

## REFLECTION ARTICLE

**Pedagogical Reflections on the Teaching of Philosophy in Colombia\*.**

Reflexiones pedagógicas sobre la enseñanza de la filosofía en Colombia

Reflexões pedagógicas sobre o ensino de filosofia na Colômbia.

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**ABSTRACT**

The following article analyzes the characteristics of the pedagogical approaches, curricular contents and evaluation criteria that are used in the teaching of philosophy, in the academic medium, in Colombia. To develop it, a bibliographic or documentary approach is used. Results: An educational goal in Colombia that is intended with the study of philosophy is the development of critical thinking skills. However, the pedagogical practices maintain models of traditional pedagogy, the curriculum is minimized to the study plan with history content and little possibility to generate reflective thinking. In Colombia there is no pedagogical, political, axiological and evaluative clarity of what is wanted with the philosophy that coincides with the organization of the curriculum and the study plan. The problematization of reality and the use of didactic and playful strategies are appropriate pedagogical dynamics to improve 'learning to think' from philosophy. Here there is a possibility so that pedagogically, curricularly and evaluatively the objective of achieving the production, if you will, of critical thinking is achieved.

**RESUMEN**

El siguiente artículo analiza las características de los enfoques pedagógicos, contenidos curriculares y criterios de evaluación que se emplean en la enseñanza de la filosofía, en la media académica, en Colombia. Para desarrollarlo se utiliza un enfoque bibliográfico o documental. Una meta educativa en Colombia que se pretende con el estudio de la filosofía es el desarrollo de habilidades de pensamiento crítico. Sin embargo, las prácticas pedagógicas mantienen modelos de pedagogía tradicional, el currículo se minimiza al plan de estudio con contenidos de historia y poca posibilidad para generar pensamiento reflexivo. Se concluye que en Colombia no existe claridad pedagógica, política, axiológica y evaluativa de lo que se quiere con la filosofía que coincida con la organización del currículo y el plan de estudio. La problematización de la realidad y el uso de estrategias didácticas y lúdicas son dinámicas pedagógicas apropiadas para mejorar el 'aprender a pensar' desde la filosofía. Aquí existe una posibilidad para que pedagógica, curricular y evaluativamente se logre el objetivo de conseguir la producción, si se quiere, de pensamiento crítico.

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The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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## RESUMO

O seguinte artigo analisa as características das abordagens pedagógicas, conteúdos curriculares e critérios de avaliação que são utilizados no ensino de filosofia, no ambiente acadêmico, na Colômbia. Para desenvolvê-lo, utiliza-se uma abordagem bibliográfica ou documental. Um objetivo educacional na Colômbia que se busca com o estudo da filosofia é o desenvolvimento de habilidades de pensamento crítico. No entanto, as práticas pedagógicas mantêm modelos pedagógicos tradicionais, o currículo é minimizado ao plano de estudos com conteúdo de história e pouca possibilidade de gerar pensamento reflexivo. Conclui-se que na Colômbia não há clareza pedagógica, política, axiológica e valorativa do que se deseja com a filosofia que coincide com a organização do currículo e o plano de estudos. A problematização da realidade e o uso de estratégias didáticas e lúdicas são dinâmicas pedagógicas adequadas para aprimorar o 'aprender a pensar' a partir da filosofia. Aqui há uma possibilidade de pedagogicamente, curricularmente e avaliativamente atingir o objetivo de alcançar a produção, digamos assim, de pensamento crítico.

## Introduction

The following article is inscribed in the thematic lines: Philosophy of teaching or teaching philosophy and critical thinking, curriculum, measurement and evaluation of learning, according to the XVI National Congress of Educational Research (COMIE) (Mexican Council of Educational Research, 2021). Therefore, it analyzes the pedagogical approaches, curricular contents and evaluation criteria used in the teaching of philosophy, in the academic middle school, in Colombia. The methodology used in the development of the reflection is qualitative. It is based on documentary research, using a descriptive analysis technique of scientific, normative and other texts that have the teaching of philosophy as a center of study. The reflection has as epicenter of analysis the teaching of philosophy in Colombia: how it has been developed, from its curricular structure, the pedagogical approaches and criteria for its evaluation.

