout our lives.

New studies confirm the value of a balanced perspective of time for personal happiness, helping to retain or improve it. Simons, Peeters, Janssens, Lataster, and Jacobs (2018) have highlighted the moderating role of age in the association between the perspective of time and happiness. During the aging process, the negative association between a negative past perspective and happiness is weakened.

Recent research with adolescents between 11 and 16 years of age provides interesting results to understand what they consider a priority to achieve full satisfaction in life (Crous, Casas y González-Carrasco, 2018). This state of fullness is associated with the appreciation of the little things of daily life, the awareness of being a just and honest person, as well as the feeling of making others happy. That is, the feeling of fullness is associated with a balanced disposition of time, capable of facilitating the jour-

ney on paths that lead to personal and social development.

There is evidence of a link between participation in well-being and patterns of time usage, which does not seem confined to any particular culture (Gao, Wu, & Zhai, 2015). Holistic well-being is associated with a distribution of time spent on leisure, social, work, and educational activities. It follows that people are happier when they spend their time in dignifying experiences and the development of meaningful social relationships than when they spend it on material goods (Sircova et al., 2014; Sobol-Kwapinska et al., 2018). Personal strengths, such as gratitude and vitality, predict positive changes in satisfaction with life over time. This predictive value also includes children suffering from serious adversities (Chaves, Hervás, García, & Vázquez. 2016). After certain negative life events (death of a close relative, unemployment, disability...), changes in subjective well-being experienced can be buffeted by different resources. Recent research highlights the ineffectiveness of material resources to counteract negative events, revealing instead that religious resources show the greatest power of buffering, above social and personality resources (Kuhn & Brule, 2019).

These investigations converge with the different strategies associated with the temporal perspectives that Sonja Lyubomirsky (2008) indicated increase people's level of happiness: past perspective (expressing gratitude, avoiding thinking too much or brooding, learning to forgive), present perspective (acting generously, cultivating relationships, increasing flow experiences, savouring joys, and caring for the mind), and future perspective (cultivating optimism, developing coping strategies, setting goals, caring for the body, and cultivating spirituality).

3. Power and relevance of education for time mastery. Temporal competence and school system

Educational personalisation has a positive impact on the different learning experiences within schools, but also on other areas of life, specifically, on planning one's existence (Kivimaki & Meriluoto, 2018; Moreno, 2020). The retention of customised learning content is not only perceived as useful, but it indirectly improves continuity intent (Mark & Vogel, 2009). In times of excessive attention to the merely productive, some counter-narratives of curriculum enrichment (Livingston & Doherty, 2020) question the overly simplistic measures of learning that can distort what really matters the most: the complete formation of the person.

Attention has been given in multiple studies to what we might call the *organisation of school time*, related to the use of formal learning in daily educational activity. Historically, from the perspective of educational personalisation, for example, the relevance of this variable in educational practice has been emphasised to distinguish between objectives for the mastery of learning and fields for cultural development and creativity (García Hoz,

1988), which underlies the technique of *Mastery Learning*, devised by Bloom (1968), derived in turn from Carroll's model of school learning (1963), based on the individual need for time to learn something and not on the amount of what can be learned.

Moreover, referring to the school system in general, there has been no shortage of criticism of the repetitive and impractical exercise in many teaching styles, as well as the widespread assertion that a subjective perception of time changes depending on whether or not there has been learning characterised by engagement — harming disadvantaged students either way (Gimeno Sacristán, 2008).

Perhaps, in this historical moment of the curriculum, the reflection on the relationship between time and school organisation in the context of knowledge society will also lead us to question "time in the organisation" (Vázquez, 2007), to open up to a greater connection of personal time with the different spheres of life, broadening the horizon of education towards goals of greater fullness. Research in the teacher sector has found the positive relationship established between psychological well-being and time planning and between the possible enjoyment of the task of educating and the achievement of some organisational temporal level (Eldeleklioglu, Yilmaz, & Gultekin, 2010).

