



Manualistics in Latin America. An approach to some of his lines of research from the perspective of present history¹

La manualística en Hispanoamérica. Aproximación a algunas de sus líneas de investigación desde la historia presente

A manualística na América Latina. Uma abordagem de algumas das suas linhas de investigação na perspectiva da história atual

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Abstract

The main objective of the article is to analyze four of the lines of research that focus on the studies of representations of social processes and groups in schoolbooks by the exponents of a historiography whose field of action, still under construction, has given rise to what is called “manualistics”. It is not about summarizing all the authors with their works, nor about reviewing each result, which goes beyond the interest and possibilities of this text, but rather about pointing towards key themes that, from present history or history of the recent past, start from the recognition of insufficiencies in the ways of representing, in books and school manuals, certain problems associated with traumatic events: international conflicts, national scenarios of violence, as well as the identity of indigenous and Afro-descendant populations, and the female presence in the historical course of the countries of Latin America, the region on which the article focuses. In this sense, it is interesting to know the theoretical references and transdisciplinary methodologies used by the selected authors, and their main proposals for changes in the multimodal conception of books and in the training of teachers.

Keywords: Manuals; Present history; Gender; Afro-descendants; Indigenous people.

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Resumen

El artículo tiene como objetivo principal analizar cuatro de las líneas de investigación que centran los estudios sobre representaciones de procesos y grupos sociales en los libros escolares, por parte de los exponentes de una historiografía, cuyo campo de acción, aún en construcción, ha dado en denominarse “manualística”. No se trata de compendiar a todos los autores con sus obras, como tampoco de reseñar cada resultado, lo cual rebasa el interés y las posibilidades de este texto, sino de apuntar hacia temáticas claves que, desde la historia presente o historia del pasado reciente, parten del reconocimiento de las insuficiencias en los modos de representar, en los libros y manuales escolares, determinados problemas asociados a eventos traumáticos: conflictos internacionales, escenarios nacionales de violencia, así como la identidad de las poblaciones autóctonas y afrodescendientes, y la presencia femenina en el decurso histórico de los países de Hispanoamérica, región en la que se centra el artículo. En tal sentido, interesa conocer los referentes teóricos y las metodologías transdisciplinarias empleados por los autores seleccionados, y sus principales propuestas de cambios en la concepción multimodal de los libros y en la formación de los docentes.

Palabras claves: Manualística; Historia presente; Género; Afrodescendientes; Indígenas.

Resumo

O objetivo principal do artigo é analisar quatro das linhas de pesquisa que se concentram nos estudos das representações de processos e grupos sociais nos livros escolares dos expoentes de uma historiografia, cujo campo de atuação, ainda em construção, deu origem à chamada de “manualística”. Não se trata de resumir todos os autores com suas obras nem de revisar cada resultado, o que ultrapassa o interesse e as possibilidades deste texto, mas sim de apontar para temas-chave que, da história presente ou da história do passado recente, partem a partir do reconhecimento de insuficiências nas formas de representar, nos livros e manuais escolares, determinados problemas associados a acontecimentos traumáticos: os conflitos internacionais, os cenários nacionais de violência, bem como a identidade das populações indígenas e afrodescendentes, e a presença feminina no percurso histórico dos países da América Latina, região que enfoca o artigo. Nesse sentido, é interessante conhecer os referenciais teóricos e as metodologias transdisciplinares utilizadas pelos autores selecionados, e suas principais propostas de mudanças na concepção multimodal dos livros e na formação de professores.

Palavras-chave: Manuais; História atual; Gênero; Afrodescendentes; Povos Indígenas.

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Introduction

Research on manuals² in Latin America has an extensive catalog of authors. Over the last thirty years of the last century, scholars gradually positioned this subject as a specialty for analysis within the broad field of social history of education, expanding its importance beyond that of a documentary source. Thanks to some authors' interest in conducting historiographical assessments, both nationally and in broader academic contexts, there are now analyses revealing the field's achievements, shortcomings, and projections. The growth of colloquiums, educational research conferences, symposiums, and international seminars, as well as an increase in specialized publications, has contributed to a more comprehensive and defined perspective on the issues surrounding the study of school textbooks.

It was more than an isolated experience; there was a movement of ideas around certain educational and research centers that encouraged research, conferences, and seminars dedicated to textbooks. The platform with the greatest reach and systematic influence on research in Latin America was the inter-university research project on Spanish school textbooks, MANES. MANES was based in the Department of History of Education and Comparative Education at the National University of Distance Education (UNED)³. As Latin American universities joined MANES and similar research groups emerged in the region, the project's objectives and bibliographic and research projections expanded rapidly.

Consequently, at the seminar "School Textbooks as a Source for the History of Education in Latin America: A Comparative Analysis" was held, Ibero-American and Inter-American projects with great academic potential for geographical and methodological expansion emerged, as noted in the introduction/assessment by Gabriela Ossenbach, coordinator of MANES, in the book *Los manuales escolares como fuente para la Historia de la Educación en América Latina*. Nevertheless, evaluations such as those by Guzmán (2001, p. 51), a member of the aforementioned group of authors, revealed the paucity of titles dedicated to analyzing textbooks as objects of research, particularly in Mexico.

