ARGENTINE EDUCATIONAL REFORM: TENSIONS BETWEEN DEMOCRATIC AND NEOLIBERAL DISCOURSES.

A Thesis in
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by
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ABSTRACT

In 1993 the National Law of Education number 24195 was passed in Argentina, setting the legal basis for a national educational reform that affects the whole educational system. The educational reform comprises changes in the structure of the educational system, the period of mandatory education (extended to 10 years), the renewal of curricular contents, the assessment of the educational system, and teacher education and teacher training.

The implementation and results of the educational reform have already been analyzed in many studies. The focus of this study is on a different aspect of the reform: the values and subjectivities that the educational reform promotes. To address this question, the study analyzes texts that comprise three levels of the curriculum: the National Law of Education, the Basic Common Contents (BCC) standards for Ethics and Citizen Education in compulsory education, and textbooks for the general and basic (mandatory) education.

This study uses an integrative method that includes critical policy analysis, critical discourse analysis, critical analysis of characters, and analysis of the formal elements of illustrations. The results highlight three main points: 1) although the different levels of the curriculum share some values, the meanings of these values change in the different texts. Some values are emphasized by the National Law of Education, but lose strength, disappear, or acquire opposite meanings in the other levels of the curriculum analyzed in this work. Examples are the idea of the subject as agent of change and the concepts of discrimination and inclusion, 2) the National Law of Education depicts the individual or
person as an enterprise self - an individual searching for happiness, self-esteem, self-actualization, and self-fulfillment, an individual who constructs her own project and her own life. I define this emphasis on the self-made individual as a way in which the market discourse enters the arena of education, a process of marketization of the curriculum. The BCC include the enterprise self, but take the construction of subjectivity to the arena of psychology, by emphasizing the individual as a psychological self. I define this emphasis on psychology within the curriculum as the process of psychologization of the curriculum. By the combination of the processes of marketization and psychologization of the curriculum, the subjectivity of the entrepreneur self emerges as the superseding subjectivity of the three levels of the curriculum, and 3) the entrepreneur self, as a form of neoliberal individualism, presents serious tensions with the idea of education of democratic citizens and the strengthening of democracy.

Finally, the study drafts brief guidelines for teachers to analyze teaching material in ways that allow them to work against the neoliberal individualistic discourse, include the solidarity within and among groups, and reinsert the democratic individual that the National Law of Education names but fails to develop.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

This study focuses on the subject positions made available within the Argentinean National Education Reform launched in 1993. My main question is: What subjectivities can be identified in the curriculum of the Argentinean education reform and what are their political consequences? Because subjectivities are related to the context, I explore the dominant political rationalities during the period when the reform program was launched, linking the national and global context to the reform program and its consequences. Toward this end, I examine three sets of documents: The National Law of Education (1993), the national curriculum of Ethics and Citizen Education, and various social studies textbooks. These texts construct apparently natural ways of being an ethical citizen in Argentina and position students accordingly. My work attempts to identify “the ways in which texts construct meaning and subject positions for the reader, the contradictions inherent in this process, and its political implications” (Weedon, 1999, p. 182). My goal in writing this study is to contribute to the current dialogue about the future of schooling in Argentina, and its relation to the development of Argentine democracy.

In this chapter, I use my personal experiences to introduce and illustrate key concepts used in this work: “subjectivity”, “pedagogy”, and “rationalities”. Toward the end of the chapter, I provide an overview of the text and the methodology of the study.
I attended high school during the last years of the period of military dictatorship in Argentina. Among other things, I learned at school how to behave and how not to behave as a student. Even though I do not remember having read any explicit rules, I learned that I could obtain good grades and teachers’ approval when I obeyed, consented, memorized and agreed. By being reprimanded and punished, I learned that I should not think differently from my teachers, question my teachers’ ideas, respect people as equal regarding hierarchy, or try to change things. Being obedient and passive were the keys to doing well.

I am sure every day lived at school taught me that, but I only remember a few “memorable situations” from which I learned “how to be.” One afternoon, during art class, while everybody was busy drawing, the Assistant Principal came in to our classroom and said “good afternoon”. Instead of doing what we were supposed to do – stopping our work, standing up and saying “good afternoon Mrs. Collazzo,” we just said it while continuing to draw our pictures. Mrs. Collazzo loudly yelled “Do you think you can say hello to me in the same way you say it to the janitor?” Just then we heard a voice that said, in a very natural, relaxed way, “Of course. Everybody deserves the same respect.” It was not until the silence that followed that I realized it was my own voice. It in turn was followed by an even louder shout “Get out of class! You deserve to be expelled!”

Outside the classroom, the argument continued when Mrs. Collazzo let me know that if I were her daughter she would be very disappointed and ashamed. In those few seconds I learned that sharing your thoughts is not always a good idea, so I did not say that I was delighted not to be her daughter. Instead, when she announced that she would
call my parents to tell them what I had done, I said that they would agree with me and that I had learned my idea about respect from them. Maybe sharing my parent’s values was not such a smart thing to do either, because as a consequence of my comment, Mrs. Collazzo said that she would ask for my expulsion from school.

My good grades, and the principal’s idea that I still was a “good girl” protected me from being expelled, so I managed to complete school, and I had the opportunity to learn other important lessons from other teachers as well as from Mrs. Collazzo. While the civic instruction teacher taught us the curriculum by making us memorize and recite statements such as “the family is the indissoluble cell of society,” Mrs. Collazzo taught us, by example, to be uncritical, and to accept authority at any price, even when the authorities engaged in what I considered to be psychological torture. For example, during the war between Argentina and England over the Malvinas (Falkland) Islands, Mrs. Collazzo once gave a speech in praise of the generals and the kids – only one year older than my classmates and I – who where patriotically freezing in the south defending “us”.

Not only did she uncritically accept the rightness a suicidal military action orchestrated by a dictatorship that would do anything to hold on to power, but she also blamed the generals’ irresponsibility on us, her students. Sharing my thoughts with her, the whole school faculty and the students who were standing by the flag that afternoon was not a good idea, it seemed to me so I just left, hiding my thoughts, pain, and anger, and risking a sanction for leaving early. But I had learned my lesson: leaving school early might have been dangerous, but thinking for yourself and sharing your thoughts was even worse.
These “memorable moments” illustrate some ways in which my teachers taught the values that took part of the curriculum during the dictatorship. Because curricula are intended to teach students how to act or be, they position subjects within certain ways of being; in this way curricula create certain subjectivities. Subjectivity is defined, according to Weedon (1999), as “the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relation to the world” (p.32). These ways of understanding our relation to the world are socially constructed. People create their image of themselves, their ways of being, and acting, by identifying themselves with available ways of thinking, acting and being. Curricula make available certain ways of thinking, acting and being, and ask that students identify with them. The center of interest of my work is the subjectivities that the curriculum of the national educational reform launched in 1993 makes available for the students to identify with.

**School and politics.**

When I finished high school and started college, I thought I had not learned much at school. Now, while remembering those “memorable moments” in high school, I realized that I learned much more than I imagined. On the one hand, the contents of my classes did not give me tools, for example, for relating facts or history to current politics. They taught me to think in an uncritical way. On the other hand, teachers who did not teach our classes, such as Mrs. Collazzo, taught us powerful lessons about ourselves, our teachers, and authority. Everyday life in contact with these kinds of
teachers and administrators impregnated our minds with ideas that molded our behaviors and thoughts. What we were supposed to do, think, and say, and more importantly, what we were not supposed to do, think, and say, were the rules that nobody ever read on the blackboard, but that every student learned, in one way or another. Our relationships with the teachers and with the contents we memorized were partially constructing our subjectivities as students, and as teenagers raised under a dictatorship. Schooling was not isolated from the dictatorship that dominated the country. School, during that period of time, was a means of forming subjects who fit well with a dictatorship. Students were expected to be obedient, silent, respectful of authority, and uncritical — soldiers with different uniforms. The school, within the context of the dictatorship, was molding our thoughts, emotions, and ways of being — constructing our subjectivities.

**Competing subjectivities.**

Although our subjectivity was not only in the hands on the school, the school had goals regarding how to raise and shape us: schooling is never completely independent from the regime of which it is a part.

In 1984, I became an undergraduate student — during the first year of democracy after six years of dictatorship. I studied at the Universidad de Luján, one of the universities that the dictatorship had closed, and that had been re-opened by the
democratic government. Studying to be a teacher meant, in that context, discussing the democratic values that teachers should teach and the ways in which students should be encouraged to become active democratic citizens. Our experience with the dictatorship had taught us that education is not value free, so we wanted to be aware of the values we should teach. Many hours of my classes were spent in these kinds of analysis and reflection. Discussion about democracy was so important, that my university had a class on human rights for the students in all majors. We were conscious of the importance of schooling and the education of democratic citizens. If we wanted to live in an incipient young democracy and contribute to its growth, first, we had to unlearn the authoritarianism that the dictatorship had imposed on us. Second, we had to learn democracy, to live democratically in the schools, and to teach democracy to our students. The subjectivity teachers wanted to offer their students was very different from the one we had learned from our teachers.

These ideas were not only popular in my college. The whole country was involved in a discussion about democratic education. This took a form of a National Pedagogic Congress which took place between 1985 and 1988. Local and provincial meetings were organized to discuss the major questions related to education, and then during February and March of 1988, a national meeting was held.

According to Lamarra (2002), during the first democratic government, the universities were normalized and democratized. Professors who had been fired by the dictatorship were re-hired, the curricula were updated, and administrators were democratically chosen. The universities regained their autonomy. According to Lamarra (2002), the National Pedagogic Congress served as a starting point for the National Law of Education, approved in 1993, since this law incorporates the main principles and goals approved by the National Pedagogic Congress (p. 28).
In 1991, when I finally became a school principal, the need for educating democratic citizens was an important concern for me at work. The elementary school connected with the school in which I was working was 40 years old, but my team of teachers and I were the founders of the high school. Since it was a new school, we built the project, including some innovations at that time, such as the inclusion of motor disabled students, and a student run governed disciplinary system, to create civic responsibility among the students. These characteristics of the project were in part an expression of the democratic principles that were in the back of my mind. But in 1993, although my democratic worries were intact, in the front (of my mind, my classroom and my school) something more urgent distracted me: I suddenly had to deal with an educational reform program that imposed so many changes that I hardly had time or energy to think about democracy or the school’s role in creating citizens.  

In my personal experience with the educational reform, I felt that I had to reform myself (or at least my teaching) in order to survive. I was compelled to take classes, and to teach new curricular contents, to contribute to the construction of the school project, and to use new pedagogical methods. Since everybody was using the new “language of reform” I also felt compelled to incorporate a new professional vocabulary. The reform movements required teachers to convert our selves and to prove our conversion through accumulated credits.

3 The law of education launched in 1993 mandate the following changes: a gradual reorganization of the structure of the school system, the creation of basic common contents for the different levels and cycles of education, the creation of a system for teachers education, the creation of compensatory programs, and the creation of a national system of evaluation.
The courses through which teachers were supposed to “reform themselves,” were offered by the provincial Ministry of Education, the national Ministry of Education, and local private and public institutions and professors. According to them, teachers should not teach the curricular contents they used to\(^4\). We had to adopt the provincial curriculum, use it to create a school curricular project, and teach the curricular contents listed in the project. To my mind the reform program was “all these things we now have to do.”

In 1995, after having worked in the creation of the new high school, I received an offer to work in a program that reported the innovations that schools were implementing, for the National Ministry of Education. This job was an opportunity for me to see other schools, to learn about school projects and innovations, and to examine on a macro level, on what I had been doing on a micro level: the creation of new school projects. Upon exchanging experiences with my colleagues, I discovered that many school principals and teachers shared my feelings regarding the reform program. We saw it as “all the things that we have to change,” and some knew that we, the teachers, were part of the “things that we had to change.” While some teachers tried to resist, by criticizing the reform program, and opposing it, others quickly incorporated the “new language of the reform.” This was a way of showing that you were updated. Terms that were rarely heard before, became part of teachers’ everyday vocabulary: “school management”, “institutional projects”, “quality”, “efficiency”, “procedures”,

\(^4\) During the 1980s, after the dictatorship, under the first democratic government, curricular changes tending toward the democratization and updating of school contents were produced for all education levels, for the schools under the governance of the National Ministry of Education and those governed by the Ministries of Education of the provinces. Lamarra, (2002). P. 52.
etc. By using the new vocabulary, teachers showed that they were adopting the reform program, that they were reforming themselves.

**The external becomes internal.**

According to Popkewitz (2000), reforms can be considered as governing practices because “governing is concerned with linking political rationalities to subjectivities, that is, the governing principles through which people think, talk, speak, and act as self-responsible individuals.” The new vocabulary that teachers were using showed that the reform was changing them, that the reform program was having some effect on teachers’ subjectivity. The reform program, which was perceived by some teachers as “all the things we have to do”, told teachers that their old ways were not good enough for the “new system,” that they had to change, to re-form themselves.

By the time of the period of educational reform, new political rationalities were in place in Argentina: while the first democratic government after the dictatorship focused on democratizing social and political institutions, the second government focused on the modernization of the country, its participation in the global economy, the reform and reduction of the state, and privatization. The government followed a conservative agenda, and adopted a neoliberal discourse.

Simultaneously, within this context, new subjectivities were being promoted through the educational system. Reforms – intended to change systems and people – are related to political processes, which are linked to political and economic contexts. In

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5 This governing is what Foucault (1979) calls governmentality, (p. 33) the mentality of governing.
other words, educational reforms are not politically neutral, and the subjectivities they promote are related to the governing rationality that initiated the reform program. This does not mean that the construction of subjectivities is done by the governments through force. As Rose (1998) states, “Modern citizens are (…) not incessantly dominated, repressed, or colonized by power (although, of course, domination and repression play their part in particular practices and sectors) but subjectified, educated, and solicited into a loose and flexible alliance between personal interpretations and ambitions and institutionally or socially valued ways of living” (p.79). While during my adolescence (that is, during the period of dictatorship in Argentina) repression was strong and obvious, during democratic times, subjectivities are linked to governing rationalities in more subtle ways. The process is not one of a forced imposition, but more one of cooption and encouragement of identification with new ideas and subjectivities. It is not about repressing or destroying subjectivities, but about constructing and promoting new subjectivities.

This process is not, however, guaranteed to be effective. The fact that the government rationality promotes, for example, democratic discourse – such as the democratic discourse that circulated during the period of democratization when the National Pedagogic Congress was held- does not mean that people’s habits and acts will automatically change in the direction of a more democratic form of education. Competing discourses – old and new, democratic and authoritarian, for example – all strive to guide people’s actions.

During the period of the reform program, for example, while some Argentinean teachers felt the power with which the reform program was imposed on them, others felt
they were active participants of the reform program. They took the required classes, and adopted the language of the reform program as part of their everyday vocabulary. They were reforming themselves, they were adopting a new subjectivity, or at least, a new discourse. If the National Pedagogic Congress had produced the feeling of open possibilities, the national educational reform was for some teachers, proof of their feasibility. Many teachers incorporated the discourse of the reform in an effort to reform themselves, to adapt their subjectivities as teachers. Changes in the teaching practices were not –however – so easy. (Fernández Lamarra, 2002)

**Design of the study.**

While teachers – and their subjectivities – play an important part in educational reform, the main goals of this reform program have to do with the students. My concern in this study is the subject positions made available to students within the framework of the National Education Reform Act and the potential consequences of these subject positions. By examining the structures and contents of three levels of educational text (national law, national curriculum, and social science textbooks), I identify those subject positions made available by and for politicians, policy makers, administrators, teachers, and students. Moreover, the three levels of analysis enable me to address the points of

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6 This does not mean to deny the agency of the individuals. The choice to limit the analysis to only one of “the ends” of the interaction responds to the need to make this project feasible. To analyze how the real individuals react to the subjectivities promoted by the education reform is an interesting task that goes beyond the scope of this work.
articulation and disconnections between and among the levels. These points close and open the possible interpretations and actions of all involved.

Since intended subjectivities are related to their historical context, I also explore the dominant political rationalities during the period when the reform program was launched, and the ways in which subjectivities and rationalities are related to the global political and economic context.

The main legislation at the basis of the educational reform was the National Law of Education, (24195), passed in 1993. This new education law required changes in the rules of school organization, curriculum, and assessment, thus opening opportunities, at least rhetorically, for greater participation from teachers and community members in school. The explicit intent of the law was to foster democratic ideas and habits among the citizenry. The National Law of Education is thus a good resource for exploring the subjectivities engaged by the reform program.

Argentine schools have “national curriculum”: a set of “basic and common contents” (BCC). The analysis of these curricular contents constitutes the second level of analysis of my dissertation. The creation of the BCC had two interesting immediate consequences. One is what Narodowski (1996) describes as the conversion of bcc – a set of directions on what should be taught into The BCC. This means that although according to the Law of Education the bcc created by the National Ministry of Education is a list of contents that would be a basis for the provinces to create their own provincial curricula, the national list of contents (bcc) became a kind of official and unique curriculum. This happened, according to Narodowski (1996), when the national programs of teacher training – implemented before the provincial curricula were published – adopted the bcc
as their curricular reference. Thus these contents, instead of providing a basis guiding the formation of provincial curricula, became more common to all the provinces than basic (p.102)\(^7\). For this reason, the analysis of the BCC for Ethics and Citizens Education can provide us with an idea of the kind of subjectivities the curriculum – the national curriculum – promotes.

According to Narodowski (1996), “publishers adapted their offerings in order to compete in the textbook market, by basing their books on the BCC. This means that the adoption of the new contents was made by the staff of the publishing companies instead of the administrators of the provincial ministries of education.” (p102) Since 1995 the pressure on teachers to “implement the reform program” was so strong, that they made sure that the textbooks they chose\(^8\) were adapted to the curricular reform program. At that point, this meant that they included the BCC. Regarding the use of textbooks, Greenberg (1997) states that “textbook use constitutes 60 percent of class time in Argentina, and the weight of the textbook as a mediator between the curriculum and the teacher has magnified since 1995, when the BCC were printed but the provincial curriculums were not available yet.” (p.75)

Developers of the Argentine curriculum do not assume that schooling is value free. Instead they are explicit about the values that should be taught. The contents of the BCC are organized into the three categories of “concepts,” “procedures,” and “attitudes.” The category of attitudes provides a set of values that students are supposed to learn. The Social Science textbooks attempt to realize these values by encoding them within the

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\(^7\) My translation and paraphrase.

\(^8\) In Argentina usually teachers choose the text they want their students to use, and students buy those texts.
topics, words, images, and charts which comprise the text. Because policy makers, curriculum developers, and textbook authors and editors must use language to complete their work they can make themselves completely explicit, and because the new subjectivities compete with older and other subjectivities within their thoughts and actions, they are not always consistent or complete. Using critical policy analysis, critical discourse analysis, and critical analysis of image, I track subject positions made available to students through the educational reform.

**Summary.**

Textbooks, curricula, laws, and educational systems are not politically neutral. They offer values, and they promote the formation of certain subjectivities, while discouraging the formation of others. This does not mean that the subjectivities the systems promote are automatically adopted by everyone concerned. Curricula have intentions however. In the same way as I can “read” the intentions my teachers had by analyzing some “memorable moments” from high-school, the intentions of the reform period systems, can be “read” in terms of the subjectivities they intent to create, by analyzing some of the texts central to the educational system. The analysis of these subjectivities allows us to be aware of them, and to teach, adopt, or resist these subjectivities intentionally.

Educational systems play an important role in the promotion of certain subjectivities. These subjectivities are usually related to the kind of citizenship that is considered necessary, that best “fit” the government rationalities of a given time. During
the Argentine dictatorship the form of subjectivity promoted was related to obedience, silence, acceptance – as I learned from my every day life at school. What subjectivities were promoted in the educational reform of the early 1990’s?

**Structure of this dissertation.**

In order to answer my question raised above, I develop my dissertation in the following fashion. Chapter two elaborates on the concepts and methods that give shape to the dissertation. In chapter three I depict the social, economic, and political context in which the Argentinean education reform was launched. Chapter four consists of the analysis of the subjectivities and values inherent in the National Law of Education 24195. Chapter five explores the subjectivities promoted by educational reform in the standards for Ethics and Citizen Education that every province has to follow, according to the BCC. In chapter six I analyze the subjectivities promoted in three textbooks. Chapter seven intertwines the results of the other chapters, and draws some conclusions about the subjectivities of the reform program period in relation to the context of the political and economic crisis experienced by in Argentina, in the late 1990s.
Chapter 2
Concepts and method.

Concepts.

My research assumes that reforms are political practices that seek to produce changes in the ways in which things are done and thought about, and in the ways people think about themselves. According to Popkewitz (2000), reforms are governing practices because “governing is concerned with linking political rationalities to subjectivities, that is, the governing principles through which people think, talk, speak, and act as self-responsible individuals”. By adopting this idea of reform I do not imply that there is a direct relationship of imposition between the goals of a reform – in this case the Argentine educational reform – and the ways in which people think about themselves, but I assume that there are intentions to promote certain subjectivities and not others.

A government, by means of reform, cannot impose a form of subjectivity on people by force. As Rose (1998) states,

modern citizens are (…) not incessantly dominated, repressed, or colonized by power (although, of course, domination and repression play their part in particular practices and sectors) but subjectified, educated, and solicited into a loose and flexible alliance between personal interpretations and ambitions and institutionally or socially valued ways of living (p.79).

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9 This governing is what Foucault (1979) calls governmentality, (p. 33) the mentality of governing
Rose (1998) describes a relationship between the government of a territory and the government of oneself in this way:

Only when the self-regulatory practices to control the behavior, emotions, and avoid political resistance were installed, within the subject, the prohibitions and minutiae of conduct were limited to special institutions, such as factories, reformatories, jails, and schools. Thus these apparatuses did not seek to *crush* subjectivity but to produce individuals who attributed a certain kind of moral subjectivity to themselves and who evaluated and reformed themselves according to its norms.” (p.77).

Schools, as special institutions that are subjected to policies such as a national educational reform, are meant to produce certain kind of subjects. The goal of my dissertation is to explore the kinds of subjectivities that the Argentine educational reform of the 1990’s intended to promote. I address the following questions: What kinds of subjectivities did the national education reform launched in Argentina in 1993 intend to produce? During the period when the reform was launched, how were the dominant political rationalities linked to the subject promoted by the reform? How are the dominant political rationalities and the subjectivity promoted by the reform related to the global context?

Regarding subjectivity, I rely on Weedon’s (1999) framework, which considers subjectivity as “the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways to understanding her relation to the world” (p.32). This sense of ourselves is not “natural”, but socially constructed within language. Language is, from this viewpoint, understood as “a system always existing in historically specific discourses…and in terms of competing discourses, (…) competing ways of giving meaning to the world”. (Weedon 1999, p 23)
The documents of the reform (the National Law of Education, the curriculum, for example) are intersections of different discourses and, simultaneously give meaning to the world for teachers and students, promoting, in this way, certain subjectivities.

According to Pennycook (2001), “subjectivity refers to the ways in which our identity is formed through discourse. Our identity or identities are not pregiven wholes but are rather conflictual and multiple (…) [and] discourses are a crucial element in the formation of subjectivity” p.148).

An institutional reform can be studied from many different angles, – its causes, its political consequences, the political negotiations that took place during its production, etc. I adopt the relationship between subjectivity and discourse emphasized by Weedon and Pennycook in my work. To explore the links between the construction of subjectivities and the Argentine educational reform, I approach the reform in relation to discourses, and I study the reform through the analysis of some of its fundamental texts. Because texts carry discourses, they are sites where the construction of subjectivities takes place. Texts construct apparently natural ways of being a subject. My work focuses on “the way[s] in which texts construct meanings and subject positions for the reader, the contradictions inherent in this process, and its political implications.” (Weedon, 1999, p.162).

Since I consider texts as politically and socially constructed, I argue that the texts that were published as the result of a reform – such as an education law, a curriculum, and textbooks – are not open to individual interpretation. As Pennycook (2001) states, “there are ‘preferred meanings’ (Hall, 1994, p.207) of texts – within any society or culture, there are dominant or preferred meanings or interpretations – and readers,
listeners, or viewers may interpret texts in alignment with, in negotiation with, or in opposition to such preferred readings (p.111). Texts are part of complex political, social, historical, and economical circumstances, and their production is affected by all these factors, as well as by their pedagogic foundations. Texts bear values related to different power groups, but their analysis should not be limited to the idea of an over-determination by social structures. Texts should not be studied simply as the direct expression of dominant groups’ ideologies – text production is more complex than that. On the other hand, text analysis should not be limited to free individual interpretations either, because texts are always political and they are embedded in social context (Pennycook, 2001).

Therefore, in this work I focus on the production of texts, I consider textual analysis as a form of social analysis that relates texts to power, and I consider textual analysis as a pedagogical and political-analytic praxis. As a consequence, I analyze texts in relationship with their political contexts; I locate the texts historically and discursively; I explore the constraints and possibilities of textual meaning; I map discourses across texts, looking for inter-textual meanings across texts; and finally, I open up questions for teachers to resist, challenge, and change discourses that construct their profession (Pennycook, A., 2001).

This dissertation aims to present a careful analysis of the meanings provided by the texts of the reform, meanings given to students with which to make sense of themselves, to adopt certain subjectivities, and to simultaneously have the possibility of resisting them. According to Weedom (1999), “subjectivity is most obviously the site of the consensual regulation of individuals [that] occurs through the identification by
individuals with certain subject positions.” (p.108) This implies an interaction between individuals and the subject positions that different discourses make available to them. Although this work studies one of the ends of this interaction – the subject positions made available by different discourses in the texts – this does not entail a denial of the agency of the individuals. The choice to limit the analysis to only one of “the ends” of the interaction responds to the need to make this project feasible. To analyze how the real individuals react to the subjectivities promoted by the educational reform is an interesting task, but it goes beyond the limits of this work.

**Method.**

**Levels of analysis.**

The texts I analyze constitute different levels of implementation of the Argentine educational reform. These texts are the National Law of Education, the curriculum of Ethics and Citizen Education in compulsory education, and textbooks for mandatory education. The first text of the reform that I explore is the main policy instrument that gives legal support to the reform: the National Law of Education, 24195, passed in 1993. This new education law changed the rules of school organization, curriculum, and assessment. The law, as a source of policy, can be considered an “agenda or set of objectives that legitimize the values, beliefs, and attitudes of its authors” (Prunty, 1985, quoted in Edmondson, 2000, p. 4). Since it describes and prescribes how education must be, it conveys a certain vision of education, and it offers a particular version of civil
society. This means that the law is not value neutral. To contribute to the discussion of the values and the subjectivities of the reform, specifically according to the National law of education, I address the following questions: What subjectivities were promoted by the national law of education? What are the values that the subject should possess according to the law? What values were promoted by the official discourse when the National Law of Education was launched?

The creation of the BCC had two interesting immediate consequences. One is what Narodowski (1996) describes as the conversion of bcc – a set of directions on what should be taught into The BCC. This means that although according to the Law of Education the bcc created by the National Ministry of Education is a list of contents that would be a basis for the provinces to create their own provincial curricula, the national list of contents (bcc) became a kind of official and unique curriculum. This happened, according to Narodowski (1996), when the national programs of teacher training – implemented before the provincial curricula were published – adopted the bcc as their curricular reference. Thus these contents, instead of providing a basis guiding the formation of provincial curricula, became more common to all the provinces than basic (p.102).

A second consequence of the creation of the BCC was the publication of new textbooks. According to Narodowski, “publishers adapted their offerings in order to compete in the textbook market, by basing their books on the BCC. This means that the

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10 My translation and paraphrase.
adoption of the new contents was made by the staff of the publishing companies instead of the administrators of the provincial ministries of education.” (p102).

Since 1995 the pressure on teachers to “implement the reform” was so strong, that they made sure that the textbooks they chose\textsuperscript{11} were adapted to the curricular reform. At that point, this meant that they included the BCC. Regarding the use of textbooks, Greenberg (1997) states that “textbook use constitutes 60 percent of class time in Argentina, and the weight of the textbook as a mediator between the curriculum and the teacher has magnified since 1995, when the BCC were printed but the provincial curriculums were not available yet” (p.75). Even though books should be different in each province, I analyze books that are not specifically written for any special province, because during the first years of the reform “publishers, unable to adjust to provincial markets and in search of profit, make similar basic textbooks for all provinces” (Gvirtz, 2002, p.465).

The importance of the book as a teaching source that guides not only students’ but also teachers’ work is one of the reasons why I decided to include textbooks as another component for analysis in the present study. The other reason is that, textbooks are not simply ‘delivery systems’ of ‘facts’. They are at once the result of political, economic, and cultural activities, battles, and compromises. They are conceived, designed, and authored by real people with real interests. They are published within the political and economic constraints of markets, resources, and power (Apple and Christian-Smith, 1991, p.2)

\textsuperscript{11} In Argentina usually teachers choose the text they want their students to use, and students buy those texts.
Textbooks are, then, related to government rationality, economic circumstances, and available discourses. Textbooks show things about the society, the political and economic context, and about the subjectivities they promote.

**Method: Kinds of analysis.**

In order to analyze texts that represent different levels of the Argentine educational reform during the last decade, my work combines different, but complementary methods. They are critical policy analysis (CPA), critical discourse analysis (CDA), an analysis of characters, and an analysis of the formal elements of illustrations. The availability of diverse methods enables richer analysis of the texts. In this section I describe the methods, as well as the ways in which I selected the samples for analysis.

Table 2-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>CPA’s question addressed</th>
<th>Method used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3: context</td>
<td>Where did the policy come from? What are the social, political, and historical aspects of the policy?</td>
<td>CPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: National Law</td>
<td>What are the [underlying] values? How are key aspects defined?</td>
<td>CPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5: standards CBC</td>
<td>What are the [underlying] values? Who is left out?</td>
<td>CDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 6: textbooks</td>
<td>What are the [underlying] values? Who is left out?</td>
<td>CDA, character analysis, illustration analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Critical Policy Analysis is the general method I employ in this thesis, but to do so, I also use other methods. In chapter three I first analyze the values underlying the National Law of Education. While I center the study on Article Six of the law, because it describes the kinds of subjects that the reform proposes, I also take into account other sections of the law. I search for consistency and contradictions between the subjects that Article Six of the law proposes and the official discourse. In order to contextualize the law in relationship with the official discourse, I contrast the values of the law with the values proposed in a speech given by the Director of Curriculum in charge of the national curricular reform in Argentina. I also locate the speech within globally prevalent values. In this way I relate the speech I study to discourses that are nationally and internationally recognized.

For my analysis of the curriculum, I focus specifically on the basic and common contents (BCC) or standards for Ethics and Citizenship Education, the creation of which was coordinated by the National Ministry of education. I select the standards of Ethics and Citizenship Education because these standards make explicit the characteristics that an “ideal subject” should have. The BCC or standards for Ethics and Citizenship are organized into five different sections or “blocks”: person, values, social norms, general procedures, and general attitudes. For each block there is an explanation summary of subtopics, expectations of achievement, relationships with other standards, and a list of standards for the three cycles of basic education (BGE 1, BGE 2, and BGE 3). To analyze a representative sample of the curriculum, I randomly selected from the different blocks, an explanation summary, a list of standards, a list of relationships between Ethics and
Citizenship Education with standards of other subject matters, and a list of standards. I show the selected items in Table 2-2

Table 2-2: Sections of the BCC analyzed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block 1</th>
<th>Person</th>
<th>X</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Block 2</td>
<td>Values</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 3</td>
<td>Social norms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 4</td>
<td>General procedures</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 5</td>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To analyze the curriculum, I use Critical Discourse Analysis, following Fairclough’s (2001) questions. This method constitutes a combination of intense, detailed, and specific questions about the non-obvious meanings of the vocabulary, the grammar, and the structure of the curriculum reform text.

The third level of my analysis is constituted by some textbooks published during the reform. I analyze textbooks edited by major publishers: Aique, Estrada, Kapelusz, and Santillana. I randomly selected chapters from social science texts. I include texts, photos, cartoons and paintings in my analysis.
I also use Fairclough’s (2001) questions for critical discourse analysis to analyze the textbooks. While these questions are deep and rich enough to study the written text, they are not appropriate to address the meaning of illustrations — photos, paintings, cartoon-like images, graphics, and maps. In order to address the illustrations, I incorporate Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2001) “tool-kit” to read images. Their method allows looking at images’ perspective, framing and composition, and color — the formal elements of design — to understand the meanings the images carry. Since words and images are used in textbooks to introduce such characters as historical heroes, everyday people, children, etc, I also use Talbot’s (2001) list of questions to analyze these characters.

**Description of methods employed**

**Critical Policy Analysis.**

Critical Policy Analysis is the perspective I choose to interrogate the Argentine Educational Reform. By relating education to power and values, Critical Policy Analysis locates issues of power at the center of the analysis. From this perspective, education and policy are not considered as value-neutral, but as carrying values and exercising political power. Policies are, thus always related to broader political processes that must be analyzed, if a complete and accurate study of the policies is desired.
Within this framework, the questions go beyond the results of policies and focus on the political origins, foundations, underlying values of, and contradictions within the policies. Critical Policy Analysis answers according to Edmondson, (2000), the following questions:

Where does the policy come from?
What are the social, political, and historical aspects of the policy?
What are the [underlying] values?
How are key aspects defined?
What are the consequences?
Who stands to benefit?
Who is left out? (p.8.)

I address these questions by intertwining the analysis of the law and the social, economic, and political context, as well as the official discourse and the texts of the reform.

*Critical discourse analysis.*

To analyze the ways in which the selected texts intend to constitute identities, I adopt Fairclough’s (2001) method of textual analysis. Fairclough presents this method from a critical discourse perspective based on the description of the text, the interpretation of the relationship between text and interaction with its audience, and an explanation of the relationship between interaction and social context. Because my

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12 The main question is not “How well does the policy work?” This kind of question is more related to a functionalist framework instead of a critical perspective.
project does not cover the interaction between the texts and their audience, I focus specifically on the description of the text. To guide the description of the texts, I use ten questions that Fairclough (2001) introduces to analyze the features of vocabulary, grammar, and structure of the text. Here I summarize the questions from chapter five of his book *Language and Power* (Fairclough (2001), pp. 92 to 116).

1) **What experiential values do words have?** This question focuses on the ways in which the ideological differences between texts are coded in their vocabulary. The idea of experiential values is defined as “a trace of and a cue to the way in which the text producer’s experience of the natural or social world is represented” (p. 93). A look into the experiential values is a look into how ideological differences between texts in their representations of the world are encoded in their vocabulary. For example, one of the textbooks\(^{13}\) that I analyze presents two different paragraphs about slaves. The first one (p.110) states that “black slaves were marked with iron marks, called tarimbas, to identify their owners. Sometimes they were marked in their face because their cloths would cover their marks”. The vocabulary in this paragraph does not suggest any negative evaluation of slavery. Another paragraph (p.161) reads “blacks, generally slaves, (...) were forbidden the use of the same clothing as whites, going out alone at night, and holding guns. If they disobeyed, they could be punished by being harshly beaten”. The word harshly implies a negative evaluation in the description. Even though the producers of the text do not overtly express their opposition to slavery, the presence of negative facts, such as these regulations against slaves and punishment techniques

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\(^{13}\) Estrada, Social Sciences, 4th grade.
implies values against slavery. To unveil the experiential values of texts, Fairclough’s (2001) questions recommend alternating the focus between the text itself and the discourse type that the text is drawing upon (for example, the discourse of schooling, the discourse of interviews, etc). One function of the first question the identification of meaning relations in texts and underlying discourse types, and the attempt to specify their ideological basis. What classification schemes are drawn upon? A schema is “a representation of a particular type of activity (…) in terms of predictable elements in a predictable sequence.”(Fairclough, N., 2001, p.131) It is a mental representation that represents a model of social behavior. For example, in one of the books I analyze, a vignette introduces two characters who represent two different points of view regarding urban life – the grandmother and the granddaughter. The grandmother lists her ideas of what counts to her as typical consumption and leisure activity for people belonging to her social class and generation: going out for a walk to downtown, window-shopping on Florida Street, walking in San Martín Square. The granddaughter lists her ideas of having fun: shopping and eating, playing electronic games, and going to the movies, all of which takes place in the mall. The granddaughter summarizes the advantages of the shopping mall in opposition to downtown, by describing the aesthetic characteristics of the mall (windows and products are as good as those in downtown), the range of activities available at the mall, the proximity to the mall, the safe, and hygienic characteristic of the mall. This vignette, that seems to focus on generational differences, presents two different schemes relating to consumption. Two different classification schemes are used to show these perspectives, by means of different vocabulary.
Are these descriptions ideologically contested? Do the passages contain processes of rewording or overwording? “Rewording is the process by which “an existing, dominant, and naturalized, wording is being systematically replaced by another one in conscious opposition to it.” (Fairclough, 2001, p.94) Overwording is related to the repetition of a word. Fairclough, (2001), defines overwording as “an unusually high degree of wording, often involving many words which are near synonyms. Overwording shows preoccupation with some aspect of reality – which may indicate that it is a focus of ideological struggle”.(p. 96)

Question 1 also focuses on the ideologically significant meaning relations between words. Are synonymy, hyponymy, and antonymy present in the text? There is synonymy when the words are mutually substitutable, hyponymy, when the meaning of one word is included within the meaning of another word, and antonymy, when the meanings of words are incompatible.

2) What relational values do words have? According to Fairclough (2001), a “feature with relational value is a trace of and a cue to the social relationships which are enacted via the text in the discourse. Relational value is (transparently!) to do with relations and social relationships.” (p 93) Are euphemistic expressions present in the text? Euphemistic expressions are words substituted by a more conventional or familiar one, to avoid negative connotations. Are there markedly formal or informal words? Do they emphasize social, position, authority, or other kinds of position? For example, one of the textbooks I analyze presents two kinds of houses in Buenos Aires in the past. One is a casco – rich person’s house – and the other is a rancho, a poor person’s house. When comparing materials, the caption of the casco shows the glass windows, and states that
they were small because they were difficult to build. The only comment on the poor houses’ material is “many times the rancho’s doors were a simple hanging piece of leather.” While one is difficult to build, the other is simple. Simple, here, works as a euphemism: a way to avoid using an overtly negative adjective.

3) **What expressive values do words have?** Fairclough’s (2001) questions state that expressive values have to do with *subjects* and social identities and “a feature with expressive value is a trace of and a cue to the producer’s evaluation (in the widest sense) of the bit of reality it relates to” (p.93). For example, the curriculum of the reform describes the category person by relating it to “the capacity of knowing, desiring, choosing, feeling, expressing, relating to others, taking responsibilities for one’s own actions, transcending, and creating” (BCC Ethics and Citizenship Education, p. 3). All these concepts have positive expressive values in this schema. If the curriculum had been written by, for example, a dictatorial government, values such as desiring and choosing would not be part of the schema, since they would not have a positive expressive value for the producers. Sometimes, text producers are not consistent with the values they include in the texts, because different ideologies underpin the same text. It is useful then to analyze whether the expressive values are ideologically contrastive within the text.

4) **What metaphors are used?** While usually associated with literature, metaphors are also used in many different types of discourses. They are words or expressions used to represent “one aspect of experience in terms of another” (Fairclough, 2001, p.99). Social problems, for example, are often represented as diseases. The analysis of metaphors allows the unveiling of ideological positions.
5) **What experiential values do grammatical features have?** This question focuses on the ways in which the ideological differences between texts are encoded in their grammar. The following sub-questions develop the analysis of the experiential values in the grammar of a text:

What types of participant and process predominate? Participants may be agent or patient. Agents act upon patients. By showing some subjects are agents and others as patients, or by omitting the subjects of the actions, the subjects are ideologically positioned in a text. For example, when a text states that slaves arrived in a country, the text is omitting the fact that they were not agents of the act of arriving, but they were brought by someone else by force. By omitting mention of who brought the slaves, the text seems to imply that slaves “came”, as if coming was their decision.

Is agency unclear? One should be sensitive to possible ideologically motivated obfuscation of agency, causality and responsibility. **Are processes what they seem? Are nominalizations used?** Nominalization is when a process is converted into a noun. In such cases, some of the meanings are missing tense, modality, agent, and patient. For example, a passage in one of the books I analyze states: “The concentration of products for sale exerted an influence on the construction of supermarkets and shopping malls.” Here the concentration of products is shown as in a cause-effect relationship with the construction of supermarkets and shopping malls. It is not clear how these two elements are related. Because the process by which the products have been concentrated became a noun (concentration of products), the agents who take part in the process are missing from the

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account. This nominalization, by focusing on an unclear relation of causality, seems to obfuscate the agents.

Are sentences active or passive? Do they leave the agent and causality unclear? This may happen in order to avoid redundancy or it can be an strategy for the obfuscation of agent or causality. Are sentences positive or negative?

6) **What relational values do grammatical features have?** Modes, modality, and pronouns are grammatical features of texts that have relational values. What modes are used (declarative, grammatical question, imperative)? Are there important features of relational modality? Modality is related to the writer’s authority in relation to others (relational modality) and to the writer’s authority in relation to the truth or of a representation of reality (expressive modality). Some auxiliary verbs which express modality are: may, might, must, should, can, cannot, and ought. Adverbs and tenses may also express modality. Are the pronouns *we* and *you* used, and if so, how? The inclusive *we* includes the readers and talks for them. A clear example is the use of *we* to include all the people of one nation, as though belonging to the same nationality would erase all other differences among people. The exclusive *we* includes the writer, some others, but not the addressees. This is the case of the editors of a magazine talking about their own opinions, for example. The use of the inclusive *we* and the exclusive *we* serves to stress unity of a people at the expense of the recognition of divisions of interests.

7) **What expressive values do grammatical features have?**

Are there important features of expressive modality? Some modality auxiliaries are: may (possibility), must (certainty and obligation), can, should, etc. Some modal
adverbs are probably, possibly, etc. Sometimes a complete lack of modality auxiliaries might be used to present a point of view or perspective as transparent. This is the case, for example, of news articles that are presented in non-modal present tense.