Indeed, it is a question of the current demands of "lifelong learning" not being reduced to an imperative of survival in today's complex societies, but rather to be able to question the meaning of our existence, distributing our time when carrying out everything that allows us to achieve a more successful life. The extent of the problem is thus increased, not limited to *Krónos*, chronological time, organised and programmed, but open to *Aión* and to *Kairós*, vital, human, and formative time, in a Bergsonian key, a time of creation (Sánchez-Serrano, 2018).

Judy Wajcman (2015) shrewdly revealed the obstacle between new technologies and society. Accelerating the pace of life is still evidence of the interconnections between speed, technology, and workplace and leisure settings. The widespread perception of a lack of time has become a social circumstance conditioning our individual and collective well-being. To be specific, the imbrication between new technologies and society is what leaves us margins of (re)action to redistribute time and channel new uses more in line with our authentic human condition. However, amid excessive accelerations, we find the obstacles of our constitutive slowness. The delay allows us to value our past while profiling the future. Without waiting there is no growth or true development, as life is made up of events and hope: "Kairós, the happy moment, always presupposes waiting: that time, which is sometimes a torment, which we —beatific— sometimes lose, and which is always a gift" (Köhler, 2018, p. 138).

Schools that present stimulating cultures for professional development take care of the mastery of time (Engels, Hotton, Devos, Bouckenooghe, & Aelterman,

2008). The decisive importance of the temporal dimension is currently noted in the demand for a school governance that goes beyond the mere bureaucratic function, trying to articulate formal learning with non-formal learning, diverse educational spaces and times. Moreover, progressively, in the virtually increasingly mediated educational systems, the processes become more relevant than the spaces themselves, and learning time is predominant over the place where one learns (García-Gutiérrez, 2015). Thus, a new type of school governance is needed, especially adapted in terms of planning, coordination, and evaluation of the educational systems (Bernardo, 2020). This does not imply institutional uniformity, but quite the opposite: "the educational impact of this *ethos* (of the educational centre itself) is not linked to a single teaching system but acts in very varied socio-educational contexts" (Ibáñez-Martín, 2017, p. 80).

There is a widespread purpose of providing effective responses to the global challenge posed by the new economic demands of the knowledge society. No one questions the urgent need to meet such fundamental demands for people's material development. But, at the same time, to avoid any drama, we may be in a historical moment conducive to the reformulation of the market and of humanism, where we can recover the primacy of human dignity, reflected in educational practices and the policies that regulate and order it. In this sense, we are not exaggerating when, extending the proverbial warning of Benjamin Franklin (1945)

to a young trader, we state that ultimately, time is not only gold, but it is all we have.

4. Time and power in education

Taking time seriously, driving its existential distribution towards human fullness, reconfiguring the recurrent procedures of building personal identity, as we are suggesting, even if it is an old concern of humanity, is not reflected in educational practice or, to a large extent, in the very design of specific educational policies.

Much of the current policy-making assumes the meaning of time within an exclusively quantitative perspective, as a neutral and standardised parameter. In everyday school life, such an understanding of time can lead to excessive concern for the assessment of widely established characteristics or indicators, inducing students to pursue a predetermined path that also homogenises everyone's rhythm and temporal dedication. Unequivocally, there is a deep ethical consideration in the current understanding of the complexity of time and the criticism of reductionist approaches to time, also reinforced by today's philosophy and science (Bates, 2019).

Within the framework of global educational reforms, the principles associated with the simple quantification of the educational process, often in a managerial and easily disseminated fashion, seem hegemonic in many parts of the world. (Díaz, Kawada, Chávez, & Monzón, 2019).