This historiographical scenario was about to change. At the aforementioned seminar, papers were presented on topics related to working with textbooks in subjects that had been less popular until then. These papers also focused on social issues more closely associated with the processes of interaction within schools and classrooms. Topics included gender issues in Argentina, hygiene textbooks associated with the genesis of civilizing processes in Colombia, and physical education textbooks in Colombia. Additionally, predominant approaches to morality and civic instruction textbooks in Ecuador, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, and Uruguay showed encouraging signs for textbook development in the region.

Criticism of the content and didactic approaches of textbooks sparked the emergence of other interests, aligning with Latin American research trends that opened social history to topics such as family, childhood, daily life, and private life. Representations of families (Alzate, Gómez, & Romero, 1998), the treatment of race and its conceptualization in natural science (Andrada, 2005) and geography (Gvirtz, Valerani, & Cornejo, 2005) textbooks, the sensitive issue of indigenous peoples (Artieda, 2005), and reading practices were among the most clearly

² "Manualistics" is the term used by Agustín Escolano to describe the emergence of a new autonomous discipline that brings together all studies related to the history of the design, production, and use of school textbooks, whose complexity and multidimensional nature requires interdisciplinary work. Agustín Escolano Benito: "El libro escolar como espacio de memoria" (The schoolbook as a space for memory), in Gabriela Ossenbach, Miguel Somoza (eds.): *Los manuales escolares como fuente para la historia de la educación en América Latina* (School textbooks as a source for the history of education in Latin America), Ediciones UNED, Madrid, 2001, p. 37.

³ The project was created in Madrid in 1992 and established close ties with the EMMANUELLE project, which emerged in the 1980s under the direction of Alain Choppin, professor at the Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique (INRP) in Paris.

defined lines of research between the end of the last century and the first five years of this century (Spiegelburd & Linares, 2009).

Bicentennial celebrations of independence in Latin America encouraged academic studies of this nature, seeking new interpretations of the influence of this process in different countries in the region. As Colombian historian Luis Alfonso Alarcón (2013) rightly points out, one of the historiographical issues that received less attention in Colombia was the role of independence as an analytical subject in national history teaching, particularly in textbooks used in Colombian schools during the first two centuries of republican life. After noting the absence of studies on this topic in the field of history education, the author sets out to analyze the representations of independence in different Colombian Caribbean School textbooks used to teach national history. (p.345).

Rather than maintaining a sequential, linear approach to historical research, some scholars prefer to reflect on history as experienced and recorded by the people involved. This approach involves "documenting experiences of subjects and institutions that are ongoing; currently this history is being constructed" (Aróstegui, 2004, p. 14). This explains why the creators of contemporary history emphasize the revaluation of subjectivity, the study of experiences, and the emergence of memory in public spaces. However, they do not view memory as a given, suffered past event; rather, they view memory as part of an ongoing, unfinished temporality. Therefore, Aróstegui's proposal is to construct meaningful objects of study involving living human beings and projecting back as far as possible to produce historiographical explanations about them (Alonso, 2010, p. 52).

What lines of research in Spanish American manuals break down various plots/traumas from the centrality of the nation as the object of study, turning them into problems of the present history of education? This is the essential problem that this article seeks to solve.

First, we will define some of the most important lines of inquiry based on topics or objects of study proposed by research focusing on present history.

1. Trauma, memories, and silence.
2. Indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, and migrant populations.
3. Gender perspective.
4. Regional identities in national contexts and in the sphere of international relations.

Although we find regularities in the approaches to the problems, it is impossible to establish a chronology to sequentially frame each of these lines by country. Rather than summarizing authors and works or reviewing each result, the focus is on determining lines of research and identifying some of their representative exponents. These are then contextualized to search for conditioning factors that explain the regularities and differences in the treatment of the objects of study in this field of history of education, which is still under construction.

1. Where do the disappeared go? Trauma-memories and silences

Now that we are more than five years into the current century, curricular studies, particularly those concerning the teaching of history, are positioning present history as an appropriate tool for educational policy in some Latin American countries. In some countries, the "recovery" of history as an autonomous discipline, detached from the social sciences, was accompanied by an interest in addressing more recent historical periods. Thus, patriotic education, which was previously centered on struggles for independence and nationalist discourses woven into the revolutionary epic of the nineteenth century, has given way to contemporary history. This new focus is particularly on events and phenomena that were

generally traumatic and have implications for the democratization of nation-states and the formation of citizenship.

One of the central objectives of school history has always been to educate good citizens. Traditionally, this goal was achieved through patriotic education, which sought to ensure national unity by following the examples of national heroes. However, by the end of the 20th century, this objective had clearly become obsolete. It was deemed appropriate to replace it with contemporary history, particularly the tragic experience of the last military dictatorship, to foster democratic citizens who respect human rights. This shift in focus moved the emphasis from the "nation" to "society" (ÁLVARO, 2010, p. 107). (Álvaro, 2010, p. 107).