Philosophy in the country has been understood as a training space that allows students to learn critical thinking skills with reference to the preparation of future citizens. Therefore, it is clear that, according to Correa (2001)

The idea that philosophy has a formative value has assumed three basic forms of manifestation, each of which, obviously, corresponds to a particular conception of philosophy. These conceptions are those that have of philosophy a scientific, i.e. speculative, concept; that which identifies it with a pedagogical concept; and that which has of it a problematic concept. (p.101)

Although, for some authors, little by little the teaching of philosophy has been assuming a technical profile in the country that condemns it to disappear (Acevedo and Prada, 2017) and, for a long time, Deleuze and Guattari (1991) related philosophical teaching to the formation of specialist of thought.

With this preamble as a reference, the exercise is developed as follows: First, it reflects on the role and challenges to be met by didactics in the teaching of philosophy; Second, it reviews and exposes the recommendations and proposals of the Colombian Ministry of National Education (hereinafter MEN) and other successful bets on the teaching of philosophy; Third, it traces some investigations that have as center of study the curricular construction of the teaching of philosophy in Colombia and thus to know its findings; Fourth, it investigates the effects that generate the evaluation criteria for the teaching of philosophy and the national tests Saber 11; Fifth, it reflects some ideas exposed in the exercise in front of scenarios of practical and pedagogical application not referenced.

## Didactics in the teaching of philosophy

The development of content from a purely historical perspective and the reduction to verbal evaluation (written tests) are pedagogical and didactic practices that do not favor the role of philosophy in education. Its teaching, under these dynamics, only manages to fill the student with historical dates on death and birth of great characters and classifications that do not know what they mean (Zuleta, 2010). From this perspective, "Learning is not motivated by the desire to know something that has become necessary, disturbing, interesting, or by the solution of an unknown that moves us, but by the grade, the promotion, the competition, the fear of losing the year and being scolded or punished" (p. 67).

One of the challenges to overcome the problematic situation of philosophy teaching is to ensure that the pedagogical discourse is not underestimated by those who have the difficult task of teaching philosophy: the professionals of philosophy teaching. To avoid rejecting the questioning of teaching methods, in opposition to a didactic reflection for the benefit of an education adjusted to the current social needs (Tozzi, 2007). A significant evolution of philosophy teaching values the logic of learning rather than a dominant logic of content transmission. Concepts that, according to Gómez (2013), are mobilized and implemented in activities where a know-how in thinking, attitudes and philosophical positions is necessary.

From the didactic point of view, three fundamental elements are present in the teaching of philosophy:

...the teacher, in charge of creatively and constructively guiding learning, responsible for the identification of profiles, ways of thinking, learning styles, contexts and individual realities of the other; the student, subject to whom the teaching is directed with the purpose of achieving true modifications of behavior and cognitive capacities; and, the content embodied in the curriculum, content to be taught and learned; it answers the question of what to teach (Aguilar, 2019, p.132).

Within this process, it is important to recognize the role of didactic strategies and teaching aids (methods, procedures, techniques, resources, evaluation) to achieve learning.

It is clear, on the other hand, that the thinker of philosophy and the one who teaches philosophy are two competences that can coincide in the figure of the teacher. Hence, Aguilar (2019) states that the philosophy teacher, in order to efficiently fulfill his task, must know about didactics of philosophy, know about fundamental elements of argumentation theory and all in coordination with the demands of an investigative, pedagogical and basic psychology culture. Likewise, he/she must be a thinker of philosophy, a questioner, a researcher, a problematizer and with the capacity to promote critical and creative thinking in his/her students.

According to Castell (2021), the teacher must provoke in the student the need to approach philosophy. It does not imply that he is the center or the end of the encounter between student and philosophy. "The philosophical event could equally happen with the reading of a book individually and without a guide" (p. 171). According to the author, "The wager here is to install the teaching of philosophy as a "violating of thought", as a jolt, as an orientation or search that forces precisely to think, that is to say, to create" (Castell, 2021, p. 172).

## Pedagogical orientations in the teaching of philosophy.

For the MEN (2010b), the teaching of philosophy should be developed from a problem-based approach. The approach is based on the postulates "learning to philosophize" and "teaching to think". From the didactic point of view:

...in our particular case, of philosophy; depending on how the teaching of philosophy is understood, philosophical discourse will be selected and redistributed in order to conjure the force of the present, to master random knowledge and to build an attitude and a disposition towards life. Philosophical teaching must be understood as a man-building process; to philosophize is to learn to learn, while learning to learn is learning to think. (p. 103).

