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*Artículos científicos*

## **Traducciones de las educadoras diferenciales en torno a las políticas de inclusión escolar en el mercado educativo chileno**

***Translations of Special Education Teachers Around School Inclusion Policies in the Chilean Educational Market***

***Traduções de educadores diferenciais sobre as políticas de inclusão escolar no mercado educacional chileno***

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### **Resumen**

Desde la dictadura cívico-militar, el sistema escolar chileno ha sido regulado como un mercado educativo, modelo que ha aumentado la exclusión del estudiantado, aspecto que en los últimos años se ha intentado revertir por medio de políticas de inclusión, implementadas principalmente por las educadoras diferenciales en las escuelas. El objetivo de esta investigación es conocer las traducciones que las educadoras diferenciales producen respecto de estas legislaciones. Entre los hallazgos, se detecta una valoración ambivalente de la política, ya que, si bien destacan el aumento de los recursos dirigidos a la educación especial, critican el hecho de que la inclusión se regule a través de subsidios. En segundo lugar, manifiestan que las legislaciones de inclusión refuerzan una mirada clínica hacia la diversidad del alumnado. Y, por último, las docentes detectan que estas leyes generan prácticas de exclusión de alumnos de acuerdo con el rendimiento académico de estos en pruebas estandarizadas.

**Palabras claves:** educadoras diferenciales, inclusión educativa, mercado escolar, políticas educativas, sistema educativo chileno.

### **Abstract**

Since the civic-military dictatorship, the Chilean school system has been regulated as an educational market, which has increased the exclusion of the student body, an aspect that recently has been tried to reverse through inclusion policies, implemented mainly by special education teachers. The objective of this research is to know the translations that differential educators produce regarding these policies. Among the findings, an ambivalent assessment of the policy is detected, since although they highlight the increase in resources directed to Special Education, they criticize the fact that inclusion is regulated through subsidies, secondly, they state that the Inclusion laws reinforce a clinical look at the diversity of the students and, finally, the teachers detect that these laws generate practices of exclusion of students according to their academic performance in standardized tests.

**Keywords:** special education teachers, educational inclusion, school market, educational policies, Chilean educational system.

### **Resumo**

Desde a ditadura cívico-militar, o sistema escolar chileno foi regulamentado como mercado educacional, modelo que aumentou a exclusão dos alunos, aspecto que nos últimos anos se tentou reverter por meio de políticas de inclusão, implementadas principalmente pelos educadores. nas escolas. O objetivo desta pesquisa é conhecer as traduções que os educadores diferenciais produzem a respeito dessas legislações. Entre os achados, detecta-se uma avaliação ambivalente da política, pois embora destaquem o aumento dos recursos direcionados à educação especial, criticam o fato de a inclusão ser regulada por meio de subsídios. Em segundo lugar, afirmam que a legislação de inclusão reforça uma visão clínica da diversidade estudantil. E, por fim, os professores detectam que essas leis geram práticas de exclusão de alunos de acordo com seu desempenho acadêmico em provas padronizadas.

**Palavras-chave:** educadores diferenciais, inclusão educacional, mercado escolar, políticas educacionais, sistema educacional chileno.

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## Background

The current Chilean educational system has been the result of one of the most important structural reforms in its history, which emerged in the 1980s within the framework of the civic-military dictatorship (1973-1990). Under the principles emanating from the Chicago school of economics and its main ideologue, Milton Friedman, a process of "municipalization" was developed that consisted of a transfer of the administration of school education (which was once public and free) from the State towards a set of public supporters (municipal education corporations and administrations) and private agents, the latter becoming collaborators in the provision of this social good (Bellei and Muñoz, 2021; Falabella, 2020).

Among the main changes introduced by the reform, or the "great experiment" according to Bellei (2015), are: the transfer of the educational administration from the central State to different entities (for-profit and non-profit), financing of education through subsidies or vouchers for tuition (daily attendance of students), free parental choice of schools and incentives for private companies to undertake as providers of education. The main assumption of these measures was that the quality of the entire system would improve because, on the one hand, schools with higher performance would attract more students and, on the other hand, parents and guardians, operating under economic rationality, they would choose "the best school" mainly taking into account its academic excellence (Parcerisa and Falabella, 2017; Verger, Bonal and Zancajo, 2016).

Subsequently, with the advent of democratic governments, a set of policies was implemented that, in a first stage, sought to increase access to primary and secondary education by students and correct, to a certain extent, the present inequity and inequality. in the Chilean educational system, legislation with a compensatory logic similar to that of the priority educational policies implemented in Europe between the 70s and 80s of the last century (Armijo, 2020). Among the most emblematic legislations of this period are: plan of the 900 Schools (P-900), program for the Improvement of the Quality and Equity of Education (MECE) (basic, middle and rural education), Critical Schools, High Schools Priorities, Links program, among others. Later, at the beginning of the 21st century, policies changed course: they incorporated support and pressure mechanisms for educational establishments and actors and introduced accountability, through which the State provides economic resources via special subsidies, increasing the amounts of the regular voucher

according to the level of socioeconomic vulnerability or the special educational needs (SEN) of the students (Falabella, 2015; Inostroza, 2020; Parcerisa and Falabella, 2017). Examples of this type of policy are the Preferential School Subsidy Law (SEP), Decree 170 on Special Education, the School Inclusion Law (LIE) and Decree 83 on Special Education, Decree 67, among others.

