

Editorial

Between tension and hope: educational transformations from the classroom

The issue that the reader holds in their hands arrives at a particularly significant moment for educational reflection in Ibero-America. It is not a set of isolated articles, but rather a deep dialogue among researchers who, from different countries, educational levels, and disciplinary traditions, share a central concern: how to build an education that not only transmits content but also transforms realities, subjectivities, and professional practices? The editorial team has selected six works that, from teacher training to science teaching, from language policies to the foundational thought of José Martí, offer situated, critical, and hopeful answers.

The first article, signed by Lady Johanna Ulloa Poveda, carries out a rigorous analysis of bilingualism policies in Colombia. The author does not limit herself to reviewing programs such as the National Bilingualism Program or the "Colombia, Very Well" law, but rather investigates the structural tension between the real and the ideal role of the teacher. With a hermeneutic gaze that integrates ontological, ethical, and pedagogical dimensions, the research reveals that the identity of the English teacher is constructed amidst often contradictory normative demands and a personal ethical consciousness that seeks to reconcile itself in daily practice. The findings are compelling: without comprehensive strengthening of teacher training — which includes not only linguistic competencies but also pedagogical and reflective ones — bilingualism goals will remain elusive. The conclusion invites us to think of contemporary teaching as a hermeneutic praxis oriented toward the humanization of education.

Next, Arnold Barreto Rodríguez deepens this same line of reflection on teacher identity, but from a perspective focused on the ethical and existential tensions of the educator in Colombia. His article, "Teacher identity in tension: a hermeneutics of current educational praxis," proposes an interpretive model called the Hermeneutic Triangle of Being, Ought-to-Be, and Teaching Praxis. Through semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and documentary analysis, the author shows how the teacher struggles between their deep vocation and bureaucratic and institutional demands. The vertex of "being" alludes to narrative identity, personal convictions, and the meaning each educator attributes to their profession; "ought-to-be" represents the normative horizon, standards, and policies that often operate decontextualized; and "praxis" emerges as the space of mediation where both dimensions are reconciled. The study concludes that teaching, far from being a technical application, is an ethical and political act that demands continuous training focused on caring for others, critical reflection, and collective construction of meaning.

Pedagogical innovation occupies a central place in the third article, by Miguel Chávez Marín, titled "Gamification in mathematics: a critical look at tensions between innovation and teaching practice in Bogotá." This work, part of a doctoral project, examines the promises and pitfalls of incorporating playful elements into mathematics teaching in public schools. Based on a systematic literature review and analysis of local experiences, the author reveals a persistent gap between the enthusiastic discourse of gamification and its actual implementation in the classroom. The lack of specific teacher training, curricular restrictions, scarce technological infrastructure, and work overload create a complex scenario that, in many cases, reduces gamification to mere "pointification" (points, badges, and leaderboards) without deep pedagogical intentionality. Chávez Marín argues that for gamification to transcend the level of a methodological fad, a cultural transformation in schools is required, accom-

panied by policies that invest in continuous teacher training, open educational resources, and participatory action research. His reflection is a call not to confuse innovation with the simple adoption of digital tools.

The fourth article takes us to initial primary teacher training in the Dominican Republic and Cuba. Romelia Colón Valdez, Clay Pérez Jiménez, and Ángel Luis Gómez Cardoso propose a comprehensive training program to strengthen pedagogical management from the first years of the teaching career. The design, validated by expert judgment through critical opinion workshops and collective construction, is structured in four stages — diagnosis, planning, implementation, and evaluation — that systematically articulate theoretical and praxical components. One of the most notable virtues of this proposal is its flexible and contextualized nature, which recognizes the diversity of training needs and the specific realities of each institution. Evaluation is not conceived as a final moment, but as a continuous process that allows permanent adjustments and fosters self-reflection in future educators. The article constitutes a concrete contribution to teacher training policies in the region, offering a practical tool based on evidence and dialogue with the very protagonists of the process.