Although criticism is emerging from various sectors close, more or less, to educational practice, the widespread perception that this standardisation-prone approach is the most adequate for solving the problems that have an impact on contemporary education systems seems to be spreading like wildfire. This perspective may have contributed to the improvement of certain aspects of performance in the public service provided by education, but at the expense of the perception that this service increasingly resembles a standardised production-line. However, only collective solutions can be provided by the state, often far from the real situations where educational projects take place. More independence and flexibility of schools is needed to implement those changes aimed at preventing obvious inadequacies and enhancing key elements such as adopting a balanced temporal outlook. A true pedagogical autonomy of time, the best way of governing time is illustrated between institutional, organisational, material, functional, and personal tensions, which continue to represent mechanisms and power disputes.

It is worth remembering that the idea of what constitutes a good education is not reduced to the strictly cognitive and academic sphere, but is also open to personal opinion, which tries to reconcile, as far as possible, quality and equity. Acquiring lifelong learning skills, developing self-esteem and interactive competence, achieving sustainable temporal competence, and increasing our chances of being happy are, among others, fundamental aspects to achieve full identities,

mature personalities, expanding our understanding of what we consider a good education. Political decisions should pay more attention to student behaviour and non-academic growth. As Michael Fullan (2005), a well-known theorist of change once said; sustainable leadership, such as that which our time requires, is only possible if we improve the ability of the educational system to engage in the complexities of continuous improvement consistent with the deep values of the person's goals.

Curriculum policy contributes significantly to a culture of technical responsibility through its complicity with performance, standardised testing, and rankings. The demand for compliance with technical requirements can divert attention from the profound philosophical and ethical questions about the educational purpose, while risking there being less possibilities for the autonomous development of the main characters of educational action (Winter, 2017).

Socially practiced assessments, sooner or later, change behaviours; consider, for example, how university assessments (QS World University Rankings, the Academic Ranking of World Universities or the Shanghai Ranking...) are influencing current university policy and management. Apart from the advantages or uses of the concern for greater efficiency of the educational system, the quality and equity required of this system are not reduced to this rational perspective, but require an equally firm dedication to social cohesion and moral integrity, placing respect for

human dignity at the forefront. Without the inclusion of a new temporal perspective, such as the one described above, successfully undertaking this challenge will become more improbable.

Imagination is needed to find systemic formulas capable of generating more balanced political decisions by providing complementary relationships between common, standardised, and new inclusive and participatory possibilities, creating humanisation-enhancing conditions. Regarding assessment, the OECD (2013) calls for the search for synergies for better learning and the necessary balance between summative and formative assessment. It is a question of progressively approaching greater intelligent responsibility in education (O' Neill, 2013), promoting sustainable practices that are more likely to be compatible with diversity.

5. The role of time in the genesis and structuring of current problems in educational policy

With respect to the legitimacy of other options, we do not intend to make a kind of problem inventory or a record of all possible fields of study related to the educational policy arising from the review of research approaches and practices. We prefer to select the most important theoretical and practical problems that respond to real life, the old and new fields of research (Puelles, 2013), which today, by virtue of some mastery of time, attract the attention of researchers in their attempt to understand how the educational

political community is constituted from its static structure, how it develops, and how it should be formed. A review of this list of problems brings us closer to the current contrast between the significant difficulties presented by the consideration of personal temporal competence and its social impact on the field of political forms of education.

- *Language* as a way of interpreting and understanding political reality, becoming a transformative system and an innovative mediation to explain democratic transitions (Reano & Garategaray, 2018), one of whose most significant exponents can be seen in the study of the relations between the State, law, society, and education, with important implications in the legal framework of education, highlighting the unique evolution experienced in the field of the right to education and its universalisation (Arrufat & Sanz, 2020). Interest in studying these aspects can be found in the academic offer of universities from countries as diverse as Ireland, the United Kingdom, and Sweden. A hotly disputed current issue relates to the new forms of political language that are approached through social networks (Hernandez-Santaolalla & Sola-Morales, 2019), with important repercussions on public opinion and the attributes of (post)truth (Gozálvez, Romero-Rodríguez, & Larrea-Oña, 2019) that certainly require greater attention in the curricular policy. Social networking technologies are modifying behaviours and scena-

rios of human interaction, but they are also closely linked to the social construction of time (Pesce, 2014). In this sense, educational action has enormous potential for change in terms of reconsidering the temporal dimension in individual and collective life.