Research on the treatment of history in textbooks soon began to proliferate (Carreño, 2012; D'Alessandro, 2014; Domínguez, 2015; Escobar, 2017). Topics such as the presence of the dictatorship in school textbooks, particularly in social studies, history, reading, and civics textbooks in primary schools, and to a lesser extent in secondary schools, editorial censorship (Invernizzi & GOCIOI, 2002), and the comparative treatment of indigenous issues during and after dictatorial regimes were among the most frequently discussed.

In Argentina, a country with an extensive historiography specializing in the context of the 1976-1983⁴ dictatorship, the relationship between memory and education was the focus of analysts concerned about the aftermath of repression in educational institutions after the return to democracy (Born; Morgavi; Von Tschirnhaus, 2010). Pioneering studies were conducted, including the significant work of Argentine historians Juan Carlos Tedesco, Cecilia Braslavsky, and Ricardo Carciofi (1984). However, it was Carolina G. Kaufmann (2018) and her research team who placed the subject on the agenda of educational historiography with their three-volume series, *Dictadura y Educación* (Dictatorship and Education), making it one of the most widely used approaches to interpreting the recent past.

Designed to counter positivist narratives, many champions of present history, particularly those with a background in linguistics, acknowledge their debt to different analytical models, especially Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which gained prominence in the 1980s. Within this theoretical framework, the notions of intertextuality and reconceptualization become essential tools for analyzing how traumatic events from the recent past are represented in history books. This approach is based on the idea that it is possible to identify ideological patterns underlying certain social relations by studying the formal linguistic elements of discourse.

Despite these antecedents, the most rigorous studies with relevant results have emerged in the current century. This is not unrelated to the cessation of internal armed conflicts in Latin America in the last decade of the 20th century, the creation of commissions to clarify processes of violence and human rights violations, and initiatives to consolidate democratic regimes and achieve "national reconciliation."

C. Kaufmann (2018, p. 126) proposes analyzing priorities in the authorial discourse of textbooks by examining how ideologies and knowledge about what was considered appropriate are legitimized. Intertextuality is one of the main methodological tools used by the director of the Center for Studies in the History of Recent Argentine Education (HEAR) at the National

⁴ The dictatorship began in 1976, when the Armed Forces overthrew President María Estela Martínez de Perón. The three branches of the military (Army, Navy, and Air Force) formed a Military Junta that took over the Executive Branch, subordinating all armed and security forces, as well as the other branches of government, to its leadership. The dictatorial regime ended in 1983.

University of Rosario to trace "the traces and voices of the centers of dissemination of schoolbook policy during the dictatorship" in various formats, including: Official communiqués, program guides for the subject, recommendations from the Federal Council of Education, resolutions from the Ministries of Culture and Education (national and provincial), bibliographic suggestions, and more.

Another method used to approach the construction of narratives that refer to recent conflicts is working with visual elements and integrating them with textual representations.

This is evident in the research of Graciela M. Carbone, coordinator and professor of the graduate program "Textbooks and Hypertextual Itineraries in the Recent History of Argentine Education: Issues and Problems Related to Teacher Training and the Formal Education Curriculum" at the National University of Luján. Carbone (2018) discusses how the Kapelusz publishing house transposed images from comics to textbooks. Similar interests can be seen in Chilean universities. Although the Andean country's textbooks include important titles in the field of pedagogy (SOAJE, 2012), the study of recent history has also influenced historical research.

Teresa Oteíza Silva (2009; 2014) is among the most important and influential specialists in language analysis. A philologist, she addresses the mediation of language in the discursive construction of the Allende administration (1970–1973) and the military coup that led to the Augusto Pinochet dictatorship (1973–1990) in sixth- and eighth-grade texts after the 1999 educational reform. Oteíza argues that an "acceptable narrative" of the recent national past is legitimized through the intertextual construction of recontextualized evidence regarding the systematic violation of human rights during the Pinochet dictatorship. In other words, she explores how authorized knowledge becomes naturalized through ideological consensus around recent conflictive events.

Other objects of study could be examined similarly, such as those inscribed in scenarios of significant social, political, and economic conflict, including wars and terrorist practices, and "difficult" or "overloaded" histories, like those experienced in Colombia during the period known as "La Violencia" (JAVIER, 2019; González, 2014; Sánchez & Bolívar, 2015), or the controversies surrounding the inclusion of information from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CVR) in Peruvian school textbooks (De Belaunde, Eguren, & González, 2005; De Belaunde, 2012).

2. Representation of indigenous and Afro-descendant components in history textbooks

Concern for these social components, which have largely been ignored or undervalued in grand national narratives, did not begin in the current century. The issue of indigenous communities' rights gained the attention of politicians, scientists, international institutions, and civil society amid the exponential increase in debates and initiatives by indigenous peoples in the region during the past three decades of the 20th century.