In relation to educational policies that deal with school inclusion as the main theme, these emerge within the framework of an educational system configured as a market. One of the main issues on which these legislations focused is educational integration, understood as the incorporation of students considered outside the "norm" intended by the curriculum to regular schools through a clinical and therapeutic device called Integration Programs. School (PIE). These programs inaugurated access to regular education for students conceptualized as having disabilities and SEN. Thus, a response was given to the political and social demand to build a less exclusive school (Infante, Matus and Vizcarra, 2011).

Within the framework of this maelstrom of policies implemented to achieve a high-quality and at the same time inclusive education, there is a key educational actor: differential educators. Within the framework of the Chilean school system, these professionals had historically worked outside of regular education, exercising in a parallel system called special education. However, when these laws were enacted, they were incorporated into the regular education system through the differential groups and with greater intensity with the entry into force of the PIE at the end of the 1990s. In general, these educators were attributed to them the role of including students through the development of pedagogical support tasks both for students with SEN and for teachers of primary and secondary education. In this sense, these teachers have seen their pedagogical functions modified, since they are not only in charge of the progress in terms of learning of students with SEN, but they also have to render accounts through reports, psychopedagogical evaluations carried out on students and in co-teaching tasks with other pedagogues, all this in the context of schools stressed by the demonstration of performance in standardized evaluations such as the Education Quality Measurement System (Simce) (Inostroza y Falabella, 2021).

Despite the notable role and function of special education educators in Chile, research related to the analysis of inclusion policies has emerged without considering the voice of these teachers so far (López et al., 2018; Peña, 2013; Sisto, 2019). As already highlighted, it is the differential educators who, in their daily work, have to implement these laws that seek

to increase school inclusion in an educational system configured as a market, where standardization, selection and competition have been the values that have configured a "performative school", according to Falabella (2015). Therefore, it is interesting to question what are the translations that these teachers produce about the school inclusion legislation that has been enacted in recent decades in Chile.

## **Theoretical framework**

### **School market and accountability**

The case of the Chilean educational system is emblematic, in the sense of being constituted as a market for more than four decades, despite the body of research that has emphatically pointed out that these principles applied to the field of education have increased inequity and segregation at the local level (Assaél, Cornejo, González, Redondo and Sánchez, 2011; Bellei, 2015; Cornejo, 2006; Villalobos and Quaresma, 2015). In strictly chronological terms, the transformation of the system took place in the 1980s, market logics that continued to be perfected and implemented during the democratic governments of the 1990s and later (Aedo, 2003; Corvalán and Román, 2011; Falabella, 2015).

Among the main measures that were adopted during the civic-military dictatorship to transform the school system into a market, are the decentralization of the educational administration (transferring the responsibility of providing this service to municipalities and private entities), the financing of education based on the delivery of a per capita subsidy (or voucher) by the State to each provider, parental choice of schools as the axis of school reform and competition between institutions to recruit students. In turn, the promotion of private actors as providers and "entrepreneurs" in the field of education was favored (Bellei, 2015; Carrasco and Fromm, 2016; Verger et al., 2016).

In addition to the measures listed above, at the end of the 1980s (specifically, 1988), the Simce standardized evaluation was created, which was conceived from the outset as an annual and census application test, an instrument that evaluated student performance. of students in priority subjects for the Chilean school curriculum, such as Language, Mathematics, Social and Natural Sciences at the 4th and 8th year of basic education and 2nd year of middle or secondary education (Eyzaguirre y Fontaine, 1999; Himmel, 1997).

However, more recently, in 2011, another element was incorporated into the Chilean educational market, the Education Quality Assurance System (SACE). The SACE provided the school system with an institution in charge of improving learning outcomes that evaluates the Simce standardized test, the Education Quality Agency (ACE). In parallel, the Superintendency of Education was created, an entity that is in charge of supervising and controlling the resources delivered to schools and the implementation of policies in the educational field in general (Falabella, 2020; Falabella and Opazo, 2014).

Both institutions mentioned provide the system with mechanisms and tools to supervise, monitor and sanction (or reward) school organizations according to the performance obtained by their students in the Simce, mainly, and in other quality indicators. In fact, a classification of schools was created: they were ranked according to their performance in the Simce, providing different degrees of pressure and support to schools depending on their respective performance. Currently, the ACE (2019) has developed the following performance categories to categorize schools: High, Medium, Medium-Low and Insufficient, labels that are assigned based on the performance of these institutions in the standardized evaluation.