Hence, some of the didactic proposals made by the regulatory body are: Reading and analysis of philosophical texts; The seminar; The philosophical dissertation; The commentary of philosophical texts; The philosophical debate; The magisterial exposition of philosophical themes; The philosophy forum; The new information and communication technologies in the teaching of Philosophy (Ministry of National Education of Colombia, 2010b).

The strategies proposed in the guiding document are sufficiently supported to generate results that differ from the questioned and standardized strategies of the traditional model.

Currently, the teaching of philosophy to children has allowed not only reflections on its timely intervention in the processes of school formation, but has also generated proposals that coincide in the need to implement pedagogical and didactic strategies to make this space something really effective and attractive within the existing school and education models. Some of these proposals are:

*Philosophy Program for Children (hereafter P4C)* by Lipman, M., Sharp, A., and Oscanyan, F. The central purpose of the P4C program offered by the authors is "to help children learn to think for themselves" (Lipman et al., 1992, p.129). Unesco (2009) emphasizes that introducing philosophy in schools to awaken the curiosity and enthusiasm of children through philosophical questioning of situations typical of today's society and the contemporary world is really significant.

For authors such as Pineda and Kohan (2012), the P4C program provides new ways of approaching the teaching of philosophy, initially using the game of rules, playfulness and the children's commitment to try to solve issues from their perspectives. The program enhances the development of thinking skills with the use of novels, which serve to articulate concepts that are considered crucial and fundamental for life (Pineda, 2015). The important thing is that it invites to make processes of research, reasoning, organization and translation of information. The novelty of this program is that it redefines the concept of philosophy and education. A new conception of the child and a new format for presenting philosophical problems.

*Nomen's (2018) contributions* to philosophy for children, without departing from Lipman's proposal, states:

Children can practice philosophy and, if they add this competence to their lives, they will be able to participate in their condition as citizens, from their own point of view, in order to build a better, more critical, more creative, more human world. They must learn to think for themselves in order to build a better world, where we all can and want to live. (p. 8).

For the author, to develop philosophy as a capacity in the child, is not to print technical and professional learning on the subject, but to stimulate the child towards a new vision of the world as plurality. The reality where the child develops is a scenario with many windows and from his curiosity and admiration for what surrounds him, he must learn to adapt with the critical use of his rationality.

Teaching children to think is an urgent need for education. Life and its circumstances demand, on the part of those who are in formation, the possibility of constructing criteria and decisions, to analyze successes and failures in the process of growth with the mediation of reason. For this reason,

Children must learn to grasp the world in its complexity. Art, science, philosophy, play are the tools we have at our disposal to pose challenges and solution alternatives. We must use them as soon as possible, experimenting and deepening, taking advantage of error to advance or go deeper into knowledge. (Nomen, 2018, pp. 10-11)

For this reason, Nomen's proposal seeks to make children reflect on the most disturbing questions that the history of Western philosophy has bequeathed, with strategies that include play, art and dialogue through stories. Both parents and educators can approach this proposal, because it is not only a strategy that is used within the framework of educational institutions, but it operates in any scenario where the child develops (family, community, etc.).

*Project PHILOSOPHY 3/8* (De Puig and Sátiro, 2011). For the proponents, Lipman's contributions suggest an important element within their idea of philosophy for children. Thus:

The purpose of the Philosophy 3/18 proposal is to reinforce thinking skills at school, in primary and secondary education, with the objective of forming citizens who think and speak reasonably, essential elements for democratic participation. We work particularly in the areas of comprehension, analysis and problem solving, and it is done through philosophy as a discipline, by means of a particular method of learning that we call community of inquiry. (De Puig and Sátiro, 2011, p. 9).

This project suggests the use of philosophical novels offered for children at primary and secondary school levels. However, playing to think has been a novelty for the proposal, which was born from the needs that the teachers proposed to the program and to be able to have an impact on children in infant or preschool education. The program seeks to promote four strategies: listening, speaking, reading and writing. All of them are aimed at the development, not of little philosophers, but of citizens capable of thinking and expressing themselves reasonably.

It is clear that "Teaching to think is not the same as teaching about thinking" (De Puig and Sátiro, 2011, p. 15). The aim is for children to learn to be autonomous, capable of exploring alternatives, discovering their own prejudices and finding reasons for their beliefs.

