

Forty years of an education journal: celebration of a long journey (1975-2015)

This year, *Education and Research*, one of the first Brazilian journals specialized in education, celebrates its fortieth anniversary. During the past four decades – since the first issues of artisanal workmanship until now – the journal has gone through many phases, has overcome challenges, has undergone changes in format and editorial policy, but it has remained true to its original purpose of being a privileged means of dissemination of studies on education and, in particular, a critical observatory of the surrounding reality.

The celebration of this important anniversary invites reflection and thus inescapable findings. One is that much has been done by generations of editors and staff during this long period. In this 40-year journey, 86 editions have been published uninterruptedly, with texts by hundreds of authors of leading universities and research centers in Brazil and all over the world. Those authors endeavored to interpret or at least understand some aspects of the complex and thorny world of education, marked by a permanent state of crisis, as Cury analyzes (2010, p. 1090):

From whatever angle you see it, the education field is always critical. Critical in the sense of judging or examining a topic accurately, distinguishing and analyzing the components of such topic. But it is also critical in the sense of being in a difficult and embarrassing situation. In the first sense, it is an active area, it acts, it produces. This sense often covered with a cutting dimension like an ax, which cuts wood to see its anatomy and structure, and to indicate what to do. In the second sense, it suffers from a situation fraught with limitations, from scarcity in a harsh context, whose serious and worrying conditions are noticeable. This sense is often covered with a paralyzing dimension as a dead end [...].

Thus, *Education and Research*, as other important journals in the area, has been one of the privileged means for the dissemination of the ideas of those who seek alternatives to what the author calls “paralyzing dimension”, which stems from the epistemological traits underlying studies in education and also from the precarious state of the entire education system. The eighteen thousand pages printed so far bring valuable records of the efforts to make diagnoses of (and indicate possible solutions to) structural and conjunctural problems affecting the educational field in different contexts.

This voluminous production resulted not only from the work of authors, but also from the dedication of many people who have contributed for the journal to achieve its profile: peer reviewers, the professors who composed the various editorial boards and advisory councils and employees who have been responsible for the secretarial and administrative support to the journal. Finally, we must also recognize that both the pioneering spirit and the longevous life of *Education and Research* have been made possible by the

invaluable strategic support, embodied in various forms, that was guaranteed by the principals of Faculdade de Educação, Universidade de São Paulo (FEUSP), in their various administrations. In addition to the funding agencies and Sistema Integrado de Bibliotecas [Integrated Library System] of Universidade de São Paulo (SIBiUSP), we must also acknowledge the significant funding by Fundação de Apoio à Faculdade de Educação [Foundation for Support of Education School] in recent years, which has enabled us to take steps toward the professionalization of the journal.

Naturally, the pages of a journal portray part of the history of a society. These are not only four decades of *Education and Research*: They are also four decades of education, four decades of technological transformations, four decades of significant political and social changes.

Education and Research traces its roots back to 1975, during the military dictatorship. Its idealizers can be considered representatives of a generation that was born in the conservative 1940s and 1950s, grew or graduated in the 1960s, a period characterized by significant transformations in art, behavior and sexuality, as well as by mobilizations and political confrontations. They were young during the dictatorship of the 1970s, stabilized professionally in the 1980s, the so-called lost decade, and, when personal computers entered homes in Brazil, they were already adults. Since then, many changes have occurred in the production and reproduction of life in every sphere. Over the past forty years, new researchers have been born and have graduated. Readers, reading, and its supports have also changed during this period (CHARTIER, 2001, 1999). When *Education and Research* was born, readers had limited sources of information in comparison to nowadays. Today, thanks to the resources of the digital world, readers can access an extraordinary, almost unlimited, amount of information and content. These changes are also reflected in the direction that journals have taken.

Examined together, the issues offer readers an interesting script for understanding the main debates and challenges which have arisen for researchers in the area in recent decades, the topics of interest that have mobilized them in each time, the rich methodologies developed in different studies, the variety of theoretical affiliations, as well as the references that were in vogue at different times. In a way, the texts published until today in the journal ultimately offer a fruitful panel not only of the obstacles and advances in research on education over the period but also of the very transformation of education in our country. And, more than that, examining the various volumes allows identifying the close relationship between the topics addressed in *Education and Research* and certain tensions (of political, economic and social order) faced in each historical moment in Brazil, Latin America or worldwide. With regard to the Brazilian reality, the picture of education that emerges from its pages is a complex field, in constant dispute, in an unequal country, marked by a long process of clashes and pending social advances, in which the failed construction of citizenship, the misuse of public and private spheres, the presence of an ambivalent state, the contradictory legacy of miscegenation, corruption and violence appear as persistent traits.