Wilhelm (1990) found that the Mayan ethnic group was absent or minimized in Guatemalan primary school teaching materials. This revelation came during a decade marked by various indigenous movements in the region. Pressure from the Mapuche nation, Ecuador's indigenous peoples, and neo-Zapatismo, as well as the National Indigenous Congress of Mexico, impacted the regulatory legislation of intercultural bilingual education. However, the 1993 Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, approved by the United Nations, was insufficient. Nearly two decades later, at the 20th Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, debates surrounding the approval of the 2021 Goals Project underscored the evident failure of inclusive education policies for indigenous and Afro-descendant populations.

The extensive historiographical production on indigenous peoples in Chile is particularly noteworthy, especially following the organization of two international seminars on school textbooks held in Santiago de Chile in 2006 and 2008. (Zúñiga, 2006; Garrido, 2006;

Berchenko, 2006; Lira, 2009; Smith, 2010; Beniscelli, 2013; Villalón & Pagès, 2013; Arias & Riquelme, 2019; Espinosa & Aguilera, 2020). Media reproduction of imagery depicting violence during the Arauco War (16th–17th centuries) raised the possibility of implementing the Intercultural Bilingual Education Program and stimulated studies focusing on the representation of indigenous social and cultural components in school textbooks.

In a context marked by the exacerbation of the so-called "Mapuche question," historical events dating back to the Chilean colonial era became relevant. This brings us to the central question that animated the presentation by Riedemann, a sociologist with a doctorate in Historical and Cultural Sciences from the Free University of Berlin: "To what extent do school texts offer interpretive proposals about the link between the occupation of Araucanía and the current relationship between the state and the Mapuche people?" (Riedemann, 2009, p. 287).

Chilean professor Gabriel Villalón (PhD in History Education) and Spanish educator and historian Joan Pagès emphasized the need for curricular changes. "How can we incorporate the presence of indigenous peoples, their histories, traditions, customs, and beliefs into the curriculum and teaching of history and social sciences?" (Villalón & Pagès, 2015). Their concern was understanding the narrative trajectory of basic education textbooks in Chile. These narratives ranged from accounts of pre-Hispanic indigenous peoples in the distant past to their reduced presence during the period of conquest and colonization until they became practically invisible in 20th- and 21st-century content. Additionally, these authors emphasized the construction of the indigenous image based on stereotypes of their habitat and savage customs. These representations are associated with miscegenation, folk traditions, and the image of the rebel warrior.

However, new theories in educational sociology that distanced themselves from functionalism and Marxist reproductive theory influenced changes in analytical scale. Consequently, the everyday life of the school institution and its cultural interactions, both explicit and symbolic, began to appear on research agendas. From this perspective, schools ceased being considered mere reproducers of hegemonic values within an irreversible state-school hierarchy. Instead, they were understood as entities capable of producing culture, even within counter-hegemonic frameworks of resistance. This demanded a sociology of knowledge that paid attention to both macro-structural, cultural, and institutional developments and the micro and classroom levels, where power also manifests itself.

These sociological references gained popularity in educational historiography, particularly in textbooks. This is understandable, given the multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches inherent in contemporary history. Consequently, some titles have gradually shifted their focus to the reception processes and pedagogical reconceptualization carried out by teachers in their professional contexts. In this study, the author first identifies hegemonic and exclusionary paragraphs in school texts. These paragraphs are defined as content that promotes hegemonic discourses from the material and symbolic power of the state. They are also identified as barriers that prevent intercultural dialogue in the teaching and learning of school history (TURRA; MINTE; LAGOS, 2019, p. 9). Then, the author becomes an observer-participant with the ability to influence learning processes. Through his interactions with teachers, he demonstrates that they are not merely passive transmitters of established cultural norms but rather have the capacity to alter the direction of these messages.

A more synchronic and critical perspective can be glimpsed in the reception of the text's discursive proposals and also in the teaching of history, insofar as it recognizes this material as the spokesperson for one part of history, the state's perspective, and places in the hands of teachers the ability and "power" to show the other history, which studies the indigenous people as a historical subject in their development as a society and in interethnic relations (TURRA; MINTE; LAGOS, 2019, p. 9).

In other words, what fundamentally matters is not the historical content of the text, but rather how its main consumers read it—the process of recreating and recoding it according to their experiences and reflective capacities. Of course, the first part of the research procedure is essential in the sense of noting the historiographical methodological assumptions. According to this line of thinking, this is precisely where the scientific observation of behaviors and the transformation of educational scenarios begin, using tools from various fields of social knowledge, particularly pedagogy.

This was the proposal of Altamirano and a group of Special Education specialists at the Catholic University of Valparaíso who were interested in multimodality analyzing a fifth-grade school history textbook in Chile. Their goal was to understand how the concept of indigenous peoples was shaped through the different semiotic resources used. After establishing the textual and visual interpretation keys that shaped the distorted view of "the other," the authors concluded that:

There is a need for teachers to become multimodality literate to master the various semiotic resources and the naturalization of the meanings constructed therein, to mediate in the configuration of indigenous peoples as part of national cultural diversity [...] Reflection remains the responsibility of teachers, who should give voice to those who do not appear in the texts, in this case the indigenous peoples (ALTAMIRANO, GODOY; MANGHI; SOTO, 2014, p. 278).