### **Curriculum for the teaching of philosophy at the middle school level in Colombia.**

The Colombian Ministry of Education defines the curriculum in the following terms:

The set of criteria, curricula, methodologies and processes that contribute to the integral formation and the construction of the national, regional and local cultural identity, also including the human, academic and physical resources to implement the policies and carry out the institutional educational project (MEN, Decree 230, 2002).

Regardless of its structures, the curriculum is composed of the following elements: goals, objectives, content organization, learning and teaching models, and evaluation of results (Taba, 1974). Although the study plan could be considered a concrete expression of the curriculum, because all its elements are reflected therein, it cannot be equated to the curriculum by itself.

Since this is part of the curriculum, Article 79 of the General Education Law 115 (Congress of the Republic of Colombia, 1994) identifies pedagogical, social, political, cultural and other purposes in its construction. According to Taba (1974)

In order to develop a theory of curriculum development and a method of curriculum thinking, it is essential to investigate what the demands and requirements of culture and society are for both the present and the future. Curriculum is, after all, a way to prepare youth to participate as useful members of our culture (p.25).

Thus, it is important to analyze what have been the cultural demands and requirements for the different curricular proposals in the teaching of philosophy in Colombia?

In the case of philosophy, the Law 115/1994 of education contemplates, in article 31, that philosophy is part of the fundamental areas of academic secondary education. With which, according to the law, it is foreseen:

The promotion of awareness and responsible participation of the student in civic actions and social service. [The reflective and critical capacity on the multiple aspects of reality and the understanding of ethical, moral, religious values and coexistence in society (Congress of the Republic of Colombia, 1994).

However, philosophy is not a discipline that is taught per se, but supports the formation so that the student learns to think and thus to intervene in a critical, autonomous and participative way in the social construction.

For the year 2010, the Ministry of National Education designs *Pedagogical Guidelines for the teaching of philosophy* for secondary and express education:

...teaching and learning activities promote the development of certain basic competencies. These are the communicative, mathematical, scientific and citizenship competencies.  
...it is considered that the teaching of philosophy in secondary education should promote the development of skills associated with critical thinking, communication and creativity. (pp. 30-31).

These orientations were carried out in the framework of permanent meetings in which not only experts in the teaching of philosophy participated, but also the educational community represented at the national level. The exercise updates and improves the panorama of philosophy teaching for secondary education in the country. The contributions found there really resignify the sense and meaning of philosophy in the Colombian education and concretely offer elements that serve as a guide for teachers.

However, Paredes and Villa (2013) affirm: "The teaching of philosophy from the curricular guidelines of the MEN should be developed in permanent contact with the knowledge of the various areas of knowledge, relating them, rethinking their problems and questions, thinking about the meaning of knowledge from its relationship with the sciences and the arts" (p.179). Likewise, it must take into account the student's experience because it reveals how knowledge acquires meaning when related to various disciplinary views where the development of a critical attitude in individuals is made possible (Dewey, 1989).

Despite these inputs provided by the MEN (2010b), the expected results, at the training level, are still absent. Surely some of the reasons have to do with the following observations:

- In Colombia, philosophy in the school context (academic middle school) has remained at a teaching level where the contents are related to old pre-modern truths (Montes and Montes, 2017). That is, basically focused on the philosophical thought of antiquity. Developing contents of purely Western thought and following currents or thinkers of European origin. Leaving gaps towards possibilities of Latin American, national thought and its links with daily life (Figueroa, 2021). In this regard, Heidegger (1951) warns that approaching great thinkers is not synonymous with thinking. It is understandable that in the face of such a panorama, "The teaching of philosophy in Colombia at the middle and higher education levels is anchored to a historicist perspective in terms of content" (Paredes and Villa 2014, p. 177). Practically, the teacher develops knowledge from a philo-historical perspective. Naively, it is thought that

...it would be enough simply to ensure its [philosophy's] presence in high school curricula to be confident that its contagion will leave a permanent mark on the whole range of possible behaviors that, now and in the future, will be adopted by those who, as students, have come into contact with it even for once (Correa, 2001), p.103)