Continuing with the previous trend, in the mid-2000s accountability with high consequences was introduced in the Chilean educational system (especially with the promulgation of the SEP Law), derived from the new public management, policies that, in general terms, offer pedagogical and human resources to schools in order to improve the quality of education in exchange for the demonstration of learning results by students in standardized tests, performance that in Chile is mainly reflected in the evaluation Simce and other standards that must be declared in the Educational Improvement Plans or PME (Falabella, 2016; Raczynski, Muñoz, Weinstein y Pascual, 2013; Verger y Parcerisa, 2016).

Specifically, a type of accountability called market or performative has been installed in the Chilean educational system, under which resources to schools (provided via subsidies) are conditioned by the improvement in indicators and standards declared in the PME, those that mostly refer to sustained increases through the scores obtained by students in the language and mathematics tests in the 4th year of primary education. In the event that the institutions fail to meet their goals, the school in question may eventually lose official recognition and close, which generates responsibility and tension on the part of educational

actors, who direct their practices and identities towards compliance. of goals determined by an external entity (Falabella, 2015; Rojas y Leyton, 2014).

### **School inclusion policies**

In recent decades, at the international level, the social demand has increased to generate more inclusive and quality educational systems, in order to offer equal opportunities related to participation and learning for all students and thus contribute to the progressive decrease of school segregation, particularly in Latin America, a region where 42% of the countries still have laws that suggest educating children with some type of disability in special schools (Ainscow, Booth and Dyson, 2006; Echeita, 2008; Gentili, 2011 ).

Given this scenario, the State of Chile has responded to the international declarations to which it has subscribed through a constant and progressive process of enacting policies since the mid-90s of the 20th century associated with attention to student diversity. , legislation that initially focused on the incorporation of students with disabilities in regular schools to later expand their actions through the provision of human and economic resources aimed at educational integration, understood as the installation (presence) of students with disabilities and SEN to regular education establishments (Godoy, Meza and Salazar, 2004; López et al., 2018; Tenorio, 2007).

Subsequently, it was intended to move from integration to inclusion. To generate this crucial step, a set of policies was developed that sought to ensure the inclusion of students who, due to their various markers of subjectivity (ethnicity, nationality, social vulnerability, language, SEN, sexual orientation, etc.) had been found to differing degrees. of marginalization and excluded from an education that tended to equal learning opportunities (Inostroza, 2020).

In this sense, legislation was enacted that injected significant economic and human resources into the centers that served the most vulnerable students in socioeconomic terms (SEP Law, for example); others focused specifically on students with some SEN (Decree 170), and those such as the School Inclusion Law (LIE) that sought to partially modify some of the unwanted effects of the market in education, prohibiting profit, the selection of students by part of the supporters of educational establishments and the copayment of families (Apablaza, 2014; Bellei, 2015; Godoy et al., 2004; Infante et al., 2011). However, the set of

these policies did not substantively modify the market principles as basic principles in the governance of the school system (López et al., 2018; Sisto, 2019).

In the case of this research, school inclusion policies are conceptualized as all those laws that promote positive discrimination towards students or groups that, for various reasons, whether social, economic, political and cultural, are at risk of dropping out or have been excluded from the regular education system and, therefore, mainly require learning opportunities and social recognition by the State and society (Graham and Slee, 2008; Slee, 2014, 2019). Likewise, these legislations, following the principles of the social model of disability, seek to ensure and favor access, participation and the achievement of high learning standards by all students (Palacios, 2008).

Among the policies considered in this study as educational inclusion, the following stand out: a) PIE (Ministry of Education of Chile [Mineduc], 1998), b) SEP Law (Mineduc, 2007), c) Decree 170 (Mineduc, 2009), d) Decree 83 (Mineduc, 2015) and e) LIE (Mineduc, 2016), perhaps the most emblematic within the set of laws that regulate school inclusion within the framework of the Chilean school system. In turn, the notion of educational inclusion will be understood from the social model of disability, an approach that understands it as a dynamic process, of interactive origin, that is, it arises at the intersection between the conditions intrinsic to the subject and physical barriers. and social that "disable" the individual (Ainscow *et al.*, 2006; Palacios, 2008; Victoria, 2013).

### **Implementation and translation of educational policies**

The theoretical-methodological approach called the implementation of policies or policy enactment is part of the field of policy research from the critical sociology of education, whose epistemic bases are based, on the one hand, on the cycle or trajectory of legislation (Ball, Maguire and Braun, 2011) and, on the other, in the notion of politics as text and discourse (Ball, 2003; Ball and Junneman, 2012).

More specifically, in the field of study of policies in the social sciences, perspectives have prevailed that assume a linear, vertical and sequential execution of legislation, with the educational actors being mere executors of these in their professional performance contexts, without considering for these effects interpretations, negotiations, conflicts and power relations that emerge at the time of implementing any legislation in schools. In contrast, policy enactment maintains that policies are interpreted, translated and put into action in an



interrelated, non-linear or sequential manner and in an active and creative way by school agents (Ball et al., 2011; Perryman, Maguire, Braun and Ball, 2017).