- New *actors* who transform the political *stage*. Our voices are heard once more, and the experience, subjectivity, attitude, and feelings developed by political actors are rehabilitated, giving way to new dimensions for the understanding of political-administrative norms and declarations, as well as the mechanisms of collaboration, participation, commitment, educational pacts, and the more significant practices of politics. From this, suggestive works on so-called *community studies* have been developed, and progress has been made on personality and politics, giving rise to today's thriving political psychology. Records and indications on these topics appear in the educational policy programmes of France, Slovakia, and Hungary. Scenarios and actors that highlight an interest in political and educational behaviours in a context of multimedia, meta-data, and online globalisation (Bonnes, Leiser, Schmidt-Hertha, Rotty, & Hochholdinger, 2020), as well as research on inclusive education and society, focused on inequalities, school dropout and, in general, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, inside and outside of school, as a priority area (Gil Cantero, 2019; North & Fiske, 2016). A struc-

tural problem of a social nature, such as the adoption of a new orientation of temporal competition, could turn into specific educational concerns thanks to certain initiatives, similar to how sensitivity to lifelong learning policies managed to turn youth unemployment (a structural economic problem) into an individual educational concern (absence of specific competences) (Valiente, Cansada-Munrech, & de Otero, 2020).

- Changes in the *narrative* of power, mechanisms of legitimacy and ways of operating in educational systems (Fernández Soria, 2013; Heimans, 2012), as well as in the explanation and criticism of the main processes of democratisation, socialisation, and political inculturation in the different educational models, also preventing their risks and impostures (Martín-Lagos, 2018). Italy, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Cyprus, among other countries, are paying specific attention to these problems. It is fair to say that there is a new political-pedagogical culture, with important changes in the consideration of the distribution of time, as well as the methods and mediations with which the curriculum is managed. In various ways, concerns, sometimes two-sided, between a chronological concept of time, which somehow confirms the objectivity of human behaviour, and a kairological notion of time, more focused on human emancipation, emerge (Decuypere & Van den Broeck, 2020).

- Obvious advances in the consideration of education as a public policy and the educational administration as *a techné* oriented to the achievement of objectives. In recent years, entrepreneurship policies, excellent educational systems oriented towards excellence, cooperation with development, and education as a public policy stand out (Griffiths, 2012; Jiménez, Matos, Palmero & Ragland, 2017; Martínez Usarralde, 2011). Remember, in this context, the strong impulse of the instrumental rationality of the educational policy experienced in the eighties of the last century, materialised in different time planning techniques in the educational systems (Jiménez, 1984), which are currently continued and reinforced by different studies on the effects of time on efficiency and internationalisation processes that are so interesting to the field of social sciences (Fuenteslaz, Garrido, & González, 2020). Following on from this is a horizon of possibilities for organisational changes that enable personalised learning practices, in a terms of differentiation and complementary relationships with time for integral human action.

- The planning and standardisation of educational work, depending on the chosen social form of coexistence, is reflected in research programs that are cultivated in universities in the Netherlands, Latvia, and the United Kingdom (Jiménez, Palmero, & Luis, 2013). It is a line of research of great interest that has solved important problems associated with the symbolic coherence of groups, the logic of collective action, and participation in educational management, as well as the explanation of school modernisation processes. Under these premises, education policy, far from pure cratology, will allow us to extend our knowledge of the content, programme, regulation, and social competence of political decisions as the action and result of power. Communicative rationality, closer to a kairological model of time, illuminates pedagogical possibilities focused on a pact and not a *diktat* (Ibáñez-Martín, 2017). It thus connects with some practical rationality (Strandler, 2015), capable of shaping the tension between the regulatory and reflective dimensions of real training contexts, between the necessary social accountability and the moral dimension that justifies the educational process.

