



GSJ: Volume 8, Issue 1, January 2020, Online: ISSN 2320-9186

www.globalscientificjournal.com

PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

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resume

In school education psychology, a clear positioning underlies the internal epistemology of educational psychology and its disciplinary coordinates, particularly with regard to its location within the psychological and educational disciplines. In other words, there is a series of academic and professional activities linked to educational psychology and oriented towards research and conceptual elaboration, the proposal of intervention programs and plans and the intervention itself, activities that reflect the constitutive dimensions of its disciplinary identity. .

Keywords: educational psychology, education, psychological development.

Abstract / resumen / résumé

In the psychology of school education there is a clear position in relation to the internal epistemology of educational psychology and its disciplinary coordinates, particularly with regard to its location within the psychological and educational disciplines. In other words, a series of academic and professional activities related to the psychology of education and oriented to research and conceptual elaboration, to the proposal of programs and plans of intervention and to the intervention itself appear, reflecting the constitutive dimensions of its disciplinary identity.

Keywords: psychology of education, education, psychological development.

1 Introduction

The existence of educational psychology as a clearly identifiable area of theoretical and practical knowledge and knowledge, related to other branches and other specialties of psychology and educational sciences, but at the same time distinct from them, has its origin in rational belief and in a profound conviction that education and teaching can significantly improve with the appropriate use of psychological knowledge. This conviction, which has its roots in the great systems of thought and in the philosophical theories prior to the rise of scientific psychology, has been the object of multiple interpretations. In fact, behind the widespread agreement that teaching can significantly improve, if the principles of psychology are correctly applied, there are profound discrepancies as to which principles should be applied, in what aspect or

aspects of education they should be used and, in a very particular, which means exactly applying the principles of psychology to education.

This view of educational psychology as psychological engineering applied to education was prevalent during the first half of the 20th century. At least until the late 1950s, and based on an unwavering faith in the new scientific psychology, educational psychology appears as the discipline with the greatest weight in educational research, as the “master” discipline (Grinder, 1989), as the “Queen of educational sciences” (Wall, 1979). Over the past few years there has been a substantial debate between the broader discipline of psychology and the discipline of educational psychology. Some authors argue that educational psychology represents a specialization within psychology, similar to that which represents cognitive psychology or social psychology. Ouros argued that educational psychology is a discipline charged with applying psychological theory and principles to a particular class of behavior, especially those related to teaching and learning, usually in formal educational settings. And still others argued that educational psychology is a discipline with its own theoretical basis, related to psychology, but independent of it.

Although each of these oppositions has its own history and unique nuances, all contribute, to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the case, to profile the different conceptions of educational psychology, in a way they end up confusing what constitutes the crucial point around the what such difference materializes and shows its true scope and significance (Coll, 1988^a; 1990^a; 1998^a; 1998^b): the relative importance attributed to psychological components in the effort to explain and understand psychological phenomena in the effort to explain and understand educational phenomena. In fact, the conceptions of educational psychology range from openly reductionist formulations, for which the study of psychological variables and processes is the only adequate way to provide a scientific basis for educational theory and practice, to formulations that question more or less radical the role and importance of psychological components, logically going through a whole range of intermediate formulations.

2 Psychology applied to education

Included in this denomination are a set of formulations - predominant until the end of the 1950s, but which continue to enjoy a certain acceptance today, especially in their less radical versions - that conceive the psychology of education as a mere field of application of knowledge psychological, that is, as *psychology applied to education*. Firstly, the belief that psychological knowledge is the only one that allows educational issues to be approached in a scientific and rational way. Second, the postulate that human behavior responds to a series of general laws that, once established by psychological research, can be used to understand and explain any area of people's

activity. Thirdly, and as a consequence of the previous one, what characterizes the psychology of education is not the type or nature of the knowledge it manages - knowledge related to the general laws that govern human behavior and, therefore, shared with other areas or parts of psychology - but the field or area of application in which it is intended to use such knowledge, that is, education. Fourthly, the task of educational psychology, thus understood, is none other than to select, among the knowledge provided by scientific psychology at a given historical moment, those that may be most useful for understanding and explaining the behavior of people in educational situations.

2.1 The psychology of education as a bridge discipline

As a consequence of these and other criticisms - in particular those aimed at highlighting the limitations and errors derived from the psychological reductionism inherent in the unilateral relations between psychological knowledge and educational theory and practice -, the psychology of education, in the course of the second half of the 20th century, progressively renounced a good part of the postulates and principles that characterize the formulations of psychology applied to education. Thus, a series of alternative formulations emerged, although not fully replacing them, which are subject to a different conception of educational psychology: that which tends to consider it as *a bridge discipline between psychology and education*, with a own study object and, above all, with the purpose of generating new knowledge about this object of study.