In this sense, policy enactment distinguishes different areas of production and policy trajectory (influence, production and practice). And one of the fundamental moments is the translation and implementation of legislation by educational actors in schools immersed in material contexts crossed by various broader historical, political, cultural and economic frameworks that influence daily activities in institutions. schoolchildren (Ball et al., 2011). For this reason, it is that, from this perspective, the research will focus on understanding the role that schools and teachers play in the implementation of the policies that enter, are received, translated and enacted in everyday life. (Lopes, 2016; Viczko y Riveros, 2019).

In the same line of argument, it is proposed that policies, in the first place, not only correspond to texts, but rather are discourses that shape reality, since they tend to be performative insofar as they produce realities and influence practices and actions. the subjectivities of educational actors. Likewise, the agency of education professionals is considered, since from this perspective they have the capacity to put policies into action, that is, to carry out a process of creative translation of the ideas present in the texts and to embody them in their practices in sociohistorically situated contexts (Singh, Heimans and Glasswell, 2014), which, in turn, implies that in many cases the intentions or logics of legislation can be distorted, omitted, resisted and actively negotiated by the actors in their daily pedagogical work (Ball et al., 2011; Hardy and Woodcock, 2016). In addition, in the implementation, the sociodemographic contexts in which the schools are located must be considered, as well as the set of regulations that are operating in parallel in a given school market (Ball and Maroy, 2010).

In concrete terms, in this research, politics will be understood as text and discourse, therefore, it will be argued that the translation of legislation will focus, at first, on the various influences and interest groups that elaborate an interpretation of the laws. laws to, in a second instance, know the local discursive productions by educational communities, that is, how frameworks of meaning are generated that guide the actions of educational agents (Ball, 2008).

## **Methodology**

### **Design**

This research was developed following a qualitative tradition (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002) and sought to delve into the translations produced by the participants regarding school inclusion policies. In epistemic terms, this study was based on the interpretive paradigm (Flick, 2004) in which it is of interest to know the perspectives produced in this case by the educators in the context in which they performed in their daily work.

In this sense, a field work was developed that was divided into two stages. In a first phase, a round of semi-structured interviews was carried out with 20 differential educators. Subsequently, six of the teachers who were previously interviewed were selected as case studies (Yin, 2017) to develop non-participant observations and in-depth interviews during the course of an academic semester, equivalent to five months, in order to obtain the results. translations of the policies they produced in their daily lives and in their natural performance environments (Rockwell, 2009).

### **Participants**

In the first phase of the study, 20 differential educators from the Metropolitan Region who worked in municipal and private subsidized educational establishments and who were part of the PIE of their respective institutions were selected. These teachers were selected through a qualitative, non-probabilistic and intentional sampling (Flick, 2004). To do this, they were sent a certified letter of invitation to participate in a semi-structured interview.

The common criteria met by the educators interviewed in the first phase corresponded to: working in schools covered by the inclusion policies of interest, working in PIE, having more than one year of work experience, the school vulnerability index (IVE ) of the students attended by the school in question and the category in which the institution was found according to the classification prepared by the ACE.

While in the second stage, six educators were selected from those previously interviewed, who were chosen through a qualitative, intentional sampling, according to the disposition of the participants, using as criteria: the dependency of the educational center, the trajectory of the teachers and the classification in which the school was within the local educational market, order built by the ACE (2019).

Table 1 below specifies some of the attributes of the educators corresponding to the case studies of this research.

**Tabla 1.** Características de los casos de estudio

Educadora	Dependencia	Trayectoria Laboral	Clasificación de la escuela
Educadora 1	Municipal	Más de cinco años	Bajo
Educadora 2	Municipal	Más de cinco años	Bajo
Educadora 3	Municipal	Menos de cinco años	Medio
Educadora 4	Particular Subvencionada	Menos de cinco años	Medio-Alto
Educadora 5	Particular Subvencionada	Menos de cinco años	Medio
Educadora 6	Particular Subvencionada	Más de cinco años	Bajo

Fuente: Elaboración propia

## Procedures

In a first phase, semi-structured interviews were applied to 20 differential educators from different communes of the Metropolitan Region. These were developed during the working hours of the participants, within the respective educational establishments in which they worked.

The semi-structured interview was prepared based on a previously prepared script. There, topics such as: notion of inclusion, position regarding inclusion policies, relevance of these legislations in their daily pedagogical work, among other topics, were discussed.

The interviews lasted an average of 1 hour and 20 minutes, were audio recorded and later transcribed by the researcher and stored for later analysis and backup.

For the next phase of deepening, in-depth interviews and non-participant observations were carried out with the six differential educators selected as case studies.

Regarding the in-depth interviews, these were applied once to each of the participants; They were also prepared based on a script consisting of 12 open questions that sought to delve into the translations produced by the teachers in their contexts of performance and that

addressed topics such as: school inclusion policies in Chile, the ways in which these policies were received and translated in their respective schools, the way in which these laws were put into action in each educational institution and the interaction of these policies with other laws and with the institutional context.