This critical approach, informed by methodological tools from sociology, linguistics, anthropology, and pedagogy, finds its greatest resources in interpretive openings with contributions from other social and natural sciences. This approach provides the necessary tools to analyze images in books, such as photographs, drawings, and diagrams. With these tools, researchers can access the denotative and connotative levels of an image, as Barthes (1986) rightly pointed out. The denotative level refers to what is objectively perceived in the illustration, while the connotative level refers to what the image suggests. Thus, Altamirano grounds "the prejudices and stereotypes" constructed in textbooks in this second level.

Similar literature addressing this issue as a subject of study can be found in Peru (Aikman, 1996; Zárate, 2011), Colombia (Herrera, Pinilla, & Marina, 2003; Soler, 2008; Cabrera, 2010), Venezuela (Ramírez, 2005), and Mexico (García, 2019). In Argentina, two projects address this issue: "History of School Representations of Indigenous Peoples in Argentine Primary School Textbooks, 1880-2000" and "Between Foundational Homogeneity (1880-1916) and Cultural Diversity at the End of the Century (1980-2000)." School Discourses on Indigenous Peoples in the Chaco," were developed by the National University of the Northeast and are associated with the MANES-UNED Research Center.

From a contemporary historical perspective, these projects delve into problems of ethnic and racial discrimination through ideological language strategies in books and manuals designed for the social sciences and humanities curriculum. The positive self-representation and negative representation of the other, as well as the use of the lexical-semantic resources "Us" (positive) and "Others" (negative), allow authors applying Critical Discourse Analysis to unravel the forms of control and discursive power of nationalism in these pedagogical devices. This is evident in the work of García Agüero, a Modern Italian Literature specialist at UNAM, who discusses the textbooks offered free of charge by the Mexican government. She notes that, since their introduction in the 1960s, these materials have contributed to the consolidation of a shared mental framework of Mexican identity. In the case of the indigenous population, this framework involves the construction of an "idealized cognitive model." In other words, the

model of the indigenous person "is constructed through certain cognitive models evoked by the text and images" (García, 2019, p. 7). This model can be expressed through the knowledge-ignorance dichotomy, phenotypic characteristics (e.g., darker skin, specific hairstyles, and clothing), rural life, and the spatial location and gestures of indigenous children in illustrations compared to prototypical Mexican children.

Multimodal work with texts and images explains the importance of research in books with a greater profusion of illustrations, namely those devoted to reading, history, and social sciences, as well as free textbooks in indigenous languages. The procedure, which has some followers in countries such as Venezuela, is associated with working with illustrations in the area of social sciences for basic education. Important in this regard is the extensive work of Tulio Ramírez (2005), whose interests go beyond the representations of the indigenous population in his country's textbooks to present a more comprehensive view of the issue of minorities and marginalized groups in society.

The analysis of geography books also shows important results (AGUIRRE, 2015). The descriptive emphasis in the design of some of these works does not detract from the effort made by geography textbooks to determine the place of specialized texts in the effort to establish a sense of belonging to a territory or a territorial imaginary—the pedagogization of territory (AGUIRRE, 2010; ALARCÓN, 2011; GUTIÉRREZ, 2014). To a lesser extent, we find attempts to elucidate the marginal spatial representation of the indigenous component confined to the geographical/cultural space of barbarism, with the insertion of topics of analysis such as the positivist treatment of climate and its impact on the population, or, more directly, the problems of "race" and the disfigurements of "the other" (ROMERO, 2004; MENDONÇA, 2009).

As Quintero explains, the revival of the "regional geography" methodology has been effective in interpretation. In the case of Argentina, these subnational narratives "could be read as ways of representing internal societal differences, narratives capable of assigning each segment a place within the country's social and territorial configuration" (2002, online). History professors Mirta Teobaldo and María A. Nicoletti (2007, p. 170) take up this methodological key on two levels: the territorial level in their studies of Patagonia and the concept of "desert and emptiness" and the level of its inhabitants and the representation of barbarism. These conceptions "legitimize the conquest and extermination of its original inhabitants."

Studies in this line of research tend to dismantle the traditional exclusionary narrative regarding the nation-state. Above all, these studies seek to reveal images with discriminatory messages toward indigenous and African-American populations. These images delegitimize the presence of these populations as social actors in the current development of their respective countries (Calzadilla & Salazar, 2000; Balsas, 2011; Almeida & Ramirez, 2011).

However, it is striking that there are very few references to critical perspectives from universities, seminars, publications, or research conducted by indigenous academics. The "indigenous research paradigm," also known as "native science" or "indigenous research agendas," developed by indigenous authors, is more than just another reference; it is confirmation of a decolonizing pedagogical approach. Although not homogeneous, this approach seeks an inclusive and relational dialogue between modernity and ancestral knowledge (Arévalo, 2013; Tuhiwai, 2017). One topic of study could be the extent to which such results are considered in contemporary textbooks.