- On the other hand, many curricula are built on the basis of school textbooks for grades 10 and 11 of elementary or middle school, in terms of the programmatic contents of philosophy. According to Montes and Montes (2017) the texts offered by different publishers become not only reference literature for learning to philosophize, but also the philosophy that is taught. These make a kind of subdivisions and classification where philosophy is periodized leading to create the false idea of a supposed conceptual evolution of knowledge, thought, idea or treatise associated with the idea that over time thought has been structured, maturing and current problems are different from those of the past. In this way, school texts make a dogmatic systematization of "reasoned" truths methodically exposed by means of arguments in a step-by-step process.
- The teaching of philosophy in Colombia has had a close relationship with the Catholic religion. Reasons that allow understanding this situation have been: "in Colombia school philosophy only acquires a formal aspect of secularism until the promulgation of freedom of belief stipulated in the Political Constitution of 1991, it can be said that only until that year, philosophy was officially Catholic" (Montes and Montes, 2017, p. 152). Its teaching was "...in charge of priests and in some cases they were lay people who had to follow the instructions of the church" (Figueroa, 2021, p. 250).

In sum, the teaching of philosophy, taking the contents as a reference, presents serious difficulties of a methodological, pedagogical and axiological nature. It does not make sense to maintain a teaching of concepts only from a historical horizon. Although the discourse may be temporarily out of the present time, it must be re-signified because human problems, many times, are maintained in time. The contributions of philosophers historically recognized by literature in political, poetic, etc., are updated. Perhaps this explains the apathy on the part of the students in approaching a subject that has nothing to do with, nor contributes to their present.

In Colombia, the teaching of philosophy has been linked to the field of religious education. Area or subject that the Ministry of National Education defines as obligatory in the schools (Law 115, article 23). Also that religious education and initiation catechesis are not equivalent and their teaching in schools should not be confused (Episcopal Conference of Colombia, 2022). As well as separating from the study of the Catholic religion (Quintero, 2021) and allowing the cultivation of an integral formation that values spirituality as a dimension to be addressed in the person (Naranjo-Higuera and Moncada-Guzmán, 2019).

From the normative point of view, although the teaching of philosophy has some legal references provided by the regulating entity, in this case the MEN, the same "...do not reach to exhaust or to be the determining references for the understanding of the disciplinary code of philosophy" (Montes and Montes, 2017, p. 88). According to Figueroa (2021) "...the curricularization of Philosophy as a school area, is characterized by the ups and downs that mark the educational policies at each moment and the conceptions of teachers and students" (p. 250). That is to say, they lack precision in the goals, objectives, purposes and pedagogically, it is not known how to achieve and evaluate them? Why work with children? What is the meaning? This normative difficulty is as complex as the definition of philosophy itself and the reasons why it should or should not be taught to children.

What is clear up to this point is that historically, philosophy has been considered an important knowledge along with other areas of knowledge in the education of children. Historically, philosophy in Colombia has been taught with the objective of increasing the general level of intelligence of the nation and the philosophy

professionals who taught in the school system were charged with strengthening the writing and reading skills of their students (Saldarriaga, 2008). A vision that still remains if compared to the evaluation criteria offered by the Colombian Institute for the Promotion of Higher Education (2021) (Hereinafter ICFES) in the Saber 11 tests where it indicates:

The argumentative or expository texts include, in particular, some philosophical texts. These texts do not assess specific knowledge of the history of philosophy or the meaning of its technical terms. The questions focus on the ability to identify and understand the way a text is structured, the ideas it presents, the arguments that support them, etc. (p.32).

The assessment of philosophy is now called critical reading and measures the student's ability to understand texts from their structures, semantics and critique.

It was the General Law of Education 115 of 1994 that configured philosophy as a school discipline. However, the concept of autonomy and the Institutional Educational Project (PEI), "...establish mechanisms to provide a certain margin of curricular freedom to educational institutions on the condition that they adhere to regional needs and characteristics" (Montes and Montes, 2017, p. 154). The curricular freedom assumed by the institutions to build educational proposals that respond to their cultural environment, many times, opens spaces of speculation where the philosophy teacher or his/her peer, must build, from his/her own understanding, what he/she believes convenient to solve and address from the teaching and learning of philosophy in school. The lack of orientation and clarity about what is sought with the teaching and learning of philosophy led it, perhaps, sometimes positively, and many times negatively, to practices and fulfillment of objectives distant from the goals set by the MEN.