In addition, non-participant observations were carried out, once a week, for half a school day (four hours) for three consecutive months for each of the educators in their school institutions. The observations were recorded through field notes, which were compiled and expanded by the researcher in a field diary, to later be transcribed and analyzed.

In total, the discursive corpus consisted of 20 semi-structured interviews and six in-depth interviews equivalent to 40 hours of recording and 300 hours of non-participant observation.

### **Analysis techniques**

For the systematization of the information obtained through the interviews and the non-participant observation, we proceeded, in the first place, through the categorization of the discursive corpus and through an open coding process, coming from the grounded or grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 2002), in order to obtain preliminary categories, which were subsequently contrasted and organized following the theoretical framework of this study. At this stage of the analysis, the Atlas Ti version 9.0 software was used instrumentally.

Secondly, after establishing the preliminary categories, they were organized using the qualitative content analysis technique (Bardín, 1996), associating the semantic content of the speeches collected with the previously elaborated codes.

### **Results**

The main findings of this research were organized into three subsections: 1) the problem of the voucher, in which translations of the educators who value and criticize the inclusion linked to this subsidy emerge; 2) the results associated with the speeches of the participants, who identify the diagnosis as a mechanism for managing inclusion, and 3) the practices that these teachers must carry out related to the concealment of students with SEN, known as overlapping practices of exclusion.

## The voucher problem

According to the speeches issued by the educators, they produced a translation of the inclusion policies in an ambivalent way related to financing through a subsidy. On the one hand, they declared that legislation such as the SEP Law and the PIE provided the financial and human resources to develop pedagogical support aimed at students with SEN; but, on the other hand, they criticized that these aids were restricted only to students categorized as having disabilities or some SEN, leaving out any other student. In the same way, they directed their criticism at laws such as Decree 170, which sets the established quotas per course (seven students in total), which in the opinion of the participants constituted a powerful barrier to developing an inclusion that extended to all students, just as the legislation on this matter rhetorically proposes.

Regarding this ambiguity around the logic of inclusion policies, the participants commented on the following:

It's that the problem happens because there are policies that were actually necessary and help, I don't know, the Integration Program itself, it allows us to have a physical space to work with the children and that they pay us our salaries with this silver (money), but the issue is that money continues to be given for the number of children, and it shouldn't be like that, inclusion is for everyone (Educator 3).

The truth is that the policies are a potpourri of things, they give us the money to set up integration programs or to educate the poorest children like the SEP Law, but in the case of inclusion they give you this money for quotas, that of seven children per class is fatal, it leaves out many children. So it is like a contradictory medium (Educator 4).

The educators corresponding to the case studies mentioned in the previous excerpts that the principles of the policies were contradictory to each other, since although they provide financing for the pedagogical supports necessary to educate children with SEN, at the same time they are restrictive, since that inclusion, for these teachers, has to be extensive to all students. In fact, when delving into this topic in the non-participant observations, one of the teachers pointed out that these limitations of the legislation have an origin that is related to the configuration of the educational system as a market. In this regard, she indicated:

I believe that when inclusion policies are made, the same idea rules, which is the issue of subsidies in Chile, that for each child the State gives you an amount of money. And it cannot be like that, inclusion cannot happen only by paying a subsidy and this issue is of inheritance, it is from the dictatorship that the subsidy per child in Chile comes, but it is little money, especially when we think of children with disabilities (Educadora 5, Nota de campo).

In the previous speech, the educator in question proposes that the problem of policies has an origin in the educational reform of the 1980s, during the dictatorship, a period in which the financing of education began to be provided via voucher, which The teacher translates as the application of the same market logic to the field of inclusion, also stating that resources are insufficient for the development of educational processes aimed especially at students with some disability condition.

In the same sense, but from the perspective of the pedagogical work that the case studies develop in daily life, there is a consensus among the participants regarding the application of financing for inclusion via a subsidy generates paradoxical effects, because, on the one hand, students with SEN are important because schools receive a higher subsidy, but when it comes to demonstrating learning results through the Simce standardized assessment, these students are problematic since they potentially affect the results in this test.

In this way, the educators pointed out this paradox:

It is strange, because by law they give more money to the school if they are from the PIE or if they are more vulnerable or poor, but they are still discriminated against because at school people assume that they will not do well in the Simce and at that time, they are no longer so welcome (Educator 3, Field note).

I think it must be something that belongs to Chile no more, because here the directors know that the children of the PIE have the highest subsidy and leave more resources, but since everyone is in the race to have a higher Simce, at In the end, the children of the PIE are like the guilty ones, and the same happens with the very vulnerable children who receive money from the SEP Law, they are still problematic for the school in the end (Educadora 1, Nota de campo).

Although there was consensus in at least four of the participants around a paradoxical assessment towards students with SEN, it was also identified in the translations of the remaining educators, who coincidentally worked in schools with performances in the Simce in the category medium- high, that in their educational institutions students with SEN were not cataloged as those who decreased the results in the standardized evaluation, rather they declared that it was presumed that these students would score less, but this would not affect the prestigious position of these schools.