According to Mayer, the different ways of conceiving the relationship between psychology and education correspond, in general, to many other phases in the development of educational psychology. During the first phase, which would go on until the middle of the 20th century, the view of a unidirectional relationship prevails as a consequence of the optimism deposited in the value of the contributions of scientific psychology to guide, guide and improve education. It is the phase in which the concept of psychology applied to education dominates. From the middle of the 20th century onwards, it became increasingly evident that the optimism of the previous phase was excessive. It would be a mistake, however, to interpret the historical line proposed by Mayer as the simple substitution of one conception for another. It is true that the first way of understanding the relationship between psychology and education was prevalent until the 1950s, that the second manifested itself mainly in the 1940s and 1950s and that the third began to gain ground progressively from the decade of 1960. But today there are still many educators, education planners, responsible for educational policies, pedagogues and psychologists installed in the second and, above all, in the first (De Corte, 2000).

A. A lógica da hierarquia epistemológica entre o conhecimento psicológico e a teoria e a prática educacionais



B. A lógica de interdependência e interação entre o conhecimento psicológico e a teoria e a prática educacionais

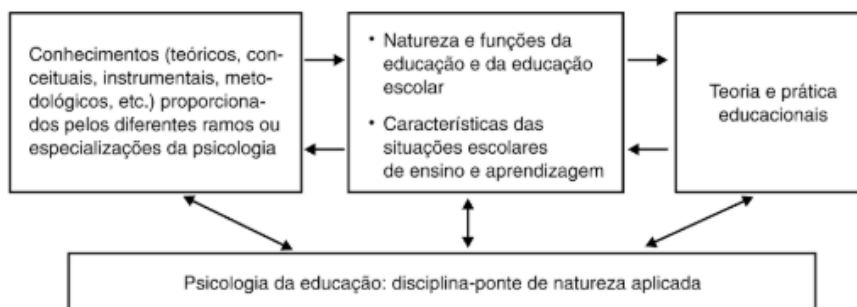


FIGURA 1.1 Duas lógicas distintas de aplicação do conhecimento psicológico à teoria e à prática educacionais.

FONTE – COLL, César. MARCHESSI, Álvaro. PALACIOS, Jesús. (2007).

Whether educational psychology will deploy its disciplinary instruments and techniques in the perspective of a morally grounded search for better ways of educating, or whether, on the contrary, it will continue to strive to perfect its instruments and techniques within its own disciplinary (psychological) contexts. objective of resolutely proposing, next, how education should conform to the concepts, theories and the empirical results thus generated. These two options cannot (...) be easily accommodated by selectively taking the best of each; on the contrary, these are two radically different approaches to a field of knowledge within a professional community.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, education psychologists should assume that education is a social practice and that engaging in a social practice necessarily means adopting certain ideological and moral options, rather than taking refuge in a supposed and deceptive neutrality of a scientific and disciplinary approach. Recovering and assuming, with all its consequences, the discourse and concerns of social reformism of the pioneers and first drivers of the discipline, educational psychologists must accept that they cannot guide their work towards understanding and improving educational practices without formulating it. if and answer some fundamental questions about education that are not strictly psychological in nature: what should be the purposes of education ?; what kind of person is it intended to contribute to train with educational practices ?; what kind of society do you want to contribute to engender the education of new generations ?; how should education meet the diversity of people's educational needs ?; what role should education play in compensating for people's economic, social and cultural inequalities? and finally, what is quality education ?.

3 Conclusion

Considering these differences, from the point of view of internal epistemology - that is, from the point of view of the nature of psychoeducational knowledge and its ways of construction -, it is evident that all the mentioned formulations have a common feature: it does not fit, from them, to consider educational psychology as a scientific discipline or subdiscipline in the strict sense, since there is no object of study of its own and, above all, there is no purpose to produce new knowledge, but only to apply knowledge that already exists or is produced in other areas or parts of psychological research, in short, the only type of new knowledge that psychology applied to education can legitimately aspire to produce is that which refers to strategies or application procedures.

On the other hand, although it is certain that the strategy of direct and unilateral application facilitates the potential use in education of the advances produced in all fields and specialties of psychological research, in a curious and paradoxical way it ignores, and even masks, the contributions reciprocal that they did and continue doing from the very psychology of education to the development of other fields of psychology. The examples in this sense are abundant: the contributions of EI, Thorndike, considered the father of educational psychology, to learning psychology; the contributions of J. Dewey, made to a large extent in the context of the incipient psychology of early 20th century education, to the study of learning and thinking, as well as to the development of functionalism; the important contributions of other educational psychologists, such as G. Stanley Hall, J.M. Cattell, Charles Judd, Alfred Binet, L., Cronbach and others, to child psychology, test movement, differential psychology and learning psychology and psychology of thought; B. Weiner's to the psychology of motivation and emotion.

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