8) How are (simple) sentences linked together?

According to Fairclough (2001), “there are generally formal connections between sentences in a text, which are collectively referred to as cohesion. Cohesion can involve vocabulary links between sentences-repetition of words, or use of related words. It can also involve connectors which mark various temporal, spatial and logical relationships between sentences (p.109).” All these are cohesive features. For example, in the third cycle textbook I analyze a reading which compares downtown and the shopping malls as leisure and shopping spaces. Most of the paragraphs that describe activities in downtown start with the word before. The use of the word before to introduce the sentences related to the downtown connects downtown with the past.

What logical connectors are used? Though, but, although, nevertheless, even, and though, express causal relationships that assume something. Do connections between sentences assume something in the analyzed texts? What means are used for referring inside and outside the text? For example, two of the analyzed texts use language and codes that refer to the educational reform. In this way, it is clear for the teachers (who choose the books) that the textbook addresses the issues favored by the curricular reform.

9) What interactional conventions are used? Are there ways in which one participant controls the activities, responses, and turns of others? This question is
appropriate for the analysis of oral texts, interviews, etc. Hence, it will not be included in my analysis.

10) What larger-scale structures does the text have? One of the books that I analyze interviews two anthropologists about discrimination. The interview is presented as a journal report. While reading this text, students have some expectations related to the structure “journal report.” When systematically taught, this structure might teach something about the authority of the specialists, and how to take this authority as an unquestionable source of truth. As Fairclough (2001) warns, “such structures can impose higher levels of routine on social practice in a way that ideologically sets and closes agendas” (p.115), making it difficult to see other matters. For example, the structure of the textbook might teach that interviews with specialists in science, reported in a type of journal report have more knowledge authority than an interview with a member of the community whose response is not written as a journal report. In the case of the interviews about discrimination, the structure of the book prioritizes scientific knowledge over, for example, the experiential knowledge that a member of the community could have as a victim of discrimination.

Character analysis.

To analyze the textbooks, I also use Fairclough’s (2001) questions for critical discourse analysis, and I complement them with six questions I borrow from Talbot’s (1996) research on the construction of gender in a teenage magazine. In this research, Talbot asks:
“Who are the interactants, i.e. who’s talking to whom?

What characters are in the text and what are they doing there?

Does the writer engage with them, either in criticism or agreement? Is the reader one of them?

What subject positions are there, i.e. what kind of identity does the writer set up for herself?

Is the writer being friendly?

And what kind of identity does she set up for us, the readers, i.e. who does she think we are?” (Talbot, 1996, p. 194)

**Analysis of images.**

While Fairclough’s (2001) method is a complete guide for analyzing the features of vocabulary, grammar, and structure of the text, and Talbot’s questions help us to deeply study the characters of the texts, neither of these methods addresses the meaning of illustrations – photos, paintings, cartoon-like images, graphics, and maps. In order to address the illustrations in the books, I incorporate Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2001) ideas for understanding how the images are designed. Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2001) frame helps to discover relations between the people represented in the images, relations between producers and viewers of the images and the people represented in the images, as well as the attitudes of producers and viewers towards each other (p.119). To explore these relations, Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2001) study the image and gaze of the illustrations, the kind of image (photo or a drawing), the represented peoples’ attitude; the relationship between size of frame and social distance; the relationship between the images subjectivity and perspective; the relationship between kinds of angle and
involvement of the viewer; angle and power; narrativization of the subjective image; and objective images.

I transformed Kress and van Leewen’s (2001) ideas into questions that I will apply to the images in the textbooks.

1) Does the represented participant look at the viewer? Regarding the images and gaze, it is important to notice if the represented participants – the people who are represented in the image - look at the viewer. According to Kress and van Leewen (2001), even if only on an imaginary level, contact between the participant and the viewer is established when participants look directly at the viewer’s eyes. Sometimes there is also a gesture towards the viewer. In this case, the visual configuration has two functions. “In the first place it creates a visual form of direct address. It acknowledges the viewers explicitly, addressing them with a visual ‘you’. In the second place it constitutes an ‘image act’. The producer uses the image to do something to the viewer”(p.122). Because the producer uses the image to produce something over the viewer, Kress and van Leewen (2001) call this kind of image a “demand.”

The gaze and gesture of the participant demands something from the viewer. For example, a smile directed at the viewer’s eyes demands the viewer’s affinity. According to Kress and van Leewen (2001), by demanding something from the viewers, “images define to some extent who the viewer is (…) and in that way exclude other viewers (p. 123).”
2) Are the represented participants demanding or offering? Participants do not always look directly at the viewers. Sometimes no eye contact is made. In those cases the viewers are invisible, but they can see. Because of the invisibility of the viewer, Kress and van Leewen (2001) call this kind of image, an offer. The image ‘‘offers’’ the represented participants to the viewer as items of information, objects of contemplation, impersonally, as though they were specimens in a display case” (p. 24). It is interesting to pay attention to who is depicted as demanding and who is depicted as offering. Is there any relationship between these roles and different social, racial or gender groups? Who is depicted as demanding and who is depicted as offering?

3) What kinds of images are used to illustrate the represented participants? Photos, drawings, paintings, or cartoon-like drawings? Another interesting difference related to the image and the gaze is the kind of illustration that is used to represent participants. According to Kress and van Leewen (2001), a photo looking at the viewer seeks above all to bring about an imaginary relation between the represented and the viewer, while a drawing seeks to be seen as an objective piece of information (p. 122). What I noticed in one of the books I analyze is that the kind of images chosen by the producers position the represented people in different status. For example, in the fourth grade book that I study, Spaniard conquerors are represented by paintings and portraits which are captioned, as if they where in museums. This means of representation encourages the viewer to relate the Spaniard conquerors with so-called high culture. South American indigenous people, however, are represented through cartoon like drawings, a kind of image less related to reality, history, and art. The viewer is
encouraged to perceive indigenous people as less real, less related to history and art. In this way, different kinds of images intend to produce different perceptions of the status of different groups.

4) How are the represented participants shown in relationship with distance? Are they close as in a portrait? Are they so far away that they look like part of the landscape? Are their images captioned? How? Is distance used to signify respect, otherness, or something else? The relationship between the viewer of an image and the people represented in an image is an imaginary relation. In regards to the size of frame and social distance, Kress and van Leewen (2001) state that “people are portrayed as though they are friends, or as though they are strangers. Images allow us to imaginarily come as close to public figures as if they were our friends and neighbors or to look at people like ourselves as strangers, ‘others’” (p. 132). The use of distance plays an important role in this imaginary relation. When people are shown from far away, they look like part of the landscape, and they hardly affect the viewer. Even when some participants were looking at the viewer, if they were very far away, they would look like strangers to the viewers. Most portraits, on the other hand, bring the represented people so close to the viewer that it seems that the viewer could touch them, and see them as they are in reality. Distance is also used, according to Kress and van Leewen (2001) “to signify respect for authorities of various kinds” (133). Portraits of national heroes are examples of this.

5) Is the object shown as if the viewer is engaged with it, by being shown near by? Is the object shown at middle distance, shown in full but without much space around it? Then, is it represented as within the viewer’s reach, but not as actually used? Distance
is also used to relate the viewer to objects and the environment, in which distance is indirectly proportional to engagement of the viewer. Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) explain that when an object is represented as being close, it seems that the viewer is engaged with the object. For example, the object is shown as if the viewer was ready to use the object, to interact with it. When the objects are shown so close that the viewer can see them fully but cannot see much of the space that is around the object, the object is perceived as within the viewer’s reach, but she is not actually able to use the object.

6) Is the object shown at a great distance? Is there an invisible barrier between the viewer and the object? Is the object there for our contemplation only, out of reach? (p. 134). When objects are shown at a long distance, they are unreachable, accessible only for contemplation. This is the case of many images in science textbooks, for example.

7) Are there frames? What do they mean? (p. 136) Do they detach the represented object from the rest of the world?

8) Are the images subjective: do they have a central perspective, a ‘built-in” point of view? How has the point of view of the subjective, perspectival image been selected for the viewer? Besides the choice of offer and demand and the size of the frame, another choice contributes to the relation between the represented participant and the viewer: the angle, point of view, or perspective. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) “perspective rests on an impersonal, geometric foundation, a construction which is a quasi-mechanical way of ‘recording’ images of reality. Socially determined viewpoints could, [by means of using perspective] be naturalized, and presented as ‘studies of
nature’, faithful copies of empirical reality” (p.135). In the same way as frames detach the represented object from the rest of the world, the use of perspective isolates the object from the surroundings and social contexts. Perspective defines, according to Kress and van Leewen (2001), two types of images in Western cultures: subjective and objective images. The subjective images have a central perspective, an unique point of view that has been chosen by the producer and imposed upon the viewer and the represented participant.

9) Do the objective images show “everything to be known about the represented participants? Do they violate any law of nature?” (p.137) Objective images do not have a central perspective that sets up a point of view for the viewer and represented participant. Objective images show everything that the image producer has judged to be known about the represented participants, even if, as Kress and van Leewen (2001) state, “to do so, it is necessary to violate the laws of naturalistic depiction, or, indeed, the laws of nature” (p.137).

10) At what angle is the image presented? Horizontal, frontal, or oblique? What do the angles say about involvement or detachment? The relation between the represented participant and the viewer can imply involvement or detachment, according to the angle chosen for the image. For Kress and van Leewen (2001),

the difference between the oblique and the frontal angle [of an image] is the difference between detachment and involvement. The horizontal angle encodes whether or not the image-producer (and hence, willy-nilly, the viewer) is ‘involved’ with the represented participants or not. The frontal angle says, as it were: ‘what you see here is part of our world, something we are involved with” The oblique angle says: ‘what you see here is not
part of our world; it is their world, something we are not involved with’ (p. 143)

11) Is the represented participant seen from a high angle? Power difference between the viewers and the represented participants is constructed through the use of vertical angles. When the represented object or person is seen from a high angle, the message is that the producer of the image and the viewer have the power over the represented participants.

12) Is the represented participant seen from a low angle? When the object or person represented in the image (the represented participant) is shown or seen from a low angle, the message is that the represented participants have the power over the producer and the viewer of the image.

13) Is the picture at eye level? If the image is at eye level, the message is one of equality in terms of power difference. (Kress and van Leewen, 2001, p.146)

14) Who could see this scene in this way? A supervisor, a worker? Someone who’s inside? Where would one have to be to see this scene in this way, and what sort of person would one have to be to occupy that space? Sometimes the power relations mentioned above are not clear. In such cases, it is useful to ask about the kind of narrativization of the subjective image. For example, if a photo shows an image of a group of workers in a factory, seen from a high angle, we can interpret that the photo shows what the manager or the supervisor in the factory sees. The viewer is put into the point of view of the manager, a position in which the viewer has also power over the represented participants in the image – the workers.
15) What kind of angle does the objective image have? Frontal or perpendicular top-down angle, top-down angle, or cross section? Regarding attitude, technical images, for example maps and diagrams, tend to encode objectivity, by using a directly frontal or perpendicular top-down angle, top-down angle, or cross section. According to Kress and van Leewen (2001), “the frontal angle is the angle of ‘this is how it works’,(…). The top-down angle, on the other hand, is the angle of maximum power. It is oriented towards ‘theoretical knowledge. It contemplates the world from a god-like point of view, put it at your feet, rather than within reach of your hands” (p.146).

Conclusions.

In this chapter I described the methods I have selected to study the documents of the Argentine Educational Reform, as well as the ways in which these methods articulate and add to the study. All these methods have in common the assumption that educational reforms and the educational policies and teaching products that derive from those reforms are not politically neutral or isolated from the relations of power and the context in which they were launched. The difference between these methods consists of the specific kind of targets for which I use them, and the ways in which they allow me approach those targets. While I use Critical Policy Analysis to explore the macro level issues, such as the political contexts of the reform, I employ Fairclough and Talbot’s questions, as well as Kress and van Leewen’s framework to investigate micro level issues, such as the values implied by written texts and images.
Critical Policy Analysis allows me to intertwine the study of the identities proposed by the Law of Education with contextual occurrences, such as the political context and the educational official discourse with the text analysis. Fairclough’s (2001) questions provide a detailed look to the ways in which the words, the use of grammar and the structure of the curriculum encode different values. By guiding my analysis of the features of vocabulary, grammar, and structure of the basic and common contents (BCC) or standards for Ethics and Citizenship Education, the questions are a good tool for asking about the subjectivities promoted by the education reform within the curriculum. Another issue that this method addresses is the ways in which the use of grammar, the choice of vocabulary and the structure of the text, position the text, the producers of the text, and the writers in relation to the values adopted by the text.

Fairclough’s (2001) questions constitute a further resource for analysing the words, grammar and structure of textbooks. However, since textbooks include characters, I complement Fairclough’s (2001) questions with Talbot’s questions for analysing the characters in the texts. The questions address what subjectivities are part of – and hence, what subjectivities are not part of – the texts. They also address the ways in which the characters and their ideas are depicted in relationship with the writer’s ideas, and the kinds of identities that the characters set up for the readers.

Kress and van Leewen’s (2001) concepts help to understand how the illustrations in the textbooks are designed. Kress and van Leewen’s (2001) method for studying the image and gaze of the illustrations; the kind of image (photo or a drawing); the represented people’s attitude (of demanding or offering); the relationship between size of frame and social distance; the relationship between images subjectivity and perspective;
the relationship between kinds of angle and involvement of the viewer; angle and power; narrativization of the subjective image; and objective images, are used to discover the ways in which the position of the viewer and the people and objects represented in the illustrations are constructed. This method shows that the illustrations are constructed and chosen by the producer. The images are not neutral or isolated from their social, political, and economic context, or from the values of the producers.\textsuperscript{15}

Finally, I complete my critical policy analysis by cross referencing the information regarding the underlying values of the law, the values that underlie the official discourse, the wide political and economic context, the subjectivities promoted by the standards on Ethics and Citizen Education, with the subjectivities presented in some textbooks published during the reform. By combining these methods, I hope to achieve a detailed and deep analysis of these texts of the reform within the context of the reform, one that allows me to describe the subjectivities emerging as the preferred subjects of the reform, in relationship with the predominant rationalities and their context.

\textsuperscript{15} A summary of these methods is included in Appendix A.
The historical and political context in Argentina: some background.

In Argentina, “National governments have made use of educational systems to guarantee the direct provision of educational services to ensure their own legitimacy, power, and domination” (Braslavsky 1998, p. 299). Education has been used as a tool to create subjectivities that are appropriate for and correspond to the government rationalities, and to exclude others and their rights. The goal of this chapter is to historicize my study by describing the different political contexts throughout the Argentine history, and to link the dominant political rationalities of each era to the subjectivities they promoted\(^{16}\). To do so, I organize this chapter by political periods, and I first describe the political context and ideas of the period, and the ways in which schooling was organized. Then, I list who was included or excluded, I summarize the government rationality, and I recapitulate the subjectivities that were fostered. After this historical summary, I contextualize the educational reform by describing the context, dominant ideas, and schooling changes during the period when the National Education reform was launched.

\(^{16}\) I do not imply that the hegemonic political rationalities were the only ones that have guided education and the construction of the social subject. I limit my work to describing only the hegemonic rationality because I focus on the education system that, in the case of Argentina, did not include, in most cases, pedagogic experiences and ideas that derived from alternative rationalities.
Education in Colonial Argentina (mid- 1500 to 1810)

Context and ideas:

During the period of colonization by the Spaniards, education in the territories that currently constitute Argentina was intrinsically related to the predominant economic and political interests. While on the one hand the Spaniards passed laws that in some ways protected the aboriginal people (“Indians”) such as the compilations of the laws of Indies (Recompilación de leyes de Indias\textsuperscript{17}), on the other hand, the system of exploitation of the indigenous people – which benefited the interests of the Spanish crown – contradicted these laws. For example, the \textit{encomienda} was a system based on forced labor. This was a legally sanctioned institution, recognized by the Kingdom of Spain (Weinber, 1995, p. 53), and its consequence was the lack of Indigenous people’ rights to property, salary, free time, and therefore, education. The extractive economic model led by the Spaniards required institutions that were based on the exploitation of the Indigenous people. The extraction economic model was based on the extraction of wealth (mostly minerals such as gold and silver) from the conquered lands and its transfer to Spain. This model was possible thanks to the “free labor” provided by the indigenous people, and organized in institutions such as \textit{mita} or \textit{encomienda}.

\textsuperscript{17} For example, Law IX stated that “Land that Indians formerly held shall not be taken away from them. (Felipe II in Toledo, 19 February 1560.) The Indians will be reduced to settlements with more goodwill and dispatch if the lands and advantages they have in the places they live are not taken away from them: we command that no change be made in this, and that they be maintained in them as they held them previously, so that they may cultivate and manage them to their benefit.
In order to develop the extraction model, Spain needed to create faithful subjects out of the indigenous population. The strategies towards this goal varied. Weinberg (1995) states that colonization was possible in highly populated and organized areas, such as Mexico and Peru. The army – and its strategy of exterminating the Indigenous people – was used against peoples who were harder to subjugate, such as the Arauncanos and Pampas, who lived in what is now Argentine territory. (p.55) These harsher methods were officially admitted even in the eighteen-century. As Solórzano (1779) asserts, “Education was possible only among the Indians in highly populated and organized areas. For those Indians who lived in the Argentine Pampas and Chaco jungles, the policy was to justly dominate them, [as] servitude, according to their ignorance” p. 205).18

Education was not recommended for many different groups of indigenous people, but even in those areas where the Spanish kings and viceroys ordered their education, the exploitation “to which the Indians were subjected was so hard, that it produced the failure of all intentions of improving [the Indigenous people’] moral, intellectual, and material status, regardless of the Reales Cedulas [Royal laws] that frequently recommended good treatment, education, and conversion of the Indians”. (Documents for Argentine History, 1924, p. XXXI)

Schooling:

In general, according to Weinberg (1995),

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18 Quoted in Documentos para la Historia Argentina, [Documents for Argentinean History], (1924) T. XVIII, Teaching during the colonial era (1771-1810). Buenos Aires: Facultad de Filosofía y Letras. Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas.
“education was a reflection of the society [that was] essentially aristocratic, confined to a selected class: the criollos, Spaniards, and high-class mestizos. They learned the alphabet, reading, counting (adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing with whole numbers and rule of 3) praying, and the catechism. The catechism was a book of questions and answers that the students had to memorize. The Regal Catechism (1793), for example, asks ‘Question: What is the king?’

Answer: A temporal and supreme power, instituted by God to govern the peoples with equity, justice, and tranquility” (p. 65, quoted on Weinber, 1995), p. 107).

The goal of creating faithful subjects was, as this paragraph shows, mirrored in the teaching material such as the catechism.

The most successful educational model during the Spaniard colonization was the model developed by the Jesuit Order, in a vast area that today constitutes the northeast Argentina, between the Paraguay and Uruguay rivers. The Jesuits’ educational project included teaching organization, working values and skills, as well as reading, writing and arithmetic – the latter, only to socially advantaged Indigenous people such as chiefs and socially important Indigenous peoples’ sons. (Weinberg, 1995) The successful Jesuit model, that lasted until 1767, when the Spaniard monarchy expelled the Jesuits from their colonies, was not the rule in this part of the “New World,” but the exception.

19 Haring (quoted in Weinberg, 1995) defines criollos as white people born in the New World and descendents of Spaniards. Mestizos are people of mixed ancestry, descendents mostly of whites and Indigenous parents.
Inclusions and exclusions:

The elitist education promoted by the Spanish Kingdom targeted high status indigenous, “so they go out and be better Christians, more knowledgeable, and that they be more fond of us, and able to teach and persuade and put their subjects in order” (Solórzano. 1779, p. 219). The education promoted by the Spanish government was elitist, and discriminated against black people, mixed-race people (the majority of the population), and women. Several Cedulas Reales (royal laws) prohibited black people and mixed-race peoples’ admission to schools. These groups were not allowed to study on their own, either. According to Ramos (1910), “a mulato in Catamarca (Argentina) was whipped because he learned to read and write.” (p. 497)

Regarding women, the ideal of education that predominated in Spain was limited to teaching them how to write their names, to read, but mostly to do homemade crafts, to have proper manners, and to develop skills for managing the servants, and administering the house, keep the kitchen, and how to make clothing for the family. (Documentos para la Historia Argentina, 1924, p. XXXIV). This was the ideal education for socially advantaged white Spaniard women, and this ideal was transferred to the colonies. Girls were not admitted to boys’ schools, where more subjects were taught.

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20 Quoted in Documentos para la Historia Argentina. [Documents for Argentinean History], (1924) T. XVIII, Teaching during the colonial era (1771-1810). Buenos Aires: Facultad de Filosofía y Letras. Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas.

21 Quoted in Documentos para la Historia Argentina. [Documents for Argentinean History], (1924) T. XVIII, Teaching during the colonial era (1771-1810). Buenos Aires: Facultad de Filosofía y Letras. Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas.

22 A person descending from white and black ancestors.
**Government rationality:**

The focus of the government rationality was on developing the extractive economic model. To do so, the Spanish Crown needed free labor to contribute to the extraction of wealth. Institutions such as the *mita* and *encomienda* were ways of intensively exploiting labor.

**Subjectivities:**

Within this framework, the subjectivities promoted most were those of subjects faithful to the Spanish Crown, passive, and accepting of their conquerors and the latters’ methods of exploitation or education. The ideal subject would be the indigenous person who belonged to a higher social class and became a Christian, was friendly to the Spaniards, and willing to put their subjects under Spanish domination. The indigenous leaders were expected to help in the mission of governing the people subjected by the Spaniards. Women’s subjectivity was presented as a person skilled in handcrafts with good manners, who master skills related to managing the servants and administering the household and kitchen. In terms of education, an ideal woman would be able to write her name and perhaps read.
From Independence (1810-1816) to 1916.

Context and ideas:

During the founding period of Argentina as a nation, the Generation of the 1880s, a group of intellectuals and political leaders adapted liberal and positivist ideas and led a process of modernization. During this process of national organization, the citizen did yet not exist, but could be taught or imported. Citizenship had to be constructed, according to the intellectual leaders of those times. Citizenship and modernization would be constructed by the integration of the Europeans who had emigrated from their impoverished countries. They were expected to become part of the nation and be examples of hard work and progress. Policy should tend, according to these ideas, to homogenize and enhance the civilization. (Puiggrós, 1999, p.17)

The process of the integration of the immigrants and its relationship with education is complex. On the one hand, immigrants were considered models of civilization and productivity. Within this framework, the policies related to elementary school were an attempt to integrate the immigrant by means of adapting school subjects to rational criteria and universalistic behaviors and values –not by emphasizing traditional national values. (Tedesco, 2003, p.111). On the other hand, according to political analysts of the time, “foreignization debilitates the cult of the country and the cosmopolitan spirit separates us from a defined ideal of nationality” (National Council of Education, fifteenth anniversary of the law 1420.) (Memoria sobre el desarrollo de las escuelas primarias desde 1884 a 1934. Bs. As. 1938, tomo II, pag. 207).
Tedesco (2003) states that, regardless the conflict between importing civilization and creating a national identity - the result of immigration was not, according to Germani (1968), the integration of the immigrant to a base population, but the disappearance of the native type and the creation of a new social type.” (p.110). In Argentina, the conquest of the desert, based on the killing of Indigenous people and the appropriation of their lands, allowed access to land for cattle raising. Economic development was not based on the education of the people - cattle rising and an agro-exportation economy do not require very much training - but on the extension of the available resources - the land. This shows that the liberal ideology claimed by the founding elite, however, did not guarantee liberal governments. On the contrary, between 1880 and 1916 oligarchical governments coexisted with liberal ideology (Tedesco, 1982, p 91). According to Weffort, this paradox responds to

the requirements of an exportation based economy and the need to maintain the internal control and impede the participation of other social sectors [rather than those sectors in power]. Because of their relationship with dominant countries, behaviors that fit the liberal economy are imposed to the producers. Simultaneously, in the domestic sphere, the majority of the population is excluded from politics in order to maintain the power control [by the dominant sectors]. (p. 92 quoted in Tedesco 1982)

Schooling:

During the revolution in 1810, education depended on the power and resources of each province. In the province of Buenos Aires, during the 1820s some educational reforms were promoted by Rivadavia (Leonard, 1989). A few decades after independence
from Spain, when the national constitution was approved in 1853, schooling was considered one of the means for consolidating the nation. The inclusion of education within the constitution shows the central role that the state played in the development of education. Subsidized by the national treasury, the country constructed, financed, and took charge of national schools, under Sarmiento’s lead (Leonard, 1989). The first National Council of Education was created in 1881, to regulate the national elementary schools.

Within this context, education was not a response to economic interests. The political strength of education was rather related to positivist and liberal ideas and to political interests. A policy that shows the influence of liberal ideas is the Law of Education number 1420. This law, passed in 1884 in the midst of a political battle with the Catholic Church, established education as mandatory, tuition-free, and secular.

Although schooling was a political strategy that the government wanted to expand, scarcity of human and material resources was a major obstacle towards this end. According to Weinberg (1995), this explains the momentary popularity of the monitorial system, or Lancaster schools, in all of Latin America, including Argentina. This method allowed teaching a thousand students using only one teacher with the aid of the most advanced students.

Regarding high school, towards the end of this period, the increasing access of some sectors of the middle class to high school was a concern of the oligarchy. In relation to this concern, an educational reform, the “Saavedra Lamas reform,” was launched in 1916. This reform

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23 Articles 5, 14 and 67 of the National Constitution were the legal basis for Argentinean Education, according to Bravo, H. (1972). Bases constitucionales del sistema educativo argentino. [Constitutional bases of the Argentinean Education System.] Buenos Aires: Paidos.

24 This method allowed teaching a thousand students using only one teacher with the aid of the most advanced students.
reduced compulsory education from six to four years, and created a middle school with a vocational 25 orientation. According to Tedesco (2003), this reform did not improve the educational situation of those attending the newly created middle school. The government concern was related to the middle class sectors which were being socialized in a way that encouraged their political activity (p. 185). This reform – rejected by the opposition because they considered the middle school as a social filter between elementary and high school- is an example of the ways in which education was related to politics and was used by the oligarchical group in power to maintain control. According to Tedesco (2003), during this period, the evolution of education in Argentina is led by political and not by economic criteria. This explains why the different and opposite sectors of Argentine society that came to power in alternation agreed in promoting an encyclopedistic and humanistic education and in opposing to education related to vocational training (p. 75).

**Inclusions and exclusions:**

Since indigenous people were considered an obstacle in the way of economic development and peace, not only they were excluded from the subjectivities promoted during the foundation of the nation, but many of them were also eradicated by means of a campaign through which the military took their lands. Women were excluded from the sphere of knowledge, which was considered appropriate for men and from schools intended for boys.

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25 The original term is *professional*, and is related to manual labor and industrial activities.
**Government rationality:**

The first governments of Argentina addressed complex tasks such as national organization, creation of citizenship, and modernization. Homogenization of the population was one of the strategies used to address these goals. Another was the elimination of indigenous people and appropriation of their lands. The agro-exportation economy needed an expansion of the available lands, as well as an internal order. While a great part of the dominant social sectors in power was composed of intellectuals who adopted liberal ideas, oligarchical governments worked to keep internal control and limit political participation to the few political sectors already in power.

**Subjectivity:**

The new leading group adopted the ideas of liberalism, such as the ideal of the active citizen, as opposed to the faithful subject – the ideal of the Spanish conquerors. Sarmiento for example, (president in 1867) adopted many of Horace Mann’s liberal ideas related to education, among them, the idea of education for all. According to Puiggrós (1999), a difference between Sarmiento and Mann was that Sarmiento and many of his contemporaries associated civilization with European and Anglo-Saxon people and barbarism with indigenous people (p.20). Within this framework, “all” did not include indigenous people. As the following statement implies, education was openly related to the construction of subjectivity. “Education had the political mission of *transforming the native inhabitant into a citizen*” (Tedesco, 1982, p. 25). While gauchos were associated with laziness and ignorance, the accepted subjectivity included criollos (white people of
European descent), and European immigrants. But they should not be “too foreign” because the cosmopolitan spirit was considered to go against an ideal of nationality.

**Democratic rule (1916-1930).**

**Context and ideas:**

The oligarchical conservative sectors connected to the agro-exportation economy maintained their power until 1916 when the Radical Party won the national elections. This party’s policies emphasized democracy, for example, by extending citizenship to the middle classes and universalizing the vote with the passage of the Sáenz Peña Act. The government produced some social reforms such as an eight-hour day and a forty-eight hour week. In ideological terms the Radical Party’s emphasis on democracy was combined with conservative economic policies which constituted a continuation of the agro-exportation economic model. Some policies and strategies show the contradiction between democracy and the economic model. For example, when some elements of the agro-exportation economic model were questioned, the government would use repressive measures against those who opposed the model, an example of which was the massacre of strikers in Patagonia.  

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26 In 1921, workers in the southern provinces, in the Patagonia, went on strike over their quest for better working and living conditions. The government sent a military commander to investigate, and this commander signed an agreement with the strikers, which was ignored by the landowners. As a consequence, the workers went on strike again, in a strike that ended up in a massacre.
Schooling:

Regarding education, the Radical government cancelled the Saavedra Lamas reform, closing the middle schools and re-established the traditional curriculum in the National schools (high schools). According to Tedesco (2003), “the radical government almost doubled the number of Colegios Nacionales (high schools). This is more than significant, considering that in 1915 the number and locations of these schools were already considered excessive in relation with the country’s needs (p. 195)”

This expansion of the high-school level with a traditional curriculum was a policy that tended towards the democratization of high-school, in the sense that it meant an increase in access to high-school education. This was a kind of education that “forms a social sector of subjects [who are] able to exert political functions (or civic functions, in those times’ terms)” (Tedesco, 2003 p. 193).

Inclusions and exclusions:

While on one hand the expansion of the National schools meant an expansion of access to education for some sectors, on the other hand the Radical government continued to exclude some groups that had been historically disenfranchised, such as women and workers who opposed the system. While the Sáenz Peña Act extended the right to vote, the extension was only for all men who were eighteen years old and older. Women were excluded from the right to vote and hence, from political power or participation. In this sense, they were not citizens. This democratic government did not include those who
wanted to express their opposition to their working conditions. The exclusion of strikers was, in some cases, carried out by means of killing them, as in the case of the strikers in Patagonia.

**Government rationality:**

A restricted democratic ideology combined with conservative economic politics to maintain the agro-exportation economic model was the dominant rationality of this period.

**Subjectivities:**

A *democratic*, active male citizen, able to participate in the political and civic arenas, and complacent with the reigning economic model, was the dominantly promoted subjectivity.

**Return to conservative rule (1930-1943)**

**Context and ideas:**

The democratic policies implemented by the Radical Party survived, however, only until 1930, when the military forcibly removed president Yrigoyen from power, initiating a new conservative era, Known as the “decada infame” (infamous decade)
during the 1930s until 1943. Banning the Radical Party and delivering fraudulent elections are some examples of this decade’s political practices.

**Schooling:**

Within the sphere of education, and as a reaction of the hegemonic sectors to the extension of citizenship to middle classes, the universal vote, and the deep changes in political life promoted by President Yrigoyen, the conservative pedagogy adopted according to Tedesco (2003), “methods of ideological imposition [that were] increasingly obvious, dogmatic, and because of that, clearly authoritarian and coercive (p.227)”. Within an active opposition to communist ideology, teachers were banned from participating in political activities, and some “men with antinational hatred” were fired by the government, in order to ideologically clean up the educational system.

**Inclusions and exclusions:**

Communists, members of the political opposition, and politically active teachers were excluded from the educational system during this period.

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Government Rationality:

Spiritualism was a hallmark of the government and hegemonic groups’ ideological struggle against secularism in education, defended by the middle class sectors that demanded more access to education.

Subjectivity:

During this period the subjectivity promoted was that of the “spiritual man.” The spiritual man should be virtuous, charitable, and prudent, the priority values which were presented in opposition to access to knowledge, which should acquire a secondary role in the education of children. The values of the spiritual man were introduced in opposition to liberal democracy, an ideology that, according to the hegemonic groups, might generate chaos. (Entel, 1988).

Not only the student, but the school as well should promote spirituality. According to Teran (1931), spiritualizing the school means “pronouncing against what is understood as the preparation for practical life, it means freeing school and the child from the tyranny of utility, of the knowledge of immediate application, and to state, as a substratum, the disinterested and intellectual teaching, because man is an essentially spiritual being” (p. 39, quoted on Tedesco, 2003, p.218).

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Regardless of this hegemonic spiritual discourse, some demands for practical education were responded to by creating technical schools, the number of which was inconsequential during this period.
The Peronist era (1940-1955).

Context and ideas:

While the conservative sector maintained its power, even “using fraud and force when necessary (...) new social and political forces were seeking political power. These included the modern military, the labor movement, (...) and the always-present Catholic Church.” (Astiz, 1999, p.41)

In the early 1940s, the Church openly supported Perón when, after participating in a coup as a leader, he became a candidate for president and won the elections in 1943. In terms of international policy, Peronismo maintained a “third way” between capitalism and Marxist-Leninism. This third way was reflected in Argentina’s non-aligned position regarding the division of the world that resulted from the Cold War. In the domestic arena, Peronismo promoted nationalization, industrialization and economic and political empowerment of the working class and unions (Astiz, 1999, p. 41). The political tradition of Peronismo also favored internal markets (Schvarzer, 1998), and the state played a predominant role in economic and social development.²⁹

Schooling:

Regarding education, Perón launched two five-year plans (Plan quinquenal). The first one, passed in 1947 during his first mandate, seeks an educational philosophy that

²⁹ For example, the state created (or nationalized) monopolistic companies and took an active role in negotiations with unions.
balances materialism and idealism. In elementary schools, subject matters were divided into preparatory classes (language, mathematics, drawing, manual work, and culture), and formative classes, organized around values and norms, classes that have effect and exert power over the spirit (Puiggros, 1993). This plan emphasized language and national history. Compulsory education from ages 6 to 14, in elementary school, was free of charge. High school included two different orientations: the traditional humanistic bachelors’ orientation (a requirement for entrance to college), and the orientation that responded to the alleged need for preparing workers in different technical specializations.

Inclusions and exclusions:

Regarding inclusions, according to Puiggros (1993), the education plan of 1947 produced a double movement:

on the one hand, it meant a response without precedents to the education demands of those sectors in the lowest level of the educational pyramid. It proposed a basic education plus labor education. On the other hand, [the plan] designed a special zone of the system, [different] from the classic (bachelors and college) track, [and] separated from it by norms and requirements (p. 241).

Another important characteristic of the five-year plan consisted of the suspension of Law 1420, guaranteeing secular education. The plan introduced catechism in the schools, and gave private schools –mostly Catholic- funds for a percent of teachers’

30 The plan also included an optional pre-school cycle of two years, for ages four and five.
31 High school was not free of charge, unlike elementary school and college.
Religion, that had been historically excluded from the educational system, was included by Peronism. Non-catholic students were, on the other hand, excluded from the ideal subjectivity promoted by the educational system (Puiggrós, 1993).

**Government rationality:**

The following ideas were central to the government rationality: the non-aligned position regarding the international situation, nationalization, industrialization and economic and political empowerment of the working class, development and strength of internal markets, the predominant role of the state in economic and social development.

**Subjectivity:**

The subject promoted during this Peronist era embodied the subjectivity of the worker, a new political sector that was growing with the rise of national industry. Peronism adopted the nationalist reticence regarding liberal democracy and generated the “national doctrine” that guides policies and opens up a discourse lead by categories such as Argentines vs. anti-Argentines and Peronists vs. anti-Peronists. (Entel 1988)

During the Peronist government, teachers had new rights and duties. Some characteristics of the students’ subjectivity promoted by the Peronism can be inferred

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32 This financial support to Catholic schools and catechism was suspended during the last year of Peron’s presidency (Leonard, 1989, quoted in Astiz, 1999).
from the duties of the teachers. Some of the teachers’s duties were to form students with a “patriotic conscience [and] respect for the [National] constitution and the law, based on the Peronist National Doctrine…” (Puiggros, 1993, p. 213). A spiritual (and Catholic), patriotic, faithful and engaged Peronist worker seems to be a subjectivity promoted by the Peronist government.


Context and ideas:

In 1955 Perón was removed from power by militaries who from the late 1950s until the 1960s alternated rule with non-military governments. The ideology of “development” claimed that a take over was necessary to start economic growth. “A crash program of investment would provide the ‘big push’ and (…) capital in such amounts that would dispense with the need for a policy of forced savings (…) could only come from abroad. And to make certain that it was adequately invested, the State would devise the appropriate means, implementing planning mechanisms and generally playing an active role.” (Szusterman 1993, p.81)

Schooling:

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33 According to the Estatuto del docente (Teachers’ Statute) passed in 1954, teachers’ benefits included retirement, overtime, annual paid vacations, job security, social help, political rights and rights to unionize, scholarships for training, field trips and tourism. (Puiggros, 1993, p.213)
During this period education was considered a profitable investment, and offering education was conceived as a responsibility that the State shared with the community. As a consequence, the government decided to increase financial aid for private education (Tedesco, Braslavsky, Carciofi, 1987). Frondizi’s government promoted a law of free education that would give funding to private schools and universities, the majority of which were religious.

Government rationality:

According to Filmus, (1994) “based on positivist and later developmental conceptions and the human capital theory (Shultz, 1986), the idea that education was the main engine for social mobility (Germani, 1963) and national economic growth (Medina Echavarría, 1973) became hegemonic until the late 1970s.” These ideas, accepted all over Latin America, considered education, beyond its traditional socialization functions, as a social and individual investment. Developmentalists such as Frondizi34 (President of Argentina between 1958 and 1962) assigned a central role to the State. Governments during this period sought an influx of multinational capital investment.

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34 Frondizi, Arturo, 1908–95, president of Argentina (1958–62). A lawyer and economist, he opposed Juan Perón and rose to prominence after the latter was overthrown in 1955. A realist, he accepted Peronist support in his successful bid for the presidency in 1958. As president he attempted to revitalize the economy by imposing strict austerity measures and arranging for aid from the International Monetary Fund. Reversing a previous stand, he permitted the exploitation of Argentine petroleum by foreign countries, a move that aroused much opposition. He allowed the Peronists to participate in the 1962 elections; after they scored impressive victories, outraged anti-Perón elements in the army arrested Frondizi and annulled the elections. José Guido assumed the presidency. *The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia*, 6th ed. Copyright © 2005, Columbia University Press.
Subjectivity:

The discourse of development emphasized the need for a more specialized workforce. The technician was the subject embodied by the technocratic and developmental model after 1955 and during the 1960s. According to developmentalism, the citizen is mainly a qualified worker who can access social mobility through training. There is a shift between the model of the worker whose identity is linked to political participation to the model of a technician that emphasizes efficacy and adhesion to the enterprise (Entel, 1988). The technician was the subject that the education system should form.

Dictatorship (1976-1982).

Context and ideas

After neither the military nor the civilian parties that followed the developmental ideology succeeded in improving the economy, Perón won the elections in 1973 once again. In 1974 when he died, the vice president, his wife, Maria Estela Martínez de Perón succeeded him. An economic crisis, political disagreements within the Peronist Party, and left and right wing terrorism ended up with another military coup in 1976. The military assumed dictatorial power and, according to Puiggross (1999), “attacked public education and considered intellectuals, teachers, and students to be potential subversives” (p. 75).
The dictatorship imposed a project of order, called the National Re-organization Process. Within the framework of the Cold War, this process coincided with dictatorships in many Latin American countries. In Argentina, the National Re-organization Process included strategies of state terrorism, such as repression and killing, in order to meet the goal of order.

Regarding the economy, according to Basualdo (2002),

between 1976 and 1982, the dictatorship broke the substitutive industrialization and imposed a new economic and social model, based on financial valorization. This model was based on the huge profit for banks and the financial system and the profit for oligopolic capital that led economic activities, including industry (…). The interest rates superceded the profit of other economic activities, and the external debt worked as resources that could be valorized in the internal economy by the most powerful sector of capital (13).

Schooling:

An important problem that the dictatorship had to address was a high drop out rate in elementary education. The official discourse attributed this to the inefficiency of the state, and it also related the problem to the responsibility of the family (Tedesco, Braslavski, Carciofi, 1987). Regarding the curriculum, the following directions given by the Subsecretary of Education on February, 20, 1978, made explicit that elementary and high school

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35 The government suspended political and trade union activity, dissolved the Congress, made alterations to the constitution, and removed most government officials. During the military rule thousands of citizens suspected of undermining the government disappeared in what became known as the “dirty war.” The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 6th ed. Copyright © 2005, Columbia University Press.

36 The School of the Americas, In Georgia, trained Latin American soldiers to use methods of torture. These methods of torture were used against people considered terrorists, even when they had not had trials. 30,000 people were “disappeared” during the dictatorship.
Teachers would not participate in the creation of educational goals or contents. (…) Teachers will have from now on five main duties within education: 1. To know and interpret the established general and specific goals. 2. To conceive and put in order the activities that allow reaching those goals. 3. To deliver those activities in the class. 4. To act in the classroom and out in a way that permanently shows a positive and consistent educational agent. 5. To assess students’ conduct in regards with the general and specific goals that teachers will receive.

The government also developed a transfer of jurisdiction over schools. This decentralization strategy was accompanied by a set of Minimum Contents. According to Tedesco, Braslavski, and Carciofi (1987), the curriculum for elementary school emphasized the national defense and the family and its role in terms of highlighting authority. Unlike previous curriculum documents, the 1977 document does not include the term democracy. Values are defined as ethic-religious values.