This was stated by one of the educators:

Here it is assumed that the children of the PIE will have a low score in the Simce, but it is not a problem, because this school has always had good scores and is outstanding for that and we have never worried much about it, but we still know that the grant is larger, so there are still incentives to accept children with diverse needs (Educadora 4).

In the speech produced by the educator, it is evident that it is not problematic that the students will obtain lower results in the Simce evaluation because the establishment in general stands out in the standardized evaluation. In addition, she agrees with the other participants in considering that these students mean higher economic income for their school due to the money they receive as a subsidy and that, therefore, they are "desired" by the institution from this perspective.

### **Clinical diagnosis as a management mechanism for inclusion**

In this category, two critical knots present in the translations that the educators made of the inclusion policies stand out: 1) the subsidy for special education reinforces a clinical look towards the approach of the SEN and 2) the diagnosis, the psychopedagogical reports and the work of demonstration through evidence, work that transforms the identity of the educators, from actors whose center is the pedagogical task, towards the image of "an administrative" to perceive the state resources directed to the education of students with SEN.

Regarding the first topic mentioned, the educators pointed out that, specifically, Decree 170 proposes, on the one hand, a differentiated subsidy according to the diagnosis that a student has, which reinforces a biomedical or clinical discourse associated more with integration than to inclusion and, on the other hand, that despite this diagnosis being useful to specify the support that students need, it also promotes the classification, hierarchization

and stigmatization of students with SEN, being these characterized as a subject with some type of biological or psychological deficit.

In this sense, the participants declared their criticism regarding the use of the diagnosis in the in-depth interviews:

I believe that diagnoses are very useful, but inclusion cannot be financed just by looking at diagnoses. And I say this because inclusion requires much more money and the subsidy is not enough. And furthermore, we are supposed to move towards inclusion, but with this we will continue to name children according to their diagnosis: hyperactive, Asperger's, etc. (Educator 2).

You have to start thinking that all children need support, then, with the money from the subsidy it is not enough. So, I believe that Decree 170 is not one of inclusion, because the truth is that it serves to classify children and to show that the school needs the money to support it and ties the money to a diagnosis. (Educadora 6).

The teachers propose that the inclusion should be financed through other mechanisms, that although the diagnosis is useful for the identification of the educational needs of each student, it finally ends up becoming the demonstration that must be carried out by the school. to receive the subsidy for special education from the State, which reinforces a clinical logic for the pedagogical support of students with SEN. In this sense, students are stigmatized and named within the school institution according to the diagnostic label with which they are nominated. In turn, the educators maintain a critical stance by mentioning that the resources allocated for inclusion are insufficient and that the diagnosis-voucher relationship does not contribute to the configuration of a more inclusive educational system, but rather reproduces the thesis of the deficit (biological or psychological), linked to some basic condition presented by the student in question.

On the other hand, the participants revealed that inclusion policies such as Decree 170 exacerbate the administrative work linked to the production of evidence, such as diagnoses and psychopedagogical reports, which turn out to be crucial to receive the subsidy and for the school in the that perform do not receive any type of sanction by the Superintendency of Education. In fact, the educators pointed out that the work associated with the preparation of documents that serve as evidence to substantiate the diagnoses made by health professionals



is usually intensive, lasting at least three months, a task that prevents them from developing individualized pedagogical support for students. with SEN, a task that for these pedagogues is essential to develop more inclusive schools focused on equal learning opportunities for students.

In this sense, the participants pointed out:

This issue of filling out forms is important, but nobody sees these documents. In other words, we spend about three months writing papers and filling file cabinets, but they do not serve to improve student learning, they only serve to confirm the diagnosis and nothing else (Educator 2, Field note).

The problem with Decree 170 is that it makes us work a lot to justify diagnoses and we are in the office for a long time, we are only doing administrative work and we only want to be working with children with difficulties, because that is inclusion, working to improve learning and not be filling cards (Educadora 5, Nota de campo).

According to the previous fragments, the teachers question the amount of administrative work linked to the demonstration of evidence to receive the special education subsidy from the State, documents that, on the one hand, do not provide, in the opinion of these professionals, to the improvement of the teaching-learning processes of students with SEN, since they only serve to justify the economic resources received by the school, and on the other hand, they pointed out that this type of work distances them from what they have conceptualized as inclusive work, that is, pedagogically support students with SEN to contribute to the improvement of their learning processes in an integral way.

### **Overlapping practices of school exclusion**

One of the topics that emerged from the translations that the educators made of the inclusion policies refers to the exclusion of students with SEN from the application of the SIMCE standardized evaluation. In this sense, the participants declared that directors and other educational actors frequently requested that students with SEN not take the standardized evaluation, which was specified in their respective contexts through two practices: "hiding" these students in units of the school establishment other than the regular classroom (library, newspaper library, inspectorate, resource room, among others) and ask

the parents of these children not to send their pupils on the day of the SIMCE test to the educational institution.