On the other hand, the implementation of a National Education Evaluation System that evaluates the quality of teaching and learning introduces national standards for international comparison (Montes and Montes, 2017). In fact, for the case of philosophy teaching and learning the MEN (2010) defines:

The basic competencies are those knowledge, skills and dispositions of all kinds that, appropriately related to each other, facilitate the flexible, effective and meaningful performance of the activities necessary to face the new and challenging contexts of today's world. To ask about the relationship of these competencies with the teaching of philosophy means to ask about the usefulness or benefit that it can provide to the lives of students in particular, as well as to those of citizens in general. (p.37)

However, when the Colombian education system begins to implement the basic competencies, it concentrates on only three areas, namely Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Spanish Language, "leaving philosophy and... the so-called social sciences, outside of such basic competencies and national and international standards" (Montes and Montes, 2017, pp. 154-155). Undoubtedly, a kind of stratification or classification in degrees of importance within the curricula, causes an unprecedented impact on subjects such as philosophy. Without manifesting, the difficulty of pretending that philosophy could be adjusted to criteria of strict reduction or comparable to the subject of Spanish language.

The structuring of the national evaluation system, through the national Saber 11 test and its concern for evaluating areas of greater academic impact, on a par with international tests such as the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), has led to the fact that

The content of the discipline has been gradually diminished, reduced, graphed, simplified, in relation to textual depth, reflection and reading-writing; thus creating the feeling that school philosophy has neither legitimacy nor useful content. (Montes and Montes, 2017, p.157)

On the other hand, León (2006) rejects "the teaching of philosophy as a normal knowledge, that is to say, the philosophy of the textbook, the catechetical philosophy, whether of the political left or of religious enlightenment" (p. 40). Nor can philosophizing be confused with the appropriation of content.

All this reality puts at risk the teaching of philosophy in Colombia, "Due to this encryption of the educational practice of philosophy on itself and this lack of adaptability to contextual problems, not only its usefulness is questioned, but also its necessity in the curricula and study plans" (Paredes and Villa, 2013, p.177). Now, it is not a question of rejecting the contents that are approached from the philosophical tradition, but rather of

a necessary "call in front of the very function of this action and an alert against the confusion that arises between training for thinking and the appropriation of expressions, quotes and references as equivalent of this process" (Paredes and Villa, 2014, p.182).

The philosophy curriculum contains a lack of diversity:

with respect to the types of discourses in which their practitioners engage or the content of their contributions, discourses of race, gender, posthumanism, and the absence of non-Western philosophies, are among those notably underrepresented and marginalized in the curricula (Davis, 2021, p. 215).

It is necessary to make processes of resignification and inclusion of divergent ways of thinking in order to make the teaching and learning of philosophy an updated and coherent discourse with the problems and vicissitudes of today's man. To achieve this, it is important "a transformation of the teaching of philosophy from the perspective of applied research and innovation... possibilities of posing relevant problems for the present, for which it is necessary to enter into relationship with other disciplines and other didactics" (Paredes and Villa, 2014, p.183).

### Philosophy evaluation criteria and Saber tests: the Colombian case

The teaching of philosophy in the country presents difficulties that are generated, in part, by the evaluation of the Saber 11 tests<sup>1</sup>. According to Icfes, the philosophy test only addresses the communicative competence that the MEN specifies in the Pedagogical Guidelines for Philosophy in Secondary Education, and specifically consists of "[...] knowing how to produce and understand texts of various genres, appreciate literary works, characterize the information transmitted by the mass media and use non-verbal communication systems" (p 30), but basic and attitudinal competences such as citizenship, critical thinking, mathematical and scientific competences that are defined in the document are not included.

In this perspective, according to Leguizamón (2016).

[...] the consequences that the philosophy test generated in the pedagogical practices of this subject, because given the demand for declarative knowledge required by the test, it was reasonable that the country's philosophy teachers were led to orient their pedagogical practice towards the teaching of this content, especially if one takes into account the importance assigned to the results obtained in the Saber 11 test. The problem, however, is that the quantity of topics and contents generated in teachers the belief that it would be necessary to undertake the difficult task of going through the history of philosophy from the pre-Socratics to the present day, even when these topics were not related to the experience, context or life of their students. Undoubtedly, the most affected by this situation were the students, who were confronted with learning a body of knowledge that had little to do with their concerns and interests. (p.196)

Against this background, authors such as Paredes and Villa (2013) consider that "[...] the teaching of philosophy is currently satisfied with developing basic processes of reading and writing, in which the subjects manage at best to paraphrase the classical authors" (p. 38). In the sense of the previous arguments, Vargas, Meléndez and Herrera, (2017); Chaparro (2017); Camelo (2020); Prada and Nossa (2020) warn that this reduction of philosophy in the Saber 11 tests, leads to its invisibilization and puts at risk its practice, by the students who take the subject of philosophy, in their practice as citizens in the country<sup>2</sup>, since a teaching of philosophy as a transmission of information and to attend evaluations, does not allow measuring the ways of acting in the daily life of the students.