The educational system had the following characteristics, according to Tedesco, Braslavski, and Carciofi (1987):

a) a government that had an increasingly bureaucratic complexity and decreasing teachers, parents, and student’s participation; decreasing and segmentation of educational opportunities offered in the key levels and parts of the educational system; c) a significant portion of the infrastructure was damaged and equipment was insufficient, and d) the teacher body was unarticulated and its training and certifications were heterogeneous. (p. 167)

The policies in this era gave priority to order and ideological imposition. “The style of the education system was accusation, fear, and repression (Bonavota, quoted in Lamarra 2002, p. 26). The values of the dictatorship were clear in the reform of “Moral and Civic Education,” and the imposition of subjects such as “the child and the army,” or “education of the consumer.” These changes in the curriculum led, according to Puiggros (1991), to the rejection of diverse religious and civil communities.
An example of the priority of ideological imposition is the extent and detail with which the government made explicit the attitudes that were considered deserving sanction. Personal hygiene, long hair (hair grown beyond the collar) for boys, use of makeup for girls, passive disobedience, carrying texts that are contrary to school activities, etc, were considered offenses.\textsuperscript{37} The regulation of the body was, obviously, an important function of the school.

**Inclusions and exclusions:**

The educational system did not explicitly exclude boys or girls. In 1980, according to National Population Census, however, only 90.1\% of the children of school age were in school. Almost 250,000 children were excluded from the system (Braslavsky, 1987). Students and teachers’ attitudes that did not correspond to the ideology imposed by the “National Re-organization Process” were explicitly excluded and sanctioned.

**Subjectivity:**

The subject that education should form during the dictatorship (1976-1983) responded to the prototype of the soldier: discipline, subordination, and courage were the values emphasized (Entel 1988). Knowledge was not a priority. A consequence of that is lack of socially significant content in education.

\textsuperscript{37} DINEMS, number 60, and CONET’s “Note to School principals”, quoted on Brslavsky (1987), p.64.
Government rationality:

The main goal of education in this era was to impose the ideology of the so-called National Re-organization Process, and to restitute order. According to Tedesco (1987), “one of the representatives of the Ministry [of Education] defined the best education atmosphere as one of respect, order, and silence” (p. 63).


“In 1981 Argentina petitioned the United Nations for possession of the Falkland Islands (Isla Malvinas), which had been occupied and claimed by the British since 1832. Tensions escalated until, on April 2, 1982, Argentina, now under the rule of Lt.-Gen. Leopoldo Galtieri, invaded and occupied the islands. British forces responded quickly, forcing a surrender by Argentine forces within 6 weeks. The Argentine defeat led to Galtieri's resignation and to the end of military rule.” (The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 6th ed. Copyright © 2005, Columbia University Press.)

Due to economic crisis, the war lost to England over the Malvinas/Falkland islands, and national and international pressure against human rights abuse, the dictatorial government called elections.

Context and ideas:

Alfonsín, from the Radical Party, won the elections and governed a period of “a twofold transition: the transition to democracy and the transition to a new economic order
through structural adjustment” (Astiz 1999, p 43). A characteristic of Alfonsín’s government was an effort at the democratization of institutions. An example of this in the area of education was the National Pedagogic Congress (Congreso Pedagógico Nacional), an extraordinary process of social participation that opened up discussion about the problems of the education system and the expectations regarding the system. This congress took place between 1985 and 1988 and “its agreements constitute a significant precedent for the elaboration of the National law of education in 1993” (Lamarra, 2002, p. 28).

Schooling:

The radical government conduced education reforms in high schools and in the magisterio (post high school institutes to train teachers). A national plan of adult literacy was launched, and the government democratized the universities\(^\text{38}\). Universities recovered their autonomy and their programs and syllabi were updated. (Lamarra, 2002).

Inclusions and exclusions:

Although Alfonsin’s campaign slogan was “Democracy feeds, democracy cures, democracy educates,” the economic crisis prevented the poorest sectors of society from obtaining benefits from the educational system. These sectors were not excluded, since

\(^{38}\) The dictatorship had taken over the universities and closed some of them. Most professors were fired and students were persecuted (Lamarra, 2002).
they had access to the system, and attempted to stay within the system. Staying in the school guaranteed in some cases access to free lunches or snacks. It did not guaranteed, however, a homogenous level of quality. No explicit exclusions existed during this mandate, the focus of which was on democracy.

**Government rationality:**

The Radical government’s main explicit goal was the maintenance and deepening of democracy. Its challenge consisted of managing a transition from a dictatorship to democracy, within the context of an economic crisis. Within this framework, the government efforts focused on democratization by prosecuting members of the army for the torturing and disappearance of 30,000 people, and by containing military actions the goal of which was the destabilization of the democratic government.

**Second democratic government: Menen (1989-1999.)**

This government developed the educational reform that is the focus of this dissertation. To contextualize the period in which that reform was launched, I elaborate on the context and predominant ideas during this time and summarize the government rationality. I also describe the changes in schooling that the reform produced.\(^{39}\)

\(^{39}\) I do not elaborate the inclusions and exclusion or the subjectivities of the reform here because they are the object of analysis of chapters four to seven.
Context and ideas:

Alfonsin’s government was destabilized by a combination of conflict with the military, difficulty in maintaining government legitimacy, and an economic crisis that included hyperinflation without precedent. As a reaction to hyperinflation, poor people rioted for food in several areas of the country. As a consequence of this chaos and pressures, the Radical Party had to leave power five months before their scheduled date of departure. Menem, the candidate who had won the elections, belonged to the Peronist Party and had appealed to Peronist values during his presidential campaign. As a condition for assuming power ahead of time, Menem imposed some demands. For example, the Radical Party deputies would have to approve two ‘emergency’ laws, the Economic Emergency Law and the Reform of the State Law, which concentrated decision-making power in the executive branch for a period of two years, and even allowed dictating laws by decree in several decision-making areas.”

While he claimed to be a Peronist, as soon as he took over, Menem aligned himself with the traditional conservative sectors in Argentina, sectors that had historically opposed Peronism. Besides this, Peronist officers, many of the members of his cabinet, including the minister of economy, belonged to the right, and some of them had been part of the military government that had banned and persecuted Peronists (Schvarzer, 1998).

This concentration of power allowed the government to deploy an agenda that corresponded more to the right conservative sectors than to the Peronist tradition. The

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40 These laws were approved without discussion only a few days after the installation of the new government. Regarding decrees, during the first term of his presidency, Menem signed 160 decrees, besides those decrees permitted by the Economic Emergency Law (Schvarzer, 1998).
alliance between Menem and the conservative sectors allowed the government to grant continuity to the financial, political, and economic model that had been launched by the previous military government.

This shift in values and governing rationality was possible, in part due to the fear that hyperinflation had produced in Argentine society for many years. It was that fear of hyperinflation that created a sense of obedience or at least silence among the people, and even limited labor movement activity (Schvarzer, 1998, p 68). The fear of new outbreaks of hyperinflation seemed to be stronger than rage at a government that had aligned with sectors that did not represent those who had voted for it.

One of the measures that did not fit with campaign promises or the Peronist tradition was the state reform that included the privatization of the main state owned utility companies. The privatization process was developed in a way that guaranteed conditions of monopoly to, for instance, the telephone companies. Because of these conditions, private Argentine consumers and the state itself had to pay higher rates (Schvarzer, 1998). This increased, instead of diminishing the expenditures of the state. Diminishing state expenditures was the main official reason for privatizing the companies in the first place.

The policies that opened up markets to “free-trade” show another way in which the government distanced itself from the Peronist tradition – a tradition that tended to promote national industry. In order to open up markets to imports, a reduction of import duties was imposed. As a consequence, prices of national products were constrained by the competition of imported products. (Schvarzer 1998).
According to Oxhorn and Ducatenzeiles (1998), the break with the old model of accumulation (agrarian exports) towards an open-market, privatized, and minimal state, “does not imply a drastic redefinition of the relationship between the state and economic agents. The most powerful economic groups appear to have achieved sufficient power to influence the application of the new model” (p. 9). The rational that justified privatization and opening the market was the need to modernize the country and make it capable of satisfactory participation in the global economy. Privatization and the reduction of the state were some of the strategies that, among others, resulted in increasing levels of unemployment. According to Cano (2000), for instance, 535,000 state jobs were eliminated between 1898 and 1995 (page 120).

Policies promoting an open market, privatization, and a minimal state were not isolated Argentine policies. They were powerfully promoted from the United Kingdom and the U.S. and adopted by many “third world” countries. If in the 1970s U.S foreign policy -within the context of the culmination of the Cold War- promoted conservatism, control, and even supported military governments in South America, in the 1990’s Clinton’s governing rationality influenced South American governments as well. The ideas of modernization, and participation in the global economy are related to the so-called Clinton Doctrine: the US’s promotion of a combination of democracy and free markets in the rest of the world (Chomsky, 1999). Clinton’s ideas, and those of other neoliberals, have been systematically promoted through the world. According to Pannu (1996),

[this] promotion is effected through the well-coordinated set of macroeconomic stabilization and structural adjustment policies of the supranational institutions such as the IMF and World Bank. The IMF
demands adoption and insists on the application of these macroeconomic policies by a large number of Third World debtor states, policies that bear the unmistakable imprint of neoliberalism. Furthermore the mechanisms used to secure compliance approach market colonialism. (p. 93)

Within the global economic rationality, the reform of the state was another means by which the country would supposedly become able to compete in the globalized market. The national process of the reform of the state was related to a wider process of state reforms developed worldwide and particularly in Latin America. According to Astiz (1999),

The role of the state and its reform was, and is still today, a generalized preoccupation among leading politicians, social scientists, and representatives of different regional and international organizations in the last decades. Administrative reform was considered the priority on political agendas and it was presented as a solution that would determine the success of the economic and social reforms. The goal of market criteria, represented by an increase in productivity, competitiveness, and flexibility in adapting to international changes were accepted as key objectives (p 2).

These criteria had been implemented in Chile, and the country had become the model of modernization through neoliberal reforms. In Argentina, these ideas were offered as the solution to all the national problems, where they were adopted and defended by the hegemonic alliance led by Menem. The policies based on neoliberal values were applied to most political areas. The fear of a new hyperinflation crisis, the illusion of stability and the brief rise in living standards, as well as the growing

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41 The media emphasized the success of the Chilean transformation, but it failed to connect the growth of the macro economic figures to the dictatorship that had imposed these measures, and to the social cost of those measures.
indebtedness in U.S. dollars for the middle and higher classes, silenced the Argentine people during the 1990s even though corruption and social injustice was obvious.  

Schooling:

When forming part of discourses on education, neoliberal values did not seem like isolated ideas, but in resonance with a model that—in general—was being accepted (Filmus 2000). Actually, the transference of these values into specific educational policies started in 1992, when as part of the general state reform, the secondary schools (schools that were under the national control) were transferred to provincial control. This silence was broken on December 2001, during a Radical Party presidency. After years of silence the Argentinean people woke up and took the streets to fight for their money— that the financial “free market” attacked, for non-corrupted politics, and for their voices. They complained, demonstrated, and removed two presidents from office. Thousands of protesters demonstrated for president De La Rua’s resignation on December 20, and president Rodriguez Saa (Peronist) on December 28, 2001. In November of that year, as a result of rumors about banks going in bankruptcy, thousands of investors withdrew their deposits and transferred them into safes, accounts abroad, and even hid them at home. Between 700 and 1,1000 million dollars were withdrawn on that day alone. As a result, the government launched the decree 1570/01, according to which each investor was allowed to withdraw only 250 pesos (same value as dollars) a week, and could send only $ 1,000 abroad. (Camarasa 2002, p.19) The new measure worsened the economic climate and people rioted to empty supermarkets and small stores to obtain food or other items which they would try to sell later. (Camarasa, 2002, p. 40). On December 19th, the government imposed a state of siege and the president gave a speech to the people. Instead of calming down, as a reaction to these measures, people went out and hit their cooking pots in the streets, squares, and balconies. Thousands of people got together in front of the government house and shouted “They all must leave”. Soon the police started to arrest protestors. Riots, demonstrations, and repression continued, leading to 24 deaths, until December the 20th, when the President resigned. Demonstrations escalated again when Rodriguez Saa, the second President after De la Rua included corrupt politicians in his staff. Saa resigned a week after he had taken over and President Duhalde – also a Peronist – took over. After that, the social climate generated in this context was expressed, according to Feijo (2000) “through behaviors such as citizenship apathy, frustration, and hopelessness.” (p. 32)
transfer, according to Astiz (1999) generated great problems, especially financial
difficulties, for the provinces. This transfer is also an example of the pressures of the
external creditor agencies – pressures that were not new for Argentine education. 43

This transfer was a decentralization policy. Decentralization is related to the
neoliberal discourse, being understood as a measure to decrease bureaucracy, a means to
improve the quality of education, and an opportunity for communities to have more
decision making power. According to Filmus (2000), the transfer increased, instead of
reduced, the bureaucratic structures of the state, due to the duplications in the provinces
of the positions existing in the national ministry. Later evaluation did not show
improvement in the quality of education, and the transfer failed to generate successful
and systematic experiences of community participation. Filmus links the failure of the
transfer to the predominant logic underlying that policy: financial decentralization.

Transfer, as a decentralization policy, could have promoted democratic
participation. According to Puiggros (1999), however, the transfer did not promote
democratic participation of teachers and communities, due to the emphasis on control and
reduction of the power of teachers and unions during the process of decentralization. The
transfer was not the main educational policy of Menem’s government. In 1993, his
government launched an educational reform that began with the passing of the National
Law of Education, 24195. The National Education reform is related to a broader process

43 In the 1960s and 1970s, the systems of education in Latin America were experiencing a
continuous educational expansion, and, on the other hand, their expenditures decreased.
(Reimers, 1990, as quoted in Astiz). According to Reimers (1990), the states had to
minimize equity and promote efficiency in order to reduce educational expenditures due
to the economic “structural adjustments” required by external funding agencies.
of reform of the state and educational reform in Latin American and other countries, and is related to the history of the Argentine education system.

The reform affected diverse aspects of the educational system. It re-defined the responsibilities of each government level in relationship with education by delegating some decision-making responsibilities such as management, curricular adjustment and service delivery to the provincial education systems and the schools themselves. However, the central government kept control as policy maker, coordinator, and controller of the overall educational design (Ley Federal de Educacion, Art. 2). Some other responsibilities maintained at the central level are national testing and system evaluation, the design of core curriculum standards for the whole country, compensatory education programs, and technical assistance to the provinces and schools (Ley Federal de Educacion, Art. 51).

The reform introduces a new organization of schools, which consists of a three level system of one year compulsory initial education; a nine-year compulsory EGB (general basic education) divided in three cycles, the first extending from grade 1 to 3, the second one from grade 4 to 6, and third and last cycle including grades 7 to 9; and a three-year optional high school education (polimodal).

A very important aspect of the educational reform was the curricular reform.

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According to the National Law of Education, the national administration is responsible for the elaboration of the *contenidos básicos communes* (Common Basic Contents, or standards). These standards were the result of several accords between the *Ministerio de Cultura y Educación de la Nación* (National Ministry of Education and Culture) and the *Consejo Federal de Educación* (Federal Education Council). All Argentine provinces are represented in the federal council. These standardized contents state the relevant minimum content knowledge, skills and attitudes that all students in Argentina should achieve.

The standards provide each province with a minimal framework within which each provincial system should develop its specific curricular standards. Also, each school must work on its own adaptation of the curriculum: each school is required to contextualize and put into practice the sets of national and provincial objectives, contents and skills in response to the needs and expectations of each school community. In theory, this is a model that moves away from a centrally regulated, administered and designed curriculum (Gvirtz, 2002). This change seems more appropriate to the demands of democratization of the times and to the promote of a more accountable educational system.

Concomitant to the decentralization of curriculum design and management, an evaluation system for education quality was put in place (*Ley Federal de Educación*, Art. 48, 49, 50). The objectives of this evaluation system are to provide information about the quality of the education service provided, to supervise the progress and achievement of the education reform, to oversee student achievement, the quality of teacher training and to assess if curricular adaptations have been made according to the diverse needs and
social demands of the educational communities being served. In general terms, the assessment system is centrally organized to monitor and control both the progress in and results of the educational transformation process within the framework of more decentralized curricular management system.

The general education policy framework takes into account the following principles: the strengthening of national identity while respecting local, provincial and regional idiosyncrasies; the consolidation of a republican, representative and federal democracy; the provision of equal opportunities for all inhabitants, avoiding any type of discrimination; the equitable distribution of education services to provide the best possible quality education and results, the inclusion of persons with special needs; the removal of every negative stereotype from instructional materials; and the promotion of the necessary conditions for pluralistic and participatory learning (*Ley Federal de Educación*, Art. 5).

The educational reform implied, on the one hand, an important investment for improving education, while, on the other hand, responding to some of the imperatives of state reform, such as the reduction of expenditures. In a time of financial crisis, according to Filmus (2000), the ideas promoted by funding agencies such as the World Bank and the IMF became very powerful because they “come with money, in times of deep fiscal crises, [and this makes them] acquire more strength” (p.56)

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45 According to Puiggrós (1999) in 1994, the Federal Education Law in Argentina set out to attain [6 percent of the GDP] but in 1995, only 3.65 percent of the GDP was dedicated to education, and this decreased to 3.35 percent in 1997(p.85).
**Government rationality:**

Menem’s government’s rationality is characterized by presidential concentration of power, considerable rule by decree, and continuity with the financial, and economic model developed by the military government, a weakening of the labor movement, focus on modernization, state reform and privatization, open markets, the need to compete in the globalized market, and decentralization. Due to the dominant neoliberal values in of Menem’s government’s rationality, I define this rationality as a neoliberal government rationality. How is the educational reform related to this government rationality? Within this context, how does the educational reform aim to educate students in relationship with their citizens’ rights and duties? What kind of subjectivities does the educational reform promote? In the following chapters, I develop an analysis of texts of the education reform in order to answer some of these questions.
Subjectivities in the Argentinean educational reform: the law and the official discourse.

Introduction

In this chapter I explore the subject of the educational reform in relation to the political rationalities during the period within which the reform was launched. According to Popkewitz (2000), reforms can be considered as governing practices because “governing is concerned with linking political rationalities to subjectivities, that is, the governing principles through which people think, talk, speak, and act as self-responsible individuals.”

The main policy that gave legal support to promoted the reform was the National Law of Education, 24195, passed in 1993. This new education law changed the rules of school organization, the curriculum, and methods of assessment, opening opportunities, at least rhetorically for greater participation from teachers and community members. The law was set in the dynamic and economic context of its time, a context not always supportive of such broad educational reforms.

In theory, the reform was intended to provide a better education for students, but, we may ask what kind of students? What subjectivities did the reform foster? The National Law of Education itself is a good resource for exploring the subjectivities

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46 This governing is what Foucault (1979) calls governmentality, (p. 33) the mentality of governing
47 According to Puiggrós (1999) in 1994, the National Education Law in Argentina was to set aside [6 percent of the GDP] for education but in 1995, only 3.65 percent of the GDP was dedicated to education, and this decreased to 3.35 percent in 1997(p.85).
promoted by the reform. Law, in its role as policy, is an “agenda or set of objectives that legitimize the values, beliefs, and attitudes of its authors “(Pruny, 1985, quoted in Edmondson, 2000, p. 4). The values that a law promotes indirectly depict the kind of subjectivities the reform supports and encourages. Since this law describes and prescribes what education should be like, it conveys a certain vision, in particular, of a future civil society and morality. It also implies hopes for the future, given an understanding of current realities (Simon 2000, p.142).

The law is not a neutral set of decrees, but a set of statements with values related to specific viewpoints of certain social sectors. Are these the values that would educate democratic subjects of a country in crisis? The values assigned to the subjectivities that the law offers as an ideal, initially seem to represent different political sectors that participated in the construction of the law. Some universal concepts show the influence of the (Catholic) church and other values suggest the influence of liberal ideas related to Argentinean political parties. This mix of values – which seems to be the result of a democratic process of the construction of a law – changes its meaning when contrasted with the values proposed by those in charge of implementing the law.

In this chapter, I address the following questions: What subjectivities are promoted by the National Law of Education? According to the law, what are the values that the educated subject should posses? In relationship with the government rationality, what values were promoted by the official discourse when the national law or education was launched?
The law of education: What subjectivities does the system foster?

The National Law of Education, a law that describes a vision about how the educational system should be, is divided in 12 titles and 71 articles. Although I briefly comment on other articles of the law, I will center my analysis on article 6 because this is the article that depicts the kind of subject the school should educate. In order to describe this subject, article six states that

The Argentine education system will promote men and women’s comprehensive and continuous education; [an education] that will foster national identity under a regional, continental and universal worldview. [This education] will allow men and women individual fulfillment according to their cultural, social, ethical, esthetic, and religious capabilities and under the guidance of the values of life, freedom, the good, truth, peace, solidarity, tolerance, equality, and justice.

[Education will allow men and women] to generate the capacities for elaborating their own life project that [are the] result of existential decisions; [an education that will help to develop men and women as] responsible citizens, critical protagonists, creators and change-makers of society, through love, knowledge and work, [and] defenders of democratic institutions and the environment.

In the first sentence, by contextualizing men and women in the local sphere but appealing to national identity and continental and universal worldviews, the law situates the subject in the process of globalization. The emphasis on national identity is consistent with the principles of the law mentioned in article 5 of the law. From the second sentence on, the depiction of men and women incorporates both liberal values and a liberal point of view. As Shannon (2001) explains, “liberalism springs from a vision of society as crucially composed of individuals and accepts their liberty as the

48 Chapter three includes a general description of the law and the reform.
primary social good (Hobbes, 1067, Locke, 1952, Mill, 1965). This liberty is often
deemed as free political institutions, religious practices, and intellectual and artistic
expression (Hayek, 1960) (p.125)."

The idea of a society composed of individuals who possess freedom to fulfill
themselves is clear in article 6, which defines education as a means to allow men and
women individual fulfillment. The fact that individual fulfillment is related to cultural,
social, ethical, esthetic, and religious capabilities, illustrates the liberal spheres of liberty

The use of universal values such as life, freedom, the good, truth, peace,
solidarity, tolerance, equality, and justice, recalls the Enlightenment period in which
liberalism acquired firm roots (Shannon, 2001). The inclusion of tolerance reveals that
the law adopts an updated liberalism, since tolerance acquired importance as a liberal
value as a consequence of the Civil Right Movements during the 1960s in the United
States.

Together, all these ideas describe a liberal education for a liberal subject. Based
on these ideas present in the law, it could be assumed that the Argentinean education
system indeed intends to promote liberal subject positions to identify with. According to
article 6 of the law of education, education will allow men and women individual
fulfillment, it will allow men and women to generate the capacities for elaborating their
own life projects that [are] the result of existential decisions. In keeping with Rose’s
(1998) description, the subjects of the law are described as individuals who “are incited
to live as if making a project of themselves” (156). The emphasis on the individual, as a
self-made person, free to be whatever she wants to be, is an illusion that opposes the
individual to society, and “frees” the individual from ties of solidarity and any kind of social tie and commitment. Described as able to fulfill herself personally, the individual seems to be not only free to do whatever she wants, but also to have the opportunity to do so.

To deeply analyze the values that underlie and accompany the subjectivities described by the law, in the next section I look at the values considered central to people in charge of the educational reform. To explore these values, I analyze the discourse of one of the most important administrators of the educational reform.

The official discourse: What values are emphasized?

The Argentinean educational reform and more specifically, the curricular reform is closely associated with a single name, the name of the Director of Curriculum of the Argentinean National Ministry of education who was in charge of the elaboration of the national curricular guide: Cecilia Braslavsky. Well known before the reform due to her academic work, Braslavsky represented for me and many Argentinean teachers a resource of knowledge and someone who influenced our ideas regarding education. By

49 From now on, I refer to Braslavsky’s paper/speech as “the official discourse.” I do so because she was part of the government, since she was the director of curriculum of the National Ministry of Education. This does not mean, however, that I consider the official discourse as a homogeneous and consistent set of ideas that coincide with Braslavsky’s concepts. I am aware of political differences within the official discourse.
analyzing Braslavsky’s paper I do not mean to criticize her personally, but to study a
flowing discourse that, in this case, she was transmitting. According to Ball (1990) discourse provides a particular and pertinent way of understanding policy formation, for policies are, pre-eminently, statements about practice – about the way things could or should be – which rest upon, derive from, statements about the world- about the way things are. They are intended to bring about idealized solutions to diagnosed problems. Policies embody claims to speak with authority, they legitimate and initiate practices in the world, and they privilege certain visions and interests (p. 22). Braslavsky’s paper represents statements about the world, about how things are and should be. The paper legimitates values that initiate practices in the educational system, and her personal authority lends authority to the values she supports.

The paper – published in 2000 – was presented by Braslavsky in April of 1996, at an international conference about educational policy, educational institutions and social

On June 1st, 2005, a few weeks after I finished writing this chapter, Cecilia Braslavsky died of cancer, in Geneva, where she was the Director of UNESCO’s International Bureau of Education (IBE). Her death is an immense lost for Argentinean Education and for all the teachers who met her or read her books or articles. I am personally grateful to Cecilia for her generosity: she wrote one of the letters of recommendation for my Fulbright scholarship and she was an excellent professor during a master program I started in FLACSO (Latin American University of Social Sciences). I learned further from her while I worked for the Ministry of Education in Argentina, although I was not her direct emploeye. For a while I considered not including this chapter in my thesis because she can no longer critically respond to it. After much thinking and talking with colleagues, I decided to include it because as my friend Juan Carlos Serra states, “the debate of ideas is something Cecilia has always promoted, and debating ideas is a way of honoring her memory.”
actors in education.\textsuperscript{51} Cecilia Braslavsky (2000), presented what she considers “the four star concepts\textsuperscript{52}” within discourse about educational policies. These star concepts are: quality, equity, participation of the community and efficiency (p44).” Braslavsky asserts that while in the past equity and participation have been concepts emphasized by the left and quality and efficiency have been emphasized by the right, only recently are these concepts becoming star concepts, due to the need for,\textsuperscript{53} and as a result of, a process of renovation in international education thought (p 45).”

The star values are presented as superseding the division between the left, concerned with equity and participation, and the right, concerned with quality and efficiency. It is interesting to note that almost the same values that Braslavsky presents as the result of international renovation and as superseding the difference between left and right, are the values promoted by neoliberalism in the U.S.\textsuperscript{54} To briefly define neoliberalism, I cite some ideas of Charles Peters, one of the founders of the neoliberal movement in the U.S. According to Peters (1983), “We still believe in liberty and justice and a fair chance for all, in mercy for the afflicted and help for the down and out. But we no longer automatically favor unions and big government or oppose the military and big business. (p. 9)”}


\textsuperscript{52} Braslavsky (2000) states that innovations in education are not chosen from an “infinite universe of possibilities, but from within a number of possibilities defined from certain thought that shares certain ‘star concepts’ and ‘controversial concepts.’ Star concepts are those that are inevitable parts of the discourse (…) The ‘controversial concepts’ are those regarding which there is no consent. (p 43/44)

\textsuperscript{53} She does not specify what kind of needs she is referring to.

\textsuperscript{54} Here I address neoliberalism as a concept in the U.S, while I exclude from my analysis British neoliberals, to whom, according to Fowler (1995) “Americans would more commonly describe as free market conservatives”
a central element of neoliberalism [is that] it is at once pragmatic and idealistic. Opposed to [the] four principles of the old liberalism are the primary concerns of neoliberalism: community, democracy, and prosperity. Economic growth is most important now. It is essential to almost everything else we want to achieve. Our hero is the risk-taking entrepreneur who creates new jobs and better products. (p.10)

In her analysis of these neoliberal values, Edmondson (2000) synthesizes a definition of neoliberalism by asserting that “the core neoliberal values are economic growth, community, efficiency, and equality (p.17).” The similarities between these values and Braslavsky’s star concepts are obvious, although the neoliberal values are broader because they do not refer exclusively to education, as Braslavsky’s star concepts do.

Quality

Braslavsky begins her explanation of the star concepts by stating that one of these concepts is quality. Braslavsky associates quality with efficacy. The *Oxford American College Dictionary* (2000), defines efficacy as the ability to produce a desired or intended result. What are the intended results of the reform? Braslavsky links the quality of education to modern ways of reflecting and guiding actions. From her point of view, the quality of education should be related to the reinforcement of modern ways of reflecting and guiding actions, [ways of reflecting that] focus on three questions. The first question is experience, as the capability of managing information and searching for empirical data to make statements and decisions. The second question is reason: the ability to argue in an analytic, reflective, and critical way. The third question is subjectivity, understood as the increasingly autonomous construction of action by individual and collective subjects. These subjects exert their liberty and will, are capable of interacting with different others, being different, and engaging on
dialogue (from a distance) with hegemonic thoughts and actions. Subjectivity would constitute the foundation for creativity and the ability to project, to imagine what is different from what exists now, in order to promote what is different thorough action. (p. 46)

It is interesting to note the emphasis on creativity. According to Fowler, (2000), this emphasis is related to “a humanistic philosophy that stimulates creativity and autonomous learning” (p. 117). Fowler (2000) contrasts this philosophy with the “utilitarian philosophy that has been in the ascendance since the early 1980’s [in the United States, and since the 1990s’ in Argentina, a philosophy that] defines quality in economic terms. (p. 118). Fowler’s observation on how the definition of the values change in relation to philosophical frameworks is interesting because it illuminates the difference between the quality Braslavsky talks about – quality related to the modern ways of thinking – and the quality that the law of education intends to measure. Fowler (2000) offers a set of questions and related terms that are present when a policy aims to evaluate quality issues from a utilitarian perspective. Such words are “standards,” “world-class,” “excellence,” and “quality control,” as well as measures to raise the level of the curriculum, and to raise standards. In the Law of Education itself, quality is not linked to the modern ways of thinking mentioned by Braslavski, but to continuous evaluation and control: the state is in charge of monitoring the quality of the educational system, by means of the evaluation system of education quality (National Law of Education, Art. 48, 49, 50). The appropriateness of the national curriculum (standards), students learning, and the quality of teaching education will be verified by the quality evaluation of the system, according to Article 49 of the law. The quality of education is not then related to efficacy as the ability to produce a modern mentality, but as the
ability to produce the achievement of high standards, high levels of learning and other measurable results. Quality is, then, related to a utilitarian perspective.

**Equity and equality**

The second star concept listed by Braslavsky (2000) is equity. In order to define this term, she claims that equity is associated with equality, and she immediately states that equality is currently a rather devaluated concept (p. 45). Perhaps U.S liberals share this perception regarding the word equality, because, according to Fowler (1995), “in general, neoliberals use the world *equity* rather than *equality* (p. 48).” In the case of Argentina, it is curious how a concept related to social justice looses its importance and power precisely at the most unequal moment of recent history.

The different role and importance that the official discourse and the law give to equity is clear when the principles of the law and Braslavsky’s definitions are contrasted. Equity is listed as one of the general principles of educational policy in Article 5 of the law.

The state shall fix the educational policy respecting the following rights, principles, and criteria: (...) the provision of equal opportunities for all inhabitants, avoiding any type of discrimination; the equitable distribution of educational services to provide the best possible quality education and results, the inclusion of persons with special needs; the removal of every negative stereotype from instructional materials; and the promotion of the necessary conditions for pluralistic and participatory learning (*Ley Federal de Educación*, Art. 5).

Equity is, however, discouraged by the official discourse when the officer in charge of the curricular reform limits its definition to an association with equality, and then immediately afterwards, classifies equality as a rather devaluated concept. The
difference between this value as explicitly mentioned in the educational law and the list of star concepts mentioned by the officer makes sense in light of the tension between the reduction of the state and the need for investment to implement the educational reform. If the government stresses the reduction of the state’s costs, it makes sense to emphasize efficiency over equity, to disregard equality, to promote efficiency as a main concern regarding education, and to call efficiency “a star concept.”

**Efficiency**

After stating that the concept of efficiency is related to a better use of resources, Braslavsky explains that it “is not exclusively related to the optimization of a company’s earnings, but also –and especially- to the need for a more efficient use of resources to improve the quality of life for all. Efficiency is, then, a social and communitarian need (p.45).” Although there is an explicit link between efficient education and improvement of people’s lives, there is no mention of economic improvement – the relation between education and the individual or the country’s economic growth is not made explicit.

The connection between efficiency and quality of life is present as well in U.S. neoliberal discourse. According to Fowler (1995) efficiency can be defined by neoliberals as “output maximization, excellence, standards, or accountability (p.46).” It is tied to economic growth (Edmondson 2000) because efficiency will allow maintaining the American standard of living.
The difference between Braslavsky’s and the U.S. neoliberal definition of efficiency seems to be that while Braslavsky thinks of education as a means to improve people’s lives, U.S. neoliberals emphasize education as a means to maintain their standard of living. There is no need here to stress the difference between the standard of living in a South American country that is dealing with its worst ever political and economic crisis – where things have to improve – and the standard of living in the richest country in the world.

While Braslavsky had started her presentation connecting the quality of education and modern ways of thinking and relating efficiency to the better use of resources to improve peoples’ lives, she continued her speech by connecting efficiency to the need for evaluational systems in a globalized world. In this sense, Braslavsky relates efficiency to globalization by stating that in a globalized world, “because of personal mobility, the efficiency of expert systems will be highly valued (p. 50).” She explains that in order for different regional goods and knowledge markets to accept national education degrees, it will be necessary to prove that each expert in different areas has certain skills that are comparable to those of experts in other places.

Braslavsky (2000) also relates efficiency to evaluation and standards, first, by mentioning that expert systems are needed to demonstrate peoples’ skills internationally. Second, by stating that some of the new devices through which the government promotes new logics, are a new curriculum (the device that establishes national standards), [and] new systems of information and evaluation, [systems that are] needed to make informed decisions (p 49). These devices are mentioned in the Article 53 of the National Law of Education (1993). This article states that the National
Ministry of Education must “establish (…) the goals and contents [of education] (…) leaving room for contents that respond to the provincial, municipal, communitarian and institutional requirements (section b),[and] evaluate the Educational System by designing a system of evaluation and quality control (…) (p.10)”

High standards are also significant for U.S. neoliberals. Edmondson (2000) shows the importance assigned to standards, asserting that to neoliberals, “efficiency can be seen in the emphasis on higher academic achievement, high standards, and by the push for national assessments to prove this achievement (p.22).” In order to illustrate this emphasis, Edmondson (2000) quotes former president Clinton’s speech on June 23, 1997.

The only thing that’s going to wreck our schools is if we hide our head in the sand, we don’t say what the standards are, we don’t measure whether our kids are meeting them, and we say, well, they just can’t make it because they are poor or they come from some disadvantaged background. That is a load of bull. We need to get this out in the open and make sure all of our kids can meet these standards (p23).

The emphasis on efficiency is, regardless of the contextual differences, another convergence between Braslavsky’s star concepts and U. S. neoliberal values.

**Economy.**

Economic growth is a main value endorsed by U.S. neoliberals. Braslavsky does not explicitly adopt this value, and she seems to avoid mentioning any explicit relationship between her star concepts and the economy. Economic issues are, however, related to equality, although this last value is disregarded by the official discourse.
analyzed here. It is interesting to note that inequality is not emphasized at the very moment when it reigns. In Argentina, in 1980, the Gini index – which measures income inequality in a society – was .38%. In 1997, the Gini index was .49. According to Amadasi, (1999) this means that between the 1980s and the 1990s income inequality increased by 9%. In the 1980s, the gap between the income of the poorest and the income of the richest was a factor of 5.8, while in the 1990’s, the gap was 6.2. In this context, disregarding equality as a main concept in education means, at least, a passive acceptance of inequality.

Braslavsky explains that although the economy is also related to efficiency, efficiency is not only related to earnings. She relates the efficiency of the educational system to globalization, an economic – if also political and cultural – process. The relationship between the efficiency of educational systems and the ability of workers to compete in a globalized job market is also present in U.S. neoliberal discourse. According to Edmondson (2000), neoliberals consider that “successful changes in public education will ultimately enable displaced workers to move easily as free agents in a fluctuating job market, which is considered necessary for the continued economic growth and competitiveness of the United States.” (p. 20) The connection between education and economic growth is explicit and strong in the case of U.S neoliberals, in opposition to some weak and implicit connections in Braslavsky’s speech. Perhaps this difference is related to the different weight of human capital theory in U.S. and in Argentina. While education is considered a means for social mobility in the United
States, in Argentina corruption and favoritism in the process of obtaining a job,\textsuperscript{55} and the number of graduates who are unemployed or underemployed weighs against a direct relationship between education and social mobility.\textsuperscript{56} Perhaps for this reason Braslavsky does not link efficient education to economic growth. The lack of prestige of human capital theory might also be the reason for Braslavsky’s explicit adoption of all of the neoliberal core values except for economic growth, in her speech on the star concepts of education.

\textbf{Participation of the community.}

Another value that Braslavsky (2000) presents as a star concept is participation of the community. She first relates this concept to citizen’s rights, and later talks about the participation of society in social processes, claiming that the state is not the only agency responsible for social processes such as education (p.50). She argues that people reflect more about the action of the state and less about the actions of other social actors. Braslavsky does not relate participation to the possibility that the community and students may exercise critical thought, propose changes, and play the part of responsible citizens.

\textsuperscript{55} In a study about middle class perceptions of liberty, equality, success, and justice, Sauty (2001) found that even though education is highly valued as a mechanism that produces equality of opportunity at the beginning of peoples’ lives, people acknowledge many obstacles to access to good education and to access to good jobs regardless the level of education, due to corruption. On the other hand, Myrna Alexander (1999), president of the World Bank between 1990 and 1993, states that the job market highly values the level of education, because in Argentina, in 1997, 13% of people who studied after high school were unemployed, in comparison to 18 % of unemployed people among those who had only finished high school.

\textsuperscript{56} In a class that I took in 1990, professor Daniel Filmus – currently National Minister of Education - gave a sad metaphor to describe the relationship between education and social mobility. He said “in Argentina, a college degree is not a diving board that helps you go up, but a parachute that protects you and slows down your descent”
as described in Article 6 of the law, or to the promotion of pluralistic and participatory learning, as Article 5 of the law specifies. Instead, she adopts a blaming approach to participation – you should participate, it is not only the state’s responsibility to run educational institutions. In this way, her perspective on the participation of the community in social issues presents participation not only as a right, but also as a responsibility.

Community is one of the major value for U. S. neoliberals. As some of them say, “neoliberalism is first and foremost a movement of community” (Peters and Keisling, 1985, p.9). The emphasis in the idea of community does not seem to be on the active participation of the community in politics, but rather on a perception of shared community. According to Fowler (1995), community is not considered by neoliberals as a special group formed around specific interests, but rather as the idea of “national community, based on a sense of shared citizenship (p. 47).” This sense of shared citizenship is related to people’s identity. Edmondson suggest another meaning that liberals allot to community. According to Edmondson (2000), when neoliberals talk about creating a shared citizenship, they talk about ‘helping ‘them’ [those who are different, mostly in terms of class] to be more like ‘us’ [the neoliberals] to share common values” (p.17).

Because Braslavsky focuses on education, when she talks about participation of the community, she centers her discussion on the rights and responsibilities of the community.

57 If we take into account how neoliberal values have been systematically and institutionally promoted throughout the world, we may think that neoliberals aim to share common values with the whole world. Some authors such as Pannu (1996) consider that the IMF and the World Bank are some of the institutions that promote these values by demanding policies that bear the imprint of neoliberalism.
community towards education. By stating that not only the state, but also other social sectors have a responsibility in education, Braslavsky complements her idea of star concepts with her conception of the state. She considers the state as an organizer and producer of social solidarity. This kind of state “convokes, is a sphere, proposes, regulates and configures the system through new devices and the promotion of certain processes and logics (p.49).” The administrator here states that the definitions of the state are not the same as they were thirty years ago. In this way, she dismisses the welfare state as a viable alternative. Currently, she claims, the available alternatives are the minimalist state, and the organizer and solidarity promoting state. The minimalist state collects taxes and manages the market forces, while the solidarian state regulates and configures a new educational system. The solidarian state facilitates and promotes processes and logics or visions, it convokes, it almost “invites” others to engage, and it facilitates other social subjects’ engagement in social processes such as education. This is the concept of state that Braslavsky endorses (p. 47).

Within this framework, the welfare state – as the main direct provider and active promoter of social processes such as education – is explicitly no longer considered an alternative. This shift in the conception of the role of the state or the role of the government coincides with the shift from liberals to neoliberals in the U.S. While liberals understand the government as an arbitrator in the competition between interest groups, (…) neoliberals believe that a large government should play an educative, visionary, and facilitative role. It should develop a broad vision of where society needs to go and communicate it to citizens, hopefully stimulating dialogue with and among them. The government should also take the lead in planning and coordinating policy. (Fowler, 1995, p 55)
Braslavsky’s call for more participation of the community on education is combined with the idea of the state as a state that “regulates, and configures the system through new devices and the promotion of certain processes and logics (p 47).” Her definition of the state coincides with structural adjustment policies to reduce state expenditures at the same time that it calls for more participation. According to Filmus (2000), participation, however, is constrained. “In terms of the number of people who engage in education, the participation of the community did not arise because of people’s perception of the gap between the discourses based on quality of education and the practice of reducing expenses and investment by the provincial Ministries (p. 62)”. In terms of the kind of participation that the reform promotes, a case study (Striedeck 2000) shows that the kind of participation that families can exert in schools is related to the role of giving aid to educators. Families participate through the “cooperadora” (parents’ association), by helping teachers and by helping the administration to obtain funds to repair buildings or improve teaching materials. In this case study, a member of the school’s parents’ association said in an interview that she participates as a way of defending public schools because private schools are selective – you pay. But here, everybody can come, and you do not need money to attend this school. But, what happens? Currently, the government does not meet its responsibilities, so, if we did not have the association, the school would not have materials. That is why we need the association. And that is why I tell you that currently the parents’ associations are small enterprises: they have to be in charge of everything, because the government is not. (p. 113)

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58 The school studied achieved higher levels of participation than most other schools in Buenos Aires. For this and other reasons the school was displayed by the superintendant, the school district, and the National Ministry of Education as a model of the reform. Families’ participation, however, has limited to the role of aid; it did not include decision making power.
This quote intertwines a discourse of defense of public education and neoliberal concepts. It reinterprets the concept of participation and the role of the state by using words that are typical of the neoliberal discourse – such as enterprise. Participation is seen more as a necessity for maintaining a service than as a right for empowering people. The state is not considered as “proposing, convoking” but as not fulfilling its obligations to public education. The work of the community is not considered a way of exercising a political right, but as a task for groups of individuals to share an enterprise for dealing with the specific needs of the school. Participation is seen as something people have to do, to cover the responsibilities that the state does not fulfill. This provides an interesting contrast with Braslavsky’s idea of the solidarity promoting state and the responsibility of the community towards participation.