Finally, the scarcity of analytical work on migration is notable, despite its impact on the discursive construction of nation-building projects favored by the representation of distinctive "other" features. In Argentina, however, a consolidated historiographical tradition on this issue (Cucuzza, 2007) and the results of studies associated with the National Plan Against Discrimination's 2005 diagnosis—updated for the 2022–2024 period—have favored the existence of specialized literature on immigrants' images in school textbooks (Braslavsky, 1991; Romero, 2004; Soledad, 2009; Taboada, 2018).

3. Representation of women in history textbooks

Most research on historical representations of subaltern groups—including Indians, African Americans, migrants, and workers—approaches the issue from ethnic, racial, and class perspectives. However, these studies do not delve into sexism as an additional source of discrimination⁵. Undoubtedly, the androcentric perspective continues to influence many of these inclusive efforts. Nevertheless, certain legal frameworks established between the end of the last century and the present, as well as the implementation of public gender policies, have impacted educational practices, including representations in textbooks.

UNESCO's call to raise awareness of sexism in textbooks and its mandate to promote global research on the issue⁶ stimulated important, albeit isolated, results. In Latin America, Argentine sociologist Catalina H. Wainerman (1984) championed Bourdieu's cultural reproduction theory in the 1980s. She was interested in demonstrating that the "agency of cultural imposition," or "informants" as she called textbooks, had maintained an unchanged sexist logic since the early 20th century. Meanwhile, in Chile, Jorge Ochoa (1990), affiliated with the Center for Research and Development in Education (CIDE), revealed that texts from 1974–1981 codified the same stereotypes as studies from other countries. For example, productive work was assigned to male characters, and reproductive work was assigned to female characters.

Since then, studies have identified common themes in textbooks. These themes include the absence of women's social roles and historical contributions, the perpetuation of gender stereotypes regarding occupational roles (Piotti, 1990; Tornaria, 1992; Rostagnotto, 1993; De Azúa, 1997), the lack of references to women's contributions to culture and science (Graña, 2006), the legitimization of school textbook narratives as instruments of exclusion and segregation, and the evaluation of gender language policies in education (Furtado, 2018).

This last line of research has seen the most development recently, although it is still more prevalent in pedagogical and sociological research. Language is considered important in two dimensions: as a means of expressing gender identity and as a reflection of it. Influenced by the Critical Discourse Analysis model of German linguist Teun van Dijk, the researchers base their study on the category of exclusion in representations of social actors. This can be through suppression, which implies that social actors are absent from the text, or backgrounding, which implies that they are present but in the background. The goal is to highlight the role of women in significant historical events and their exclusion, suppression, or relegation to marginal roles.

In these cases, research designs are based on content analysis that includes categories defined a priori, such as the appearances of each sex, types of sexual roles, relationships with living beings, the social space of interaction, and the prominence of the actors.

⁵ The fact that this gender perspective is absent from studies on minorities and marginalized groups in textbooks correlates to some extent with the shortcomings of these studies, at least in historiographical terms, which does not imply that they are unknown. Let us cite the case of approaches to the work of the Zapatista Army of Women for the Defense of Water of the Mazahua People in Mexico. See Anahí Copitzky Gómez Fuentes. *Water and social inequality. The case of the Mazahua indigenous women in Mexico*, Madrid: Catarata, 2010.

⁶ At the end of the United Nations Decade for Women in July 1980, it was declared that education and training should contribute to a change in attitudes by eliminating traditional stereotypical images of the roles of men and women. Starting in 1981, UNESCO launched a vast program aimed at raising public awareness of the problem of sexism in children's and school books and promoting, encouraging, and supporting actions in this regard. See Ana Lorena Vargas Viquez. "Sexism in school textbooks and children's literature," *Repertorio Americano*, No. 27, 2017.

In addition to ACD, other models are used by exponents of this line, among which Multimodal Discourse Analysis and Assessment Analysis, inscribed in Systemic Functional Linguistics, stand out, with a Latin American reference in the work of Oteíza. The multimodal hermeneutic perspective is based assuming communication in the contemporary era transcends linguistic acts and also includes images, new audiovisual media, music, etc. This semiotic perspective broadens and enriches analytical proposals, although, I insist, its application in the field of historiography is less visible.

This observation does not mean that there have been no results in this area of research. In dictatorship scenarios such as in Chile, for example, it is important to elucidate changes and continuities in the representation of social actors in history textbooks between educational reforms in the 1990s (LOCE) and in 2009 (LGE), the transition to democracy, and the emergence of social demands, including those concerning women. Sometimes, as in the work of María C. Fernández Darraz (2010), a professor of social work at the Catholic University of Temuco, regimes of historicity respond to the evolution of women's representation in different Chilean historical contexts, as reflected in the book's different sections. This response is also seen in the chronological order of the textbooks themselves (Duarte, 2010; Minte & González, 2015; Castro, Manzo, & Pinto, 2016). However, the second variant, historicity based on textbooks, prevails. Research such as Andrea Minte's (2010) study of school texts is uncommon. There are also few specialists, usually female analysts, with a background in history. This author, a history professor at the University of Los Lagos, analyzes Chilean history books approved by the Ministry of Education to evaluate representations of women since pre-Columbian times.