- The innovative and creative potential of lifelong learning, a reform movement that is admirably managing to provide universal access and continuous education to all individuals, opening up conventional educational spaces and contents and making organisation and educational timetables more flexible (Morris, 2019). A major educational problem is the permanently unstable balance between a personal development model —humanistic model— and a model of human capita —human capital model— (Regmi, 2015). Education can be effective as an instrument of "soft" power (Antonova, Sushchenko,

& Popova, 2020), finding formulas that overcome old antinomies, albeit from a long-term perspective.

- Modification in the spatial coordinates of educational decisions, *supranational policy* that emphasises cooperation and territorial solidarity. We are challenged to coordinate national and supranational decisions — specifically on curricular policy — and consequently a process, still open, of prescription and pedagogical normativity, including results of the evaluation of international bodies with the added claim of a long-term perspective that surpasses the traditional episodic and circumstantial characteristic of educational policies (Dijkstra & Athanasoglou, 2015; Pedró, 2012; Represas, 2015). The influence of international agencies in education policy-making at all levels of governance is partly due to the creation and dissemination of educational indicators, more than a few of which are linked to a knowledge of economics and its demand for short-term results (Rutkowski, 2008). Leaving the economic loop is a challenge that encompasses not only a reconsideration of the temporal perspective of individuals and societies, but also the fate of genuine human development.

6. Conclusion

The relevance of time-balanced government is more important than ever because of the volatility of modern life. Mastery of the various areas of our existence, far from mystifications close to absolute autonomy, constitutes a renewed pedagogical requirement that calls for a second look at our relationship with time.

We find it impossible to control physical laws, but we can manage the referential contexts of time. Better management of our temporal orientation, distinguishing some moments from others, some spaces from others, thanks to a more mature distribution of the time available and a better knowledge of what can benefit or harm us according to the circumstances, can profoundly modify our behaviour and contribute to greater general well-being. Increasing our temporal competence, by forming new attitudes more in line with the balance of the usual temporal perspectives, requires a new educational sensitivity, associated with a vindication of human dignity and its demand to live life to the full.

But the change of life that harbours a new individual and collective temporal orientation also calls for some transformation in our ways of life, our lifestyles. Surely, the crux of the problem lies in the spaces between the complex connections of the contexts of educational practice and the instances where the decisions that mark the frameworks of coexistence are generated. Rethinking human time and educating our temporal perspective leads us to the very reconsideration of the political decisions that condition the circumstances of a shared life.

The implications and patterns of educational action, inside and outside the school system, in new scenarios where

time prevails over places, lead to the search for a conciliatory approach between the regulatory requirements and the demands of a new distribution and individual and collective use of time. Channeling these demands requires their inclusion among the new priorities of the political agendas of local, national, and supranational education.

Indeed, the transfer of such pedagogical ideals to the widespread practice of education forces us to reflect on the influence of the episode, the conjuncture and the long duration of the priorities, mechanisms, and agendas of the educational policies, revealing the intricate links that emerge in the relationship of time with power. In this regard, we simultaneously warn about certain innovative obstacles and potentials in current political decisions: communication as a mediating and transformative system, the emergence of new actors on the political scene, certain changes in the narrative of power itself, the search for new combinations of different rationalities of the educational phenomenon, the unexplored potentials of lifelong learning requirements, and the coordination of different levels of political decision-making.

With its kaleidoscopic presence, power infiltrates the entire plot. And it is not limited to the political prescriptive sphere but is also experienced in the educational potential of educational practice itself. The reconfiguration of individual and collective lifestyles associated with the temporal dimension is not due to one-way decisions but is open to the interactive

complexity of current socio-cultural dynamics. Not only are the greater well-being of everyone and an increased fulfilment of life at stake, but also the creation of a fairer and easier world to live in. No one is excluded from this task.

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