Conclusions.

In this chapter I have focused on the analysis of the values that underlie the National Law of Education and the official discourse about this law. This section began with a concern and a premise. My concern was related to the subjectivities that the Argentinean educational law promotes. The premise that underlay this concern consists of the existence of a relationship between the subject positions that the reform offers to the students, and the prevalent political rationality during the period when the reform was launched. This premise means that the construction of subjectivities is not politically or ideologically neutral. It is related to the hegemonic ideas, values, and interests of a given time: it is related to the government rationalities. In order to explore this relationship, I
intertwined the analysis of a policy – the National Law of Education –, with the analysis
of a piece of the official discourse – a speech/paper by the Director of Curriculum of the
Argentinean National Ministry of Education.

I found several coincidences and contradictions among the different elements of
analysis. I found that Article 6 of the law promotes subjectivities related to active and
engaged citizens, agents of change of society and individuals able to elaborate their own
life projects. This is consistent with the viewpoints described in the principles of the law
in Article 5, that expresses a conception of democracy emphasizing the strengthening of
national identity; the consolidation of a republican, representative and federal democracy;
equality of opportunity and access to educational services, and pluralism.

Regarding the official discourse, the most obvious coincidence consists of the fact
that most of the values adopted as the star concepts in education, according to the director
of curriculum of the National Ministry of Education, are the same values that neoliberals
consider the core values of neoliberalism, and which are consistent with the government
rationality. Braslavsky’s star concepts seemed to apply neoliberalism to the specific area
of Argentinean education.

By contrasting the values that describe the subject proposed in Article 6 of the
Law of Education with the star concepts introduced by Braslavsky, some contradictions
arose as well. These contradictions can be classified as internal and external. The
internal contradictions are related to tensions between the article of the law that openly
proposes subjectivities (Article 6), and other articles of the Law of Education. An
internal contradiction is clear in the ways in which this article relates the subject to a
humanitarian perspective and the utilitarian perspective of Article 49. While Article 6
depicts the subject as capable of generating the capacities for elaborating their own life projects that [are the] result of existential decisions; men and women as responsible citizens, critical protagonists, creators and agents of social, Article 49 relates the subject to her ability to achieve high standards, a high level of learning, and other measurable results.

Besides this contradiction, external contradictions were also revealed. I define external contradictions as tensions between the law and other texts from the reform. An external contradiction exists between the values promoted by the subjectivity proposed by the law – a liberal person prepared to participate in a democracy – and the values promoted by the official discourse -mostly neoliberal values. The values promoted by the official discourse are consistent with some of the values adopted and promoted by the government rationality.

By comparing the values of the law with the official discourse, this chapter has shown the existence of a set of neoliberal values that is parallel to the liberal subjectivity explicit in the law. These neoliberal values do not represent the liberal subjectivity proposed by the law of education.

In sum, the law and the official discourse offer students different ideas regarding a democratic society, different subject positions to identify with, and values to adopt. Regarding the ideas of society, on the one hand the law implies a democratic society that promotes justice by providing equal opportunities for all inhabitants, equitable distribution of educational services, and which avoids all forms of discrimination. This is a liberal description of a democratic society that underlies the values of the law. On the other hand, the official discourse implies a global society, in which individuals’
knowledge and skills have to be comparable to those of other places in the global market – and this is related to the efficiency of the educational system. A society in which equality is “a rather devaluated concept” – but which expects that interest groups and individuals that are invited by the state participate and engage in social processes such as education. Within this idea of the state, participation becomes a right and a responsibility of the citizen towards her community. The idea of the state here is that of a facilitator between different interest groups, not that of “the provider.” The state is also the promoter of new logics, such as the standards and evaluation systems. In this case, the state is in charge of evaluating the quality of education. Neoliberal values are the explicit reference within this discourse.

Regarding the ideas of citizenship, Article 6 and the law’s principles listed in Article 5 imply the promotion of a liberal citizen of a liberal state. The citizen outlined by the law has a national identity, is an active and critical citizen engaged with democratic institutions, and adopts liberal values such as freedom, the good, truth, peace, solidarity, tolerance, equality, and justice. This citizen is able to fulfill herself and elaborate her own life project.

The official discourse describes subjects as competing and demonstrating their knowledge and skills in the globalized market. National identity or citizenship are not even mentioned. The subjectivity fostered is that of a modern thinker, able to manage information and search for empirical data for making statements and decisions, able to argue analytically, reflectively, and critically, as an increasingly autonomous social actor. This free and willing subject can interact with others, be different, and engage in dialogue with hegemonic thoughts and actions. She is creative and able to project and promote
changes. All of these characteristics are presented under the subtitle “controversial concepts.” Besides these “controversial” characteristics, the official discourse implies that since she lives in a global competitive knowledge market that values efficiency and quality, the subject needs to be efficient, highly qualified, and competitive. While some characteristics of a humanistic – and supposedly controversial – perspective such as creativity underlie the subjectivity promoted by the official discourse, the emphasis on efficiency, high qualifications, and competition in the global knowledge market show the predominant weight of neoliberal values within the official discourse.

This chapter shows that two competing discourses are present in the documents analyzed: the mostly liberal discourse of the National Law of Education, and the mostly neoliberal discourse of the official discourse. While the two analyzed texts differ in many values, they have something in common: both texts describe the subject as someone with liberty and will, and the ability to project and promote what is different thorough action (official discourse); someone who is an agent of social change, an individual able to elaborate her own life project (National Law of Education).

What roles do the contradictions and similarities between the liberal subjectivity offered by the law and the neoliberal values promoted by the official discourse play in other texts of the reform? What kinds of subjectivities are promoted in different texts of the reform? How are they promoted? What values do they bear? To start answering these questions, in next chapter I explore the subjectivities present in the curriculum of Ethics and citizenship education curriculum – a curriculum that was created as a result of the law analyzed in this chapter.
Chapter 5

Subjectivities in the Basic and Common Contents.

What are the Basic Common Contents (BCC)?

The curricular reform – which was a part of the Argentine educational reform - was organized in three distinct levels: national, provincial or jurisdictional, and the institutional or school level. The national level includes all the provinces and the Municipality of the city of Buenos Aires, is coordinated by the National Ministry of Education, and has a council that approves agreements – the National Council of Culture and Education.

The BCC are part of the national agreements within the National Council of Culture and Education – a council constituted by the Ministries of Education of each province and the National Ministry of Education. The BCC comprises a set of relevant knowledge that will constitute the basic education in the whole country. (National Law of Education). The BCC provide the basic matrix for a national cultural project through which each jurisdiction of the educational system will continue to update their own guidelines or curricula and will situate diverse but compatible school curriculum projects”. (BCC, Introduction, p. 21)

Each province elaborates and contextualizes the BCC standards, according to the regional context. Then, the institutional level – the school - creates its own curriculum, by guaranteeing and enriching what the national and provincial levels establish (Ministry of Education, 1995 Contenidos Básicos Communes para la Educación General básica, p. 11).
Because the BCC are the foundation on which the rest of the curricula will be
based, I analyze this level of the curriculum. In order to identify the subjectivities
promoted by the education reform throughout the curriculum, I examined the Ethics and
Citizenship Education section of the BCC assuming that it makes explicit the
characteristics and values that the “ideal subject” should possess. By analyzing this
section, I show the consensus among and contradictions between the state’s official set of
political and social values.

The Ethics and Citizenship Education curriculum is divided into five “blocks:”
person, values, social norms, general procedures, and general attitudes. The “Person”
block focuses on psychological processes, basic sociability, identity, and personal health.
The “Values” block presents universal values. “Social norms” considers society, the
national constitution as a fundamental norm, and human rights. “General procedures”
centers on the development of logical, reflective, and critical thought, development of
creativity, and the moral discernment of individual and social actions. Finally, “attitudes”
focuses on the contributions to ethical development, social and communitarian
development, scientific and technological knowledge, and the development of expression
and communication.

The chapter on Ethics and Citizenship Education has the structure shown in
Table 5-1:
Table 5-1: BCC Chapter on Ethics and Citizenship Education: structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block 1: Person</th>
<th>Block 2: Values</th>
<th>Block 3: Norms</th>
<th>Block 4: Procedures</th>
<th>Block 5: Attitudes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explanatory summary</td>
<td>Explanatory summary</td>
<td>Explanatory summary</td>
<td>Explanatory summary</td>
<td>Explanatory summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with other standards.</td>
<td>Relationship with other standards.</td>
<td>Relationship with other standards.</td>
<td>Relationship with other standards.</td>
<td>Relationships with other standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of standards</td>
<td>List of standards</td>
<td>List of standards</td>
<td>List of standards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the table shows, each block presents an explanatory summary, a list of expectations\(^{59}\) – what students are supposed to be able to do at the end of the compulsory education in relation to the block – a chart that shows the relationship between the standards of Ethics and Citizenship Education and other subject matters, and, finally, the list of standards, organized under concepts and procedures. The standards of the other subject matters – language, math, social sciences, natural sciences, technology, artistic education, and physical education – are categorized under concepts, procedures, and attitudes. Within the standards of Ethics and citizenship education, the attitudes constitute a block themselves – block 5. In this block, however, only the explanatory summary is explicit. The expectations, relationship with other blocks, and list of standards are not made explicit.

\(^{59}\) The literal translation is “expectations of achievement”.
Analysis of the Basic and Common Contents for Ethics and Citizenship Education.

In order to analyze a representative sample of the curriculum, I randomly selected from the different blocks, an explanatory summary, a list of expectations, a chart that shows the relationship between Ethics and Citizenship Education with specific contents of other subject matters, and a list of standards. I show the selected items in Table 5-2.

Table 5-2: Selected items analyzed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block number:</th>
<th>Explanatory summary</th>
<th>Expectations</th>
<th>Relationships w/ other standards.</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>BGE 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1: Person</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BGE 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Values</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>BGE 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: Norms</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: Procedures</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: Attitudes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For my analysis I adapt a system based on critical discourse analysis (Fairclough’s (2001)\textsuperscript{60} to guide an intense and meticulous study of the non-obvious features of vocabulary, grammar, and structure of these parts of the BCC.

Analysis of the explanatory summary for block 1, “Person.”

The block on “Person” starts with the following paragraph:

The category person refers to [what is] the most distinctive [characteristic] of men and women: their singularity, and their rational and free nature. Human dignity is based on this. When the category person is mentioned,
what comes to mind is the capacity of knowing, desiring, choosing, feeling, expressing, relating to others, taking responsibility for one’s own actions, transcending, and creating.” (p. 3, BCC Ethics and Citizenship Education)

Regarding its vocabulary, this paragraph does not place the text within any specific discourse in terms of ideology. According to Fairclough (2001), some words ideologically situate a text. For example, he argues that solidarity is a term related to the thought of the left, while subversive is usually related to the right. The “Person” paragraph mixes different words related to diverse discourses, leaving unclear the ideological location of the text. Words such as “singularity,” “feeling,” “expressing,” “relating to others,” “transcending,” and “creating,” might be associated with a humanistic discourse, while rationality and the capability of knowing may be associated to rationalism. On the other hand, “desiring,” “choosing,” and “taking responsibility for the own actions” might be connected to a more individualistic discourse, an enterprise cultural discourse within which the subject is considered as someone who is guided by their own desires, free choices, and free and responsible actions. This kind of discourse, according to Roses (1998)

inculcate[s] and sustain[s] the ethic that individuals are free to the extent that they choose a life of responsible selfhood, and have promoted the dreams of self-fulfillment through the crafting of a life-style…[This] ‘enterprise culture’ …embodies a political program grounded in, and drawing upon, the new regime of the active, autonomous, choosing self. (p. 168)

______________________________

61 My translation from Spanish. The original states: La categoría de persona hace referencia a lo más propio y distintivo de los hombres y mujeres: su singularidad, su naturaleza racional y libre. (…) Cuando se habla de persona se piensa en la capacidad de conocer, querer, elegir, sentir, expresarse, relacionarse con los otros y responsabilizarse por el propio actuar, trascender y crear.
The humanistic, rationalist, and enterprise culture discourses are mixed together in this paragraph. This combination of discourses demonstrates the experiential values of the vocabulary. Fairclough (2001) defines experiential values as “a trace of and a cue to the way in which the text producer’s experience of the natural or social world is represented.” (p. 93) The experiential values of this text represent the subject as someone who has characteristics and values typical of humanistic, rationalist, and enterprise culture discourses.

The explanatory summary of the block “the person,” presents four subtopics: psychological processes, basic sociability, identity, and personal health. Among the psychological processes, two paragraphs describe the contents related to volitional life.

the expectation of facilitating the understanding and explanation of ‘what is desired and done.’ It is about the processes that drive the actions and self-fulfillment, through free choices and decisions.

Addressing topics related to the volition is a privileged opportunity to reflect on the value of constancy, the strength to face difficulties that tasks present, commitment, efficiency, self-control, and mastery of the culture of work. [Addressing topics related to the volition] allows the introduction of topics related to self-fulfillment, freedom, choices and personal decisions. (p. 5 BCC)

The combination of these two paragraphs is very interesting, and my analysis addresses the experiential value of the words used. The first paragraph, which introduce the topic, focuses on the individual and her freedoms – self-fulfillment, choices and free decisions. The second paragraph lists personal characteristics related to working life – constancy, strength in facing difficulties that tasks present, commitment, efficiency, self-control, etc. This paragraph closes with a sentence that connects the vocabulary related to working life with self-fulfillment, choices and free decisions: “[Addressing topics related
to the will] allows introducing topics related to self-fulfillment, freedom, choices and personal decisions.” However, the connection is not entirely clear. How do constancy, strength facing difficulties that tasks present, commitment, efficiency, self-dominion, and mastery of the culture of work serve to introduce topics related to self-fulfillment, freedom, choices and personal decisions?

By not making explicit the conflict between these two kinds of personal characteristics, the text is fusing together two different classification schemata. According to Fairclough (2001), a “classification scheme constitutes a particular way of dividing up some aspect of reality which is built upon a particular ideological representation of that reality. In this way, the structure of a vocabulary is ideologically based.” (p.115) The text includes two classification schemes: one related to working life, or the subject as a worker, and another related to the subject as a free individual, capable of self-fulfillment. In other words, the text implies that by learning to be constant, to possess strength on the face of tasks at hand, committed, efficient, self-controlled, and knowledgeable of the culture of work, a person can be self-fulfilled and free to choose and make decisions. In short, it is by being a good worker, that a person can be free and happy.

Regarding the relational values, the vocabulary used is completely impersonal. No pronouns are used, and the only subjects mentioned are the families, boys and girls, and future men and women. Teachers are not included in the text. The formal vocabulary establishes a distance between the producers and the readers – none even being mentioned.
I translate these statements in passive voice even though technically, in Spanish, the use of “se”\(^{62}\) is not limited to passive voice. In this case, however, the word “se” has the same function as the passive voice does because while the action is clear, the agents are never mentioned. For example in *se* habla, *se* piensa, it is said, it is thought, etc., “se” is a reflexive form used to express impersonal actions, actions without explicit agents, or even actions of a “universal agent” – “everybody thinks,” for instance. This obfuscation of the agent positions the statements beyond doubt or question. It implies that every time someone talks about the person, everyone thinks about what the producers of the text explain. By means of this implication, the producers of the text assume a commonality of values with the reader, and deny any possibility of difference. By presenting the idea of person as the way in which everybody thinks about the concept “person,” the producers of the text force this concept into the arena of common sense.

Another example of the omission of the agent is in the third paragraph\(^{63}\):

However, it is necessary to lead boys and girl’s reflections [about definitions and theories of the person] away from their own experiences towards categorizations and theories more rational basis and explanatory scope. Within this framework, it is desirable that [they] begin to learn that there are different conceptions of person, and what each is based upon. It is also convenient [for them] to learn to contrast and enrich their reflections with contributions from art, religion, and popular knowledge.\(^{64}\) (p. 4, BCC Ethics and Citizenship Education).

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\(^{62}\) In English, a literal translation of “se” is difficult – it is a reflexive pronoun.

\(^{63}\) I skip the analysis of the second paragraph, which only states that the BGE searches for the learning, recognition, and differentiation of the aspects of the person, more than the repetition of definitions or theories about the person.

\(^{64}\) My translation from Spanish. The original states: “Sin embargo, es necesario ir conduciendo las reflexiones de los niños y las niñas desde sus propias experiencias y vivencias hacia categorizaciones y teorías con mayor nivel de fundamentación racional y de alcance explicativo. En ese marco es deseable que comiencen a saber que hay distintas concepciones de la persona y a
Who will guide the student through these reflections? The answer seems to be “teachers.” The BCC are not, in theory, written for teachers, but for the officers and provincial curriculum specialists, who are mandated to re-create the curriculum, using the BCC as a basis for revision.

It seems to me that these grammatical features of the BCC might be related to what Narodowski (1996) states is the role delegated to schoolteachers as the main agents responsible for the curricular reform, even though they were not always recognized as the main agents of reform. Teachers, however, are relatively absent in the text. The text addresses them, but only in an anonymous and indirect fashion. Although they are not explicitly mentioned, some sentences’ grammatical features and specific contents clearly address schoolteachers.

In spite of the ambiguity regarding the producer of the text and its audience, there is no ambiguity in relationship with who possesses the knowledge and who does not. The producers of the text use a set of written assertions and declarative sentences that express what is necessary, what is desirable and convenient to do. The statements are not modalized with expressions such as “in our point of view,” “we believe that,” etc. The

conocer cuáles son sus fundamentos. También es conveniente que aprendan a contrastar y enriquecer sus reflexiones con los aportes del arte, las religiones, la sabiduría popular.” (p. 4 BCC)

65 The fundamental role of teachers in the implementation of the reform was not reflected by an increase in compensation for the teachers. On the contrary, because of the reform, they were pushed to “reconvert themselves” by taking an enormous number of training classes, and their salaries did not improve. In some provinces, teachers salaries were even decreased.

66 For example, after explaining the development of logic, reflective and critical thought, the explanatory summary for block 4, “general procedures,” states: “In order to achieve these goals, it is recommended that argumentative dialogue be employed; listening to reasons, learning how to give reasons, learning to explain causes, to disagree on the basis of rational arguments…” (BCC p 13) The use of “se” - as in “it is recommended” - is used as a way of avoiding mention of the agent (the National Ministry of Education) and the audience (the teachers).
explanations are presented as “the truth.” As Fairclough (document 843) states, “the document sets up a non dialogical divide between those who are making all these assertions, and those they are addressed at – those who tell and those who are told, those who know and those [who] do not.” (p. 23).

Regarding the structure of the text, the way in which sentences are linked together throughout the explanatory summary follows a regular pattern. In each block a specific topic – for example, the person – is explained by addressing the subtopics selected. After the subtopic is elaborated, a sentence or paragraph relates the explanations to the selection of the contents that form the BCC, legitimizing the selection on the basis of the value of the knowledge previously explained. An example of this kind of connection is the combination of the following paragraphs:

Affective, volitional, and intellectual life, and sociability, intertwine in a complex process of integration that forms personal identity and, at the same time, opens up the person to different ways of transcending, according to their own convictions and those of their groups.

These contents will allow the students to find in school a sphere for consideration, reflection, and discussion of problems that emerge when they start to wonder about the meaning of things, of their own existence, and of life in general. 67 (p. 6, BCC)

67 My translation of the BCC. The original version reads: La vida afectiva, volitiva e intelectual y la sociabilidad se entrelazan en un complejo proceso de integración que configura la identidad personal y, al mismo tiempo, abre a las personas a diversas formas de trascendencia, según sus propias convicciones y las de sus grupos de pertenencia.

A través de estos contenidos se permitirá a los alumnos y a las alumnas encontrar en la escuela un ámbito propicio para la consideración, reflexión y discusión de problemáticas que surgen en ellos cuando comienzan a preguntarse por el sentido de las cosas, de la propia existencia y de la vida en general.
While the first paragraph explains and summarizes the topic, the second one uses the future tense as an assertive way to express a consequence. This consequence is what legitimizes and gives sense to the selection of the contents. Regarding the textual structures, the ways in which sentences are connected constitute a pattern, a larger-scale structure throughout this text and each explanatory summery. (Fairclough, question 10). The pattern consists of an explanation – the person is… and a connecting sentence that legitimizes the selection of the contents. In other words, the pattern implies: *this is the truth, and that is why these contents were chosen.* The text is an authoritative transmitter of “the knowledge.” What is presented as knowledge is not under question, even when there is a reference to discussions about some topic. Sometimes, what legitimizes the selection of the contents is a reference to the National Law of Education.

The analysis of the explanatory summary of block 1, “Person,” is summarized in Table 5-3.

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68 For example, the explanation summary related to universal values mentions the current discussion about the possibility of considering universal values that address everybody. Then, it briefly explains the positions of skepticism, relativism, ethnocentrism, and fundamentalism. Immediately, the text states: The school has the responsibility of promoting those values that are universally recognized because they are based in the dignity of the person, and [the school has the responsibility of ] contributing to students’ adoption [of those values] as a way of contributing to the formation of a democratic order and culture. In other words, the text recognizes the existence of a debate about universal values, and simultaneously states that the school will promote only certain universal values.

69 For example, the explanatory summary of the second block – values – states that “The inclusion [of the dimension related to values] to the topics of Basic and General Education is done with the expectation of contributing to the fulfillment of the persons in their ethic dimension in relation to what the National Law of education states in its article number six”.

Table 5-3: Summary of the analysis of the explanatory summary of block 1, “Person.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Combination of humanistic, rationalist, and enterprise culture discourses</td>
<td>Agent and person acted upon are not explicit</td>
<td>Use of connecting sentences to legitimize contents selection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal vocabulary</td>
<td>Use of “se” prevents from mentioning text’s producers and readers.</td>
<td>Reference to the National Law of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject as worker, free individual, capable of self-fulfillment.</td>
<td>Use of assertions and declarative sentences.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No use of modalized expressions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the table shows, regarding the vocabulary of the analyzed explanation, a list of values combines the humanistic, rationalist, and enterprise culture discourses in the first analyzed paragraph. In this way, the text creates a new discourse that seems to supersede previous narratives by going beyond discoursive and ideological differences. In other words, according to the BCC, the subject can and should be a humanistic, rational, and enterprising self.

The combination of the ambiguity in terms of who the subject created by the vocabulary, plus the use of “se” – that reaffirms the ambiguity – and the lack of modality results in the authority of the text to tell someone (the unnamed reader) the truth. The vocabulary also presents the subject as a worker, and as a free individual, capable of self-fulfillment. The formal vocabulary used in the text emphasizes the authority of the text, by establishing distance between the – unmentioned – producers and readers of the text.

Regarding the grammar, first, by avoiding mention of the agent and patient (the person for whom the text is produced), the text creates ambiguity and renders the patient
anonymous. Second, the use of the impersonal expression “se” reinforces the strategy of not mentioning the text’s producers and audience. Third, by means of assertions, declarative sentences and lack of modalized expressions, the text makes clear that the producers of the text are those who possess knowledge. Concerning the structure of the text, by using certain connectors between sentences, the text creates a pattern of legitimization for the selected contents. This justification is also effected by means of a reference to the National Law of Education.

**Analysis of expectations for block 2, “Values.”**

According to the stated expectations regarding values, at the end of the General and Basic Education, boys and girls⁷⁰ should,

[K]now the values assumed as universal by the Argentine community, and those of the [student’s] groups of reference and the groups they belong to, have criteria for judging and distinguishing positive from negative values, begin to personally assume and stand up for universal values, and to justify their own opinions.

[U]nderstand and respect the values of other persons and groups that live in the society. Deepen the level of commitment and responsibility towards values such as the search for truth, the promotion of the good, peace, justice, friendship, solidarity, freedom, international and intercultural understanding. (p. 10, BCC.) ⁷¹

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⁷⁰ In Spanish the words used to show gender are niños y niñas. The “o” or “a” at the end of the word mark gender, and masculine or feminine articles are used to indicate gender as well.

⁷¹ My own translation from Spanish of the following paragraphs: “Los alumnos y alumnas deberán

Conocer los valores asumidos como universales por la comunidad argentina y los de sus grupos de referencia y pertenencia, tener elementos de juicio para el discernimiento de valores y disvalores;
Regarding the vocabulary, in this passage it is interesting to note first of all, the use of the expression the Argentine community to present diverse peoples as a people, a single community, denying the existence of communities, or Argentine communities. This mechanism is what Ninnes (2001) calls essentialism. According to Ninnes (2001), essentialism refers to the representation of groups in such a way as to deny any internal diversity or behaviors, attitudes, perspectives or lifestyles within the group. (…) The lack of modifiers such as ‘some’ or ‘many’ or more specific adjectives (…) and the widespread use of the article ‘the’ or its omission altogether, are the chief means by which essentialized notions are articulated (p. 30).

By means of using the article the, the first sentence of this paragraph reinforces a representation of homogeneity that, even though it is consistent with the representations promoted in other spheres of Argentine culture, such as mass communication and official documents, does not correspond to reality. 72 It responds to a hegemonic discourse that

72 Although there is much European influence within the Argentinean population, out of 35 million inhabitants, a large percentage is a mixture of European and Indigenous people, and currently there are almost half a million Indigenous people among the Toba, Pilagá, Mocovi, Wichi, Chorote, Chulupí, Guarani, Chiriguano, Tapité, Chané, Mapuche, Tehuelche, Diaguita calchaquí, and Kolla ethnic groups (I.N. A. I. National Institute of Indian Affairs, quoted in Historia Argentina. Página 12. volume 1, 1.) In terms of religion, of 36,260,130 inhabitants (Census 2001), an estimated 34,400,446 are Catholics in Argentina (Christianity (Argentina), in Europa World online. London, Routledge. Retrieved 22 January 2006 from http://www.europaworld.com/pub/entry/ar.dir.213 ), about 250,000 are Jews, living mostly in Buenos Aires.(Delegación de Asociaciones Israelitas Argentinas (DAIA) (Delegation of Argentine Jewish
throughout Argentine history has systematically denied the heterogeneity of the population, or worked to construct the image of homogeneity. What underlies this sense of homogeneity of the population is an assumption of the commonality of values between producers and readers of the text. It is interesting to note that while differences are denied within the text, the only difference mentioned is a gender difference. The text starts by stating what boys and girls must respectively know.

The second paragraph makes explicit the demand that students should understand and respect the values of other persons and groups, but they only need to commit themselves more deeply to being responsible for certain values. These values are introduced in the explanatory summary, one paragraph before the expectations, as values that are universally recognized. By collocating (putting together) the values of others along with the verbs “understand” and “respect,” and the universal values along with the phrase “deepen one’s grade of commitment” and the term “responsibility,” the text creates a difference between the two sets of values. This difference between understanding and respecting on one hand, and committing oneself on the other, implies a division between these different kinds of values. Emphasis on universal values is shown

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The homogeneous representation of the population is not an isolated characteristic of this text, but it is present in many texts within diverse arenas of Argentinean culture. Until few years ago, the National Institute of Statistics and Census, for example, did not classify people by race or ethnicity. Only the last census (2001) includes a question (number two) that acknowledges the existence of Indigenous people. Another example, in the official passport renewal form, there is a question about color. The possible answers—even though not explicit—are white, black, and yellow. Because the categories focus on color instead of race or ethnic group, and there is no color officially associated with Indigenous groups, the forms leave them out, since all must identify themselves as white, black or yellow. The ethnic heterogeneity of the Argentinean population is also denied by the mass media. In the Argentinean television, for instance, there are no news presenters, television hosts, or actors with Indigenous features. The homogeneity of the Argentinean population has been a political goal throughout history, as I mention in chapter three.
through the strategy of repetition. The universal values are listed one paragraph before
the expectations – out of this paragraph – and then they are presented as “values such as.”
In this way the text repeats the values while redefining what Fairclough labels
overwording.

Within these two paragraphs there is an implicit classification schema regarding
people. The first sentence introduces the singular and broadest category: the Argentine
community, as well as groups of reference and belonging – in the plural. The second
paragraph introduces other persons. This implication can be illustrated as in graphic 1:

By using plural only for groups and persons, and not for the community, this
schema reinforces the idea introduced in the first sentence about the existence of only one
Argentine community, and reinforces the denial of separate communities.

While I do not detect any euphemistic expression within the paragraphs, the title
of the section itself might be considered a euphemism. The expectations of achievement,
which I translated as “expectations,” are not explicitly defined in the curriculum. What
follows under the title “expectations of achievement” is “boys and girls should…”, plus a
list of ways in which students should behave, procedures they should be able to do, and
knowledge they should master. The question is, What are the expectations of achievement?

During one of the national meetings that the National Ministry of Education organized with the provincial Ministries of Educations of the provinces to elaborate the provincial curricula, someone asked for a definition of expectations of achievement. One of the members of the team that produced and coordinated the BCC, Laura Fumagalli, said that the team avoided calling the expectations “general goals” or using other terms that might be associated to old names related to different pedagogic ideas that have since been criticized by teachers. In this sense, the term “expectations of achievement” could be considered a euphemism, because it substitutes for other words in order to avoid negative values or associations (Fairclough, question 2).

Regarding the grammatical features of the text, the use of the modal should shows the authority of the text’s producers over the readers – in theory those in charge of writing the provincial curriculum – and the students. Must is used as a way of imposing an obligation (Question 7, Fairclough)

The two sentences that constitute the text are connected by the introduction ”students should: …” (Question 8, Fairclough)

Concerning the structure of the expectations, it is constituted by an introductory sentence (students should) and two sentences that complete the introduction. They are a list of things students must know, do, or be. The use of the modal must shows the authority of the text, authority that is justified by the previous explanation. The explanatory summary that precedes the expectations elaborates about the importance of the contents included in the BCC. Once that is explicit then the fact that students must
learn these contents seems natural. The analysis of the expectations for the general basic education are summarized in Table 5-4:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essentialism, homogeneity: <em>The</em> Argentine community</td>
<td>Authority of the text: modal <em>must</em></td>
<td>List of things students must know, do, or be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender difference: What boys and girls must know</td>
<td></td>
<td>Justification: the list is preceded by an explanation about importance of the expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Categorization of values: understand and respect values of others Commitment and responsibility towards universal values.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition of universal values: emphasis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euphemism: expectations of achievement for “expectations”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In brief, according to this text, boys and girls have to commit themselves to the universal values adopted by *the* Argentine community, and they have to understand and respect the values of others. Little room for diversity and difference is left in this idea of community. Students have to know that there are other values, and they have to respect them, but they are encouraged to commit themselves to the mainstream values, a set of “the universal values.” The authority of the text is emphasized by means of using the modal *must* and the importance of the expectations are justified in the explanation that precedes the expectations.
Analysis of the relationships between blocks of the curriculum of Ethics and Citizenship Education Curriculum and those of other subject matters.

At the end of most of the blocks of the Ethics and Citizenship Education curriculum, there is a chart that lists the block of contents of other chapters of the BCC that are related to a specific block of the Ethics and Citizenship Education chapter of the BCC. For example, block 4 of Ethics and Citizenship Education is related to blocks one, two, and three of Language, blocks three, four, and five of Social Sciences, etc. The list does not specify how these blocks are related, or which contents of each block are related to what contents of the other. No explicit use of the list is explained, so it is difficult to know what to do with the chart and who should do something about the connections between blocks.

The fourth element of the chapter on Ethics and Citizenship Education – after the explanatory summaries, the expectations, and the relationships between the contents of different blocks – is the list of contents. This list is organized by cycles of the Basic and General Education – BGE 1, BGE 2, and BGE 3 – and by kind of content – concepts and procedures. In this section I analyze the concepts and procedures of block two for BGE 1, block one for BGE 2, and block 3 for BGE 3.

Analysis of list of contents or standards.

The contents of the BCC follow the same form and grammatical structure. They constitute lists of concepts and procedures, listed one after the other, without any connectors except for the subtitles that group the contents. This format does not allow for
much grammatical analysis. For this reason, what follows is mostly a vocabulary analysis. A random selection resulted in the analysis of block two of contents for the first cycle of compulsory education (BGE 1), block one of contents for the second cycle of compulsory education (BGE 2), and block three of contents for the third cycle of compulsory education (BGE 3).

**Analysis of standards for BGE 1. Block two.**

Block two for BGE1 lists the values to be taught to children who are among first and third grade. The concepts related to values are: “Human actions and natural facts; values of the family and the educational community; customs of close groups; differences of customs; respect for and rejection of oneself and the others; respect for differences; and doing good and avoiding evil.” (BCC, p. 22/358)

Regarding these concepts, not only values are listed. Actions and customs constitute part of this list of concepts. The collocation of actions and customs (or the co-occurrence of actions and customs) under the title of values could be understood as implying that values underlie actions and customs. This connection, however, is not mentioned. The inclusion of actions and costumes under the title of values could also be understood as a way of synonymy – the use of some words to substitute for others, as if they were interchangeable. (Fairclough, question 1) The list of values – actually, values, actions and customs – does not make explicit whether the producers support or are

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74 In Argentina, “educational community” usually refers to the people related in some way to the school, such as teachers, principals, students, and parents, or others who participate in the schools’ activities.

75 Fairclough (2001) defines collocation as “the ways words co-occur or collocate. (p. 95)
against the listed values. For example, is rejection of the others good or bad? Should it be criticized or fostered? By omitting their position, the producers of the text assume commonality of values with the readers (Fairclough, question 2).

The procedures listed are:

Differentiation of the way in which people and other living organisms act; identification and classification of some customs of groups to which students belong; identification of customs of other groups, and differentiation between those and the customs of the groups to which students belong. (BCC, p. 23)

According to the Merriam-Webster’s dictionary, the meanings of the word procedure are: “1 a : a particular way of accomplishing something or of acting, b : a step in a procedure, 2 a : a series of steps followed in a regular definite order.” Differentiation and identification are what students are expected to accomplish. They have to differentiate the way in which people act, in opposition to those of other living beings. It is interesting to note that one of the sections of the curriculum that aims to teach to respect for differences leaves no room for differences regarding ways of acting, as if everybody would act in the same way – the human way.

What underlies this contradiction is the existence of two discourses that are ideologically contrast (question 3, Fairclough). The first one appeals to the respect for differences (in the list of concepts) while the second one, by using the article the, denies the existence of difference. The latter is related to the hegemonic discourse throughout Argentine history.

Besides the difference between the ways of acting of human and other beings, the procedures listed in this section include another classification scheme – a scheme that divides the groups to which the students belong from other groups (question 1,
Fairclough). Students are supposed to identify and classify the customs of their own
groups and identify the customs of other groups, besides being able to differentiate both
kinds of customs.

The analysis of the standards for the block two of BGE 1 on “values” is
summarized in Table 5-5:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concepts</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Synonymy: attitudes and customs are included as values. No explicit position taken by the text. Respect for difference</td>
<td>Use of article <em>the</em>: No room for difference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of standards for BGE 2. Block one, “the person.”

Analysis of standards for BGE 2. Block one, on “the person”.

Block one for BGE 2 lists concepts related to the psychological processes of the person, basic sociability, identity and social identification, as well as health, that fourth to sixth graders should learn. The concepts related to the psychological processes of the person are:

Acknowledgment of motives and affectionate reactions; causes of remembering and forgetting; strategic, communicative, and expressional intelligence; will, desire, choice, and decision. The concepts listed under basic sociability are: roles assigned to the man and the woman and to family relationships; those listed under groups of friends: affinities; what is individual and collective in the game, the function and the norm; work
relationship in society; communication, cultural diversity and the need to accept diversity. Under identity and social identifications, the concepts listed are: identity as acknowledgment of belonging to a group and a history; personal and diverse ways of opening and searching for transcendence according to one’s own convictions and decisions. Regarding health, the concepts are: bodily appearance, health and illnesses, care and risk; hazards for health; appropriate protection and integral health; the right to health and dignity of the person. (BCC, p. 24/357)

Many different discourses constitute this list of concepts, psychological discourses being the most obvious. (Question 1, Fairclough) Terms such as “affectionate reaction,” “causes of remembering and forgetting,” and “different intelligences” are related to psychology. An updated liberal discourse underlies the appeal to “cultural diversity” and the need to accept diversity, while the influence of spiritual or religious discourses are present in the idea of diverse ways of opening and searching for transcendence according to one’s own convictions and decisions. The discourse of enterprise culture and the individual are associated with the terms “choice,” “desire,” and “decisions” included together. Finally, discourses related to medicine and human rights underlie the concepts regarding health.

The weight of psychology in this list is not light. Almost a third of the concepts (five out of seventeen) have psychological contents. At an early age – between approximately 9 and 11 years of age – students must learn specific psychological concepts such as affectionate reactions; memory, kinds of intelligence – strategic, communicative, and expressional – will, desire, etc. – concepts that were unknown to earlier generations. It seems that students must be young psychologists able to understand the self.
Concerning some concepts related to basic sociability, such as roles assigned to the man and the woman and to family relationships, first, the use of the article *the* shows again a denial of differences within the categories man and woman, as if all men and all women were the same, regardless of their position in terms of social class, race, sexual orientation, disability, etc. Second, the producers of the text do not make clear their position about these concepts. Do students need to learn and accept the actual roles assigned to *the man and the woman* and work relationships in society as they are, or should they critically analyze them? (Question 2, Fairclough). The text position is clearer regarding other concepts, such as diversity – it makes explicit the need to accept diversity. The absence of a clear position regarding roles and work relationships implies at least, a lack of criticism towards these issues. Simultaneously, by being present in the curriculum without an explicit position being taken the possibility opens up for reader to criticize those roles and relationships – even though when the possibility of critique is not emphasized or even mentioned. Regarding identity and social identification, the text limits the possibilities of identification with groups, because it does not making explicit what kinds of groups it refers to. It does not make explicit to what historical and spiritual or religious ideas it refers either. Regarding the concepts related to health, the order in which they appear in the paragraph is surprising. The text’s producers start the list of concepts regarding health with the words “bodily appearance” Is bodily appearance so important to be heading the list of ideas related to health in the curriculum?

Risks and hazards to health are mentioned in a general way. Specific problems are not made explicit in the list. Students seem to be considered old enough to learn about specific psychological content, such as different kinds of intelligence, but it is not clear if
they are mature enough to learn about illnesses that affect many of them, or if some specific illnesses are as important as expressional intelligence, for instance. Another concept that is not clear is “appropriate protection:” what kind of protection is the text referring to? AIDS, for example, is a great and growing health problem, but it is not an explicit part of the list of concepts related to health. The existence of such overly general concepts or the absence of more specific problems prevents this curriculum from addressing social and health problems about which the educational system could play a role in informing the students.

Collocation of terms is especially peculiar in this part of the text. While bodily appearance is the leading concept, the final concept is the right to health and dignity of the person.

The procedures listed in block one of the curriculum for the BGE 2 are:

Observation and analysis of different feelings; analysis of situations in which different kinds of intelligence are expressed; production and analysis of communicative experiences; role playing and acknowledgment of roles; exchange and analysis of modes of relating between parents and siblings; analysis of differences between different groups of friends; analysis of different roles within the situations of play, work, and communication; analysis of the conditions under which illnesses are produced; explanation of the relationships between environment and health. (BCC, p. 25/359)

The first two procedures describe tasks related to psychologists: students have to learn to observe feelings and different kinds of intelligence. This emphasis on psychology is consistent with the expectations for this cycle of education, that state that students should know, on their own level, how to differentiate, understand, state relations, and value the complexity of psychological processes.
Most of the procedures listed in this block really amount to one procedure applied to different standards: students have to analyze different things (feelings, ways of relationship between parents and siblings, differences between different groups of friends, roles at work, etc.). Besides learning the procedure of analyzing – an over worded procedure listed seven times –, students have to learn to observe, learn role playing and learn to produce and explain. Regarding role playing, it can be assumed that students should participate in it, but this is not made explicit, so it is open to participation but also to observation, performance, analysis, etc.

The other procedures that are not analytic are the production of communicative experiences and explanation of the relationships between environment and health. Basically, besides mentioning these procedures, this section of the curriculum emphasizes the need for students to learn to analyze. The strategy used to make this emphasis is called overwording. The emphasis on analysis seems related to what Braslavski (1996) refers to as modern ways of thinking and acting. These ways of thinking include the use of information, the collection of empirical data, the capacity to argue and analyze, reflect and criticize.