It must be recognized that in the past forty years *Education and Research* has made significant efforts to achieve genuine internationalization. Interestingly, this was already our journal's

mission even before current demands and pressures. Since its beginning, the journal has had the merit of presenting the ideas of authors from different regions to Brazilian readers, functioning as a sort of window on the world. But the effort made so far has been not only to bring to the national scene *the latest news* (thereby reinforcing the trend of valuing, in principle, what comes from abroad), but also to circulate the important – and increasingly respected (for its vigor, originality, and rigor in writing) – Brazilian educational production (through translations into English and the electronic availability of articles). With this, we mean that, on the one hand, since its inception, *Education and Research* has stood out for the strong presence of foreign authors in its editions, not only in its editorial committee, but also in the authorship of articles or participation in interviews. On the other hand, in recent years, it has undertaken numerous efforts to ensure that Brazilian research and production is disseminated and recognized. This is our commitment with the academic community, with our peers.

This remarkable collaboration of foreign authors is associated with a number of factors, among them the fact that the journal is linked to FEUSP. It is noteworthy that *Revista da Faculdade de Educação* [Education School Journal], the first name of *Educação e Pesquisa* [Education and Research], started its activities five years after the founding of FEUSP, with the purpose of disseminating the studies conducted by its faculty¹ However, in 1976, the year after its launch, the journal began a shift toward publishing productions of researchers from national and international institutions, besides those of FEUSP professors. Since then, in line with the cutting edge role played by FEUSP in educational research in the country, the journal has increasingly strengthened its broad nature, disseminating scientific production in the educational field in general, with no limitations regarding themes or institutional affiliations of its authors. More recently, other important factors have contributed to the internationalization of the journal, such as the fact that it has become virtually bilingual (today a significant number of articles is published in English and Portuguese) and the fact that it is fully and freely accessible by electronic means. The presence of international authors throughout the editions can also be understood as an expression of the growing interest that the journal has begun to arouse in other settings, in particular in Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula. We must also admit that some of this demand can be explained by the pressure on researchers to publish articles on the findings of their work – an international phenomenon typical of contemporary academia (CARVALHO; SASSERON, 2014). Thus, with the purpose of promoting a qualified debate to help editors of Brazilian journals and researchers collectively tackle issues relating not only to the professionalization and internationalization of journals, but also to academic assessment practices generally called *scientific productivity*, we organized in 2014, v. 40, n. 2 a little dossier (PACKER, 2014; REGO, 2014; BENCHIMOL; CERQUEIRA; PAPI, 2014).

This time, to mark the fortieth anniversary of *Education and Research*, its editorial board has planned this commemorative edition, which expresses its vocation for internationalization. In this volume, we present four dossiers on various burning issues in educational

¹- The title *Educação e Pesquisa* [Education and Research] was not adopted until 1999, when the journal underwent a sharp reform.

research. Each of them brings together six to eight articles written by researchers and intellectuals from several countries.

Because it is a special edition, instead of following the usual article selection process (basically regulated by the continuous flow of submitted manuscripts or of calls for papers), we have opted for another strategy: we invited colleagues from various fields to take on the coordination of four dossiers in their fields. We also defined protocols and they were followed strictly: to submit one's dossier proposal through a text to justify the relevance of the topic chosen within contemporary academic production; to submit a list of participating authors, with their titles and institutional affiliations (which should meet the geographic diversity criterion at international and national levels), and an expanded summary of each article. The evaluation and approval of each manuscript followed the same formal parameters of publication of any article in the journal, that is, manuscripts were submitted to the usual blind peer review, whose criteria are available on the journal's website.

The first dossier is entitled "Significant currents of ethnographic research on education: Majorities, minorities and migrations across the Americas." It was organized by Elsie Rockwell, a researcher with Centro de Investigación y de Estudios Avanzados del Instituto Politécnico Nacional (Cinvestav), Mexico, and by Kathryn Anderson-Levitt, University of California, Los Angeles, USA. It consists of seven articles representing consolidated lines of ethnographic research in five countries in the Americas – Canada, the USA, Mexico, Brazil and Argentina –, and results from exchanges between academics from different parts of the world in successive meetings of Simposio Interamericano de Etnografía de la Educación [Inter-American Symposium on Ethnography of Education], which has been held since the late 1980s. As the coordinators clarify in the great introduction to the dossier, "The contributions focus on aspects of the Ethnography theme of the XIII Simposio Interamericano de Etnografía de la Educación (UCLA, 2003) – 'Majorities, minorities and migrants'. Recent studies in these lines explore the ways in which diverse community and network resources, structural inequalities, and transnational realities impact educational processes both within and beyond formal schooling. Together they pose important conceptual and methodological challenges for educational research". It is noteworthy that the presentation text goes beyond the articles of the dossier and illuminates the set of texts (choices, differences between them, absences, and the need for dialogue), and each article. It also allows situating the themes, methodological options, and theoretical frameworks according to what articles have in common and to what is specific to each of them. Thanks to the extensive knowledge of the authors in this field, more than just a presentation, it is a profound reflection on the course of ethnography of education in the Americas.