In this way the educators referred in their speeches in the in-depth interview:

Before it was more frequent, now not so much, there is more supervision, but that the children with the greatest difficulties were sent to the library to watch movies or were hidden somewhere else, that was seen on the day of the Simce and we all knew it , it was an open secret (Educator 3).

Honestly, it was an established practice to camouflage or hide the children from the PIE on Simce day and it was done, not out of malice, but it was believed that these children would spoil the school score and that was bad for everyone, because after the punishments came and they took away the subsidy, so it was not convenient to take risks (Educadora 5).

What the educators previously stated shows a practice that was configured in a certain way as a kind of taboo, since they mention that all educational actors were aware that students with SEN were being hidden, but that it was not politically correct to declare it, since it was an exclusion strategy. This concealment of students resulted in not altering the academic results of the educational institutions, in keeping the Simce scores stable, under the assumption that the students with SEN were going to lower them and with this the sanctions provided by the SEP Law would be deployed, for For example, losing grants and thereby running the risk of losing official recognition and eventually closing the school.

In addition, the educators who were part of the case studies pointed out that although they were aware that these practices went against their ethics and professional criteria, they often understood that the punishments and sanctions derived from lowering the scores in the Simce were too "risky" for the entire school community, since the schools could not lose the subsidies and, thus, be exposed to the institution being closed for sustaining low academic results in this evaluation over time.

On the other hand, the results linked to the request to the parents not to send their pupils with SEN to schools on the day of the Simce application, there were nuances regarding the participants who worked in establishments with higher returns, who pointed out that Although at some point this practice had been exercised in order not to affect the scores in standardized evaluations, at present it was no longer developed, since the Simce does not

consider the scores of students with some permanent special educational need. and that, in addition, it was assumed that children with SEN would obtain lower performance than their peers and that this did not constitute any threat or danger to the school.

Exemplifying what was stated above, one of the educators in her daily pedagogical work declared the following:

I remember that before there was the issue of asking the PIE children not to attend school on Simce day, but now we know that the permanent children do not count in the score and that we already know that the PIE children will not do well good, but this school has good scores and that is not going to affect the average of the school (Educadora 4, Nota de campo).

What the educator mentioned previously is related to the position in the educational market that this school has, that is, it is an institution with a "prestige" that is reflected in outstanding performances in the Simce evaluation, therefore, it is assumed that the students with SEN would not have a favorable performance, but this would be "compensated" with the high performance of their peers, therefore, for these schools and their actors it would not be necessary to develop practices of exclusion of these students in particular.

In contrast, the educators who worked in schools that had been classified as having "low or insufficient" performance openly stated that despite policies such as the LIE, these practices of "hiding" students with SEN were still being developed on the day of the teaching application of the SIMCE evaluation.

In fact, one of them openly declared it in the in-depth interview:

It is that as a school we are in danger, and we do not want to risk it and sometimes we have to tolerate that these children do not come for the day of the Simce and if they do come, there is no other option but to hide them, although that is still a tremendous risk, in case they catch us the Superintendence (Educadora 1).

Although the practice mentioned above is considered dangerous, the risk of losing the subsidy is more feared in the translation of the participant, since it would imply the closure of the PIE and, with it, the differential educators would eventually lose their jobs, given that their salary depends in some cases directly on the resources provided by the State as a voucher for Special Education, which leads to a suspension of pedagogical support aimed at the

learning of students with some SEN and to the extinction of school inclusion in these contexts.

## Discussion

The objective of this study was to know the translations that differential educators produced regarding school inclusion policies in their daily performance contexts within the framework of an educational system such as the Chilean one, regulated as a market. Through a theoretical-methodological framework that was oriented through policy enactment, and mainly from the notion of the translation of legislation, three critical knots were evidenced among the most relevant findings: 1) the problem of the voucher, 2) the diagnosis as a management mechanism for inclusion and 3) the overlapping practices of school exclusion.

The participants in their translations of the inclusion policies expressed their disagreement regarding the financing of inclusion through subsidies, since they argued that this type of logic prevents progress towards the constitution of more inclusive educational communities. In this sense, they stated that although the State contributes with greater economic and human resources to put inclusion into action, establishing quotas for children per course restricts the actions of the educators themselves to carry out their professional work towards all the students who at some point in their schooling require additional pedagogical support. On the other hand, this type of financing provision builds a direct link between the diagnosis and the voucher, which reinforces the use of labels to nominate students by virtue of their deficit, which triggers the use of a language full of connotations negative towards these students (for example, Asperger child, hyperactive child, autistic child, among others).

This empirical evidence is consistent with the critical analyzes that have been carried out around the logics of inclusion policies in Chile, which have extrapolated market principles to the field of school inclusion (Infante et al., 2011; López et al. al., 2018; Sisto, 2019). The fact of determining quotas for students favored by the subsidy, those who have to prove their condition through a diagnosis, reproduces the mercantile logic characteristic of the Chilean school system, as well as the use of the diagnosis reproduces the thesis of the student's deficit, installing a clinical look at student care (Peña, 2013).