The analysis of the standards (concepts and procedures) for BGE 2, block one, on “the person” are summarized in Table 5-6:
Table 5-6: Analysis of the standards (concepts and procedures) for BGE 2, block one, on “the person”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concepts</strong></td>
<td><strong>Use of the: no place for difference, in “roles assigned to the man and the woman”</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different discourses: psychological, liberal, religious, enterprise culture and individual, medicine, and human rights discourses. 5/17 concepts are Psychology concepts. No explicit position taken by the text regarding gender roles. Use of general terms (health hazards) and lack of specific terms. Collocation: body appearance first, right to health and dignity of the person last.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedures</th>
<th>Term “analysis”: overwording (listed seven times)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Analysis of standards for BGE 3. Block three, on Social norms.**

Block 3 for BGE 3 lists concepts and procedures regarding social norms. The concepts are divided under the following subtitles: norm and society, national constitution, and human rights. The concepts are:

Characteristics of social norms; differences between legal norm and social norm; norms and proper functioning of justice; norms as acknowledgement and rights to the dignity of the person; the rule of law as a means of social coexistence and a procedure for rationally resolving conflicts. (BCC p. 360)
The concepts related to the National Constitution are:

historical understanding of the national constitution; importance of the assembly of the year 1813 and of the provincial constitutions; history of the reforms; history of periodical interruptions to the constitutional order; democracy, the organization of the State, and the federal organization of the Nation; democracy as a means of socio-political organization and as life-style; historical origin and evolution of constitutional rights; rights, entitlements, and their relationships with duties and responsibilities; and citizenship. (BCC p. 360)

Under the subtitle human rights, the concepts are:

motives for the declaration of human rights; the need for universalization of rights; the need for defending the human condition against hunger, genocide, ignorance, and persecution; civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights; individual, group, and social responsibility for, and political defense of human rights; defense and improvement of the environment and the historical extension of rights; violence as an offense against coexistence; social discrimination against women, disabled people, and others, as a violation of human rights; some stereotypes as a violation of human rights. (BCC p. 361)

According to this list, the curriculum should provide students with knowledge related to democracy. The concept of citizenship, however, appears only once throughout the whole list of standards. The concept of the citizen does not even take part of the list of standards. This result is surprising because the title of this section of the BCC is Ethic and Citizenship Education.

Regarding human rights, the producers of the text make explicit the need for universalization of rights and the need for defending the human condition. Other concepts do not appeal to the need for defense, or universalization. They are listed as contents to be learned. The producers of the text do not list, for example, the need for challenging

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76 The concept “citizen” appears only twice in the whole document of the BCC, in the introduction (the first of its 29 pages).
and eradicating discrimination against women, disabled people, and others. Instead, they include discrimination as one more concept to teach and learn about. By this means, the text sets up a hierarchy between two kinds of concepts, regarding their importance. Although this hierarchy is not explicit, it is present in the text.

One of the last concepts – social discrimination against women, disabled people, and others, as a violation of human rights – brings attention to what is and what is not obviously considered discrimination and who are and who are not considered as being discriminated against. The kind of discrimination that the curriculum acknowledges is social discrimination against women, disabled people, and others. While this acknowledgement constitutes a step forward in relation to the homogenizing and denial of difference typical of hegemonic discourses, some absences are still remarkable. By stating that students have to learn about social discrimination, the text is also omitting economic and political discrimination against women, disabled people, and others. This is a reduction of discrimination to only one kind: social discrimination. By assuming that all kinds of discrimination are included within the concept social discrimination – a process of hyponymy according to Fairclough (1989, question two) - the text omits economic and political discrimination, concepts that may not always be obvious for students.

Regarding the subjects of discrimination -who are and who are not considered as being discriminated against- the texts shows a limited perspective regarding minorities in the country. By focusing on women and disabled people, and including everyone else as others, the text neglects mentioning each of those considered as the others. This implies that those subjects are less important than women and disabled people, or are not important enough to be mentioned one by one. Indigenous people, Bolivians,
Paraguayans, people with indigenous features, Jews, and homosexuals are discriminated against in Argentina. Their omission in this text does not help teach about discrimination, human rights, and difference. Since this omission is an interesting fact, I explore all the expressions related to discrimination against people in the rest of the whole BCC for Ethics and Citizen Education. I noticed that the expression “discrimination” appears seven times within the curriculum. A broad expression, such as “means of discrimination” is used in four out of the seven sentences that mention discrimination. The other three sentences are more specific. The list of concepts related to social norms for the second cycle of education under the title “human rights” specifies the “right to not being discriminated against, on the basis of religion, race, gender, and ideology.” (BCC, p.28) This statement includes different kinds of discrimination, but it does not specify who are the victims of discrimination.

The explanatory summary about the person states that

“difficulties in constructing a personal identity include conscious and unconscious processes of discrimination within which social model and fixed roles play a role, such as those of men and women, the healthy and the sick, the “normal” and the “disabled,” the poor and the rich, the native and the foreign, the believers and the non-believers. (BCC, p.7)

This sentence makes explicit who are discriminated against. It also includes more categories related to discrimination: social class, disability, and origin. The explanatory summary for social norms states that “within the context of ‘education for human rights,’ it is important to work at school on children’s rights, the different ways of discriminating against women, ethnic groups, the disabled, the sick, and respect for beliefs and religions’ diversity. (BCC, p.14) This statement introduces children’s rights and includes different
ways of discriminating. It does not limit discrimination to social discrimination, but it
does not make explicit which are the other means of discrimination.

Regardless the level of generality of these paragraphs, none of them includes
discrimination based on sexual orientation. Besides the limited perspective regarding who
is discriminated against, women, for example, are reduced to a universal and hegemonic
subject, defined only by gender. According to Mohanty (1991) “this results in an
assumption of women as an always already constituted group, one which has been
labeled ‘powerless,’ ‘exploited,’ sexually harassed,’ etc.” (p 56) Differences regarding
class and race within the category of “women” are ignored. This prevents students from
seeing relations of exploitation and power among women of different social classes, for
instance. Reducing a subject to a universal and hegemonic subject, defined only by a
category – in this case, gender – fixes the meaning of the subject and oversimplifies the
subject, offering no opportunity for a more complex and rich analysis.

The procedures listed in Block three of the BCE are:

recovery\textsuperscript{77} of information about social norms; investigation, recovery and
production of information about the relationship between democracy and
human dignity; critical analysis of situations; recovery of historical
information; recovery of information about members of the community;
recovery of information and production of brief essays; analysis of current

According to this text, students have to learn how to investigate, critically analyze
information and situations, and produce information. The other procedure students have

\textsuperscript{77} Although a more appropriate word in English may be “research,” recovery implies finding again
information, as if it was lost.
to learn – and appears five times in this list of standards- is recovery of information. By means of overwording, the producers of the text emphasize the importance of this procedure over others. Students need to be researchers who recover data, and critical analysts of information and situations, investigators and producers of essays.

Table 5-7 summarizes the analysis of the standards (concepts and procedures) for BGE 3, block three, on “social norms”:

Table 5-7: Analysis of the standards for BGE 3, “social norms”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship appears once</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen is not a concept in this list.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchy: some concepts are needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others are just mentioned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination is limited to social discrimination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minorities is limited to women and disabled people, and “others”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Woman” defined only by gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overwording: recovery of information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions.

Before having analyzed the basic and common contents (BCC) of Ethics and Citizenship Education, I assumed that these standards would constitute a list of contents students needed to learn in order to become citizens – “responsible citizens, critical protagonists, creators and change makers of society, [and] defenders of democratic institutions and the environment,” as article six of the National Law of Education specifies. To my surprise, I could not find the “citizen” in the whole list of standards, and
the word “citizenship” appears only once. I found other interesting data that is related with characteristics of the context of the reform, and other data that is related to other texts of the reform.

The analysis of the BCC is summarized on Table 5-8
### Table 5-8: Analysis of the BCC

#### Explanation of block 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Combination of humanistic, rationalist, and enterprise culture discourses</td>
<td>Agent and patient are not explicit “se” prevents from mentioning text's producers</td>
<td>Connecting sentences used to legitimize contents selection. Reference to the National Law of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal vocabulary</td>
<td>Use of assertions and declarative sentences. No modal expressions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject as worker, free individual, capable of self-fulfillment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Analysis of Expectations for the General Basic Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essentialism, homogeneity: The Argentine community</td>
<td>Authority of the text: modal must</td>
<td>List of things students must know, do, or be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender difference: What boys and girls must know</td>
<td></td>
<td>Justification: the list is preceded by an explanation about importance of the expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Categorization of values: understand and respect values of others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment and responsibility towards universal values.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition of universal values: emphasis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euphemism: expectations of achievement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Analysis of the standards for the block two of BGE 1, on “values”:

- Concepts: Synonymy: attitudes and customs are included as values. No explicit position taken by the text.
- Use of article the: No room for difference

#### Analysis of standards for BGE 2. Block one, on “the person”.

- Concepts: Different discourses: psychological, liberal, religious, enterprising culture and individual, medicine, and human rights discourses. 5/17 concepts are Psychological. No explicit position taken by the text regarding roles and gender. Use of general terms (health hazards) and lack of specific terms. Collocation: body appearance first, right to health and dignity of the person last. Procedures: Overwording: “analysis” is listed seven times
- Use of the: no place for difference, in “roles assigned to the man and the woman”

#### Analysis of standards for BGE 3. Block three, on Social norms.

- Concepts: Citizenship appears once in the introduction, not in the standards. Hierarchy: some concepts are needed, others are just mentioned. Discrimination is limited to social discrimination. Minorities is limited to women and disabled people, and “others” “Woman” defined only by gender.
- Procedures: Overwording: recovery of information
The text of the curriculum and the intertextual context.

Texts are never isolated from the contexts in which they are produced, and they are usually related to ideas and discourses that are circulating (Apple and Christian – Smith, 1991). Some clues about the relationships between the text and the context, or clues about the relationships between the text and other texts can be observed within the analyzed text. According to Fairclough (2001) “Some formal features [of the analyzed text] point outside the text to its situational context, or to its ‘intertextual’ context, i.e. to previous texts which are related to it.” (p. 108)

For example, the procedures for the third cycle of compulsory education, block three, on social norms, states that students have to be able to search for information, recover data, critically analyze information and situations, inquire and produce essays. These characteristics are related to the characteristics of the modern thought, mentioned by the Director of Curriculum of the Ministry of Education during the reform period. In her speech, Braslavsky (2000), stated that

an education of quality should be related to the reinforcement of modern ways of reflecting and guiding actions, [ways of reflecting that] focus on three questions. The first question is the experience, as the capability to manage information and search for empirical data to support statements and decisions. The second question is reason: the ability to argue in an analytic, reflective, and critical way. The third question is subjectivity, understood as the increasingly autonomous construction of action by the individual and collective subjects. These subjects exert their liberty and will, are capable of: interacting with different others, being different, and dialoguing – from a distance – with hegemonic thoughts and actions (p. 46).

This speech and the procedures for the third cycle agree. In opposition, a relationship of contradiction or at least lack of consistency between the analyzed text and
the speech of the director of curriculum during the reform is also present. For example, the use of the article *the*, to present the idea of person as *the way* in which everybody thinks about the concept “person,” shows that the producers of the text take this concept to the arena of the common sense. Common sense is not one of the modern ways of reflecting and guiding actions, in an education of quality, according to the director of curriculum in the speech mentioned above. Common sense, as an uncritical perception of reality, is not compatible with the ability to argue in an analytic, reflective, and critical way. A relationship of contradiction or at least lack of consistency between the analyzed text and the speech of the director of curriculum during the reform was also noted.

Another relation of contradiction between the analyzed text and the speech of the director of curriculum becomes visible when I explore the use of the article *the* in “the Argentine community.” The expression “the Argentine community” creates no room for diversity, contradicting also the capability of “interacting with different others, being different, and dialoguing –from a distance – with hegemonic thoughts and actions.” (Braslavsky (2000), p. 46).

Within this discourse that implicitly denies diversity, gender difference is the only difference that is explicit in the text of the analyzed standard. The Argentine educational reform was very similar to the education reform developed in Spain in the 1980’s. The Spanish Statutory law of General Arrangement of the Educative System (LOGSE) shows emphasis on the recognition of gender by mentioning girls and
boys ("los niños y las niñas") every time it refers to children. The similarity between the Spaniard and the Argentine curriculum could correspond to an effort to recognize gender differences within the Argentine community by the producers of the Argentine curriculum, or to the adoption of the Spanish model of the reform (including gender difference).

The text of the curriculum and the context.

One characteristic that is common to all the analyzed texts within the curriculum is the fact that the producers and the readers or audience of the curriculum are not explicit. Different strategies are used to maintain this pseudo-anonymity throughout the curriculum, such as the use of the reflexive form “se” and the passive voice. The texts do not make clear who is who. The producers of the text are not mentioned throughout the document by name or by using words such as “we” or “the National Ministry of Education.” By these means, the grammar renders ambiguous the relationship to the producers of the text.

These strategies result in an impersonal and formal style that the texts ambiguous in terms of the agent and the audience. The text does not make clear who are supposed to do things with it – for example, who is supposed to make connections between the standards of the different blocks in the different areas (mathematics, language, social

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78 This does not mean that different women subjectivities were promoted or even recognized by the LOGSE. On the contrary, a characteristic of the Spanish reform is, according to (Rodriguez, 2001), teachers were called to educate citizens of a European Spain while giving up the teachers’ own historical subjectivities as women.
 sciences, etc). Are the curriculum technicians in the provincial Ministries of Education supposed to make these links? Is this a task for schools’ principals or teachers? The text does not say. Perhaps the idea of including these charts was an attempt to promote an interdisciplinary use of the contents. If this was the case, the lack of clarity or suggestions on how to connect the blocks of different areas of knowledge and on who should do it does not seem to enhance interdisciplinary use of the contents.

The ambiguity of the texts in terms of the agent and the audience might be related to the process of production and circulation of the BCC. The use of “se” to avoid making explicit a relationship between the producers of the text – the National Ministry of Education – and the schoolteachers or school principals makes sense in the framework of the decentralization of education. In theory, as a result of the transference of schools, or process of decentralization, the National Ministry of Education has no direct jurisdiction over schools, which are under the provinces’ authorities. In order to maintain consistency with this process and to respect provincial jurisdiction, the BCC were presented as a resource with which the provincial Ministries of Education could construct their own Curriculum. While these curricula were not complete but still in the process of construction, training programs for schoolteachers, principals, and supervisors of different provinces were based on the BCC and explicitly used them as resources. In this way, according to Narodowski (1996),

the bcc are not a space for basic reference any more and become a contradictory version of a Single National Curriculum. In other words, what should be a general setout guidelines becomes a specific mandate: the bcc becomes the BCC, with capital letters (p.101).
The only direct explicit reference to authority is to the National Law of Education, which is quoted in the introduction of the document. This kind of reference appeals to the criterion of authority: the message is that the curriculum is based on and responds to the National Law of Education, so it must be right. The curriculum has other grammatical features that emphasize its authority. The lack of use of modality, and the use of verbs such as must throughout the curriculum, make it assertive, and reinforce the authority of the text. An assertive tone and references to authority make sense as a political strategy within the context of changes and opposition to changes from different social sectors.  

On the other hand, if the BCC are so assertive, what is the margin left by this document for the provinces and the schools to create new curricula, based on the BCC? Perhaps the construction or elaboration of the provincial curricula is not meant to be a real construction but a literal adaptation with some additions to it. Even if this was not the intention of the producers of the curriculum, it was, however, the result in some provinces.

The text of the curriculum is related, not only to the context of educational reform, but also to a wider context, that includes for example the discourses that circulate within the mass media and other social arenas. An example of this connection between the curriculum and other circulating discourses is in the description of the characteristics of the students. According to the BCC, students have to learn to be constant, firm in facing tasks and problems, committed, efficient, self-controlled, and knowledgeable of

79 The Educational reform was opposed by teachers, the Catholic Church, and teachers’ unions.  
80 Article 2 of Decree 39/94 of the National Council of Culture and Education (Consejo Federal de Cultura y Educación) states that the BCC “will be the basis for the adaptation and elaboration of the Curriculum that each province will construct from 1995.”
the culture of work. While in a different context the concept “efficient” would have not been mentioned or thought of as a characteristic of students, or it would have been criticized, in the context of the extension of neoliberal policies, efficiency becomes an every-day concept, an idea which people are used to hearing mentioned. Efficiency does not thus appear as an alien concept in education, even though it belongs originally, to the economy and the arena of the work world.

The use of terms that belong to the field of psychology, and the emphasis on standards related to psychology are not isolated from the great influence that psychology has had in education and in Argentine society in general. The use of specific terms “imported” from other knowledge areas is in contrast with the lack of specificity regarding some standards. For example, the list of standards related to health mentions general health hazards, but it does not specify what health hazards should be addressed by the educational system. The list of standards related to health reads: bodily appearance, health and illness, care and risks. Health hazards. Appropriate protection of integral health. Right to health and dignity.

Which health hazards should be addressed? What kind of appropriate protection does the curriculum talk about? Protection against AIDS, or unwanted pregnancies? The text does not specify it.

Besides of the lack of specificity, the order in which the standards are presented is surprising. By listing physical appearance as the first word in the list regarding health, and right to health and dignity as the last one, the order of the words reflects the state of
most of the media discourse in the country: what is emphasized is one’s appearance, and what appears at the end are rights.\footnote{81}

The lack of specificity regarding some standards is a characteristic of the texts analyzed throughout the BCC. For instance, different means of discriminating against people are made explicit – for example, discrimination based on race, religion, gender – but the texts do not name the people who are discriminated against. The texts omit discrimination against indigenous people, Bolivians, Paraguayans, people with Indigenous features, Jews, and homosexuals as concepts students should learn. Sexual orientation is not mentioned even once. Hence, the curriculum does not offer a language to talk about discrimination based on sexual orientation. By omitting who are the victims of discrimination, the curriculum not only works against its goal of teaching about discrimination, but it also fails to challenge the hegemonic and historical representation of the Argentine population as a homogeneous people.

Besides the lack of specificity regarding some standards, the texts analyzed in the curriculum also show that while some new contents are incorporated to the BCC, they are also very broad and limited in terms of their definitions. For example, the concept of discrimination is limited to its social aspect. Educating about social discrimination could encourage individuals to analyze and change their individual behaviors, and this would be an interesting step forward in a society with problems of racism and patriarchy.

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\footnote{81} The importance of physical appearance as the first word in the list is also interesting because in Argentina, according to a study of the Association for Fighting against Bulimia and Anorexia (ALUBA), “One out of 10 adolescent girls suffers from clinical anorexia or bulimia. (…) The rate of bulimia and anorexia is triple that of the United States and is probably the highest in the world, according to experts in health” (The Washington Post. Special). Local experts (ALUBA, 2000) relate these facts to an obsession with a culture that emphasizes appearance and slimness.
Including social discrimination as a content to learn about is a very positive contribution of the BCC. By addressing the issue of social discrimination students could, for example, blame the whole society and individuals for discriminating against people. If they could also learn about economic and political discrimination, however, they would see the political and economic aspects of discrimination and they would have a language for petitioning or demanding changes – a perfectly democratic practice that the text misses.

This limitation on definitions is also associated with a lack of complexity in the categories included in the BCC. For example, when the text lists discrimination against women as a content to be addressed, it limits the idea of women to a universal homogeneous representation. Differences regarding class and race within the category “women” are ignored. This prevents students from seeing relations of exploitations and power among women of different social classes, for instance.

According to the introduction to the basic and common contents for Ethics and Citizen Education, the student has to learn how to become “a person and a social subject, [who] knows how to respect and value others, the constitutional order, and democratic life.” (p. 1) This knowledge related to democracy was not available for the generations that went to school three decades before the reform, during the last dictatorship. Between 1976 and 1983 Argentines were denied their rights as citizens, and democratic governments had to rebuild democracy and citizenship. The suspension of constitutional rights as well as the violation of the human rights that lead to the death of 30,300 people during those years generated the need to educate new generations about constitutional and human rights. Education was one of the means by which people would acquire the knowledge needed to become a citizen. Within this context, during the first national
educational reform after the dictatorship, the concept of citizenship, however, appears only once throughout the whole list of standards. This result is surprising in addition, because of the title of this chapter of the BCC is Ethic and Citizenship Education. The fact that the concept “citizen” does not even appear in the list of standards shows that the emphasis on this curriculum is not in fostering the subjectivity of the citizen.

The subject and the curriculum

In this final section of the chapter I use the data I analyzed and summarized before, to describe the different characteristics that the Basic Common Contents for Ethics and Citizenship Education adjudicate to the ideal subject.

According to the BCC, a subject should be a humanistic, rational, and individualistic self. Students should learn to be constant, firm in facing tasks and problems, committed, efficient, self-controlled, and knowledgeable of the culture of work. The BCC imply that by having these characteristics, they can be self-fulfilled and free to choose and make decisions. The connection between these two sets of characteristics seems to describe a good worker, who is free and fulfilled.

According to the BCC, students have to be aware of and respectful of other values, different from the universal values, but they only must commit themselves to the universal values adopted by the Argentine community. This could be read as encouraging tolerance of other values. At the same time, they need to accept diversity, a diversity that the expression “the Argentine community” undervalues. Even though diversity is
addressed, it is not to be valued or celebrated as something that can enrich students’ life, but as something they have to be aware of.

Students have to search for transcendence according to their own convictions and decisions and also be able to exercise their free choices. They need to know some information about health and human rights. Regarding health, the standards are not specific enough to inform what kinds of health problems students should be informed about. The document “Fuentes” – a theoretical basis for the BCC – does not specify those problems either.

General and really serious problems that affect children all over the country, such as AIDS, bulimia, anorexia, and unwanted pregnancies, are not mentioned. This implies that these contents do not need to be part of children’s education. On the other hand, the fact that health problems are not specified and are expressed in a broad sense, creates a space for the provinces and schools to include specific standards related to health problems relevant to their region and to the whole country.

While the knowledge students must acquire regarding health is expressed in a general way, the knowledge about psychology is clear and specific. Students have to learn about affectionate reactions; memory, kinds of intelligence – strategic, communicative, and expressional– will, desire, etc. It seems that they must be young psychologists able to understand the self.

Girls and boys have to know about roles assigned to men and women, to family relationships and to work relationships. Should they accept or challenge these roles? This is not clear. Regarding identity, students should identify themselves with their groups and with their groups’ history and spiritual or religious ideas. Students are to know about
psychological processes and they are to be able to make free choices. Sexual orientation, as knowledge content, is, however, absent from the list of psychological processes, and from the list related to identity. Individual aspects of identity – such as sexual identity or orientation – are absent. This contradicts the emphasis on the rest of the BCC on the individual, psychology, and choices.

The subject, according to the BCC, must be a modern thinker, a good user of information and a researcher, able to collect empirical data, argue, analyze, reflect and criticize. In other words, the subject has to develop the abilities of a young researcher. Regarding human rights, the subject has to be aware of social discrimination against women, disabled people, and others, but she is not expected to know about a need to challenge discrimination, or struggle to eradicate discrimination against “women, disabled people, and others.”

The subject has to know how to find information, be a researcher, critical analyst of information and situations, an inquirer and producer of essays. It seems that she has to develop the skills of an effective young journalist or researcher. This knowledge listed in the curriculum is related to what Braslavsky (1996) refers to as modern ways of thinking and acting. These ways of thinking include the use of information, the collection of empirical data, the capability of arguing and analyzing, reflecting and criticizing. These are capabilities developed and used by scientists.

A characteristic of this curriculum is that it blends together different classification scheme and different discourses. For example, it combines a schema that includes conceptual and procedural knowledge related to psychology, and other scheme that include conceptual and procedural knowledge related to communication and sciences.
Regarding discourses, in the explanatory summary regarding the person, the humanistic, rationalist, and enterprise culture discourses are mixed together in a paragraph. The paragraph lists values related to humanistic, rationalist, and enterprise self discourses.

Returning to Article 6 of the National Law of Education\textsuperscript{83}, the influence of this article in the curriculum is clear, since some of the knowledge mentioned in that article are considered in the analyzed standards. Some examples are: national identity, individual fulfillment, values of life, freedom, the good, truth, peace, tolerance, existential decisions, and elaboration of own life project. It is difficult to see, however, how other characteristics of the subject listed in Article 6 of the law are addressed by the standards. It is not clear in which ways a curriculum that does not even mention the word citizen will foster a responsible citizen. If the emphasis is on procedures such as finding information, how do the standards encourage critical protagonism?

If the subject has to focus on her individual fulfillment, knowledge and understanding of herself, and the mastery of procedures such as analysis of her psychological processes, how do the standards help her to develop as a creator, and an

\textsuperscript{83} The Argentine education system will promote men and women’s comprehensive and continuous education; [an education] that will foster national identity under regional, continental and universal worldviews. [This education] will allow men and women’s individual fulfillment according their cultural, social, ethical, aesthetic, and religious capabilities and guided by the values of life, freedom, the [common] good, truth, peace, solidarity, tolerance, equality, and justice. [Education will allow men and women] to generate the capacities for elaborating their own life project that [is a] result of existential decisions; [an education that will help to develop men and women as] responsible citizens, critical protagonists, creators and change-makers of society, [and] defenders of democratic institutions and the environment (\textit{Ley Federal de Educación}, Art 6).
agent of social change? How does the curriculum encourage students to work towards changes related to the roles of men and women if the standards do not even mention the possibility of criticizing the construction of those roles? By mastering procedures such as analysis and recovery of information but not other procedures related to organization, protest, and productive action, how can these subjects defend the democratic institutions and the environment?

In this chapter I showed general characteristics of the BCC (the standards), and the subjectivities that the BCC foster. I also established few connections between the first level of analysis of this dissertation – Law of Education – and the curriculum. In next chapter I analyze the third level of this job: the subjectivities promoted by the textbooks.
Chapter 6

Subjectivities in textbooks

Overview.

In this chapter I develop the third level of my analysis, which refers to textbooks that were published during the reform period. Two main reasons guide the choice of textbooks as a level of analysis in this work. One is related to general characteristics of textbooks as texts, and the other has to do with the role that textbooks acquired within the Argentinean reform.

According to Apple and Christian –Smith (1991),

textbooks are not simply ‘delivery systems’ of ‘facts’. They are at once the result of political, economic, and cultural activities, battles, and compromises. They are conceived, designed, and authored by real people with real interests. They are published within the political and economic constraints of markets, resources, and power, p.2)

Textbooks are, then, related to government rationality, economic circumstances, and available discourses. Textbooks speak about the society, the political and economic context, and about the subjectivities they promote. Textbooks portray societies for the students. They introduce students to different characters and scenarios that construct textual realities where these characters live, appear similar, think in certain ways, do some things and not others, talk about certain topics, and behave in certain ways. These textual realities are not disconnected from the political, economic, and social context in which the textbooks are produced. This means that when publishers create the textual
realities that inhabit their books, they make choices related, for example, to curricular policies, consumer preferences, the availability of technology, etc.

Even though students can interpret textual realities in different ways, publishers present ‘preferred meanings’ for characters and situations. What are these “preferred meanings?” How are they constructed? How are identities formed through discourse in the textbooks? What identities are available for students to identify with? What thoughts and emotions are offered to the individuals? What ways are offered to them for understanding their relation to the world? What are socially valued ways of life, according to the texts? What are the characters in the texts like? How do they think? How do they look? Who do they admire? Who do they ignore? How do they relate to the readers? These are some of the questions that this chapter addresses.

In Argentina, textbooks play an important role in schooling. According to Greenberg (1997) “textbook use constitutes 60 percent of class time.” (p.75) Usually teachers choose the text they want their students to use, and students’ parents buy those texts. Since 1995, the pressure on teachers to “implement the reform” was so strong, that teachers made sure that the textbooks they chose included the standards of the curricular reform. “The weight of the textbook as a mediator between the curriculum and the teacher has increased since 1995, when the BCC were printed but the provincial curriculums were not available yet.” (Greenberg, 1997, p.75). Due to the lack of provincial curricula (that were being elaborated) during the beginning of the reform teachers used the textbooks as their guide, as their curriculum. This preponderant role of textbooks in schooling is the other reason why I consider the textbooks of the reform
period as an excellent source to explore the subjectivities promoted by the educational reform.

Sample.

My sampling includes textbooks from the three cycles of mandatory education in Argentina. General basic education is divided in three cycles of three years each, from first to ninth grades. In order to sample the whole range of textbooks for mandatory education, I selected books for the first grade of each cycle: first, fourth, and seventh grades.

Since many publishers produce books for general basic education, I would have chosen those books that are the best sellers. The problem is that the textbook industry trade group (camara del libro) would not make that information public. As I cannot tell what specific textbooks are best sold, I decided to analyze textbooks published by best-selling publishers: Aique, Estrada, Kapelusz, and Santillana. Because of the autonomy that publishers have in producing their books, texts for the same grade that are produced by diverse publishers present some differences. In spite of this, due to the fact that all the publishers used the BCC to select the contents of their books, there are significant similarities among the books for the same grade, even though among those that were published by different publishers. As the similarities seem more preponderant than the differences, for my analysis I randomly select one book of each selected grade.

I analyze Social Sciences textbooks for two reasons: The first one is the intrinsic characteristics of the contents for Ethics and Citizenship Education. According to the
BCC, the contents on procedures and attitudes for Ethics and Citizenship Education have to be related to the contents on the person, values, and norms, and to the contents on attitudes for the other subject matters in the Curriculum, including Social Sciences. Second, the Social Science textbooks are more likely to be available to most students than the books for Ethics and Citizenship education, so they may be the most used teaching material to learn about Ethics and Citizenship Education. In order to establish relationships between the standards on Ethics and Citizenship Education and the texts I analyze, in the description of each text I answer the question: how do the Social Science textbooks teach the contents for Ethics and Citizenship Education?

To form a sampling of texts, following Nines (2001), I create an “archeology” of subjectivities present in the text. This comprises an archive of statements (texts, graphics) about [the subject] extracted from the texts (p.83). To select the parts of the books that I include in the archeology I randomly select a double-page reading from each book. Because the written text for the first grade book is so small, I analyze two double-page readings from that book. The analysis includes written text and also photos, cartoons and paintings.
Table 6-1: Books and pages analyzed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Editor</th>
<th>First cycle</th>
<th>Fourth cycle</th>
<th>Third cycle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter &amp;</td>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Chapter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pages</td>
<td>Pages</td>
<td>Pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santillana 1st grade</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24-25</td>
<td>114-115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estrada 4th grade</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>76 - 77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapelusz third cycle</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>253-254</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis.

To analyze the textbooks, I study the vocabulary, grammar, and structure of the text, using Fairclough’s (1998) ideas on critical discourse analysis. For the analysis of illustrations – photos, paintings, cartoon-like images, graphics, and maps – I adopt Kress and van Leeuwen’s ideas on reading images. Because words and images are used to introduce – among other things – characters, and characters introduce identities, I also use a guide for analyzing characters. (Talbot, 2001).

Since these three methods were already elaborated in chapter II on concepts and methods, I “translate” these three methods into questions that I “ask” the texts, and I put them together in Appendix A as a “tool-kit” for textbook analysis.
Textbook 1: Third cycle.

Analysis.

For the selected pages of this and the other two textbooks I first analyze the vocabulary, the grammar, the general structure of the pages, the illustrations, and the characters. Second, after the analysis of these texts, I interpret the data. I end each section with a conclusion. Finally, after the analysis of the three textbooks, I conclude comparing and contrasting the analysis of the three books. The first book I analyze is published by Kapelusz, and is titled *Society, Space, Culture. Argentina, LatinAmerica. B.G.E, third cycle.* In opposition to the other books I analyze, this is not a textbook organized by grade, but it is an integration of the contents of Social Sciences (history and geography) for the third cycle of General and Basic Education (seventh, eighth, and ninth grades). The book follows the structure of the Basic Common Contents so carefully, that it is even organized in blocks that correspond to the blocks of the BCC.

The analyzed reading includes pages 253 and 254 of chapter 9, in figure 6.2.
Figure 6-1: The shopping center

A version translated from the original is included in Figure 6.3 Figure 6-2
-Please, grandmother, take me to the shopping center. Please, be nice...
-But, Adriana, I was planning on going to downtown window-shopping in Florida Street. Besides, we can buy some little things and afterwards we can go to San Martin square, that is so beautiful.
-Grandma, downtown, as you say, is too far. The windows there are not better than in the mall, neither are the things they sell. Regarding the square, would it be clean and safe?
-Mother, I know you love downtown, and I love it too, but Adriana has her points. It is far away and it is not safe... you might be robbed...
-There is no need to exaggerate... May be what happens is that you are planning on going to the vacation home to spend the weekend and you think it will be late to them if we go to downtown first...
-Well, actually...
-Grandmother, let’s think. In the mall we not only can go window-shopping, and shopping, but you can also have some tea and some of your favorite cakes. I can play electronic games. Or, better, we can go together to the movies.
-In the old days, if someone offered me to go to downtown I was so happy. This time I take you to the mall, but next week we go to downtown.

It is getting more and more common in our country, as in almost the whole world, to substitute the shopping walk, the outing for fun, or the simple walk that used to attract people towards the city, by the visits to the shopping malls that have been established in some neighborhoods.

Figure 6-2: The shopping center (translation).
The reading is related to the following contents for Ethics and Citizenship Education. Regarding the block on the person, the reading is related to the concept “The culture of adolescents” and to the procedure “Review of everyday life situations. Comparative analysis and taking a position among different options.” Regarding the block on norms, the reading can be analyzed in the light of the concepts “some stereotypes as violations of human rights.” The procedures addressed in this reading are “recovery of information from different members of the community,” and “analysis of situation at present.”

**Vocabulary.**

The vignette uses two different sets of terms to describe the shopping center and downtown. The reading that follows the vignette also uses different terms to describe these two places. These terms are listed in the following tables:
Vignette.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Shopping Center</th>
<th>Downtown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Window-shopping</td>
<td>Window shopping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>Buying little things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Having tea and one’s favorite sweets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Playing video games</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Movies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Square: beautiful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Too far away</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Windows no better than at the mall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Products no better than at the mall.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This table on the vignette’s vocabulary reveals the activities people can do in the shopping center and downtown, and the adjectives that the characters attribute to these places. The table shows that the characters mention five activities that can be done in the mall versus two that can be done in downtown. Regarding the adjectives, on one hand, one positive adjective is mentioned in the description of a square downtown while no adjectives are used to describe the shopping mall. On the other hand, six negative adjectives are attributed to downtown.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shopping Center</th>
<th>Downtown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Common to the country and the world Concentrations of products ⇒ construction of malls.</td>
<td>Substitution of going out for fun, a simple walk that used to attract people to the city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In opposition, for those who can travel out of the country, similar things anywhere in the world. Common characteristics throughout the world: same brand names of clothing, music stores, movies, food stores, houseware stores, computerized services, surveillance and safety. Upper and middle class neighborhood, spreading, reflects people’s tendency to dwell in closed spaces, variety of services, Closed areas, public space. People from different social sectors alternate. Lower-middle class and poor people, enjoy the beautiful windows, imagine buying things, enjoy the air conditioning or heating unavailable at home. Well to do go on week- days. Vacation homes on weekends</td>
<td>Before (in the past), a mark of identity Before, glancing through stores, coffee shops, theaters, movies, and bookstores. See the sky, explore downtown, dare to go out and learn about some other part of the city. To get there, some have to travel across the whole city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open space People from different neighborhoods came.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The reading also compares the activities that people from different social sectors engage in downtown and in the shopping mall, by stating that “People from different neighborhoods came [downtown]” and that “People from different social sectors alternate [at the mall].” Regarding the shopping malls and social classes, the reading states that people from the lower or middle-class or poor people can “enjoy beautiful windows; imagine buying the most different things; enjoy the air conditioning or heating unavailable in their homes.” The reading also describes the mall as a place where “the most well-to-do go on working days, because on weekends they retire to their vacation homes.”

Regarding the collocation of the words, the word before (meaning “in the past”) is added to the beginning of some sentences in the reading. Before is the word used to introduce the paragraphs that describe leisure and shopping activities downtown, and downtown as a mark of a city’s identity. The repetition of this collocation establishes a relationship between the past and downtown on the one hand and the shopping mall and the present time on the other.

The following sentence shows a combination of oppositional wording and the use of the word before. “Before, the downtown area of a city was the distinctive mark of its identity; in opposition, the shopping malls allow those who can travel out of the country, to find something similar to places in any city of the whole world.” Identity is associated with downtown, and shopping malls is associated with travel out of the country and any city of the whole world. The word before is collocated in another sentence by the

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84 Fairclough (2001) defines collocation as “the ways words co-occur or collocate. (p. 95)
activities that could be done in downtown, and the expression *all over the world* is collocated by the products and services the shopping malls offer. The expression all over the word is reworded and repeated three times.

The words in the table s also show some intertextual connections: links between both texts – the vignette and the reading. The expression “*dare to go out*” (mentioned in the reading) is linked in meaning to the fear and lack of safety mentioned in the vignette, in relation to the downtown. The statement in the reading about richer people having vacation homes is linked to the characters in the vignette who have a vacation home.

**Grammar**

In this section I analyze the ways in which grammatical form is used to construct character’s agency, the use of modes, the way in which tenses are used, and the kinds of connectors that link paragraphs. The construction of agency is related to the use of the active and passive voice and the omission of the agent. The subjects that are clearly shown as agents are those who realize an action, for example, “people used to walk by downtown glancing at the stores..” The next table, Table 6-4 shows the sentences in passive voice and those in active voice:
Table 6-4: Use of the active and passive voice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active voice</th>
<th>Passive voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vignette</td>
<td>Vignette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take me to the shopping center [Adrianita to her grandmother]</td>
<td>[In Downtown] you [Adrianita and her grandmother] might be robbed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I [Adrianita’s grandmother] was planning on going to downtown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We [Adrianita and her grandmother] can buy some little things</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown is too far. The windows there are no better than in the mall (...)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(...) you are planning on going to the vacation home to spend the weekend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the mall we [Adrianita and her grandmother] not only can go (...)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(...) I [Adrianita’s grandmother] was so happy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(...) I will take you to the mall(…)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reading

In the past, people used to walk by downtown
The streets (…) marked a route
(…) Many people had to pass through.
There were people who came from different neighborhoods.
The concentration of products for sale, exerted an influence on the construction on supermarkets and shopping malls. The malls all over the world have common characteristics: they offer the same garments (…) In the past (before), the downtown of a city was the distinctive mark of its identity (…) Shopping malls allow to those who can travel out of the country, to find something similar in any city (…) The inauguration of shopping malls, (…) marks peoples’ strong tendency to retreat in closed spaces (…) The closed area of the mall is clearly different from the open space of downtown. The mall became a public space
People from lower middle-class and poor people, who find a place where they can enjoy beautiful windows; imagine buying things
The most well-to-do go [to the malls] on working days.

(…) malls are visited by people from the lower middle-class and poor people,
By means of using the active and the passive voice, in the vignette, the grammar constructs the following characters are agents: Adrianita, her grandmother, her mother and the thieves (in the vignette). In the reading, the agents are: the people downtown (who used to walk), the streets, squares, monuments, and advertisements in the buildings, the people from different neighborhoods, the concentration of products for sale, the shopping malls, the downtown, the inaugurations of shopping mall, the people from different social sectors, the lower middle class and poor people, and the most well to do (at the mall).

In one sentence of the vignette, Adrianita and her grandmother are shown in passive voice (as patients). In this sentence, there are implicit agents: the thieves. In the rest of the vignette, Adrianita and her grandmother are agents; they realize something, the sentences describe them in active voice. The mall appears as a patient, in the passive voice once – “Malls are visited by people from the low middle class and poor people.”. In this case, the agents are the people from the lower middle class and poor people. The malls appear as an agent – realizing something in active voice – four times. The downtown does not appear as a patient, in the passive voice, and is mentioned in the active voice twice.

The agents are omitted in the following sentences: “It is getting more and more common …to substitute the walk through the shopping district…by the visits to the shopping malls,” “The streets, squares, monuments (…) marked a route where it was possible to see the sky…”

In this reading the process of nominalization is present as well. A nominalization is a process converted into a noun: *The concentration of products for sale, exerted an*
influence on the construction of supermarkets and shopping malls. Here the concentration of products is shown as in a cause-effect relationship with the construction of supermarkets and shopping malls.

The predominant mode used throughout the reading is the declarative mode. No modal auxiliaries are presented in this reading. Only once, a modal adverb is used, in this case to elaborate on how people form different social sectors alternate at the mall: Generally on weekends, malls are visited by people from the lower middle-class and poor people...

The reading relates the past and the present tense to mark differences between downtown and the shopping malls. The present tense is used to describe the activities in the shopping mall. The word “before” is used to introduce the sentences about downtown, and in every sentence in which the downtown is the agent, the tense used is the past. There are no sentences in the present tense to talk about the activities downtown, except for one that states ”downtown is too far away.”

The connectors between paragraphs and sentences show opposition and comparison between downtown and shopping malls as spaces for shopping and leisure. The word before is repeatedly used to introduce the sentences related to downtown. Another connector is the collocation of the term “shopping mall” by the expression “the rest of the world.” The connector however is used to contrast the identity of downtown to the homogeneity of the malls all around the world.
Structure.

The sample analyzed consists of pages 253 and 254 of chapter 9 of the book, titled “Some scenes of current cultural life.” Three photos and a short text introduce the chapter. The text reads: “We live in a world that is changing fast. Theses changes have positive and conflictive aspects. Hence, one of the challenges is to select what elements of our culture we must conserve and to critically select the new elements.” After the introductory double page, the subtitle of the chapter, in green font, bigger than the readings’ titles, wonders: “Which are the recent changes?” The answer to this questions is the following list of readings: “the school,” (9 lines long) “the mass media communication,” (19 lines long) “the shopping mall,” (66 lines long) “women,” (33 lines long) “children,” (49 lines long) “the old people and the unemployed,” (53 lines long) and “We are also the others” (51 lines long). The reading analyzed here, “The shopping mall,” has the following structure: The title is “El shopping center,” in English. The text is divided in two pages. The first page introduces “The shopping center.” The second page includes the rest of the reading on the right side of the page. It is forty-one lines long; twelve of which talk about the downtown, while the other twenty-nine describe the shopping malls. Each chapter of this book ends with activities and a work project. The activities and projects explicitly demand students to order concepts and facts in time and geographic space, to think and relate facts, to critically reflect on social relations and facts, and to do something with the information (explain concepts; write reports on texts that show conflicting political perspectives; write answers to questionnaires related to the kind of laws that strengthen or weaken democracy; organize debates and panels for
parents and other students to encourage ecological consciousness, etc). The only chapter in the book that does not ask students to order concepts and facts in time and geographic space, to think and relate facts, to critically reflect on social relations and facts, and to do something with the information, is the chapter that deals with changes such as the shopping center.