On the other hand, the Saber 11 tests and their role in measuring and making visible the quality of educational institutions, generates at least two situations found in teachers: (1) to contribute a reflective dimension that allows them to shape their critical thinking, regarding the assumption of competencies for citizenship, from the development of their subject, or (2) to design an educational process (topics, didactic and evaluative strategies) aligned with the test in order to achieve good results.

1. This test is a standardized assessment that measures the level of competencies of Colombian students at the end of their academic middle school studies (ICFES, 2018).

2. The Saber tests are important for the Colombian education system because the Colombian Ministry of National Education (2010a) in Decree 869 of 2010 determines that they have several functions: (1) measure the degree of development of students' competencies; (2) provide information for university entrance; (3) monitor the quality of education in educational establishments and the country; (4) define national educational public policies.



Another issue of relevance, according to Avelino (2015), has to do with.

[...] low results do not necessarily indicate low understanding, and worse still, they do not reflect the competencies that a student may have acquired from his or her relationship with philosophy. The issue is complex, since at its core is the very conception of philosophy. The exam as it was designed, according to the questions taken as a sample, obeyed an academicist tradition closer to the conception of philosophy followed in some universities than to a phase of initiation in critical thinking, learned and developed at  
(p.197)

The evaluation proposed in the Saber 11 Tests, as regards the area of Philosophy, assumes reading comprehension levels for a high level of education other than basic or intermediate academic education. To expect students, despite the deficiencies of the educational system in terms of quality, to respond to such highly demanding evaluations confirms that one situation is what the regulatory bodies for education and its evaluation foresee and another is the reality in which education and children find themselves.

## Discussion

It is important to be clear about the prevailing reasons or motivations for teaching philosophy in children's education. To estimate in a balance the priorities: to fulfill the norm indistinctly of the learning processes in the student or to worry about making effective learning processes. The dynamics of teaching through the traditional professorial or magisterial exposition model, as one of the common practices in the teaching of philosophy, contradict a real desire to make learning processes of philosophy that lead to philosophizing.

On the part of philosophy teachers, showing mastery of the concepts, theories, critiques and other matters pertaining to philosophy, only manages to demonstrate egomaniacal abilities over the knowledge of philosophical matters. Defining the student through the grade or quantifying his process is a way of minimizing the scope of education itself. Both, very typical of the reality of schools in Colombia, only reproduce a teaching system that is not very effective and appropriate for students.

Many philosophy teachers, because of its versatility, are often apathetic towards pedagogy and its branches. It is underestimated, underestimated and undervalued. In spite of replicating the model of teaching where the professorial exposition dominates, they must recognize that the learning processes comply with dynamics that are not in themselves in the concepts, history and theories of philosophy. Focusing on learning rather than on what one wants to teach, places the teacher in a professional scenario as a pedagogue and didactic, rather than as an expert or technician of knowledge.

Some pedagogical proposals, such as Lipman's Philosophy for Children, focused on improving the teaching of philosophy and making it more attractive to students, depend on scenarios where minimum conditions must be met in order to be able to carry them out. Given pedagogical difficulties on the part of the educators, axiological clarity of the teaching of philosophy, contradictory evaluative model according to the criterion of this reflection, they make the applicability of these proposals difficult. These proposals are interesting, but to what extent are they possible, with problems in children with low levels of reading comprehension and little accompaniment on the part of the guardians.

The MEN is clear in proposing a curricular and pedagogical model for the teaching of philosophy, but does not follow up and update it. Since 2010 was the only and last construction of pedagogical guidelines for the area. It is easy to issue manuals, but difficult to do practical research on the results and the commitment to improve if the expected situation is not met.

On the other hand, the curricular construction of philosophy curricula in Colombia, according to this reflection, has failed. The history of philosophy is confused with the possibility of learning to think. The philosophy books, regardless of their publishing house, mark ideologies and processes of teaching philosophy in a progressive or evolutionary way. Where are the other curricular elements to be able to build a curriculum that meets the cultural needs of the students and of society itself?