Linked to the previous category is the use of diagnosis as a management mechanism for inclusion in schools. In this sense, one of the most questioned policies was Decree 170,

since although on the one hand this legislation provides guidelines for the operation of PIE, on the other, it reinforces the association between a diagnosis and obtaining the subsidy, which that transforms school micropolitics, more specifically, it modifies the pedagogical work of differential educators, since they have to invest a large amount of their time in the production of evidence to record that a certain student actually has an SEN and that, therefore, it requires the additional resources proposed by the laws on this matter. In addition, a reinforcement of the clinical perspective is generated regarding the approach to the heterogeneity of needs that students require in terms of learning, since the clinical diagnosis would become the determining document when it comes to demonstrating that a student actually has an NEE certified by a health professional qualified for these purposes.

Regarding the findings mentioned above, these are reinforced, since although various investigations have warned that the use of diagnosis fosters a clinical perspective towards inclusion, little has been said about the exponential increase in the work of differential educators, since specifically, they must dedicate a large amount of time and work to accountability, to the demonstration of the diagnosis through countless pieces of evidence, which distances them from their usual performance of pedagogical support for students with SEN and in general all students in their respective learning processes (Inostroza, 2020; Inostroza and Falabella, 2021).

As a third relevant finding of this research, the practice of concealment of the students belonging to the PIE was evidenced, so that they did not participate in the Simce evaluation. Although the participants generally stated that these practices had been adopted by their school institution at some point in the past, there were different perspectives, since the educators who worked in schools with medium-high performance in the Simce stated that hiding or excluding to children with SEN on the day of application of this test was not a problem, given that the institution in which they worked showed outstanding performance and that the possible low scores of students with SEN would be compensated by the high scores of their peers. In a different position were the teachers of schools classified in the Insufficient or Low category, since they declared that the PIE students were valued in a contradictory way in their schools: on the one hand, thanks to these children they received a subsidy more high; on the other, due to the risk that these students would lower the performance of their classmates, they were hidden or excluded from their participation at the time of the annual application of this test.

The findings in this area are controversial, since although there is international literature that has shown that students with SEN are considered problematic due to their inferior performance in standardized evaluations, especially in systems where there are sanctions derived from the performance of students. students like the Chilean (Liasidou and Symeou, 2018; Perryman et al., 2017; Slee, 2019), these practices were tacitly installed in the schools, but they were not declared by the actors, especially by the differential educators, for whom These behaviors translate into contradictions with their professional criteria and their ethos as those in charge of putting inclusion into action in their daily performance contexts. (Inostroza, 2020).

## Conclusions

In this research, it is possible to know the translations produced by the differential educators belonging to the case studies regarding school inclusion policies in an educational market context such as the Chilean one.

In this sense, it has been shown that the translations of inclusion policies are mediated by accountability and educational market policies, which constitute powerful barriers to the achievement of school inclusion, as conceptualized by differential educators. .

Due to the foregoing, it is that educators question the fact that higher inclusion quotas are achieved by financing it through vouchers and student quotas per course, as well as being critical of the bureaucracy that emerges from the accountability around clinical diagnoses, since these diagnoses would have no relation to the learning of students, but would only serve as evidence to justify the use of economic resources that are provided by the State to schools to produce precisely higher inclusion quotas.

It is this inclusion of "market" or "Chilean style" that is called into question by the case studies, since in their daily pedagogical work they have to face contradictions and dilemmas, such as: eliminating diagnostic labels for name their students, but, at the same time, use them in reports and mainly to justify the subsidy received; work for the inclusion of all students, but the voucher is only received for quotas of seven children per course, and finally, try to work in a coherent manner in their professional judgment, but they are asked to hide students in the Simce application or assess their students according to their performance in this standardized evaluation.

The findings of this study reinforce the results of international and national research that propose that in countries where market policies predominate and where education is a commodity, putting inclusion into action becomes a second-order educational task. , focused only on diagnoses, subsidies, evidence to be held accountable, leaving aside equal learning opportunities for all students. For this reason, it is necessary in countries like Chile to study the possibility of once again granting education the status of social right and educational inclusion as a task of the first order, which must be financed through basal funds, so that it goes beyond SEN, disability, and student performance on standardized assessments.

### **Future lines of research**

It is proposed for future research in this field to develop ethnographic studies in schools in different regions of the country to contrast this evidence with that obtained in the capital, in addition to deepening the study of translations and implementation of inclusion policies from the perspective of school directors, since they are the ones who must lead and fulfill the goals related to inclusion, which are mostly focused on incorporating students with SEN into regular classrooms to demonstrate the use of the voucher or subsidy received.

Following the previous argument, it is relevant to consider the voice of all educational actors, starting with differential educators, who are in charge of embodying inclusion, to later investigate this phenomenon from managers to the students themselves who are the beneficiaries of these policies. , and thus better understand the complex routes and detours that inclusion experiences when it has to be put into practice in schools located in the country that began as a laboratory of neoliberalism in education in the 1980s.

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