Illustrations.

The second page of the reading includes the rest of the reading. See Figure 6-3
Antes, la gente transitaba por el centro reconociendo los negocios, las confiterías, los teatros, los cines y las librerías. Las calles, algunas plazas, algunos edificios públicos, las propaganda en los edificios altos, algunos monumentos, marcaban un recorrido donde era posible ver el cielo, explorar el centro, atreverse a salir y conocer algún otro lugar de la ciudad. Para llegar al centro, mucha gente tenía que atravesar la ciudad. Allí en el centro se encontraba gente que vivía en los más diferentes barrios. La concentración de la oferta de productos incidió en la construcción de los hipermercados y de los shopping centers. Los shopping de todos los países del mundo tienen rasgos en común: ofrecen las mismas marcas de vestimentas, tienen centros musicales, cines, patios de comida, negocios de electrodomésticos, varios servicios computarizados, vigilancia que garantiza la seguridad.

Antes, el centro de una ciudad era el sello distintivo de su identidad; en cambio, los shipping centers permiten encontrar, para sus usuarios con posibilidades de viajar fuera del país, algo parecido en cualquier ciudad del mundo entero.

La inauguración de los shopping centers, al principio en barrios donde predominaban las clases alta y media, y ahora extendiéndose sobre la heterogeneidad geografía ciudadana, señala una marcada tendencia de la gente a recluirse en un espacio cerrado, en el que se brindan los más variados servicios.

El espacio cerrado del shopping se diferencia claramente del espacio abierto del centro. El shopping se transformó en un espacio público, donde gente de distintos sectores sociales se alterna en el recorrido incesante de sus instalaciones. Generalmente, los fines de semana los visitan la clase media baja y los pobres que encuentran abierto un lugar donde disfrutar de bellas vidrieras, imaginar la compra de las más diversas cosas, gozar del aire acondicionado, en una acción que se suelen aumenta en sus propias casas. Los más pudientes van los días laborables porque los fines de semana se retiran a sus casas quintas.

A través de la familia, cuales eran las formas de recreación cuando ellos eran más jóvenes.

Figure 6-3: Downtown.

A translated version is shown in Figure 6-4
Before, people used to walk by the downtown, glancing through the stores, coffee shops, theaters, movies and bookstores. The streets, some squares, corners, and columns, the streetscapes in the high buildings, marked a route where it was possible to see the city, to explore downtown, to dare to go out and know some other place or the city. To arrive to downtown, many people had to go through the whole city. There, in the center, there were people who came from different neighborhoods. The concentration of products for sale and disbursement on the construction of the downtown and shopping malls. The malls all over the world have common characteristics: they offer the same goods of "brand names," they have music stores, movies, food areas, houseware stores, computerized services, and surveillance services to guarantee safety.

Before, the downtown of a city was the distinctive mark of its identity; in opposition, the shopping malls allow to those who can travel out of the country, to find something similar in any city of the whole world.

The inauguration of shopping malls, first in high and middle class neighborhoods, and now spreading towards the heterogeneous city geography, made people's "strong tendency to reside in closed spaces, where a variety of services are offered."

The close area of the mall is clearly different from the open space of downtown. The mall became a public space, yet people form different social sectors alternates unceasing walking the mall's facilities. Generally on weekends, malls are visited by people from low, middle, to poor people, who find a place to enjoy a beautiful window, imagine to buy the most different things, enjoy the air conditioning or be sitting unavailable in their homes. The most well-to-do go to the mall on working days, because on weekends they retire to their vacation homes.

Ask the old people in your family which ways of leisure did they practice when they were young.

Figure 6-4: Downtown (translation)
Some similarities between the photos in the two pages can be observed. First, the three photos show places. Second, due to the way in which distance is used, people are shown as part of the landscape. They are in a crowd, they are out being seen (offered to the viewer) but they are not looking at the viewer. Several differences between the photos are also noticeable. The photo that shows the mall is the biggest one, and it comes first. The other two photos are smaller than the first one, and they seem to be the same size in comparison to each other. The sepia photo is, however, bigger. The space that people occupy in the photos is different. In the photo of the shopping mall, distinguishable people are located only in the bottom right quarter of the photo. In the photos of downtown, people are located in the entire bottom half of the photos. The caption of the photo of the mall focuses on the newness of the shopping malls. The caption of the photos of downtown focuses on life downtown. There is no caption to differentiate the photo from the past and the photo from the present. The use of sepia and color works as a time cue. The photo in sepia shows only men. The other photo of downtown shows men and women almost in an equal number, though is hard to identify gender, due to the small size of the people in the picture. In the photo of the mall, most of the people whose face can be seen, are women (I count eight women and three people who could be men).

Another difference between the photos is the distance between the viewer and the object—downtown or the mall. While the two small photos of downtown show the center of the city far from the viewer. The photo of the mall—which is bigger and wider—represents the shopping center at a close distance.

The use of vertical angle differs in these pictures, as well. While the photos of downtown show the center of the city from a high angle, the photo of the mall is at eye
Finally, the kind of narrativization of the images is also different. Regarding the picture of the mall, one would have to be inside the mall, close to the first person shown in the photo, to occupy the space of the photographer in the photo, to see the mall in the way the producer saw it when she took the photo. To see downtown in the way the producer saw it when she shot the photos, one would have to be above everybody downtown, and in the center.

**Characters.**

The texts can be divided in two: one of them is the vignette, that includes three characters, the other one is the reading, that does not include characters as the main subjects of study, but objects: downtown and the mall. In the vignette, Adrianita, a granddaughter, asks her grandmother to take her to the shopping mall. These two characters shift to discussing the advantages and disadvantages of the mall as opposed to the downtown. A third character, Adrianita’s mother says only two sentences to support her daughters’ opinion in favor of the mall over the downtown. The author, as well as the reader, is an outsider: they are not part of the vignette. They seem to be “listening” to the conversation. Some less obvious subjects are indirectly mentioned. When Adrianita wonders if they would be safe in downtown, and when her mother says that they could be robbed, they are implying the presence of thieves downtown.

A similarity between the three main characters is that all three of them are women. They are depicted as planning activities related to consumption or leisure. They are not related to any productive activity.
Their roles – granddaughter, mother and grandmother – allow the reader to assume that the characters belong to different generations. Some information given in the vignette – the fact that the characters have a weekend home, mentioned in the vignette and the statement about upper class people having weekend homes, mentioned in the reading, allow the reader to infer that the characters belong to the same social class – upper to upper middle class.

**Interpretation of the analysis of pages 76 and 77.**

Regarding the vocabulary, two different classification schemes are embedded in this vocabulary. A schema is, according to Fairclough (2001), a representation of a particular type of activity (…) in terms of predictable elements in a predictable sequence. It is a mental representation that represents models of social behavior. The type of activity represented is shopping. The grandmother uses a classification schema to justify her preference for shopping in downtown. This schema includes the two activities that she would do in downtown and a positive adjective to describe a place in downtown. The granddaughter’s schema presents terms to list five activities they could do in the shopping mall, and words to talk about the disadvantages of shopping downtown. The granddaughter’s vocabulary shows the preferences and concerns of the younger generation of consumers. Adrianita summarizes the advantages of the shopping mall, by listing the aesthetic characteristics of the mall (windows and products are as good as those downtown), the activities that the shopping mall offers (shopping, eating, games,
movies), short distance to the mall, hygiene, and safety. A third character, Adrianita’s mother emphasizes the disadvantages of downtown: distance and lack of safety.

At first glance, the vignette seems to focus on generational differences. However, a detailed analysis of the vocabulary shows that it focuses on different consuming styles. Although the reading seems to alternate between two points of view, an analysis of the experiential values allows noticing that only one of the perspectives presents negative aspects. The authors use oppositional wording to position one shopping place in advantage of the other. Oppositional wording is, according to Fairclough (2001, p. 94), a strategy used to locate one concept in opposition to another. The fact that the grandmother only presents the downtown as the shopping place that she prefers and the place that made her happy “in the old days” might be a cue to the way in which the text producer’s experience of (...) social world is represented (Fairclough, 2001, p 93): the downtown as an “old fashioned place.”

Besides showing an experiential values, this vignette also shows expressive values, since by locating negative aspects only to downtown, the producers are evaluating the different shopping possibilities – shopping in the mall as safe, and shopping downtown and walking in the square as potentially unsafe and dirty. In this way, the writers construct a negative image of shopping in downtown and a positive image of shopping in the malls without making their points of view openly explicit, but by presenting their evaluation of the places as the characters’ perspectives.

In regards to the grammar, the use of the word before, along with the use of past tense to describe the mall portrays downtown as a consumption trends that belongs to the
past, related to the local space in “old times,” and in opposition to the current trend of
malls, which are related to a global space.

The lack of sentences in the present tense to describe the activities downtown works as an
implication: there is no activity downtown nowadays.

The use of the nominalization in “the concentration of products” as a cause for the
construction of shopping centers, does not show in a clear way how these two elements
(the concentration of products and the construction of shopping centers) are related. What
is the concentration of products? Where did it originate? In which ways did it exert
influence on the construction of shopping malls? To whom are the concentration of
products and the construction of shopping malls related? Since the process by which the
products have been concentrated has became a noun (concentration of products), the
agents who take part in the process are missing. This nominalization, by focusing on an
unclear relation of causality, seems to obfuscate the agents.

While on the one hand the agents related to the construction of the shopping malls
are not explicit, on the other hand, people are related to the existence of the malls, by
collocating popular’ trends with a main characteristic of malls. The sentence “the
inauguration of shopping malls, shows peoples’ strong tendency to retreat in closed
spaces, where a variety of services are offered” implies a causal relation between
peoples’ preferences and the constructions of shopping malls. Is that really the way the
market works? Are shopping malls constructed to respond to peoples’ preferences? How
about capital owners needs or investments groups’ interests? Do they not play a role in
the construction of shopping malls? Why are they not even mentioned in the reading that
talks about the origin of these centers of consumption? The sentences mentioned here
seem to describe a market that reacts to the needs and preferences of the consumers, as if nothing else took part in that relationship. The assumption seems to be: people like this product, then the market offers it. What is the market? The implication of a relationship between peoples’ tendencies to retreat to closed spaces and the construction of the malls as the only cause for the construction of the mall is a rather incomplete way to address causality.

In relation to relational values, although the characters represent the difference between generations – the grandmother representing an old-fashioned life style, and the granddaughter the new trend – they also belong to the same class. All the characters belong to the same upper class group form Buenos Aires, considering that they go to a vacation home on weekends. Another cue to the relational values that are enacted via the text is the way in which the producers of the text describe and word the presence of the different social groups in the shopping mall.

What do the most well-to-do do in the mall? Do they buy things instead of imagining that they are buying, as the poor people do? While the authors state when one group goes to the mall and what that social group does in the mall (imagining buying things), they only state when the other group goes to the mall. Those who really can do what malls are for (shopping) are not mentioned as doing it. By listing different aspects of the life in the mall for the different social groups, the comparison between the possibilities or lack of possibilities of the different groups is evaded. The wording chosen in this reading evades a conflictive, critical perspective related the differences between social sectors. Very similar information could have been worded as follows: the most well-to-do go [shopping at the mall] on working days, because on weekends they retire to
their vacation homes. Since the lower middle-class and poor people cannot shop in the mall, they go there to enjoy beautiful windows; imagining buying the most diverse things; enjoy the air conditioner or heating unavailable in their homes. A small difference in the wording shows a different perspective regarding the social relations enacted by the text. In this case, even though the reading speaks about two social groups, on one hand, the comparison is avoided or dissimulated by means of a description of different things done by the mentioned groups. On the other hand, the difference and distance among classes is mentioned in the same list as positive characteristics of the shopping center. The text also describes that in downtown people from different origins used to meet. Is this opposition implying an advantage to distance among classes?

Regarding relational values, the authority of the writers in relation to the reader is implied by the use of declarative mode throughout the reading. The use of the declarative mode implies a lack of doubt about the statements in the reading, and gives no chance for questioning the statements. This establishes a hierarchy between the producer of the text and the reader. Only one modal auxiliary is used. According to Fairclough (2001), sometimes a complete lack of modal auxiliaries might be used to present a point of view or perspective as transparent.

The lack of use of the pronoun “we” implies that the producers do not include themselves as part of the characters and hence, of any of the groups mentioned in the reading. They are beyond those classifications. This image of omniscient writers gives the impression of a transparent and neutral perspective.

The authors relate the downtown and the shopping mall with different sets of words and ideas. For example, the collocation of the mall with the rest of the world
relates malls to the international, the global. Basically, the concepts of this reading could be classified as shown in Table 6-5:

Table 6-5: Downtown vs. shopping malls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Downtown</th>
<th>Shopping malls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the past (use of word “before”)</td>
<td>Present tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Represents the identity of the city</td>
<td>Related to the global, the rest of the world, the international.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People from different neighborhoods met there.</td>
<td>People from different social sectors alternates there.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In regard to the structure of the chapter, the structure of this reading positions the pages about the shopping centers within a bigger topic: the changing world. The chapter warns the readers of the challenge of selecting the elements of the culture that must be conserved and critically selecting the new elements. The structure of the chapter includes the shopping centers among the changes, and the photos caption introduces this change as “A new reality: hours and hours in the mall.” Among all the changes described in the chapter, the shopping centers’ description is the longest. It is thirteen lines longer than the longest reading and fifty-seven lines longer than the shorter reading. The reading itself also dedicates more lines to the malls than to the downtown (twenty nine versus twelve lines). The photo of the shopping center is bigger than the photos of the downtown, as well. This structure puts the shopping centers over other topics and over the downtown, even though the neutral appearance of the reading.

In regards with the structure of the book, each chapter of this book ends with activities and a work project. The activities and projects explicitly demand that students put in order concepts and facts, in time and geographic space, to think about and relate facts, to critically reflect on social relations and facts, and to do something with the
information (explain concepts; write reports on texts that show conflicting political perspectives; write answers to questionnaires related to the kind of laws that strengthen or weaken democracy; organize debates and panels for parents and other students to have ecological consciousness, etc.). The only chapter in the book that does not ask students to order concepts and facts in time and geographic space, to think about and relate facts, to critically reflect on social relations and facts, and to do something with the information, is the chapter that deals with the shopping center. It is interesting to note that the education for consumers offered by this book does not include critical thought, even though all the other topics include activities to promoting critical thought, and even though the introduction to the chapter proposes critical thought as a challenge.

Regarding the illustrations, the fact that people are in a crowd, are offered to be seen but are not looking at the viewer, means that they are not demanding anything from the viewer. The distance used to show the represented participants implies a lack of importance of these people. They are only part of downtown or the mall. The use of sepia in a photo is a cue to link downtown with the past. The fact that this photo shows only men could imply the lack of public exposure of women in the past. The use of distance between the viewer and the object – the downtown or the mall – implies that downtown is unreachable, accessibly only for contemplation, as though downtown and the people there are not part of the viewer’s reality. The photo of the mall –taken at short distance– gives the impression that the viewer could be there, inside the mall. This implies engagement with the mall. The vertical angle, used to show the down-town from a high angle, implies the power of the producer of the image and the viewer over the represented object – downtown and the people there. The eye-level photo of the mall implies that the
mall and the people there, the viewer, and the producer are at the same power level. The narrativization of the photo of the mall puts the reader in the place of the shopper: one would have to be a shopper to see the mall from the producers’ eyes. The narrativization of the photo of downtown puts the viewer and the producer in a different position: one would not be part of the people. This implies the producers’ and viewers’ power over the downtown and the people there. The producers and the viewers are not part of the downtown and its people; producers and the viewers are above.

Regarding the characters, the writer does not engage with the characters in either criticism or agreement, but instead gives the granddaughter and her mother a voice to list the advantages of the mall as well as the disadvantages of downtown. The writer does not give the grandmother a voice to list the disadvantages of the mall. She only expresses her favoritism for downtown as a personal preference, related to her “old days.”

Two main subject positions are represented here. The grandmother’s is the position of the older generation, who were young before the existence of the shopping mall and the consumption trends that are associated with malls. The granddaughter’s subject position is the position of the youngest generation of consumers. She represents the current adolescent, and represents the reader. By using these two characters and their discussion, the writer fixes not only her own identity – as a neutral omniscient subject – but also the readers’ identity. The writer assumes certain similarities between the youngest character and the readers – at least, they are assumed to be the same age. Adrianita’s mother is in the middle in terms of generation, but this character who only occupies three lines out of the 21 lines of the vignette, supports the younger character’s perspective. She emphasizes fear of being robbed, a common feeling in urban life in
Buenos Aires. No men are explicitly mentioned in the vignette about centers of consumption. Is the text attributing to women a dominant place or is it implying a relationship between shopping and women? Is the text presenting women as main characters or is it reinforcing a representation of women as consumers as opposed to producers? Regarding social class, the social position of the three characters – upper middle class – is offered for the readers to identify with.

Table 6-6 summarizes the interpretation above.
Table 6-6: Interpretation of the analysis of pages 76 and 77.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience values</th>
<th>Relating to shopping malls: now, currently Present tense</th>
<th>Relating to downtown: Before, in the old days Past tense, implies no current activity in downtown Color and Sepia A grandmother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Photos:</td>
<td>Color</td>
<td>A teenager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characters linked:</td>
<td></td>
<td>A grandmother</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regardless a neutral appearance of the text regarding the objects described –shopping malls and shopping districts (downtown) – the reading presents shopping malls to the reader as a new consumption trend as opposed to downtown.

The analysis of expressive values shows that the writers construct a hierarchy between the shopping and downtown, in which the shopping is above downtown, by presenting their evaluation of the places as characters’ perspective.

Expressive values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary:</th>
<th>Relating shopping malls: Safe Longest description in the whole chapter The reading dedicates twenty-nine lines to malls Color implies current times; distance implies engagement.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Structure:</td>
<td>Relating downtown: Unsafe, dirty. The reading dedicates twelve lines to downtown Sepia implies past times, distance, disengagement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Photos:

Relating shopping malls:
- Safe
- Longest description in the whole chapter
- The reading dedicates twenty-nine lines to malls
- Color implies current times; distance implies engagement.

Relating downtown:
- Unsafe, dirty.
- The reading dedicates twelve lines to downtown
- Sepia implies past times, distance, disengagement.

The analysis of the relational values shows that the reading obfuscates class conflict, by depicting different classes as distant from each other:
- Different classes are described as doing different things –this evades comparison: different classes are described as attending the shopping mall in different times.

The analysis of the characters shows women in activities related consumption or leisure:
- The main characters discuss leisure activities such as window shopping, movies, walking, going to the mall or going to a vacation home, etc.
- The main characters are not related to any productive activity in the whole reading.

The analysis of the photos and texts shows a Buenos Aires centered perspective:
- The squares and street mentioned by the characters are in Buenos Aires

The analysis of relational values shows that the reading imposes the authority of the producers, by means of:
- Using almost exclusively the declarative mode, that implies lack of doubt about the statements
- Including modality auxiliaries only once in the whole reading, that may imply transparency excluding the producers as participants, which implies they are outside, in a neutral location.

The analysis of the grammar, the relational values (above), the characters and the structure of the reading, shows that critical thought is not promoted by the reading:
- Understanding of causes and consequences is not promoted by obfuscated, by the use of blurry and unexplained links between causes and consequences (for example between “the concentration of products” and the constructions of malls, or peoples tendencies, and the constructions of malls)
- The use of modality and mode imposes authority.
- The representation of women as consumers is not questioned in the reading.
- This is the only chapter in the book that does not demand the readers to put in order concepts and facts in time and geographic space, to think and relate facts, to critically reflect on social relations and facts, and to do something with the information (explain concepts; write reports on texts that show conflicting political perspectives; write answers to questionnaires related to the kind of laws that strengthen or weaken democracy; organize debates and panels for parents and other students to have ecological consciousness, etc.).
Summary

As the table shows, the reading offers the readers the following objects or subjects to identify with: new consumption trends, belonging to upper or upper middle class, women as consumers, not as producers, Buenos Aires as “the place.” Regardless of the neutral place the writer sets for herself, the use of characters, words, and grammar imply a hierarchy among the elements that compose the topic of the readings. It is interesting to note that identity – in this case of the city – is related to negative values, while homogeneity – in this case of the malls – is related to positive values. The use of photos emphasizes this whole categorization. The text depicts women in activities related consumption or leisure, and they are not depicted as related to productive activities. In this way, the text and the photos imply a relationship between women and shopping. Since this relationship is not problematized, this might act as a way of reinforcing a patriarchal prejudice that limits women’s role to non-productive activities or to reproductive activities exclusively. Awareness regarding gender difference is not promoted by the text. These two pages do not promote a subject position of a critical citizen or even a well-informed consumer. An upper or upper-middle class, uncritical female consumer from Buenos Aires, naïve in terms of gender stereotypes, who prefers new global trends and accepts authority, is the subjectivity the text offers for the students to identify with. The figure of an active citizen, who has the ability to engage with information and criticize it, is not present in this reading.
The second textbook I analyze is Estrada’s Social Sciences for fourth grade. I analyze a reading in chapter 8 titled “The city of Buenos Aires,” on pages 76 and 77 (Figure 6-5).
A translated version is shown on Figure 6-6
What can we see from the times when **BUENOS AIRES** was countryside?

In the surrounding of the city there were farms that produced cereals and provided the city with vegetables and wood.

DID YOU KNOW THAT WHAT IS CURRENTLY NOT ALWAYS WAS THAT WAY? WHEN IT WAS FOUNDED, IN 1850, IT WAS ALL COUNTRYSIDE.

The city laid between Córdoba Avenue and 9 de Julio Avenue, and it occupied about thirty-two blocks. So you have an idea, in 1850 a person had to spend about half an hour walking between the down-town and the outskirts of the city. It is like if today we wanted to spend half an hour walk to Pilar. In 1889, the city occupied 135 blocks between what today is Juan B. Justo Avenue, Córdoba Avenue, Medrano, Casto Barros and Saenz Avenue.

These green areas surrounded by high buildings are today’s squares and parks: the house of the Piñero family became the Lezama Park, the Pineiro summer house became Centenario Park; Rivadavia Park formerly belonged to the Lezica family and in Lavalle square there was Miro’s Palace.

Some of the farms survived longer, but were surrounded by the city in 1887, when General Paz became the limit. Municipal authorities from the beginning of the XX century bought the farms to create new green areas for leisure, recreation, and health in the city.
En las cercanías del barrio de Flores estaba la "Chacra de los Remedios", de la familia Olivera; hoy es el Parque Avellaneda que le da nombre al barrio. Don Demingo Olivera organizó un tambó y un molino de harina movido por caballos, llamado atahona. El casco de la chacra, construido en 1870, está en el medio del parque y se puede visitar; hay un proyecto del Gobierno de la ciudad de convertirlo en museo rural.

Sobre la calle Bonpland, cerca de la Avenida Juan B. Justo, está la antigua quinta de la familia Comastri; todavía conserva su mirador de vidrios que cuando estaba iluminado servía de guía para los viajeros que cruzaban el arroyo Maldonado. En la actualidad funciona una escuela de enseñanza técnica.

Figure 6-7: When Buenos Aires was countryside, p. 77
The divider’s family “Chacra de los Remedios” was close to Flores. Today it is Avellaneda Park. Don Domingo Olivera organized a XXX and a mill powered by horses, and a station. The casco, built in 1870, can be visited. The government of the city plans on turning it into a museum.

On Bonpland St., close to Justo Ave., is the Cemetery family’s vacation house. It still has its glass observatory. When its lights were on, it was a guide for travelers who crossed the Maldonado stream. Currently, the house is a Technical High School.”
The reading from this text is related to the following contents: regarding the block about the person, the concept analyzed is “identity as a recognition of belonging to a group and a history” In relationship with the block on norms and society, the concept analyzed is “rights not to be discriminated against, for reasons of religion, race, gender, or ideology.” Regarding the contents of block 5, attitudes, the content analyzed here is “fostering the development of appreciation for the own [culture] as a way of contributing to the sense of belonging and national identity, and a proper and respectful relationship with the other identities that allows to understand them as a possibility of enrichment.”

Analysis.

Vocabulary

These pages present two terms for two different kinds of houses: a “rancho ”, in the left page illustration, and a “casco” of the chacra that belongs to the Oliviera family, in the right page. Rancho is a word that denotes poorly constructed houses usually belonging to poor people. A casco is the main house of a farm or chacra, usually used by the owner’s family. Table 6-7 shows some of the terms related to each house.
Table 6-7: Terms related to ranchos and cascos.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rancho</th>
<th>Cascos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terms to pointing to the</td>
<td>Sticks; straw roof; top bean; rancho’s door, many times a simple piece</td>
<td>The house is surrounded by a park filled with exotic plants; stairs of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drawing, with an arrow</td>
<td>of leather hanging; wooden washing sink, made out a single piece; the</td>
<td>honor; small glass windows, because they were hard to build; fence that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>water was transported on horse carts.</td>
<td>closes the terrace; tower; bedrooms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captions</td>
<td>Buenos Aires Countryside Rancho. Drawing based on a “1880’s photograph.”</td>
<td>Casco of the “Chacra de los remedies,” belonging to the Olivera family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of lines about each</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Thirty three.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kind of house</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A four line introduction, at the beginning of the reading talks about chacras that provided food and wood to the city. After that, two drawings illustrate two kinds of houses, and the text dedicates thirty-three lines to an elaboration of the cascos. No sentences in the text are used to describe the ranchos.

The words in the illustration of the rancho (a poor person’s house), name the material with which the house was built (wooden beans, mud, straw, a “simple piece of leather for door,” etc.) and utensils, along with a short description of the kind of tasks for which they were used. For example, the “one piece carved wooden sink, used to wash clothes” and the bucket, where “water was transported in carts.” In the illustration on the right page, no words are used to name the materials of the house (except for the glass windows). Instead, the labels of the arrows in the illustration name the parts of the house (tower, bedrooms, terrace, etc.)

The only material that is shown in the casco is glass, and the caption reads “small glass windows, because they were difficult to build.”
The rancho illustration’s caption states:” Buenos Aires Countryside Rancho. Drawing based on an 1880’s photograph.” The caption illustration of the casco does not specify the kind of illustration. It states the name of the house – “Chacra de los remedios” – and the name of the owners – the Oliviera family.

The part of the reading dedicated to the cascos has a schema that follows this pattern: it relates parks of Buenos Aires to the names of the families to which the lands used to belong. The schema of the texts is as follows: what today is $X$ park used to be the house that belonged to $Y$ family.

Grammar.

The use of the active or passive voice constructs participants as agents of actions or as patients. In the reading about the houses, the active participants are, first, the government, which at the beginning of the twentieth century, bought the houses. The other participants are the houses themselves, and the owners of those houses, whose names are mentioned in the reading. These participants are agents because their actions are clear: the government bought the houses, the houses became parks, and the owners of the houses owned the houses and did things. For example, Mr. Domingo Olivera organized a dairy farm and a flourmill, powered by horses. The use of the active voice makes this character an agent. The passive voice is used to talk about activities related to other characters. For example, next to a bucket that is near the black woman who is washing clothes, there is an explanation that reads “water was transported in carts.”
The vignette that describes the expansion of the city of Buenos Aires, addresses the students by using the informal form of “you.” The same reading uses, two sentences later, an inclusive “we” (“It is as if today we wanted to spend half an hour walking to Pilar).

Regarding the use of mode, the reading starts with the question “Did you know that (…)”, followed by an explanation that includes the expression “so you have an idea.” The declarative mode is used in the rest of the reading.

Structure.

Pages 76 and 77 focus on Buenos Aires, because the chapter is on Buenos Aires. The book does not dedicate a chapter to other provinces. Instead, the other parts of the country are grouped in the following sections: Argentinean llanuras (plains), the mountains, and the plateaus. While this makes sense, considering that Buenos Aires is the province where the capital city is, it may also be seen as being consistent with a Buenos Aires centered perspective that is very popular in Argentina, and is linked to historical stragglers between Buenos Aires and the other provinces.

Pages 76 and 77 have the following structure: The framed title of the reading says: “What can we see about the time when Buenos Aires was still county side?” To the right of the frame, a 14 line reading, in capital letters, addresses students by using the expression “did you know that…?”, and describes the expansion of the city of Buenos Aires from the 1500’s to the 1800’s. Underneath this introduction, black and white
illustration shows a Buenos Aires countryside rancho. A caption on the bottom left of the illustration reads: Buenos Aires countryside rancho. Drawing based on a 1880 photograph. Under the illustration, the second reading continues, in lowercase smaller font than the first part of the reading. On page seventy-seven, a black and white illustration shows, according to the caption, “the casco of the Chacra de los Remedios, belonging to the Olivera family.

Illustrations.

In this two page reading, two drawings portray a rancho and a casco of a hacienda, and two small color photos show cascos in the present. The photos do not include people, but the drawings do. The drawing on the left page has a caption that reads: “Rancho [poor house] of Buenos Aires’ country field. Drawing based on a photograph taken in 1880.” The caption refers to the rancho, not to the people in the drawing. The caption does not mention their names or anything about them. Inside the rancho, there is a black man sitting and holding something on his lap (is hard to tell what). Outside the rancho, by the left side of the door, there is a black woman sitting and doing something with her hands – it looks like she is kneading or preparing some food, since there is a cooking pot close to her. Sitting on the floor, by her legs, there is a black child who has a little ball. In the other side of the door, there is another black child sitting on the floor, with his back to the viewer. To his right there is a black woman washing (probably clothes) in a sink.
None of the represented people are facing the viewer. Peoples’ faces are not distinguishable: they are completely black, they have no eyes or noses. These people are faceless, besides being nameless. The drawing on the right page has a caption that reads: *Casco* (main house) of the Olivera family “*Chacra de los Remedios.*” The caption clearly refers to the *casco*, but is not clear if the people in the drawing are the Oliviera family, the owners of the *chacra*. The people represented are two white men, two white boys, and three white women. One of the men is standing by a horse cart; the other is conversing with three women; one of the boys is playing with a toy; and the other is inside the cart. One of the women has a dog on a leash, and the other two are carrying umbrellas. They wear big antique dresses. The three women are looking down (the angle of their heads is oblique to the floor), and everybody is looking to the side. The only person who is not facing the side is the man who stands by the horse cart, but his face is so small that no contact with the viewer is established. As in the other illustration, the represented participants are not asking for the viewer’s reaction, they are not demanding. They are being offered for the viewer’s observation. There are, despite these similarities, some differences between this illustration and the other. While the people in the other drawing are not even mentioned – they are nameless – the people in this illustration might well be the Olivera family. The features of the people in the drawing on the left are impossible to distinguish because their faces are completely painted in black – they are faceless. The people in the left page illustration seem to be working, while nobody seems to be working in the right page’s drawing, except for the man who is standing by the horse cart (because of his posture, he looks like a driver). Everybody else looks like they are talking or going for a walk. Finally, the most obvious difference between these two groups of
people is that while the black people are presented next to a poor person’s house, the
white people are by a rich person’s house.

Characters.

There are several characters on these two pages. First, the writers, are the invisible
characters. They engage with the students, by telling them about the past of the city.
Other characters are the governments which bought the houses, and the owners of the
houses. One of the owners is the clearest character in this reading, because his actions are
clearly described. He owned the house and he also organized a dairy farm and a horse-
powered mill. Other people are introduced not in the readings but in the illustrations.
Neither the written text nor the illustrations or their captions attribute any agency to these
people. As a consequence, I do not consider them characters, but people that are offered
to the viewer only for observation. In that sense, they are objectified by the text. They are
the black people in the illustration.

Interpretation of the analysis of this two page reading.

Regarding the vocabulary, this reading has two main texts accompanying it. The
first is a vignette that addresses the reader and describes Buenos Aires in the past. The
other is the description of the evolution of the chacras (farms) into recreational areas in
Buenos Aires. Even though the illustrations show two kinds of houses – a rancho, on the
left page illustration, and a casco of the chacra that belongs to the Oliviera family, on the right page – the reading is dedicated only to one kind: the cascos.

Some terms in the two different illustrations give the reader a “cue to the way in which the text producer’s experience of the natural or social world is represented” (Faircluogh 2001, p 93). These words show experiential values. An example is the kind of words related to the illustration of the different kinds of houses. There is a relationship between the poor house, the materials that make it a poor house, and the kind of activities that are done in this kind of house (manual labor). The people shown in this house are black people, and their names are not mentioned in the caption. On the other hand, the text relates some parts of the casco – the bedrooms and the garden – to leisure and other parts – honor stairs, and a garden with exotic plants – to status. The cascos are not associated with black families, families who have a name and history.

The expression “simple piece of leather for a door” – that refers to the door of the rancho, and the expression “small glass windows, because they were difficult to build” contain too words that work as antonyms in the context of the reading. These words are “simple” and “difficult,” since difficult to build implies complexity. This is a cue of experiential values: the writer associates simple with the poor house and difficult to build with the rich house. The use of simple and difficult as antonyms emphasizes difference between the objects presented in the reading. The word “simple” works also as a euphemism, because it implies poorer quality or less complexity than the glass. In this sense, the writer is implying a hierarchy between the materials of the house, while avoiding the use of negative values. The hierarchy is established not in an open and explicit way, but by using the words simple and difficult instead of, for example, worse
and better. By means of these euphemisms, the writer also provides cues for expressive values: she is sublety classifying the kinds of houses.

The schema that relates families’ houses with parks or squares does not leave room for the description of the houses of people who did not sell their houses to the government, or whose houses were not *cascos* of big *chacras*. The schema works as a structure that limits the discussion to only one kind of house – the *cascos*—, even though the two pages of illustrations show two kinds of houses; *ranchos* and *cascos*. The schema of the texts goes “what today is X park used to be the house that belonged to Y family.” By means of using this schema, the reading connects places that are part of the present and the families who owned these places with the past, with the history of the city. The other kind of house, the *rancho*, and the people who lived there – poor black people –, are not connected to the history of the city, as if, along with the farms where they lived, they had not survived the expansion of the city. This implication is not accurate.85

The difference in the way in which these two houses and their inhabitants are presented, emphasizes experiential values: some houses and people have names and histories, they are part of the past and the present, while others – those of poor black people – do not have names or histories.

Regarding agency, the text shows differences between the people who inhabited or owned the different kinds of houses. While Mr. Domingo Olivera is a clear agent in

85 Even though it is true that the black population in Argentina has diminished so much that it basically disappeared, the reasons are more complex than the expansion of the cities, and are related to wars, – in which black men were forced to take part of– (such as the war with Paraguay), cholera and yellow fever, and exile.
the reading – he is the subject of some actions – when the text mentions an action done by the black people, the subject of the action is omitted. The text states “water was transported in carts.” Who transported the water? Why? The reading does not say it. The use of the active or passive voice works as a way of constructing some characters as agents while omitting others. Again, the poor people are not presented as agents, while the white families with a name and a history, are.

The writer uses the informal form of “you” to address the readers. In Spanish there are two forms for the pronoun “you”:” usted,” the formal form – usually used to convey respect for authority, age, and hierarchy, and “tú” or “vos,” the informal forms, usually used to talk to people who is the same age group or with the same level of authority. The informal form “tú” or “vos” is also used to show closeness. Friends and members of a family usually talk to each other using this form. By using the informal form of the pronoun “you,” the publishers position the reader in two ways. The reader is located in a place of proximity – in the fashion used by some children magazines– and in a position of distance, in which the publishers are those who have the authority. The publishers are those who are not children, who know, and whose authority has to be respected. The pronoun you used in the reading, positions the student outside the group of those who know: the writers.

The use of we shows that the publishers assume a shared background between them and the students. In this case, they assume that students are familiar with the streets of Buenos Aires; they address students from Buenos Aires. Paradoxically, this inclusive we works as an exclusive we, because it disregards students who are not from Buenos Aires, even though the book is supposed to be written for students from all over the
country. The use of you and we in this reading clearly marks relational values in the text.

Relational values also underpin the use of grammatical mode. The use of mode denotes a relationship between the producer and the reader. This kind of modality is defined by Fairclough (2001) as relational modality (p.104). Modality has to do with speaker’s or writer’s authority, and there are two dimensions to modality (...). First, if it is a matter of the authority of one participant in relations to others, we have relational modality. Secondly, if it is a matter of the speaker or writer’s authority with respect to the truth or probability of a representation of reality, it is expressive modality. In this case, the relational modality is implied by the use of the question “Did you know that …?”, followed by an explanation that includes the expression “so you have an idea.” This implies a lack of knowledge on the part of the readers. The relation between the writer and the readers is a relation in which the reader does not know, and the writer has the knowledge. Regarding expressive modality, after the question “Did you know that …?”, a declarative mode is used throughout the rest of the reading. The declarative mode – which operates by means of making statements – denotes a lack of room for doubt about the content of what is being said. The implication is that the writer has “the truth.” The students do not need to think or hesitate about the meaning of what they read; they just need to accept it.

Regarding the illustrations, the people on both pages 76 and 77 do not demand the viewer’s attention because there is not direct eye contact between the represented

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86 While the provinces were working on their curricula, the publishers published books that included the “National Curriculum,” the Basic Common Contents” and offered them as “national books.”
participants and the viewer: the people represented have their heads facing down or to the side. The image “offers the represented participants to the viewer as items of information, objects of contemplation, impersonally, as though they were specimens in a display case.” (Kress and van Leewen 2001, p. 124)

A notable difference between these illustrations is that while the reader can see the faces of the people on the right page – the casco illustration –, the faces of the people in the drawing on the left – the people by the rancho – are not visible. They are completely black, besides looking down or to the side. The people illustrated are “faceless.”

Since this may or may be not a pattern, I examined all of the photos in the whole textbook. I found that among the 103 persons depicted in these photos, 31 (30%) are “faceless”: they are looking toward the floor or the photo is very diffuse or shows their back. These people include one white woman, three indigenous women, one indigenous man, five agricultural workers, 13 factory workers and the only 8 Asians that appear in any of the photos. It seems that those who are depicted as faceless, are the minorities.

87 The illustrations in this book have other interesting characteristics. For example, as devices that more realistically present people, photos show only 21 % of the people in the book. Among the 146 non-white people, only 27 (18 %) are shown in photos. There are no old women in the photos, and there is only one black person, a handsome boy, shown close to other children, in an advertising style photo. In 91 cartoons, paintings, and photos, 489 persons are presented. Among these people, only 24 % (119) are women. 63 % are men (309), but this gender difference is greater in the cartoons (19% women versus 71 % men) and the paintings (26% women versus 67% men). Many photos are not clear enough to distinguish the gender or color of the people. Indigenous people are presented most of the time through cartoons. A possible explanation could be that there are not enough photos or paintings of indigenous people. However, the Spanish conquerors, who lived in the same historical time as some of the indigenous people shown in the book, are never presented through cartoons: they only appear in paintings, a kind of illustration associated with museums and high culture. In general, the photos in this textbook also create a hierarchy in the ways in which the subjects are represented. Some people are shown throughout the illustrations as associated with high culture – the conquerors – while others are shown through images associated with fictional characters – the indigenous people. Only 25% of the
The readings and illustrations present the information in a tone that denotes neutrality. However, while the two illustrations look similar – both of them are drawings in black and white, none of the characters depicted face the viewer or demand attention, and the people are the same size – the text emphasizes differences between the two groups of people. In a subtle way, the vocabulary and the images associate poverty and work along with black people, and recreation with white people; anonymity (no name and no face) with black people and status with white people; passiveness with black people and agency with white people. All this is shown as natural, since no questions are asked or opinions presented or requested regarding the way things were.

The tone of the reading positions the writer as someone who offers “e knowledge” from a Buenos Aires centered perspective. The data is presented, and no opinions are given or requested from the readers. Children from Buenos Aires, who accept the social reality of the text and do not question issues related to difference, seem to be the subjects promoted by this reading.

Regarding the characters, Mr. Domingo Olivera and the other people who owned cascos are the clearest characters in the reading – they are shown as agents. The author includes the reader as characters, by addressing them directly. The question “Did you know that…?” implies that the writer assumes that the reader does not know. The subject position that the writer creates for the reader is of someone who does not know about the past of the city, and someone who knows the city as it is now. The reader is, according to women pictures are shown in relationship with men. Most of non-white people are shown as faceless. European white men are a dominant figure within the illustrations in this book.
the writers’ assumption, a child from Buenos Aires. The producer’s use of the informal “you” in a question resembles the tone of someone close to the children reading the text, someone who tells them stories. The writers’ subject position is that of someone who knows and shares her knowledge with the reader.

Due to the differences in the ways the text depicts black people and non-black people and the objects related to them, I examined other appearances of black people in the whole book, to see if the perspective presented in this text is isolated or if there is a trend in the whole book. I found only one more reading that explicitly mentions black people, on page 100. The reading has two parts. One of the parts, which describes how Argentina was populated, says: “After the conquest, a large number of African slaves were brought to America\textsuperscript{88} to be used as slaves.” The rest of this section elaborates on how Europeans migrated to Argentina due to difficulties in their countries of origin and the need for labor in Argentina. The other part of the text is titled “Slavery,” and it reads: “It is estimated that during the 18th century, there were more blacks than whites in cities such as Córdoba, Tucumán, and Salta, and that in 1840, four out of ten inhabitants were black. Slaves were branded with iron tools called tarimbas, to show who owned them. Many times they were branded on their faces, because clothing would cover their bodies. In colonial times, in the Rio de la Plata region,\textsuperscript{89} blacks were a symbol of luxury. On Sundays, families would go to mass forming a line: first was the man, followed by his

\textsuperscript{88} In Argentina, and many Latin American countries, the word America does not refer exclusively to the United States, but the whole continent, divided in North, Central and South America.

\textsuperscript{89} Refers to the area formed by Buenos Aires and Uruguay, places between which is the river “de la Plata”
wife, then the children, and behind them, the slaves. A family that took only ten to fifteen slaves with them considered a humble family.”