From Venezuela and Cuba, Omar Escalona Vivas and Víctor Bless Gutiérrez address a cross-cutting theme in natural science teaching: experimentation in secondary education and its capacity to develop higher-order scientific skills. Through a systematic review using the PRISMA methodology, the authors analyze 250 studies and extract seven thematic categories, including explicit scaffolding, collaborative problem-solving, maker culture, STEM/STEAM education, contextualization of learning, and spaces for reflective exchange. The findings are enlightening: experimentation alone does not guarantee the development of critical thinking, argumentation, or hypothesis formulation. Deliberate pedagogical guidance, opportunities for students to design, build, and test their own experiments, and a dialogic environment where error becomes a learning engine are required. The study also warns about structural gaps in Latin America — lack of equipped laboratories, scarce connectivity, insufficient teacher training — that limit the potential of experimental practices. The conclusion is a call to rethink science didactics from an integrative approach that combines epistemic rigor with social sensitivity.

Closing the issue is an article by Rosa María Medina Borges, "The homeland in José Martí: Cuba, Our America, and the world," which offers a lucid interpretation of Martí's thought on identity and emancipation. The author traces three moments of conceptual synthesis in the work of the Cuban Apostle — "The Spanish Republic before the Cuban Revolution" (1873), "Our America" (1891), and the "Dominican Literary Review" (1895) — to show how Martí builds an idea of homeland that is neither narrowly nationalist nor abstractly cosmopolitan. The homeland is, for Martí, a community of interests, a unity of traditions, and, at the same time, a portion of humanity seen more closely. The research unveils the originality of the Cuban thinker in subverting the terminological instruments of his time (homeland, patriotism, nation) from a decolonized and deeply humanist stance. Medina Borges highlights the relevance of this thought for understanding current challenges of Latin American integration, citizenship building, and education for freedom. Her article is not just an exercise in the history of ideas, but an invitation to recover ethical and political reflection at the center of the educational debate.

Next, the editorial team incorporates a seventh article that, due to its relevance and quality, joins the central dialogue of this issue. It is titled "The teacher's voice in rural education: speech accommodation and literacy as mediations of educational quality," by Alba Lucía Barajas-Lizarazo and Adrián Filiberto

Contreras-Colmenares. The study addresses one of the historical debts of Latin American educational systems: rural education. Based on documentary and field research with an ethnographic approach, the authors examine how teachers in remote territories interpret and adapt the quality standards of the Colombian National Ministry of Education (MEN) through communicative strategies adjusted to the sociolinguistic environment. Speech accommodation theory and the sociocultural approach serve as a framework to understand that the rural teacher's ability to adapt their language and methodologies to the cultural reality of their students is not an optional addition, but the very condition of possibility for meaningful learning. The results show that rural teachers' discourse, far from being a mere transmission of content, constitutes an act of epistemic justice: it recognizes and values local knowledge, promotes dialogic practice, and is woven with affectivity and a sense of belonging. However, the findings also reveal important tensions: initial teacher training is mostly designed for urban contexts, multi-grade schools lack specific support, and quality policies often operate decontextualized. The article concludes that the true mediation of educational quality in rural settings does not lie in the repetition of universal standards, but in the teacher's ability to "accommodate their speech" — that is, to build bridges between the official curriculum and the daily life of the community. This is a fundamental contribution for rethinking teacher training, curricular policies, and educational research with a territorial focus.

Together, the seven works that make up this issue share a common thread: the conviction that education is fertile ground for transformation, but that transformation does not occur automatically or by decree alone. It requires committed individuals — teachers, trainers, researchers — capable of sustaining the tension between what is and what ought to be, between norm and conscience, between tradition and innovation. It also requires public policies that are not content with grandiloquent declarations, but that invest sustainably in teacher training, equitable infrastructure, and pedagogical support. Finally, it requires an academic community that dialogues with classrooms, listens to teachers, and places knowledge at the service of social justice.

The journal expresses its deepest gratitude to the authors for the quality and commitment of their contributions, as well as to the anonymous reviewers who, through their rigorous work, have guaranteed the scientific level of these pages. It invites readers to immerse themselves in each article with the certainty that educational research is not a luxury reserved for a few universities, but an indispensable tool for building more inclusive, creative, and humane societies. The next issue will continue exploring these paths, in the hope that shared reflection will continue to illuminate the way for those who, from the classroom, the laboratory, or the lectern, make possible the daily miracle of educating.

The editorial team