Although the topic of women's work in texts, including the image of the housewife, is one of the most sensitive areas of contemporary social debate and cuts across most studies, it is beginning to yield results as a specific subject (Grinberg & Itatí, 2000; Fernández, Montanares, & Carrillo, 2018).

These projects and studies have contributed to unraveling the limitations of the textual and iconographic content of textbooks, especially those focused on history and the social sciences. According to these proposals, discrimination does not lie in access to the school system but rather in the reproduction of inequality through the official curriculum and educational practices, which are dominated by an androcentric approach.

However, there is generally a need for better articulation of the narrative logic, which is often overloaded with linguistic theoretical assumptions and then "broken down" into successive examples that converge into commonplaces.

Opening up to other areas, such as comparative studies (Robles, Pereira, & da Natividade, 2016), the production of school texts with their social, economic, political, pedagogical, and cultural aspects, etc., intersections, the relationship between school knowledge and historiographical academic development in terms of gender, updating book authors, designers, illustrators, and publishers, expanding multimodal analyses, and using textbooks in teaching practices could contribute to opening or updating new topics, methodologies, and approaches. This line of research is of vital importance in the field of contemporary history (EGUREN; DE BELAUNDE; GONZÁLEZ, 2005). Historians Carolina Alegre and Antonio Tudela's (2020) exploration of the representations of the historical role attributed to women during the War of the Triple Alliance in Paraguayan school textbooks between 1989 and 2020 is a good example of this universe of possibilities.

3. Regional identities in national contexts and in the sphere of international relations.

Regional integration processes in the late 20th century, particularly those formalized in the 21st century through memoranda of understanding and agreements between ministries of education, promoted joint research projects. These projects aimed to analyze each school system's perception of neighboring countries. Within the framework of MERCOSUR's (1991) multidisciplinary Socio-Cultural Research Program and UNASUR's (2004) initiatives, approaches to the historical relations of member countries were encouraged, emphasizing the importance of reciprocal perceptions (Urribari, 1999).

Conceptualizing textbooks as "instruments of international understanding between states that share a conflictive and entangled history" and "means of internal reconciliation" (Lässig, 2008) provided essential insights for research in this field, in which significant academic progress had been made through the Georg-Eckert-Institut für Internationale Schulbuchforschung⁷. Along the same lines is the Andrés Bello Agreement, which promotes analyzing history teaching programs and texts to make them compatible with the goals of Andean and Latin American integration.

Similar to textbooks that focus on indigenous issues and other marginalized populations, the problems of integration among Latin American nations are attributed to the "invention of the enemy" promoted by hegemonic images of otherness present in textbooks. Due to the nature of the content, historical events and processes receive special attention, and historians are more present. Thus, the notion of otherness in national formation in relation to former metropolises (Spain and Portugal) and neighboring countries, as well as the reinterpretation of international wars, such as the War of the Triple Alliance (1865–1870), which left Paraguay in ruins when it confronted Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay (Brezzo, 2001), and the War of the Pacific (1879–1883) between Peru, Chile, and Bolivia, emerge as central themes (Rodríguez, 2009; Parodi, 2011; Chaupis, 2015).

According to José Chaupis, a history professor at the National University of San Marcos, the manner in which the War of the Pacific is presented in school textbooks published by Santillana and Norma in Chile — the publishers with the largest market share in history, geography, and economics — "has prevented it from being a factor in the integration of both countries and the development of a culture of peace" (Chaupis, 2015, p. 103). This analytical logic is behind the title of Peruvian historian Daniel Parodi's book, *Lo que dicen de nosotros* (What They Say About Us), in which he contrasts the simplistic narratives of textbooks with the demystifying advances in Chilean social sciences. In these school narratives: "[...] the representation of relations between Chile, Peru, and Bolivia produces an otherness that places the former as the dominant power and the latter two as subordinate" (Parodi, 2011, p. 18).

Current events led Chaupis to propose a proper contextualization and discursive and historical reconceptualization of the War of the Pacific. Rather than avoiding conflict, this approach confronts it head-on. To this end, he suggested considering the multicultural variant of the national discourse promoted by the state. At this point, the author intertwines the analysis of subalternity discourse with that of border issues. "[...] recognizing the contribution of the subaltern actors of both countries in the war, who, although silenced, exist and should be

⁷ The Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research was founded in 1951 under the name International Institute for the Improvement of Textbooks. In its early days, and due to the particular context in which it was established, the Eckert Institute's work focused on bilateral conferences aimed at eradicating mutual prejudices, stereotypes, and enemy images in the respective school textbooks. Among the most significant of these were the 1951 "German-French Agreement on Controversial Issues in European History," the much-discussed 1976 "Recommendations for History and Geography Textbooks in the Federal Republic of Germany and the People's Republic of Poland," and the "German-Israeli Recommendations for Textbooks" of 1985.

considered" (CHAUPIS, 2015, p. 103). However, they are prevented from becoming a factor of integration "from below." La Rosa (2009, p. 24) alluded to this idea when he addressed the role of inhabitants in border areas of countries in conflict, including camps where Bolivians, Peruvians, and Chileans lived together.