Without doing an extended analysis of this text, it's possible to note first of all that the text does not recognize African immigrants’ history. Did they choose to leave their countries in search of better opportunities, like European immigrants did? What was it like in their countries? Were their jobs needed in Argentina? The text gives this kind of information about European immigrants, but not about slaves. Although the reasons why slaves were brought to America are directly related to production, the book does not make any connection between the Africans and work, production or the economic needs of Argentinean territory.

Second, the use of passive voice to describe the arrival of slaves to South America omits information about who brought them, and why. This strategy also makes the links between causes and consequences blurry or invisible to the readers. Similarly, even though the description of how slaves were branded is detailed – it mentions tools and parts of the body where slaves were branded – it omits the agent, by means of using passive voice. According to Loewen (1995) “Imparting information in a passive voice helps to insulate historical figures from their own unheroic or unethical deeds.” (p. 25) In this case, those who enslaved or branded people are not blamed.

Third, the text states that four out of ten people were black in 1840, but it does not address the fact that the composition of the population is so different now. Questions such as “What happened to the black population?” are evaded or neglected. Again, the relation between events and their causes and consequences is avoided.
Fourth, even though the information about slaves is cruel and describes slaves as objects (that were branded and displayed as a sign of luxury), the text does not promote any type of criticism, reflection, or inquiry from the readers in relation to the information. The use of declarative mode throughout the reading prevents any doubt about the content of what is being said.

In sum, the only other text that mentions black people also creates a hierarchy between African people and others – in this case, Europeans. The text omits black Africans history, while it talks about Europeans history. It also describes Africans as having been treated as objects. This is not criticized or even put in question. The text does not promote any awareness of the relationship between the race and class differences. Instead, the text reproduces a racist vision of black people that has its origin in the colonial system. This text shows a way in which five hundred years later, colonialist discourses are still present in education.

The texts analyzed do not develop standards such as “the right to not being discriminated against on basis of religion, race, gender or ideology” and they do not address the opposition to discrimination against different people that the National Law of Education emphasizes. Due to this particular way in which the contents are addressed in the analyzed readings, I examined another reading in the same book, the goal of which seems to be to address the standards “cultural diversity: the need for accepting the diverse” and “the right not to be discriminated against on basis of religion, race, gender or ideology.” Chapter 10 of the book is titled “We are many and different.” After an introductory page, which includes a painting, three analytic questions about it, and two paragraphs about diversity, page 98 presents a cartoon with a story. In the story, the
teacher asks the students to form groups, and addresses the Korean student with whom he is working. Since he does not have a group, the teacher includes him in a group, but the other students complain, because Lee “is Korean and Koreans do not know how to speak.” At this point in the story, a caption reads, “When a person is not allowed to enter a place or participate in an activity, the person is being discriminated against.” In the following vignette, an Argentinean student defends Lee by saying that his Spanish is not very good because he has not been in Argentina for too long, and he is learning. In response to this argument, a girl says that her neighbor is Korean and he seems weird to her. At the end, a second caption reads “Prejudice is the idea that a group or a person has about another group or person without knowing what they are really like.90

This reading, the purpose of which is to address contents related to discrimination against and respect for different identities, uses a very different tone to talk about “the others” than do the analyzed texts that do not focus on issues such as discrimination, diversity, and identity. Even though the text does not give Lee, the Korean character, a voice to defend himself and to act, it gives him a name and a history. It seems that the text in this book “teaches” about discrimination and respect for different identities when the producers of the text write about these issues, but they discriminate against different identities or undermine diversity when they write about other topics.

Table 6-8 summarizes the interpretation above:

90 See appendix C
Table 6-8: Interpretation of the text on textbook two.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary:</th>
<th>Ranchos (poor houses)</th>
<th>Cascos (owner’s houses)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Related to manual labor (laundry, water transportation)</td>
<td>Related to resting and status (bedrooms, honor stairs, garden with exotic plants)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euphemisms: simple instead of worse</td>
<td>Euphemisms: hard to build instead of better</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of the experiential and expressive values show that the reading constructs a hierarchy between the two kinds of objects presented (ranchos and cascoss), by relating different levels of quality of the houses and complexity to build them.

Experiential values:
- **Ranchos**' inhabitants (black people): Nameless, no history or presence in the present.
- **Cascos**' inhabitants (non-black people): Have a last name, a history, and are related to the present.

Vocabulary:
- Words relate them to poverty and manual labor (laundry, water transportation).
- Black, poor people are not agents.
- People are faceless.
- Words relate them to recreation and status (honors, garden with exotic plants).
- Non-black families are agents.
- People have a face.

Illustrations in the whole book: 103 people in photos: 31 (30%) are “faceless”: one white woman, three indigenous women, one indigenous man, five agricultural workers, 13 factory workers and 8 Asians.

The analysis of relational values shows that the reader is located in a place in which the publishers are those who have the authority, by means of using:
- The informal you
- A question that implies the readers’ lack of knowledge and the producer’s knowledge.
- The declarative mode in statements that imply that the writer possesses “the truth”.

A brief analysis of another text in the book that depicts black people shows that the text creates a hierarchy between black and non-black people.

Vocabulary:
- Black people
- Blacks were luxury objects (objectivation)
- No mention of their history
- Difficult situation in their countries (they have a history)

Grammar:
- Blacks were brought
- Slaves were branded
- Immigrants (agents)

The brief analysis of the other text in the book that depicts black people shows:
- Use of the declarative mode, that implies lack of doubt about the statements and gives no place to criticism.
- Non use of modal auxiliaries, which implies transparency.
- Use of information isolated from context, causes, and consequences.
4. Summarizing

As this table shows, in the text, the only people who have a name and a history, and hence, are offered as subjects to identify with are those who belong to upper (maybe or upper middle) class from Buenos Aires. The text creates a hierarchy between black and non-black people: black people are faceless, nameless, and have not history, in opposition to non-black people who do have faces, names, and history. Those who belong to minorities – in terms of power – are those that the book portrays as faceless throughout the whole book. The hierarchy between black and non-black people is consistent with the other reading in the book that describes black people, in which black Africans are objectified and slavery and cruelty and some methods related to slavery are described, but not questioned. The text does not open issues of race or race and class to discussion. The book addresses discrimination against people only in the reading the goal of which is to teach the standards related to discrimination and diversity. When the focus is on other topics, the readings discriminate against some people or at least do not question discrimination or disrespect for human rights.

These texts’ perspective avoids critical thought. Because they do not question issues such as slavery or racism, and present scenes related to slavery or racism in a neutral tone, as if they were unquestionable facts, the texts are taking a side. This is not consistent with Article 5, section 15 of the National Law of Education, that states that one of the rights, principles and criteria of the law consists of superseding all kinds of stereotype in teaching materials.
The figure of an active citizen, who has the ability to engage with information, analyze it, relate it to her life, and criticize it, is not promoted here. A citizen who reacts to cruelty and to the disrespect of human rights and social injustice, is not the subject promoted by this reading. A passive citizen, naïve in terms of racial injustice, a subject who accepts isolated pieces of information regardless how cruel, unfair, and wrong its content is, is the citizen that this text promotes.

**Textbook three: first cycle.**

The third textbook I analyze is a first grade language, natural, social sciences, and technology book published by Santillana. The name of the book is *Cuentacosas* an invented word that means “tell about things,” as in “storyteller.”

**Analysis of pages 24 and 25.**
Figure 6-9: We introduce ourselves
The readings in the book for the first cycle of compulsory education addresses the following standards for Ethics and Citizenship Education, given by the BCC: regarding the block about the person, the procedure addressed is: “personal narratives and others’ experiences”
Vocabulary.

It is hard to analyze a text when its pages include only between 20 and 60 words each, such as pages 25 and 24. Regarding the vocabulary on these pages, “year” is the word used in the book for the students to talk about their schooling experience. The title of the page is “We introduce ourselves,” The activities – the only written text in this reading – do not include any introduction of the students or readers. A translated version is presented in figure 6.8.

Grammar.

Regarding the grammar, the title of the page uses the inclusive we. The only mode used in the whole page is imperative. In Spanish, commands are conjugated in plural or singular, depending on the individual or individuals the commands addresses. “Completen esta ficha personal” (complete this personal card) is conjugated in a way that implies that one person is talking to many others (you all, complete this personal card).

Structure.

Underneath a social sciences heading, the title of the reading presented in black capital letters, “We introduce ourselves,” introduces the photos and commands.
Illustrations.

Page 24 shows two color photos. One is a scene in a kindergarten and the other is a scene in an elementary school. The photo of the kindergarten (photo A) shows six children in a playground. The photo of the elementary school (photo B) pictures six students sitting in rows in their classroom. Their books or notebooks are opened, and a teacher is standing, looking down at a student’s notebook. The children are looking at each other, at their notebooks, or to the side. No one is facing the camera. These photos are entitled “Yesterday and today.” Under the photos, a line reads: “Observe the photos and talk to your teacher about the difference between kindergarten and the first grade."

On page 25, photo C shows a blackboard and the teacher in front of it, and the students facing the blackboard. The vertical angles of the photos are different. In the photo of the kindergarten the represented participants – children at the playground – are at eye level. The teacher and students in the two photos of the elementary school (photos B and C) are seen from a high angle. In one of the photos the teacher in looking down at a student’s work, and the profile and top of the head of most of the students can be seen by the viewer. In photo C, the teacher and the blackboards are in the front of the class, and the students are facing her. As a consequence, what the viewer can see is the back of the students, and the backs and tops of their heads. Of these three photos, two of them show what probably are public schools, if the uniform, is taken into account. The photo of the kindergarten seems to portray a private school.

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91 The literal translation would be “first year” instead of grade. Grade was the term used before the educational reform. After the reform, grades are called “years.”
Characters.

The grammar and the illustrations construct the writer as an invisible character who gives the instructions for the activities. According to the title, *we* – a group of students – are the characters. Each individual student is the real character of the activities, however. The teacher, with whom the students have to talk about differences between kindergarten and first grade, is another character, according to the text.

Interpretation of the analysis of pages 24 and 25.

Regarding the choice of words, the word “year” shows that the book incorporates the vocabulary of the educational reform. There is a contradiction between what the title of the first activity implies, and what the activity asks students to do. While the title implies introducing one another, the activities are limited to individually writing the student’s own name and other personal data in a small form and on labels.

In relation to the grammar, the written text does not construct agency by the use of the active voice. The use of the imperative implies the agency of the one who gives the commands: the book or its author.

The use of the inclusive “*we*” in the title “we introduce ourselves,” sounds like an invitation for the reader to be part of the “we” and to introduce herself to others. Despite this tone that implies collective communication, all the sentences that follow the title are commands, and they do not demand interaction among students. The use of the imperative implies the writer’s authority in relation to others, in this case, the readers.
The fashion in which the commands are expressed reflects the ways in which a teacher would give commands: speaking in the plural, to the whole class. In this reading, the writer seems to be using the grammar to reach the students from the subject position of the teacher who speaks to the class. The activities, however, are individual activities. They do not include group work, which indicates that the use of the plural does not respond to the kind of activity, but to the intention of setting relational values in which the writer adopts the subject position of the teacher, to establish a relation of authority between writer and students. Another way of addressing the student – one more associated with individual activities – could have been by appealing to the singular “you.” In this case, the role of the writer would openly be that of a guide for self-study, without the authority of the teacher.

Regarding the photos, none of the represented participants in any of the three photos is looking at the viewer; they are all being seen, they are offered to be seen; they do not demand anything from the viewer. The characters do not address the viewer.

The vertical angle used in the photos of the kindergarten implies a similar level of power between the producer, viewer, and the represented participant. The level is the same because the photo was taken by an adult and the children are playing on a high part of a playground. In order to occupy a place in this photo, the viewer would have to be an adult.

The message carried by the angle used in photos B and C – the photos of the first grade classroom – is that the producer and the viewer of the photos have power over the represented participants. In order to occupy a space in this photo, the viewer would have to be someone who is above everybody else, including the only person who is standing
and who is probably the tallest person in the photo – the teacher. In order to occupy a space of photo C – in which the students face the teacher – the viewer would have to be in the back of the class, above everybody else, including the only person who is standing and who is probably the tallest person in the photo – again, the teacher.

Because the pictures seem to portray two kinds of schools – public and private – I examined all of the photos depiction schools in the book. There are not many differences in the ways in which the participants are represented, except that when the photos depict classroom scenes that include the teacher and the students, if they show a private school, the teacher is always at the same level than the students – seated with them. If the photos show a public school, the teacher is standing, in a position that implies her supervision of the students’ work, or surveillance. In total, four photos in the whole book show these kinds of scenes; two in private and two in public schools.

*Analysis of pages 114 and 115.*

The reading on page 114 is titled “Yesterday and today’s families.”
Figure 6-11: Today’s families.

A translated version is shown in figure Figure 6-12
Yesterday and today's families
Each of us has a family. You may have heard the saying “each family is a world.” Why do you think people say that? Even though there are many families, not all of them are alike.

Many of the costumes related to the members of the family and the activities they do in and outside the home have also changed.

II’ Find out how the families were when your grandparents and great-grandparents were young.

II’ Ask a relative about the kinds of activities their grandmothers and grandfathers used to do.

II’ Compare with your classmates the different kinds of family groups.

Figure 6-12: Today’s families (translated version).
Figure 6-13

TODAY’S FAMILIES

Currently, some kids live with their parents, some live with their grandparents, some live only with their mother or their father. But love and caring is what joins all these families. Currently, parents work away from home and share housekeeping tasks. How are housekeeping tasks distributed in your family?

Put a checkmark in the chart.

Figure 6-13: Today’s families (translated version, part 2)
The reading addresses the following standards for Ethics and Citizenship Education, given in the BCC: regarding the block about the person, the concepts addressed are: “the family: roles, pair groups, boys and girls,” and “the feminine, the masculine.” The procedures include “description of the family,” and “differentiation between what is feminine and masculine.” In relationship with the block about values, the concept addressed is “family and school values.” Regarding the block about norms, the concept that the reading addresses is “norm and group organization,” and the procedure is “explanation of every day live situations related to the family and groups of friends.”

Analysis.

Vocabulary.

The reading starts by asking the students to analyze the meaning of the following metaphor: each family is a world. By stating that there are many kinds of families, although not all of them are alike, the concept of difference is introduced in the first paragraph. The last paragraph introduces the idea of change. No positive or negative values are explicitly linked to these concepts.

On the following page, the vocabulary defines the term “family” as including a broad rage of families: the single parent family, the grandchildren-children families, the mother, father, and children family. The text uses different words to define work outside the house and housekeeping chores.
Grammar.

As on pages 24 and 25 of the same book, on pages 114 and 115 the writer “speaks” in plural even when the activities are individual activities. The first sentence, “Each of us belongs to a family” sets the place of an agent for the reader (each of us). By means of the use of the active voice, the rest of the reading attributes agency to the families and, in general, to its members. In the three paragraphs reading on page 115 the use of the active voice constructs children, families, and parents, as agents (“currently, some children live with their parents, others with their grandparents, some only with their mother, and others with their father”). The table mentions members of the families and housekeeping chores.

These readings are in the present tense and modal adverbs such as probably, possibly, etc., are absent in the readings. In both pages 114 and 115, the mode used to address the students in the activities is imperative.

Structure.

As is true of all of the social sciences pages in this book, the pages analyzed have a blue border on the top of the page. On the left side of the left page (-page 114-) a portion of a photo that portrays children’s faces is the background for a heading in a white font that says “social sciences.” Underneath the social sciences heading, the title of the reading is in black. The reading on page 114, “Yesterday and today’s families,” is divided into three paragraphs. The first two paragraphs are on the top left side of the page, and are surrounded by the four photos. The third paragraph is under the photos.
Underneath the four color-photos, to the right of the third paragraph, a cartoon of a woman and two children illustrates the reading. Below the reading, three activities close the page.

The top half of page 115 also has the blue border that identifies the section on the social sciences. On the left, a black title introduces the three paragraph reading. On the right, a color photo illustrates the reading. Below, on the bottom half of the page, an activity presents a command and a table for the students to check. The chart has color drawings and pink captions in the left column. The top row lists words in purple. The rest of the chart is empty.

Illustrations.

Page 114 includes four color photos and a drawing, and the second page – page 115 – includes a color photo and four cartoon-like drawings in a chart. Underneath the four photos, a cartoon-like image shows a woman holding a fruit basket on her head and a purse, surrounded by a girl with fuchsia hair and a boy with orange hair.

The four photos in the first page are approximately the same size. One of the photos pictures a mother working on her computer, holding the telephone with her shoulder, holding her baby with one hand, clicking a mouse with the other hand, and smiling. Another photo portrays a father with his son on his lap, the third photo shows a couple of grandparents playing ball with their grandchild, and the other photo a young couple carrying a picnic basket together, while the woman holds her daughter’s hand and the man carries his son on his shoulders.
All of the people in the photos are smiling, though not at the viewer. All of the people in the photos, except for the young couple and their children, are white people. The photos that show the grandparents and the granddaughter and the photo that portrays the two parents and two children are a little bit farther than the photos that portray the mother and the baby and the photo that shows the father and the boy. The distance is not great enough, however, to blur people’s faces or gestures.

The four pictures on this page and the photo on the following page have frames. The photo of the young couple and children family is shot from a low vertical angle. The photos that portray the other kinds of families are taken from a high angle.

Underneath the photo of a father reading to his son, on page 115, a column of a chart illustrates—in cartoon-like drawings—different tasks (cooking, cleaning the house, doing dishes, fixing broken things). The other columns include words for different members of the family (mother, father, siblings, grandparents, and me). The students have to check the chart according to the way in which the housekeeping chores are distributed in their homes. The cell that illustrates the chore “cooking” shows someone in a pink shirt with dots, cutting tomatoes. Two cells down, someone with long hair, the same shirt, and blue jeans is doing dishes. The cell that illustrates “cleaning the house” shows only the legs of someone in blue jeans cleaning the floor. The cell that exemplifies someone fixing broken things shows only two arms in a blue shirt, fixing an iron.
Characters.

This reading has two characters who are always present in the book: the invisible writer and the students, who are asked to interact with the text by answering questions, filling out forms, filling in charts, etc. Besides these two characters, the readings present some characters in photos. For example, the specific members of the family are not mentioned in page 114, but the four photos show them playing, walking, or working. Other characters are explicitly mentioned in the reading or on the chart on page 115. They are the children, their parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, and the reader.

Interpretation of the analysis of pages 114 and 115.

By using the “family as a world” metaphor and stating that there are many kinds of families, and that not all of them are alike, the writer introduces diversity. Since the author does not ask the students to question the sentence but to explain it, she establishes acceptance of the metaphor. The change of customs and activities done by the different members of the families is also stated without any negative value linked to it. The questions invite the students to examine the changes related to families and tasks done by different members of the family in the past.

The conception of the family elaborated on page 115 goes beyond the traditional idea of family as composed of mother, father, and children. The sentence “love and caring is what join all these families” puts all the families on the same level, avoiding any kind of hierarchy among the different types of families. The kinds of families that the
reading does not mention are families that have two fathers or two mothers, and families in which the children live with a parent, the parent’s spouse, and the spouse’s children. The existence of the other parent is ignored in the statements related to families in which children live with their mother or their father. Families in which the children live some days with their father and some days with their mothers are also not included. This implies that the children who live with their mother or their father do not necessarily belong to families of divorced parents. Their parents might be single parents, widows or widowers. Basically, the families that are excluded from this classification of families are those families in which the parents have the same sex and the families in which the parents are divorced or separated.

The vocabulary in this reading also offers a clue to the way in which the author’s experience of work is represented. By stating that “Currently, parents work out of home and share housekeeping tasks,” the text implies that work is what happens outside the home, and what is done at home is different; the word tasks (or chores) is used instead of work. This is what Fairclough (2001) would call antonymy, not because work and task are considered as antonyms, but because their meanings are incompatible; they exclude each other. In other words, their meanings do not oppose, but they are not the same.

About grammar, the writer addresses the students from the subject position of the teacher who speaks to the class. The use of the singular informal “you” implies closeness,

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92 I tried to ascertain how many of these families are overlooked by the reading, but the national census—that classifies families by gender of the family head, by income, does not include this information. I contacted the National Institute of Statistic and Census (INDEC) asking for information on this kind of family, and an officer answered that there is no information classified in such categories.
kindness from the writer towards the student. The absence of modalities such as possibly, probably, etc., gives the impression of a transparent and unquestionable point of view. The use of the imperative to address the students implies the writer’s authority: it denotes relational modality.

Regarding the layout (structure), both pages are colorful and include photos of children whose age is the same age as the reader. The pages have a color code to identify the pages as social science pages, as well as the activities. The collage-looking design of the pages (many images in different angles and colors) resembles the design of video clips, a genre that is attractive to children. All of this shows that the readers’ characteristics have been taken into account when the pages were designed.

Regarding the illustrations: The cartoon-like images seem to “decorate the page.” There is no background that allows locating the characters and the drawing does not show what they are doing. They are very colorful, but they do not look like real people.

The four photos on page 114 represent the four kinds of families introduced in the reading: families composed of mother and children or father and children (single parent family); the grandchildren and children; and mother, father, and children.

The people in the photos are not facing the viewer: their attitude is not one of demand attention from the viewer; they just look happy and they are offered to the gaze of the viewer. The photos show a grandfather playing with a girl and with his wife, a father putting a child to bed and another father playing with his son. When women are

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93 In some Latin American cultures, including some Argentinean groups, the use of the formal “you” denotes respect, age difference, and authority. In many cases, however, the use of the informal “you” is so extensive that students – mostly young students – address teachers with this word. Most books for young students use the informal “you.”
shown in the photos, a woman is portrayed as playing with her husband and
granddaughter, another is shown walking with her husband and children, and another one
is shown as being on the phone, working on her computer, and, at the same time taking
care of her baby. The women in the photos are always with the children, and in one of the
photos, a woman is also working while she takes care of her baby. This woman with the
baby is the only person in the photos who seems to be doing other work besides taking
care of the children. The others are taking care of the children by playing, reading, or
spending free time outside with them.

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2001), frames detach the represented
participant from the rest of the world (p. 136). As a result of the combination of frames
and distance used in these photos, only in the photo of the young parents and children is
the viewer able to distinguish the environment where the participants are – a park. The
photo of the grandparents shows a little bit of green, but it could be a park, a garden, or
many other places. The photo of the mother and her baby shows part of a window and
part of a plant as background. This could be an office or a house, but the photo fails to
give information about the social space where the family is. The photo that portrays the
father and the boy shows even less background. It seems that this is not a whole photo,
but a piece of a photo from which other things and people were cut off. By the father’s
shoulder there is something that could be someone else’s shoulder. The social situation
has been limited by the producers so the viewers will see what the producer wants them
to see. It is hard to read the image and imagine what are the participants doing, since even
their hands and legs have been cut out of the photo. The photo on the following page, that
shows a father reading to his son, shows part of the child’s bed. This allows the viewer to
read the social situation as one in which the father is taking care of the boy and putting him to bed.

The low vertical angle used to shoot the photo of the young couple with children family implies, according to Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) the power of the represented participants over the producer and the viewer. It implies power of the represented family over the producer and the viewer.

Even though this reading states that the housekeeping tasks are shared by the mothers and fathers, the use of a pink shirt and a blue shirt in the cartoons on the chart can work as clue for the student to associate tasks with gender. The message of the drawing and the reading contradict with each other. On the other hand, by associating housekeeping chores to women (in the illustrations), and differentiating work from housekeeping chores (in the vocabulary), the text also reproduces a patriarchal representation of women as non-productive subjects.

Regarding the characters, the writer – the invisible character – uses a tone that resembles that of a friendly teacher. The reader is the character who has to obey the producer and complete the activities. The other characters are the members of the families shown in the photos, the text, and the chart.

Table 6-9 summarizes the interpretation above:
Table 6-9: Interpretation of textbook three.

| Pages 24 and 25: |  
|---|---|
| The analysis of the vocabulary and the structure of the texts shows an effort to incorporate the educational reform. |  
| Relational values: the writer’s authority in relation to the readers is imposed by means of: |  
| using imperative mode |  
| using a teachers discourse (students are addressed in plural) |  
| The reader has to complete activities (procedures). |  
| Experiential values: The four photos show a difference in the ways they show classroom scenes in private and public schools. |  
| Private schools | Public schools |
| the teacher is at the same level than the students seating with them | the teacher is standing, like supervising the students’ work, in surveillance position |

| Pages 114 and 115. |  
|---|---|
| The reader has to complete activities (procedures) and talk about changes in family activity distribution. Readers have to relate their lives to the reading. |  
| Expressive values: The written text and the photos address the existence of different kinds of families, while ignoring others: |  
| Relational values: the writer’s authority in relation to the readers is imposed by means of informal commands (use of the imperative mode) |  
| 4. Families presented by the text and photos | Families that are not presented |
| 5. Families with father, mother, and children (traditional family) | Same sex parents families, families that include children, a parent, and the parent’s spouse, and the spouse’s children (families with divorced parents ) |
| Grandparents and children families |  
| Single parent families |  
| 6. No hierarchy among families is marked by the vocabulary. The photos, however, show all the families from a high angle, except for the photo of the traditional family. |  
| 7. Housekeeping chores and work are differentiated. |  
| 8. No relationship between housekeeping chores and gender are established by the vocabulary. The illustrations, however, relate women and men to different chores: |  
| Chores related to women | Chores related to men |
| cooking, doing dishes, and cleaning the house. | fixing broken things |
Summary.

As the table shows, the vocabulary and the structure of the book and these readings show an effort of the producers to adopt, include, and highlight the vocabulary of the reform. The reader’s subject position is constructed by the producer as an individual instructed to complete activities, to respond to commands. The emphasis on the demand on the reader to answer questions can be related to the need for teaching procedures included in the BCC.

The reader is the observer and a subject who has to obey the authority of the author, who “talks” like a teacher. The subject position of the teacher is complexly constructed. The author of the text borrows a teachers’ discourse, and through it, its authority, and author uses the teachers’ discourse and also exerts the teachers’ role, by telling the readers – the students – what to do. On the other hand, the photos show teachers from a high angle, as if power was imposed by the author over the teacher. While the private school teacher is shown with the students, on their high level, as if she was helping them, public school teacher is shown in front or behind the students, as if she was in a surveillance situation. Regarding the construction of families, the list of families presented in the reading makes the book an option for teachers who look for reading materials that offer opportunities for most children to find characters to identify with. Middle class children who belong to a family with a single mother or father, or who live with their grandparents or with their mother, or darker children who have a “traditional family” (both parents living together) can find characters to identify with in these texts. In the textbook – as well as in official literature, such as the curriculum and the national
census – there is no language used to include other families, such as families with same-sex parents. This is not surprising, since even the introduction of the concept of gender and family group in the BCC originated an enormous controversy and conflict between the Catholic Church and the Ministry of Education\textsuperscript{94}. The textbooks’ publishers, which target not only public but also private schools – many of them catholic – do not go beyond the changes included in the BCC.

The text presents a patriarchal representation of women as non-productive subjects, by relating women to housekeeping chores – which are considered different from work. Since the text does not question this relationship, it is not promoting awareness regarding gender stereotyping. The illustrations add caring activities to the role of the father and working activities to the role of the mother, but, in contradiction to the written text, they do not imply a change in the role of the woman as a main caretaker and housekeeper. A caretaker -while working mother is one of the subjectivities presented by the reading, as well as a caring and handy father.

The reader is constructed as belonging to some of the many kinds of families included in the texts, a subject who is ready to follow commands and able to individually complete procedures. Abilities such as relating information to their real lives are promoted by the texts, while critical thought – appropriate for this age level – is not. A subject open to accepting certain different kinds of families is promoted. A subject who is aware of the existence of gender stereotypes and challenges them, is not.

Conclusions.

Although there are obvious differences among the textbooks, the similarities are significant. In Table 6-10 I include the topics that are common to the three books, in order to make the comparison easier to be seen. The categories labeled common issues emerged from the data analyzed.
## Table 6-10: Textbook one, two, and three: comparison.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common issues</th>
<th>Book 1</th>
<th>Book 2</th>
<th>Book 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference to the reform</td>
<td>BCC block number on each page of the book.</td>
<td>Imposition of the authors authority by: use of the informal “you”; implying the readers’ lack of knowledge and the authors’s knowledge; declarative mode; no modal auxiliary; authors excluded</td>
<td>Imposition of the authors authority by: use of the imperative mode; use of a teachers’ discourse; no modal auxiliary; authors excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>Imposition of the authors authority by using almost exclusively the declarative mode; including only one modality auxiliary; authors excluded as participants.</td>
<td>Imposition of the authors authority by: use of the informal “you”; implying the readers’ lack of knowledge and the authors’s knowledge; declarative mode; no modal auxiliary; authors excluded</td>
<td>Imposition of the authors authority by: use of the imperative mode; use of a teachers’ discourse; no modal auxiliary; authors excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparent neutrality</td>
<td>The writers create a hierarchy between the shopping mall and downtown.</td>
<td>Hierarchy between ranchos and cascos by relating their quality construction complexity. Hierarchy between black people and non-black people.</td>
<td>Different representation of private school teacher and public school teacher. The traditional family is highlighted over the others Stereotypical chore division among genders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race, class, gender conflict.</td>
<td>The stereotyping representation of women as consumers is not questioned. Class conflict is evaded</td>
<td>Hierarchy between black people and non-black people. Slavery is not questioned. Race and class conflict is not addressed Upper class people alone have history</td>
<td>Stereotypical chores division among genders is implied by the illustrations, regardless of the openness of written text. Characters belong to middle or upper class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excluded by the texts</td>
<td>Men. Productive women</td>
<td>Black people with histories, names, and faces.</td>
<td>Divorced families, same sex parents’ families. Poor people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excluded by Illustrations</td>
<td>Disabled people</td>
<td>Disabled people are shown in cartoons Same sex couples</td>
<td>Disabled people Same sex couples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buenos Aires centered</td>
<td>Photos, characters, and words refer to places in Buenos Aires.</td>
<td>The chapter is on the only province that has a chapter (Buenos Aires)</td>
<td>No place is mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought processes</td>
<td>Understanding of causes and consequences is not promoted but obfuscated. No critical analysis of stereotypes. No procedures are demanded from readers</td>
<td>Use of information isolated from context, causes, and consequences. No questioning of information is promoted.</td>
<td>Emphasis on procedures, and changes in family activities distribution. Readers have to relate their life to the reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>Consumer women, of upper of upper-middle class, from Buenos. Aires.</td>
<td>Upper or upper-middle class non black people, are those who do things.</td>
<td>Middle to upper class caring and sometimes caring and working mothers, caring fathers, grandparents, and white children with a parent or dark skinned children with a traditional family.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The category “reference to the educational reform” refers to the ways in which the texts make clear that they adopt the reform. While the three textbooks are a consequence of, and a response to the curricular reform, two of them (the first and third cycle books) make the relationship between the book and the reform explicit and very visible. Only the text in the book for the second cycle makes no reference to the educational reform. In opposition, the text in the book for the third cycle includes a reference on every page. This third cycle book follows the structure of the Basic Common Contents so carefully, that the book itself is organized in blocks that correspond to the blocks of the BCC. Each page of the book, including the pages analyzed here, have the number of the block that corresponds to the BCC. The text in the book for the first cycle uses words such as “year” instead of “grade” – “grade” was used before the reform. This emphasis on the vocabulary of the reform makes sense in a context in which teachers, who were pushed to implement the reform, were responsible for choosing the books. The books that show connections to the reform were more likely to be chosen.

This effort to show the relationship between the texts and curricular reform is an example of what Fairclough (2001) refers to as the “relationship between texts and context.” (108) According to Fairclough (2001) “Some formal features point outside the text to its situational contest, or to its ‘intertextual’ context, i.e. to previous texts which are related to it.” (p. 108) These textbooks stand in relation with the BCC and the National Law of Education.

The category “authority” describes the ways in which each text imposes its authority upon the readers. The three textbooks use different strategies to impose their authority. In this way, not only do they justify themselves, but they also construct the
subjectivity of the reader as someone who has to respond to authority in specific ways, such as accepting it without any doubt or criticism. For example, the authors of the text on the book for the third cycle do not include themselves as participants. In this way they imply that they are outside, in a neutral position which does not need to be defended and should not be questioned. The text from the book for the second cycle consistently uses declarative mode. This mode sets the tone of statements and by this means implies that there is no doubt about what is being stated, or no room for other perspectives. The tone denotes that the reader is presented with “the facts.” The book for the first cycle uses no modal auxiliaries whatsoever. Some auxiliary verbs which express modality are: “may,” “might,” “must,” “should,” “can,” “cannot,” and “ought.” According to Fairclough (2001), modality is related to the writer's authority in relation to others (relational modality) and to the writer's authority in relation to the truth or of a representation of reality (expressive modality). The fact that no modal auxiliary such as “might” or “may” is used implies that the producers of the text do not open a space for different perspectives or possibilities regarding what they are stating.

The category “apparent neutrality” responds to the fact that all the texts analyzed present their points of view as a neutral one, as the truth, and as value neutral in relationship with the topic they lecture about. I define this neutrality as “apparent” because the positions that are shown as neutral are cancelled by different strategies, such as building hierarchies. The text in the book for the third cycle uses the characters’ positions and the grammar to relate the objects they represent to the characteristics of the characters. The young character – who represents youth, globalization, new trends in consumption, and the present, is related to the shopping mall as the place for shopping
and leisure. The old character – who represents old modes of consumption, the local, and the past, is related to downtown as an old-fashioned place for shopping and leisure.

There is an implied hierarchy among young and old, present and past, global and local, new trends and old fashions, in which the young, present, global and new are valued over the old, past, and local. The subjectivity that is promoted here is that of a female, trendy, global, and young consumer.

The text in the book for the second cycle relates poverty and anonymity (no name and no face) to black people. On the other hand, it relates recreation, status, and agency to white people. The hierarchy implied here values white people and the values related to them over black people and the values related to them. Another strategy for building hierarchy that cancels the apparent neutrality of the texts is the use of vertical angle in the photos or illustrations. The photos in the book for the first cycle use an angle that implies the power of some participants over others, opposing the appearance of equality of the descriptions in the written text. In this case the producer has the power over the families that do not respond to the model of mother, father, and children. The traditional family is presented, then, as the preferred one.

The category “Buenos Aires centered” refers to the strategy that cancels the apparent neutrality of the texts specifically by showing Buenos Aires as “the place to be.” While only the text in the book for the first cycle does not mention any place, the other texts focus on Buenos Aires. The text in the book for the third cycle talks about the country, but its photos, characters, and vocabulary, however, refer to places in Buenos Aires. The text on the book for the second cycle is part of a chapter about Buenos Aires, which justifies the fact that everything in the reading refers to Buenos Aires. But the rest
of the provinces do not have a chapter in the book. They are grouped together in different categories. Buenos Aires is offered by two of the three analyzed texts as “the” place of reference.

The category “race, class, and gender conflicts” refers to the way in which some of the texts reinforce some prejudicial common sense perceptions or at least do not show difference as something socially constructed. For example, the text in the book for the third cycle relates shopping with women, and the text in the book for the first cycle relates caretaker tasks and housekeeping tasks mainly with women. By presenting these stereotypes without any place to question them, not only do the texts reproduce stereotypes, but they also contribute to the construction of a subject that uncritically accepts these and other stereotypes. The text in the book for the third cycle for example, uses a strategy that consists of comparing different aspects of a same object or subject. The text compares poor people to upper class’ people in terms of when they go to the mall, but not in relationship with the activities they do in the mall. While the text mentions not only when poor people go to the mall, but also what they do, and implies what they cannot do – shop –, the reading does not mention what upper class people do in the mall. In this way, a difference between social groups is avoided. I call this a false comparison: a comparison that avoids comparing. The reading in the second cycle book presents this strategy as well. While the illustration shows the materials that make a rancho a poor house, and the kind of activities that are done in this kind of house, the illustration that portrays the rich house does not show the materials of the house but the parts of the house. The places are not associated with tasks, as in the other illustration, but with leisure and status. By avoiding these comparisons, the texts prevent readers from
seeing differences that have been socially and historically constructed, and that might be criticized and challenged. Social conflict is evaded and a passive description of socially static situations is presented instead. This perspective, in which order prevails over any conflict, does not promote critical thought, and does not contribute to the construction of a critical citizen. As a consequence, a subject who lacks awareness regarding social problems is promoted.

The category “thought processes” refers to the thinking processes promoted by the texts. Since the National Law of Education makes explicit the need for critical thought as a desired skill for students to master, an effort in such a direction from the texts would be expected. Neither of the texts, however, really promotes critical thought. The lack of possibilities offered to the students for them to question, inquire, and criticize the information is a characteristic of each of the three texts analyzed. The subjectivities promoted in the readings do not emphasize or even include attitudes that demand that the students act as responsible citizens or critical protagonists, as Article 6 of the National Law of Education proposes. The texts promote subjectivities related to passive acceptance of “the truth,” even if it is prejudicial, passive consumption, ability to uncritically complete procedures, and belonging to certain middle and upper class families.

The category “identity” explores – by means of listing the characters that the texts include – the subject positions that are excluded. The analyzed text in the book for the third cycle includes women as consumers, the text in the book for the second cycle includes black people who have no identity (name, face, or history), and the text in the book for the first cycle includes the traditional family, single parent families, and families
with grandparents and grandchildren. By contrasting the people the texts include, it is obvious that the texts I analyzed exclude men as consumers, women as productive people, black people with histories, names, and faces, families with divorced parents, and same sex parents families.

In order to further explore the inclusions and exclusions in the context of the whole books, I examined the illustrations in the three books, and found other exclusions. Only one of the books – the book for the second cycle book – shows two disabled people, and it shows them in cartoons. Cartoons are a not very realistic way to depict people, or are, at least, much less realistic than photos. Same sex couples are absent from the three books as well. Girls who want to be productive active citizens, black children, children whose parents are divorced, would not find subjects to identify with in these texts. Disabled children or children whose parents are the same sex, would not find subjects to identify with in these books either.

By omitting the presence of some subjects, the texts do not offer the readers either a language with which to understand certain subjectivities, nor these subjectivities themselves, to identify with. By not offering this kind of language and these subjectivities, the texts do not contribute to teaching about different identities that are already discriminated against in society. The texts do not contribute to the inclusion of the socially excluded, even though these texts are a consequence of a national law that mandates a rejection of any kind of discrimination, the inclusion of people with special

95 See Appendix B
needs, and the superseding of all stereotypes and discrimination in teaching material. As a consequence, the texts do not contribute to the construction of subjectivities that are inclusive, open minded, pluralist, and hence, democratic.

The subjectivities that these texts construct have the following general characteristics: acceptance of authority, without criticism; acceptance of hierarchies among classes, races, and genders; acceptance of stereotypes; lack of awareness regarding race, gender, and class conflicts; lack of critical thought; and lack of a language that includes identities that are already discriminated against.

Diverse discourses underlie the categories described above and the textbook authors' treatment of those categories on the pages I examine. The way in which texts’ authors talk for those who are discriminated against, shows a liberal tendency to name “the problem and the solution for a group that is defined as unable to fend for themselves” (Shannon, 1998, p. 182.). This happens for example in a text of the book for the second cycle, in which Lee, a Korean student is discriminated against, and someone else defends him. Lee does not have a voice to defend himself.97

A liberal perspective also underlies the effort to include some of those who have been historically excluded, without challenging the power relations within the economic, political and social system that causes their exclusions. Page 114 in the book for the first cycle includes single parents families, and page 100 in the book for the second cycle includes slaves, but it does not question slavery. Another characteristic of the books that

97 This text was examined to put in perspective the stereotyping trend of the book. A copy of the page is included in appendix C.
is related to liberal discourse is the fact that the texts make an effort to include some of the disfranchised, but they do not promote critical questioning and challenging of the cultural, economic, and political system that disfranchises them. For example, the text in the book for the third cycle includes “lower class people” separated from “upper class people,” but the division is presented as natural, is not questioned. In this way, class difference is brought to the table and simultaneously avoided. The text in the book for the second cycle includes disabled people, but they are not shown as productive members of a society or as active citizens (see appendix B). They are shown in cartoons as tourists or as recipients of benefits from the new buses that accommodate disabled people. The text in the book for the first cycle includes an image of a woman as taking care of a baby and working, while also smiling. This picture shows the woman as if she was playing a completely natural multitask role, isolated from patriarchal cultural, economic, and political structures that position a woman in such a role.

A neoliberal perspective is clear in the global market language and business-like language introduced by the reading that highlights new global modes of consumption and leisure on pages 253 and 254 of the book for the third cycle. A patriarchal discourse underlies this reading, in which women are depicted primarily as consumers. In the text in the book for the first grade, patriarchal discourse impregnates the illustrations on pages 114 and 115 that associate women with housekeeping tasks. A racist discourse is clear in the illustrations within the reading in the book for the second cycle that presents black people as faceless. The illustrations in the whole book show minorities as faceless and the readings show the persistence of colonialist discourses in education.
A classist discourse underlines the fact that none of the texts analyzed present active characters belonging to lower classes for students to identify with. The poor are the other. In the text in the book for the third cycle, the poor are those who go to the mall to enjoy the comforts they do not have at home, while middle to upper class people go at a different time. In the text in the book for the second cycle, the poor are those who do not have faces, histories, or names, while rich people have histories, names, and property the photos of which are presented in the book. In the text in the book for the third cycle, the poor people are not even included in photos or written texts.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

A national educational reform implies a vision (or several visions) of society and the individuals that form that society. Created by people who belong to certain power sectors and have specific interests, an educational reform is never an ideologically neutral policy. The main question of this dissertation, “What subjectivities does the Argentinean educational reform foster?”, has consequences for both teachers and students. By being conscious of the values and subjectivities that the reform fosters, teachers can go beyond a role of technicians in education and be critically engaged educators. They can work to offer students different values and subjectivities to identify with than those values and
subjectivities promoted by the reform. In this way, the curriculum would open spaces in school for public democracy and the education of democratic citizens.