The theme of educational assessment in the world today is the theme explored in the second dossier, entitled "Where do current educational assessments go?", and organized by José Alberto de Azevedo and Vasconcelos Correia – Universidade do Porto, Portugal –, Lisete Regina Gomes Arelaro – Faculdade de Educação, Universidade de São Paulo, Brazil – and Luiz Carlos de Freitas – Universidade Estadual de Campinas,

Brazil. It presents seven articles authored by professors from Brazil, Italy, Ireland, Finland, and Portugal and the interview “Self-evaluation can make a difference in the quality of education: talking with John MacBeath”, published in the latest section of the volume. John MacBeath is emeritus professor at the University of Cambridge in England, and a consultant to several international organizations. The dossier brings together thought-provoking reflections and critical analyses about the impasses of the transformation of large-scale evaluation, adopted as a unique strategy to measure the performance of students at all educational levels, and suggests perspectives different from the ones which have been in evidence. In the words of the organizers, “The authors show that the evaluation of educational quality is a more complex process which, to be successful, requires, among other things, the conscious participation of those involved. Other facets discussed are: the importance of ethics in the evaluation processes, since, due to their requirements, which are incompatible with school daily life, such processes have led to corruption in education; and the distortion brought about by PISA, particularly in the analysis of the reasons for the success of students in Finnish schools”.

The third dossier, called “School: between acknowledgement, merit and excellence” was conceived and organized by Danilo Martuccelli – Université Sorbonne Paris Cité, Paris, France, Institut Universitaire de France (IUF), Centre de recherche sur les liens sociaux (CERLIS), and Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS) – and by Maria da Graça Jacintho Setton, Faculdade de Educação, Universidade de São Paulo, Brazil. The dossier’s eight articles – authored by researchers affiliated with French, Portuguese, Brazilian, and Chilean universities – discuss the social position of school and education today, marked by the ambiguity between the promises of a fairer and more egalitarian society and of individual success and the malaise generated by the non-fulfillment of such promises. In the presentation text, the organizers work with the intertwining of three key concepts – acknowledgement, merit and excellence – and the consequences of the widespread acceptance of these notions to understand trajectories of school success or failure. In this reflection, they discuss with propriety the main theoretical frameworks with which they dialogue, involving classical authors of sociology of education. The concern to analyze the imaginary of school and education in its relation to subjects’ projects and individual trajectories, especially in contexts of democratization of access to early childhood, primary and secondary education, brings to light a set of tensions that cross this relationship, which is sometimes marked by hope, and sometimes by frustration, which sometimes points to broader and deeper transformative education, and sometimes is permeated by an utilitarian character. The authors point out that even the presence of studies of different national origins in the dossier allows a comparative look, capable of locating alterities and similarities.

The last dossier entitled “Weird, abject, coveted, constructed: bodies, desires, and education” was organized by Anderson Ferrari, from Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora, Juiz de Fora, Minas Gerais state, Brazil, and address issues related to gender, sexuality and education. Its purpose is to present the ideas and studies of a group of researchers from Brazil and from other nations – who use different approaches and problematizations – around the theme of the production of bodies and desires, understood as provisional

results of disputes and negotiations between subjects who experience different educational processes. Its chief merit is to bring to education a debate that originated in the struggle of feminist, gay and lesbian groups which for decades have denounced the inability to understand society disregarding its multifaceted and historical reality.

Publishing this special issue was the way chosen by the editorial board to celebrate the anniversary of *Education and Research* together with readers. We hope everyone approves the choice of articles. They were selected for their clear writing, the explicitation of the leading concepts, for the relevant treatment of bibliography, and especially for the contemporaneity of the subjects addressed. We also expect this issue to express our conviction that to do science in education involves teaching how to think critically, and this relates to the ability to ask good questions and develop judgments that help forward problems, construct arguments and at the same time show how to disassemble such problems, find misconceptions and assess the credibility of sources. And, finally, we expect this issue to manifest our conviction that scientific journals are important sources of information for teaching and research activities, and thus constitute an input for research and the development of science.

On this anniversary, besides celebrating the maturity of *Education and Research*, we would like to congratulate and thank all those who make daily great efforts to ensure this important journal continues to exist.

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