The competencies or learning skills that children are supposed to obtain are relegated to history programs and removed from any contextual relationship. There is no follow-up either within schools or by the MEN to verify what is done at the national and local levels with the teaching of philosophy.

To improve this reality, it is important to investigate and include the actors in the teaching and learning process of philosophy in order to look for new possibilities from the pedagogy and to overcome the difficulties. One possibility

is to insist on the use of the pedagogical guidelines issued in 2010. This has only remained a document relegated to a pedagogical primer without transcendence. Controlling its implementation can be a sign of the real interest that the teaching and learning of philosophy has for the governments in power in the country.

The philosophy teacher must encourage, not only in the student, but also in him/herself, exercises of critical reflection. Not as a philo-historian, but as a researcher. That is to say, to assume novel issues and of imperative reflective necessity from philosophy so that there is relevance and necessity of philosophy in the subjects and the processes of education.

Finally, the criteria for the evaluation of the saber 11 tests in Colombia have been relegating philosophy in the country's curricula. However, if philosophy were really significant and important for the formation of boys and girls, it would not matter if it appears or not in the evaluation of the state test. It is a matter of recognizing the relevance for national education. An area of knowledge is not more significant because it allows us to see or verify scientific and technological advances in the country, but to the extent that it makes real contributions to social transformation, coexistence and peace.

Each field of knowledge in the school should be committed to a philosophy of the domain area rather than a history of the subject. Transversalizing philosophy would be the same as trying to develop critical thinking at the institutional level and not relegate it to spaces of academic responsibility proper to the human sciences.

## Conclusions

In Colombia, the Ministry of National Education has not carried out an investigative exercise on the situation of the teaching of philosophy. It has become a cliché the problems of pedagogical approaches, usefulness in the educational system and little interest in reaffirming it as a space for learning skills or competences of critical thinking. Likewise, it is implicitly assumed that philosophy generates, in those who study and teach it, critical competences for the formation of citizens in a democratic social system.

On the other hand, although pedagogical approaches understand the psychic dynamics of learning as a fundamental axis and the experience or context as an indispensable element for reflective or complex knowledge operations, traditional pedagogical practices, in which the magisterial exposition maintains its constancy, continue to operate and develop to the point of being normalized in educational scenarios.

To allow philosophy to dialogue with reality is to make it possible for experience and cognitive dynamics to meet and thus to valorize a space of reflection relegated to the history of ideas, theories and characters. It is to allow a know-how based on thought, rather than a know-how-knowing.

There are important inputs to improve philosophy teaching practices in the country. On the part of the MEN, the Pedagogical Orientations for the teaching of philosophy, has instructions that promote better learning conditions. The problematization of thematic components for philosophy and strategies or dynamics for the development in classes are useful, but little valued by the teachers. Likewise, there are programs, proposals and projects aimed at improving the teaching and learning of philosophy that allow, through games, reading of novels, art, etc., to improve its perception. The didactics in the case of philosophy should be reflected upon, not in function of a kind of detriment of the subjects treated in philosophy, but in favor of the students' learning.

In Colombia, philosophy has been curricularly developed through the study of the history of ideas. That is to say, a learning process in which the child recognizes and identifies issues proper to the philosophical environment, rather than its usefulness in the real context. There is no pedagogical, political, axiological and evaluative clarity of what is wanted with philosophy that coincides with the organization of the curriculum and the study plan. This allows to include in the philosophical reflection issues of vital treatment and of permanent reflection in the different contexts. Philosophy has remained in a state of curricular stillness where there is the impression that everything is built and given. If this dynamic continues, its disappearance in the educational system for middle and elementary school in Colombia is inevitable.

Some issues that serve as a reference for future practical research, according to this reflection, have to do with: (1) Teachers' perspectives on didactics in the teaching of philosophy; (2) Construction of the curriculum in public and private educational environments; (3) Common pedagogical practices in the teaching of philosophy in public and private schools in Colombia; (4) Importance of the teaching of philosophy to

the Colombian Ministry of National Education; (5) Fulfillment of educational objectives, since the law 115/94 of education, with the teaching of philosophy in Colombia; (6) Novel strategies for the teaching of philosophy designed for differentiated social contexts; among others of vital importance to improve the teaching of philosophy and research.

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