“What subjectivities does the Argentinean educational reform foster?” I choose to answer this question by analyzing the curriculum because the curriculum shows – when examined in detail and between the lines – the values that are promoted, and offers preferred subjectivities while simultaneously excluding others. In this sense, the curriculum is a record of the official goals of the reform. The three levels of the curriculum examined in this dissertation – the National Law of Education, the BCC standards, and textbooks show a trajectory of the curriculum between the Ministry of Education and the classroom.

After having analyzed these three levels of the curriculum, in this chapter I establish connections between the results of previous chapters, I interpret these results, I place the generalizations within their historical context, and I reflect on the results and their relationship with the education of democratic citizens. Finally, I develop guidelines to analyze teaching material in ways that allow teachers to reinsert the democratic individual that the National Law of Education only names.

In this section of the chapter I connect the results of chapters four, five, and six. To do so, I first present Table 7-1, which summarizes the subjectivities promoted by the analyzed texts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjectivities promoted by the BCC standards</td>
<td>Universal values, free choices, transcendence, self-fulfilled individual, discrimination, efficient worker, psychological self, critical thinker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjectivities promoted by the texts in analyzed textbooks.</td>
<td>Individual as consumer. (Non) Integration. Individual who is discriminatory. Individual as a worker or caretaker.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Subjectivities in the curriculum: from Ministry to classroom.**

As table 7-1 shows, the subjectivities promoted by the National Law of Education, in general terms, include individuals guided by freedom, universal values,
able to fulfill themselves and to elaborate their own life projects according to their religious belief. They are supposed to be tolerant, critical thinkers and protagonists, responsible citizens, and agent of changes, through production. The BCC standards subjectivities call for individuals committed to the universal values adopted by “the Argentinean community.” Not much real room is left here for other values; these subjects should be aware of and respectful of other values. This is one of the ways in which the analyzed standards address diversity. Students have to accept diversity, but commit themselves to the values adopted by “the Argentinean community”. They should also be aware of social discrimination against women, disabled people, and others. Students are not expected to challenge discrimination, or struggle to eradicate discrimination. The individuals should search for transcendence according to their own convictions and make decisions accordingly. They should know about psychological processes, and be psychologically aware selves. The BCC standards’ subjectivities include the position of an individual who is committed, efficient, self-controlled, and knowledgeable of the culture of work. A critical thinker is a modern thinker, able to develop several processes. She is an information seeker, able to collect empirical data, argue, analyze, reflect and criticize, perform critical analysis of information and situations, an investigator and producer of essays. This modern thinker, committed worker, searcher for transcendence, choice maker, psychological self, is also to be happy, or self-fulfilled.

In the textbooks, the subjects offered for students to identify with are consumer women, of upper or upper-middle class, from Buenos Aires; upper or upper middle class non-black people; able middle to upper class caretaker or caretaker and working mothers; caring fathers; and the traditional family. Issues of integration and discrimination are
addressed by the texts by means of defining what discrimination is in few readings, and discriminating against individuals in terms of gender, race, class and ability in other readings. The subjectivities fostered by the analyzed texts include that of a consumer, unaware of and insensitive to issues of class, gender, race, and ability.

Regarding values, some of the values in the different texts of the reform are juxtaposed. I show how they overlap in Figure 7-1.

Figure 7-1: Values in different texts of the reform
Values: from Ministry to classroom. Same words, different meanings.

Each circle in the figure above represents a level of the curriculum (the law, the BCC, and the textbooks). The figure shows that some values are isolated on one level of the curriculum, others are present in two of them, and other values are present in all three texts of the reform. Although many values overlap on the different levels of the curriculum, these values are not always defined in the same way.

Isolated values?

Among the values that are isolated on one of the levels of the curriculum is the concept of the citizen. As I mentioned in the introduction to this dissertation, before analyzing the BCC standards, I assumed that the subjectivity promoted by a subject matter called “Ethic and Citizenship Education” might be the citizen. However, having taken that for granted would have been a mistake. Even though the citizen is mentioned in Article 6 of the Law, citizenship is not part of the goals of the National Law of Education for the compulsory levels of education. Consistent with this, the list of standards for “Ethic and Citizenship Education” does not mention the “citizen,” and the word “citizenship” appears only once in that list. The analyzed texts do not show the citizen either. Taking a broad view of the three textbooks, I noticed that citizens are shown as such only in lessons the goal of which is to teach about elections or democracy, but no civic attitudes or actions are included in other readings.
Another concept that is explicitly highlighted in one of the texts of the reform is psychology. The BCC standards of the reform dedicate a considerable amount of space to psychology. The list of standards includes concepts such as “affectionate reaction,” “causes of remembering and forgetting”, and “multiple intelligences.” According to the BCC, students in general basic education (who are between six and thirteen years old) ought to learn specific psychological concepts such as “affectionate reactions,” “memory,” “kinds of intelligence”—strategic, communicative, and expressional—“volition,” and “desire,” among others. It looks like, considering students ages, they need to be experts in the self. I define this subjectivity as a psychological self. The psychological self appears to be isolated to one level of the curriculum – the BCC standards. The consumer is another subjectivity that appears only on one of the levels of the curriculum: the textbooks. The textbook for the third cycle presents women as consumers. The characters’ only concern is related to choosing the best place to shop and spend time. By presenting this situation, the text manages to highlight the global subject, the young, and their patterns of consumption habits as trendy subjectivities.

**Values that overlap on two levels of the curriculum.**

The values that appear in the intersection between the National Law of Education and the BCC are freedom, universal values, choice, spirituality and the self-fulfilled individual, and critical thought. Freedom is referred to as such by the National Law of

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98 I use this word as an umbrella concept that includes both the concept of religion mentioned in the National Law of Education and the idea of the search for transcendence, explicit in the standards.
Education and the BCC standards. It is also mentioned by the official discourse of the reform, which refers to it as “liberty.” Universal values are emphasized by the National Law of Education and the BCC standards. The law specifically lists the values of life, freedom, the good, truth, peace, solidarity, tolerance, equality, and justice. The BCC standards state that students must “[K]now the values assumed as universal by the Argentinean community, and those of the [student’s] groups of reference and the groups they belong to, have judgment criteria to distinguish between positive and negative values, begin to personally assume the universal values, stand for them, and justify their own opinions.” So, students should know other values, but to assume the universal values.

Regarding choice, the National Law of Education stresses the capability of the subjects to make decisions, and the BCC standards put accent on their ability to exercise free choices. Regarding spirituality, the Law describes the subject as someone who has religious capabilities, among other capabilities. The BCC describes the subject as engaged in a search for transcendence. Regarding critical thought, the BCC standards highlight processes such as information search, empirical data collection, argument, analysis, reflection, critical analysis of information and situations, investigation and production of essays. On these two levels of the curriculum the individual is also depicted as a self made and self-fulfilled subject. The law stresses that subjects should be able to

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99 Transcendence is mentioned in the BCC in the Expectancies of achievement for the BGE, block 1 (p. 7); Second cycle, block 1, person, psychological processes (22); and Third cycle, block 1, Person, psychological processes (p. 26).
elaborate their own life projects, an “entrepreneur of itself” (Rose, 1998, p.158). In the law individuals “are incited to live as if making a project of themselves” (Rose, 1998, p. 156). The emphasis on the individual, as a self-made person, free to be whatever she wants to be, presents the subject as free from society, from ties of solidarity and from social commitments. The subject seems to be free and able to do whatever she wants, as if she really had the opportunity to do so. The BCC standards underscore the subjects as able to exercise free choices. The BCC present volitional life, by stating “it is about the processes that drive the actions and self-fulfillment, through free choices and decisions. Addressing topics related to the will is a privileged opportunity to reflect about the value of constancy, strength in facing difficulties that tasks present, commitment, efficiency, self-dominion, and mastery of the culture of work.” (p. 5) The connection between constancy, strength in facing difficulties that tasks present, commitment, efficiency, self-control, mastery of the culture of work become and self-fulfillment, freedom, choices and personal decisions is not clear. The BCC may be implying that by being constant, committed, efficient, self-controlled, and a good worker, subjects are self-fulfilled, free, and able to make choices. This kind of subject seems to describe the perfect, happy, efficient, self-controlled worker that any company would dream of or name “the employee/associate of the month.” I cannot see the place for freedom and choices in this schema. The subject looks to me as obliged to be free.

In the intersection between the National Law of Education and the textbooks, the concept of integration appears. The meaning of this concept on each level is, however, different. While the Law of Education strives for “the integration of people with special
needs, through the full development of their abilities,” 100 only one of the three books shows two people with special needs101. This book shows them as cartoons – not a very realistic way to depict people. The two people with special needs that appear in the book are shown as tourists. By means of not showing them as active citizens or productive people, the textbook discriminates against people with special needs. The other two books discriminate against them by excluding them. The concept of integration loses strength relative to the meaning it has in the Law of Education, and acquires a different and opposite direction on the level of the textbooks.

Values that appear on all three levels of the curriculum.

The intersection area between the National Law of Education, the BCC, and the textbooks, shows the values and concepts that are commonly addressed by the three levels of the curriculum. These are discrimination, gender roles, and work or the worker. Again, the meanings of these concepts are not the same on the different levels of the curriculum. While the law makes its position explicit by stating the need to strive for superseding all discriminatory stereotypes in teaching materials, the BCC standards do not make their position explicit regarding the roles assigned to women and men, girls and boys. The BCC standards only list among the concepts students have to learn, the 

100 National Law of Education (1993), Title II, General principles, Chapter 1, Article 5, section 11.

101 See Appendix B
concepts “the family and pairs groups. Girls and boys,” “Roles assigned to men and women, and family relationships” and procedures such as recognizing and analyzing roles. By not taking a position regarding gender roles, the BCC standards give freedom to students and teachers to critically address these roles. But because the BCC standards do not explicitly promote that attitude, they also allow texts and people to continue to reproduce stereotyping roles. And this is just what happens on the level of the textbooks. Since they are not supposed to critically analyze the roles they present, the texts not only fail to critically analyze the roles, but they also reproduce patriarchal conceptions related to roles and gender. This is observed in the text in the book for the first cycle, in which the pictures stress the role of women as housekeepers, and in the text in the book for the third cycle, that shows women primarily as consumers.

“Work” or “the worker” is another concept that appears on all three levels of the curriculum. The National Law of Education describes the subject of education as an agent of change through love, knowledge, and work. The BCC introduces the subjectivity of the self-fulfilled, efficient worker, as I showed above. On the level of textbooks, the text in the book for the first cycle introduces the image of a mother who is a caretaker and simultaneously a worker – and who looks happy being both. Believe it or not, in the photo that portrays her in this multitask situation, she is also smiling. The photo shows the self-fulfilled female caretaker-worker. Work as something positive that leads to self-improvements is one of the few concepts in which the three levels of the curriculum explicitly agree.

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102 National Law of Education, 24195, Chapter two, article six.
After this analysis of the values of the reform, it is clear that even though the same values are mentioned on different levels of the curriculum, the use of the same words does not mean the adoption of the same meanings. Some values are strongly emphasized by the National Law of Education, but lose strength or disappear in the other levels of the curriculum analyzed in this work. An example is the idea of the subject as an agent of social change. While the National Law of Education depicts the subject of education as critical thinker, protagonist and agent of change, the BCC standards describe the subject as an information searcher, able to collect empirical data, argue, analyze, reflect and criticize, perform critical analysts of information and situations, an investigator and producer of essays. A scientific discourse and a subject as a critical thinker underlie this vast list of skills that students should master according to the BCC standards. The list leaves out, however, the agent of change described by the law. The texts in the books analyzed exclude both, the agent of change and the critical thinker. Each level of the curriculum excludes a characteristic related to democratic and active political participation that is present in the previous level of the curriculum.

Another example of a concept that is strong on one level of the curriculum but that loses its strength in the following is the concept of “discrimination.” The emphasis on the concept shifts from “the elimination of any form of stereotypes or discrimination” in the law to “observe and narrate situations of discrimination [against people]” and learn about the “right to not being discriminated against, in bases of religion, race, gender, or ideology” in the BCC, to the inclusion of the topic discrimination in isolated

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103 National Law of Education (1993), Title II, General principles, chapter one, article five.
lessons and the simultaneous discrimination against minorities in the rest of the textbook, by means of the vocabulary, grammar, and illustrations in the lessons that are not directly related to discrimination. In the case of discrimination, the concept acquires a different and opposite direction in two levels of the curriculum. While the National Law emphasizes the need for elimination of stereotypes or discrimination, the textbooks discriminate against different groups of people, such as women, poor people, black people and other racial minorities (indigenous people and Asians in the second cycle book), non-traditional families people with special needs, and same-sex couples.

Another value present in different texts but acquiring opposite senses in other texts of the reform is the idea of integration. While article five of the Law of Education strives for “the integration of people with special needs” the BCC standards do not even mention the concept of integration, and only one of the books shows two people with special needs, in cartoons and not as active citizens or productive people. The other two books do not even include people with special needs. The typically liberal attempt of the National Law of Education to include some of the historically excluded, is cancelled on the level of the textbooks, and taken in the opposite direction, by ignoring or stereotyping those who were supposed to be included.

104 National Law of Education (1993), Title II, General principles, chapter one, article five, number eleven.
Subjectivities and values in context: curriculum, the global market, and neoliberal discourses.

Argentine education reform: when the banker tells educators what to do in education.

To more deeply understand the importance of the subjectivities shown in Table 1 and the values shown in Figure 1, these subjectivities and values need to be located in the context in which the reform was launched. As I mentioned in chapter three, during the time-frame when the educational reform was launched, larger international and national issues pressured Argentina (an other Latin American countries) toward reorganizing schools around neoliberalism. Regarding international pressures, the external debt conditioned and compromised the country’s sovereignty to plan and design its own policies, and at the same time, gave the external lending institutions power to promote and affect reform programs. In fact, policies such as the state reforms – including educational reforms – and the adoption of the World Bank recommendations were considered conditional for the borrowing countries to obtain more credits. According to Puiggross (1996), in Latin America

the World Bank, […] has been in the vanguard in defining social policy in the neoliberal era. The Bank's educational policy has an exclusively economic logic. It is based on a short-term cost-benefit analysis. […] The Bank's educational policy is part and parcel of a larger neoliberal economic program whose overarching goal is to reduce state spending so
that governments are able to continue making payments on their foreign debt.

The World Bank “recommendations” – focused on policies such as the improvement of elementary education, decentralization, privatization (Puigross 1996), and promoted concepts such as competitiveness, accountability, and schools’ autonomy. Besides recommending specific educational policies, the bank uses and introduces free market discourses in the arena of education.

Regarding the national sphere, during the educational reform era, Argentine economy was in the aftermath of hyperinflation that led to non-democratic policies, such as emergency laws that allowed governing by decree in several areas of decision-making, and the concentration of power by the presidency. The government rationality characteristic of this era relates to neoliberal values and policies. Modernization, state reform and privatization, open markets, an effort to compete in the globalized market, decentralization policies, and the weakening of the labor movement are some examples of policies consistent with a predominant neoliberal discourse. High rates of unemployment, low teachers’ salaries, teacher strikes and a “white tent” as a protest against these salaries, were part of the everyday life of most students and teachers in Argentina.

Within this context, the official discourse of the reform\textsuperscript{105} introduces into the arena of education the neoliberal values of the Argentine government rationality and the

\textsuperscript{105} I define here the official discourse of the reform as the speech/paper by Cecilia Braslavsky analyzed in this dissertation. Although I am aware of the limitations of using a single paper to represent a discourse, I choose it because in her role as Director of Curriculum in the National Ministry of Education during the
recommendations of international lending institutions such as the World Bank.

According to Filmus (2000), the current National Minister of Education, when introduced into the area of education, neoliberal values did not seem like isolated ideas, because they were consistent with a model that, in general, was familiar. These values were powerful because their adoption was accompanied by international money for the development of reforms.

The discourse of the market goes to school.

Although underlying the three texts of the reform are both liberal and neoliberal discourses, the neoliberal ideas are those ideas that find their way to classrooms mainly via the BCC and the textbooks. While the National Law of Education presents a liberal shell by highlighting values that have been historically related to liberal discourse, and the texts in the textbooks also include a liberal way of dealing with some concepts and values, the BCC standards’ values are more directly related to neoliberal discourse. Words such as self-fulfilled individual, efficiency, and freedom to make choices have a strong presence along the BCC document. The individual and the individual’s psychological dimension are highlighted in this text of the curriculum.

reform, Cecilia Braslavsky’s speech voices the values that underlie the curriculum of the reform, and because her professional academic prestige constituted, among many teachers, a source of authority for the new curriculum.

106 For example, they include some subjects who have been historically excluded, but they do not challenge the power relations that have excluded them (Shannon, 1998). By so doing, the texts deny students the possibility of seeing power relations that cut across the politics of race, class, and gender.
The policy makers who participated in the construction of the National Law of Education and the experts on curriculum who created the BCC standards for the nation have coincided on highlighting the subject as an individual. The National Law of Education describes the individual (person) as an enterprise self - an individual searching for happiness, self-esteem, self-actualization, and self-fulfillment, an individual who constructs her own project and her own life. This idea of the subject as an enterprise can be though as one of the ways in which the market discourse enters the arena of education, a way of marketization of the curriculum. The BCC include the enterprise self, but the BCC also take the construction of subjectivity to the arena of psychology, by emphasizing the individual as a psychological self. I define this emphasis on psychology within the curriculum – according to which children as young as 8 years old are supposed to know psychological concepts – as the process of psychologization of the curriculum.

The combination of the process of marketization of the curriculum – by the promotion of the enterprise self – and the process of psychologization of the curriculum results in the creation of the subjectivity of the entrepreneur self. In this new subjectivity, the self is not only able to choose and act autonomously, to create herself and her life, but also has the psychological skills for permanent self-analysis, self-actualization and self-improvement, and fulfillment.

The ideas of the individual in search of happiness, self-esteem, self-actualization, and fulfillment – an enterprise self as described by the National Law of Education and the BCC– and the psychological self as emphasized by the BCC combined constitute the
entrepreneur self. These ideas are connected with neoliberal discourses. Rose (1998) links psychology and neoliberalism by stating that neoliberalism has contributed to the shift away from the citizen that was implemented by political authorities to regulate everyday life, to the psychological self, who makes choices “under the guidance of cultural and cognitive authorities, in the space of regulated freedom, in our individual search for happiness, self-esteem, and self-actualization, for the fulfillment of our autonomous selves.” (p. 166)

The authority of psychology opens doors to the language of the market in education. The National Law of Education fosters the individual’s freedom to create herself, to choose who she is, and the BCC promote the individual as someone who has the skills to project her life and, by means of self analysis, constantly improve herself, like a product that can be updated responding to the needs of the market. Competitiveness, market, freedom, and choice are no longer strange concepts within the curriculum, and they are not only pushed by the recommendations of the international lending institutions, but come from a respected science historically linked to education - psychology.

These concepts and other ideas related to neoliberal discourses are also presented in the third level of analysis of this study. The textbooks normalize, for example,

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107 According to Rose (1998), in the first half of the nineteenth century psychology was a discipline of the social person. Today, psychologists elaborate complex emotional, interpersonal, and organizational techniques by which the practices of everyday life can be organized according to the ethic of autonomous selfhood. Correlatively, freedom has come to mean the realization of the potential of the psychological self in and through activities in the mundane world of everyday life. The significance of psychology, here, is the elaboration of a know-how of this autonomous individual striving for self-realization. Psychology has thus participated in reshaping the practices of those who exercise authority over others – social workers, managers, teachers, nurses, – such that they nurture and direct these individual strivings in the most appropriate and productive fashions. (p. 17).
business-like language, consumption, globalization, and choice. One of the readings (in the third cycle textbook) uses a global market language and business-like language to define a modern consumption style. Concepts such as global trends of consumption, choice making – limited to leisure or shopping – are highlighted in the textbooks. The individual is emphasized in most readings. Individuals are represented as consumers, workers, or caretakers in the three textbooks analyzed in this study.

The entrepreneur self is present in the three textbooks of the reform analyzed in this study, in images of individuals as autonomous choosers of products and styles of consumption, (in the textbook for the third cycle), the agent as the individual who creates enterprises (in the lesson in the textbook for the second cycle), and self fulfilled worker and simultaneously, care-taker (in the textbook for the first cycle). As this study shows, the values and vocabulary of the entrepreneur self related to neoliberalism have permeated the National Law of Education, the BCC standards, and the textbooks.

*When the discourse of the market goes to school, where does democracy go?*

Within the curriculum of the Argentine educational reform, as defined in this study, the entrepreneur self becomes a superseding subjectivity. This subjectivity emerges as surpassing the free individual, because it includes the free individual but it also allots to her the psychological skills for self-improvement. This combination of different discourses that constructs a superseding discourse is a pattern in the Argentine
educational reform. These superseding discourses leave no space for the discussion, questioning, and analysis of any of the concepts that are depicted as polarized and surpassed, and hide important contradictions and tensions.

The entrepreneur self, as a form of neoliberal individualism, presents however, the following tensions. First, there is an evident tension between the description of a subject who has the power to create herself and the Argentine economic context that constrains peoples’ capacities to plan, project, and develop their lives as they would like. Described as able to fulfill herself personally, the individual seems to be not only free to do whatever she wants, but also to have the opportunity to do so. Argentinean reality, however, shows the opposite. An elevated rate of unemployment and underemployment constrains people’s lives in ways that prevent them from satisfying their basic needs. Without the essential economic means, it is hard – or may be impossible – to make a project of oneself and develop that project. Students may be free to desire to attend a good school, to study hard, and participate in democratic institutions, but, if they have to work because their parents cannot meet their basic needs, their freedom to elaborate their life project does not have much meaning. In other words, even though educability (Lopez and Tedesco, 2000) – as the resources, attitudes, and predispositions that make it possible for a child or adolescent to successfully attend school – is not guaranteed, students are expected to be educated and able to accomplish their life projects.  

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108 Braslavsky, a main voice of the official discourse of the reform presented the “star concepts of education” as exceeding the differences between right and left, and the solidarian state (Bralavsky’s definition of the neoliberal state) as overcoming both the welfare state and the absent state.

109 According to Lopez and Tedesco (2000), the concept “educability” invites research on the social conditions that make it possible for all children and adolescents to have access to these resources. (p. 7)
Second, even if subjects were able to plan, project, and develop their lives within the Argentine context, the subjectivity of the entrepreneur self is in tension with the subjectivity of a democratic subject that the National Law of Education mentions but fails to develop. The entrepreneur self that emerges from the texts of the reform analyzed in this study and also from the official discourse and the government rationality within the context of the reform, is an individualistic psychological self, and an efficient self-fulfilled and self-improved worker competing in a globalized job market. This subjectivity, that is not imposed by force but worked into the desires of the self, draw the profile of a psychological self, who dreams of fulfillment through personal choices. This subjectivity constitutes a politically weak, individualistic self. This kind of subjectivity disempowers, disunites, divides, and isolates people within their individual micro-psychological worlds. As Rose states, within this neoliberal rationality, social and political questions are understood as psychological conflicts. (p. 168)\footnote{Rodriguez (2001) connects the enterprise culture and the self to the national educational reform in Spain – a main “inspiration” for the Argentinean educational reform. Rodriguez came to the hypothesis that in Spain, constructivist psychology was the basis for construction of the neoliberal individual. Cesar Coll, “the father of the Spanish reform” who presents constructivist psychology as foundation for educational reforms, was one of the theoretical referents of the Argentinean reform. In fact, his book, “The contents of the reform” was included as a reference in teacher training and development programs in Argentina.} Political questions and the individual are unrelated. The individual does not need agency, because her universe is her psyche: she is a psychological individualistic self who is beyond the petty materialism of politics, and issues of class, race, and gender.

The subjectivity of the entrepreneur self limits peoples’ relationships with institutions to a kind of market exchange in which the predominant rationale is self-interest and self-fulfillment. Within this framework, there is no reason for individuals to
develop ties with social groups, or to be involved in democratic activities or institutions. The subjectivity of the entrepreneur self is in tension with the subjectivities of democratic citizens, and with democracy itself.

This tension is reflected in the difference between the subject named - but not developed - by the National Law of Education and the subjects portrayed in the texts analyzed in the textbooks. While the law describes the individual as an agent of social change, in the readings, the individual is not portrayed as a political being, a solidarian subject, or a citizen related to a government, a political party, or a social group. No ties between individuals and social groups are presented in the texts, except for family ties.

By placing so much emphasis on the individual, the discourse of the entrepreneur self creates an atmosphere in which group solidarity or ties of class, gender, race, are not addressed. Within this atmosphere, neoconservative discourses are not challenged; they are admitted. The texts studied in the three textbooks, for instance, include a patriarchal discourse in which women are represented as consumers, or engaged in housekeeping tasks. One of the textbooks is characterized by a racist discourse in the written text and illustrations that present black people as faceless. In this book for the second cycle, the illustrations show minorities as faceless. This book, which objectifies black people and presents slavery without questioning it, also shows the presence of colonialist discourse. None of the three analyzed texts depict characters that belong to lower classes. In this way, the poor are constructed as “others,” and are not presented as possessing subjectivities for students to identify with. This shows a classist discourse in the text. The texts also discriminate against people with special needs either by presenting them as non-productive or inactive citizens represented in unrealistic cartoons, or simply by
excluding them. Another exclusion is of gay people. In sum, the apparently liberal discourses present in the law acquire meaning related to the neoliberal discourses on the level of the BCC standards. At the level of the textbooks, in spite of the inclusion of some subjects historically excluded, the discourses are almost reduced to the discourses of neoliberalism, with elements of conservative discourses also strongly present.

Finally, the tension between the subjectivity of the entrepreneur self and the subjectivities of democratic citizens is reflected in the inclusions and exclusions of subjectivities in the three levels of the curriculum analyzed in this study. The answer to the main question of this dissertation, “What subjectivities does the educational reform promote?” is the entrepreneur self. This subjectivity takes the shape of the psychological self, a self-made person, an enterprising individual who constructs herself, a decision and choice-maker, a self-fulfilled and efficient worker, a self-fulfilled female caretaker and worker, a subject guided by the universal values of “the Argentinean community,” unaware of injustice and power relations regarding issues of race, class, gender, and ability. The subjectivity of the entrepreneur self excludes other subjectivities from the curriculum. One of those excluded is the citizen, understood as an active, social subject, critical and aware of injustice related to class, gender, race, sexual orientation and ability. The curriculum does not include the citizen as involved in public radical democracy, because within the predominant rationality in the curriculum – the neoliberal rationality – social and political questions are understood as psychological conflicts. Within these limits, there is no need for political action, for agency, and for radical democracy. Democracy is not a concern for the subjectivity promoted by the texts of the reform
analyzed in this study, a reform that in theory was originated with the goal of strengthening democracy.

**Reinserting the democratic subjects in school, in spite of the texts.**

If the values of the law, the standards, and the textbooks were adopted by teachers and acted on by schools, translated into teaching practices, if teachers and students followed the subjectivities promoted by these texts, schools would hardly contribute to the construction and strengthening of democracy and the education of democratic citizens. Schools would educate individualistic, psychological, choosing subjects who will not contribute to political activities that are related to citizenship and democracy or that go beyond the limits of self-interest, self-control, and self-fulfillment. They would promote the subjectivity of the entrepreneur self.

Some of the values of neoliberal discourse related to this kind of subjectivity have already been adopted by teachers and schools, either consciously or not. Teachers, for example, have been recycling themselves not only by taking classes to learn new teaching contents and methods, but also by using the new terminology of the reform. The free market and business-like vocabulary related to the enterprise culture, a typical element of the neoliberal discourse, has already permeated the culture of some schools. An example is the statement of a mother who belongs to a school parents’ association, who defines the association as an “enterprise.” The students of this school would be then,
the clients of the enterprise, consumers of education. It is not unlikely then that the subjectivity of the entrepreneur self be present beyond the level of the intended curriculum (laws, BCC, textbooks).

In spite of the increasing presence of these kinds of subjectivities and neoliberal values within education, many teachers are serious regarding the role of education in the construction and strengthening of democracy by means of educating democratic citizens. This section is for that kind of teacher. It develops guidelines to analyze teaching material in ways that allow teachers to work against the neoliberal individualistic discourse, to include the solidarity within and among groups, and to reinsert the democratic individual that the National Law of Education names but fails to develop and promote.

Citizenship is not an attribute people acquire naturally when they turn a certain age. People learn to be active and critical citizens, if they are given a chance to observe their reality, reflect on it, and promote changes – among other things. Although including critical action among the contents of the curriculum may be scary, doing so is supported in Argentina by article 6 of the National Law of Education. I introduce here a set of ideas that teachers can adapt and use to give their students opportunities to become agents of social change at school, by challenging undemocratic practices and representations in teaching materials and by experiencing democratic practices at school.

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111 The mother states: “Currently the parents associations are enterprises: they have to be in charge of everything, because the government is not.” (Striedick, 2000)
Young citizens challenging texts.

When considering textbooks and other teaching materials and the need for educating democratic citizens, two main problems arise. One is the lack or representation of some groups, for example gay people and disabled people. A consequence of this is the lack of opportunity for students whose parents or other relatives are gay or for students who have a disability, to identify with positive characters in the textbooks. They and their families are left out of the universe that their books present. The message is that they do not exist as a part of the reality shown by the book.

Neoliberal discourses do not explicitly intend to exclude. In some countries neoliberal discourses have learnt to “include” everybody in their own fashion. A second problem is not a lack of representation of some groups, but the ways in which these groups are represented. For example, of the three texts analyzed in this dissertation, only one includes disabled people. In this book disabled people are shown in cartoons – a not very realistic kind of illustration - and as tourists observing a place. They are not shown as active, productive, and positive people. An analysis of teaching material should include not only the detection of inclusions and exclusions –who are and who are not represented - but also the study of the ways in which different peoples are represented.

Since some textbooks are impregnated with neoliberal discourses, the way in which that textbooks represent people are far from the image of a politically active citizen committed to his country or some groups. If teachers want their students to be
represented in a respectful and positive way in teaching materials, and they want to give students the opportunity to see citizens as positive role models, a first step in the analysis of that material may be learning about the students, their families and background. How are their families composed? Who are they? To what ethnic, racial, religious groups (if any) and social class do they belong? Are they members of some social or political groups? Where are their ancestors from? Do they speak a second language? Do they have some disability?

Once the teacher has this information – which she can acquire by having the students research and/or give a presentation on their families – she needs to explore her own feelings, knowledge, and bias regarding these different groups. Most people grow up learning stereotypes, and reproducing sayings, statements, or expressions that imply the underestimation of some groups. Textbooks at school have taught that. The important – and sometimes hard job – is to unlearn those prejudices to avoid reproducing and teaching them. This step is essential to be able to detect bias in the teaching materials. Teachers may ask themselves the following questions: What kind of student do I want to form (critical thinker, solidarian and engaged citizen, good consumer, individualistic competitive self, etc.)? Who am I, in terms of politics, ethnicity, race, religion, abilities and social class? Do I think that belonging to one of these categories makes me better or worse than other people? Who are those other people? How did I learn those ideas? How do these ideas help or become obstacles for the education of democratic citizens? In what situations have I been discriminated against? How did I feel and react? In what situations have I discriminated against other people? What consequence may it have had?
Group discussion and comparison of responses with colleagues is a positive way of dealing with these topics that are not easy to address. After teachers are able to talk about some prejudices that affect their everyday life at school, they have better tools to detect prejudices and diverse kinds of values in textbooks. To do so they can create and use numerous techniques. Here I recommend a set of questions that students can apply to their teaching material – and discuss in groups, reflect individually, have panels and discussion sessions about, etc. Of course this is only a guideline that teachers should adapt according to the specific context and to the characteristics of the students.

**Questions about the characters in the text:**

What characters are in the text and what are they doing there?

Who are they? Take into consideration their color, place of origin, religion, gender, physical ability, age, etc.

Are some of the people presented through stereotypes? Who are they?

What are the characters doing? What types of characters are dominant? Who are active (are doing things) and who are passive (are receiving or suffering the effects of someone else’s doing)?

What kinds of images are used to illustrate the characters? Photos, drawings, paintings, cartoon-like drawings?

Are different kinds of illustrations used to illustrate different kinds of people?

What is the underlying message? Is there a pattern?
Are the characters close as in a portrait, or so far away that they look like part of the landscape?

How does distance make you feel regarding the character? Do you feel respect for her? Do you feel that she is the other? Do you feel something else?

Are the characters shown from the top down, from the bottom up or at your level? What is the implication?

Questions about the ideas in the text:

What ideas are introduced by the text?

Does the writer express criticism or agreement with those ideas?

Does the writer introduce the ideas like “the truth”?

What does the writer expect from the reader: to passively accept the text, criticize it, question it, do something about the topic of the text?

Does the writer address the reader as a consumer?

Do the text and/or the images help readers become more critical, inquisitive, active citizens?

Does the text promote solidarity among students or among students and other groups? Does it promote the construction of ties among subjects, or does it promote individualism?

How can this text be used in ways that promote solidarity among people?

Critical analysis of texts at school could be a first step towards building new subjectivities that include citizens who are aware of, and sensitive to injustice, and
politically engaged in building a public democracy in a fair society. The skills students
develop by critically analyzing and using textbooks can be taken to the level of the
quotidian life at schools so students could learn about democracy by living in a
democratic institution, in the critique and construction of which they could participate
like democratic citizens\textsuperscript{112}. Curriculum analysis may be a first step in accepting or
politically questioning, challenging, and changing the texts, teaching practices, materials,
devices, and school culture that go against the construction of a democratic and fair
society, and the education of democratic citizens. Exploring what subjectivities are
promoted or excluded from schools can be a way of rethinking and working for schools
open to different subjectivities, acknowledging and welcoming teachers’ and students’
multiple subjectivities that integrate issues of gender, class, and race. Critical analysis of
subjectivities fostered by the curriculum could allow teachers and students to go beyond
the individualistic psychological self and rethink themselves in ways that are not driven
by self-interest, immediate satisfaction, or market-like relationships, but based on a need
and desire for a democratic society.

\textsuperscript{112} A helpful tool to work on a democratic school culture is “The Anti-bias curriculum (Derman-
Sparks el all, 1989). Some of this books’ recommendations for teachers to practice democracy at schools
are:
Be alert to unfair practices in your school or neighborhood that directly affect your children’s lives. You
may be the first to identify the problem, or the children may bring a problem to your attention.
Consider the interests and dynamics of your group of children. Do they care about the problem? What kind
of actions would work for them? Consider the parents’ comfort. Do you want their agreement beforehand?
Do you just plan to inform them of your plans? Do you want to include them in the activity? Try out the
activity. If it works, great! If it doesn’t, try again with a different activity!


Documentos para la Historia Argentina. [Documents for Argentinean History], (1924) T. XVIII, Teaching during the colonial era (1771-1810). Buenos Aires: Facultad de Filosofía y Letras. Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas.


Appendix A

Tool-kit to analyze textbooks.

This tool-kit includes questions to analyze textbooks based on three methods: Fairclough’s (1998), questions to analyze the features of vocabulary grammar, and structure of the text, Kress and van Leewen’s (2001) ideas to analyze images, and Talbot’s (1996) questions to analyze the construction of characters.

Fairclough’s (1998), questions to analyze text’s vocabulary, grammar, and structure.

Fairclough’s (1998), questions to analyze the features of vocabulary grammar, and structure of the text.

Vocabulary

Question 1) What experiential value do words have? How ideological differences between texts in their representations of the world are coded in their vocabulary?. What classification schemes are drawn upon? Are there words which are ideologically contested? Is there rewording or overwording?

What ideologically significant meaning relations (synonymy, hyponymy, antonymy) are there between words? Synonymy: are words mutually substitutable?
Hyponymy: the meaning of one word is included within the meaning of another word.

Antonymy: the meaning of words are incompatible.

Question 2) What relational values do words have? Are there euphemistic expressions? They are words substituted by a more conventional or familiar one, to avoid negative values. Are there markedly formal or informal words? Do they emphasize position?

Question 3) What expressive values do words have? Are they ideologically contrastive?

Question 4) What metaphors are used? Social problems as diseases, for ex.

Grammar

Question 5) What experiential values do grammatical features have? What types of process and participant predominate? Actions (svo), events (sv), and attributions (svc) Actions involve 2 participants, an agent and a patient, and the agent acts upon the patient. Events involve only one participant (animate or inanimate). Is agency unclear? Are processes what they seem? Are nominalizations used? A nominalization is a process converted into a noun. In such cases, some of the meanings are missing tense, modality, agent, and patient. Are sentences active or passive? Do they leave the agent and causality unclear? May be to avoid redundancy or it can be obfuscation of agent or causality. Are sentences positive or negative?

Question 6) What relational values do grammatical features have? What modes are used (declarative, grammatical question, imperative)? Are there important features of
relational modality? Modality is related to the writer’s authority in relation to others (relational modality) and to the writer’s authority in relation to the truth or of a representation of reality (expressive modality). Expressed modal auxiliary verbs: may, might, must, should, can, can’t, ought, adverbs and tenses. Are the pronouns we and you used, and if so, how? The inclusive we includes the readers, talks for them. The exclusive we includes the writer, some others, but not the addressees. It serves to stress unity of a people at the expense of the recognition of divisions of interests.

Question 7) What expressive values do grammatical features have?

Are there important features of expressive modality? For example, some modality auxiliaries are: may (possibility), must (certainty and obligation), can’t, should, etc. Some modal adverbs are probably, possibly, etc.

Question 8) How are (simple) sentences linked together? What logical connectors are used? Though, but, although, nevertheless, even though, express causal relationships that assume something. That something gives coherence to the text. As a result, shows a consequential relationship with a different assumption. These relationships may be ideological common sense. Are complex sentences characterized by coordination or subordination? In some cases, the content of subordinated clauses is presupposed, taken as already known to or ‘given’ for all participants. What means are used for referring inside and outside the text?
Structure.

Question 9) What larger-scale structures does the text have? Such structures can impose higher levels of routine on social practice in a way which ideologically sets and closes agendas (making it difficult to see other matters and naturalizing the fact that it is not there).

Kress and van Leewen’s (2001) ideas to analyze images

Question 10) Does the represented participant look at the viewer?

Question 11) Are the represented participants demanding or offering?

Question 12) Who are depicted as demanding and who are depicted as offering.

Question 13) What kind of images are used to illustrate the represented participants? Photos, drawings, paintings, cartoon-like drawings?

Question 14) How are the represented participants shown in relationship with distance? Are they close as in a portrait? Are they so far away that they look like part of the landscape? Are their images captioned? How? Is distance used to signify respect, otherness, or something else?

Question 15) Is the object shown as if the viewer is engaged with it, by being shown at close distance? Is the object shown at middle distance, shown in full but without much space around? Then, is it represented as within the viewer’s reach, but not as actually used?
Question 16) Is the object shown at long distance? Is there is an invisible barrier between the viewer and the object? Is the object there for our contemplation only, out of reach? P. 134.

Question 17) Are there frames? What do they mean? (Usually “frames separate the represented world from the physical space in which the image was viewed...A frame is like a window on the world” (136)

Question 18) Are the images subjective: do they have a central perspective, a ‘built –in” point of view? How has the point of view of the subjective, perspectival image been selected for the viewer?

Question 19) What are the objective images showing as “everything to be known about the represented participants? Do they violate any law of naturalistic depiction, or of nature? (p.137)

Question 20) Are the compositional principles of perspective challenged? For example, do the images juxtapose, as in a video or a computerized image?

Question 21) What kind of angle does the image have? Horizontal, frontal, or oblique angle? What do the angles say about involvement or detachment?

Question 22) Is the represented participant seen from a high angle? This means that the relationship between the producer of the image and, hence the viewer, and the represented participants is a power relationship in which the producer of the image and the viewer have power over the represented participants

Question 23) Is the represented participant seen from a low angle? This means that the relationship between the producer of the image and, hence the viewer, and the
represented participants is a power relationship in which the represented participants have
the power over the producer of the image and the viewer.

Question 24) Is the picture at eye level? This means that the “point of view is one
of equality, and there is no power difference involved” (146)

Question 25) Who could see this scene in this way? A supervisor, a worker?
Someone who’s inside? Where would one have to be to see this scene in this way, and
what sort of person would one have to be to occupy that space?

Question 26) What kind of angle does the objective image have? Frontal or
perpendicular top-down angle, top-down angle, or cross section?

Talbot’s (1996) questions to analyze the construction of characters.

Question 27) Who are the interactants, i.e. who’s talking to whom?

Question 28) What characters are in the text and what are they doing there?

Question 29) Does the writer engage with them, either in criticism or agreement?
Is the reader one of them?

Question 30) What subject positions are there, i.e. what kind of identity does the
writer set up for herself?

Question 31) Is the writer being friendly?

Question 32) What kind of identity does she set up for us, the readers, i.e. who
does she think we are?

Question 33) This question does not belong to any of the authors mentioned
before in this questionnaire. I add it because I consider that addressing the attitude that is
promoted by the text enriches the analysis. The question is What kind of attitude does the text promote from the reader? Is it an active attitude, by which the reader is motivated to engage with the text in a critical way, questioning, relating ideas, looking for connections between concepts, causes and consequences, etc? Is it a passive attitude, by which the reader is expected to passively accept the text, without engaging in criticism or other ways of active though?
Appendix B

People with special needs as shown in the textbook for the second cycle, p.119.
Appendix C

Teaching against discrimination, in the textbook for the second cycle.

We are many and different.

Form groups to answer the questions.

Lee, who are you working with?

I don’t have a group.

So, work with Manuel, Andrea, and Mattas.

We don’t want to work with him. Why us?

What is the problem?

Lee is Korean and they don’t know how to speak.

Lee’s Spanish is not very good because he has not been in Argentina for too long, and he is learning.

Well, my neighbor is Korean and he seems weird to me.

Lee is not the way you think he is.

The idea is that a group or a person has about another group or person that they think that they are really like.

VITA

Gabriela Azucena Mendez

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