Rivera (2012) refers to another "integrationist" variant in the sense expressed in some gender-related research when he points out the necessary link between "taught history" and "researched history" as pedagogical practices based on action research methodology.

Rivera, who holds a doctorate from the Department of Language, Literature, and Social Sciences Education at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, analyzes how the War of the Pacific is treated in textbooks used in Peruvian, Bolivian, and Chilean schools. Through his comparative analysis, Rivera reaches conclusions similar to those of other specialists, noting the presence of continuous rituals of war and heroic tragedies in which national heroes courageously confront the enemy. Her initial proposal is to deconstruct national narratives and reconfigure the image of "the others," establishing spaces for teachers, "the translators," to engage with academic readings and conceptualizations, which she believes they are currently distanced from. [1]

Carlos Garrido, a professor of history at Boston College Maipú in Chile, shared this perception when he presented the thought-provoking paper "My neighbor, my enemy?" at the Second International Seminar on School Texts in History and Social Sciences. Garrido understands that many teachers responsible for certain subsectors "do not necessarily specialize in them, so the school textbook becomes their only source of content. This has risks, fundamentally in transmitting questionable views, such as nationalist ones, to teachers and students" (GARRIDO, 2009, p. 348).

Representations of the War of the Triple Alliance, also known as the Paraguayan War, are examined to a lesser extent in the textbooks of the countries involved in this conflict. Despite its significant presence in historiography and its undeniable impact on the definitive formation of nation-states in the River Plate Basin, this event is not given much attention. Notably, some Argentine historians (BEL, 2015) have made significant contributions lately, as have Uruguayan and Paraguayan historians to a lesser extent (SANSÓN, 2011; ALEGRE & TUDELA, 2020).

What is most needed in these approaches, precisely because of the omissions, is an analysis of textbook production processes and market policies. Who is behind the development of the manual? How do they respond to the legal framework of educational reforms? How do they fit into the strategies of publishing companies? In other words, the position of the book's author within the intellectual field's structure should be perceived as a system that reduces their autonomy regarding legitimizing instances. These instances are not the academies, universities, or scientific journals from which many authors come. Rather, they are the political and economic powers that also seek to hold a monopoly on cultural legitimacy.

Balsas (2008, p. 419) refers to the limitations of intercultural education in schools by alluding to the deregulation of the publishing market and the impact of transnational cultural industries — another agency of the system — and proposes encouraging greater participation by Argentine publishers, especially smaller ones, in government purchasing processes. He also proposes excluding from government purchases those titles that present stereotypical views, conceptual errors, and discriminatory values, whether through the presence or omission of information.

Understanding these extra textual realities that influence the production of a text and its authors is useful for a textbook writer because it allows them to contextualize their work as part of the complex web of agencies that influence the final result. This is a methodological assumption and another line of research that could be considered. The history of this subject would contribute greatly.

General considerations

The exponents of manualistics in the four lines of research discussed in the article generally begin with various methodological tools, particularly Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). These researchers, from different specialties, articulate theoretical and methodological matrices that comprise a significant field of research impacting social and educational orders. The study of formal linguistic elements of discourse, as well as the use of intertextuality and reconceptualization, contributes to the analysis of how traumatic past events, historical border conflicts, and social components of a nation—such as Afro-descendant, indigenous, migrant, and women's populations—are represented in school textbooks today.

When delving into this historical-educational field, the exponents of the lines of research discussed here incorporate interpretive frameworks with a critical approach that is often contrary to consensus and norms. The present-day textbook author tends to swim against the tide. They seek to address the needs of marginalized or absent population sectors, groups, and strata, including victims of dictatorial regimes and critical memories sensitive to pain. They also address the needs of men and women "without stories" and discursive constructions of corset nationalism that exclude, denigrate, or distort in the pretension to legitimize an ego that requires, at all costs, the configuration of an alter.

This type of manual and textbook, a widespread literature associated with mass schooling, implicitly structures and legitimizes, with varying degrees of intentionality, a cultural socialization based on exclusionary collective imaginaries. This is constituted based on agreed-upon identity goods and values, conveyed by a lexicon that reflects the evolution of a fragmented social memory due to asymmetrical power relations.

This crusade is led not only by historians but also by a growing legion of linguists, sociologists, social workers, leaders, local development specialists, and directors of anti-violence and gender equality programs. Of course, educators, and pedagogues are also involved. As the field of research broadens and consolidates with new and revealing proposals, the methodological tools for the future will surely continue to expand and refine.

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