Reflection Article

Theoretical and methodological keys to understanding research in inclusive education

Claves teórico-metodológicas para entender la investigación en educación inclusiva

Chaves teóricas e metodológicas para entender a pesquisa sobre educação inclusiva

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents some theoretical and methodological keys to understand the ways of conceiving research in inclusive education. The method used has been that of critical documentary review. Inclusive education imposes a structure of knowledge that operates in the register of heterogeneity and interreferencing. It is, in turn, a politically committed terrain. It is precisely the political that defines its existence in the world. For inclusive education to penetrate deeply, it needs a corpus of brilliant and sophisticated ideas, but, above all, it needs to consolidate an intervention at the level of institutional relations. This attribute, together with the definition of the object and many other problems, becomes critically and imaginatively critical. A brilliant and clear idea is not synonymous with a consistent intervention in the structures of the world-system we inhabit. What is at stake is the warning that urges us to understand the ethical-political heart of the responsibility that each of the central arguments that this field indexes contains. The paper concludes by observing that, if we had to think about the type of research it builds, we would undoubtedly have to maintain that it is of a critical nature. Critical in the path of the interest of knowledge that it manufactures, since its genealogical inheritances, which participate in the creation and emergence of its specialized knowledge, demonstrate a marked post-critical character that includes some inheritances and legacies of critical theory.

Keywords: inclusive education; alter-disciplinarity; fields of academic formalization; epistemology; research methodology.

RESUMEN

El presente trabajo expone algunas claves teórico-metodológicas para comprender los modos de concebir la investigación en educación inclusiva. El método empleado ha sido el de revisión documental crítica. La educación inclusiva impone una estructura de conocimiento que opera en el registro de la heterogénesis y la interreferenciación. Es, a su vez, un terreno políticamente comprometido. Es, justamente, lo político, lo que define su existencia en el mundo. Para que la educación inclusiva cale profundamente, necesita un *corpus* de ideas brillantes y sofisticadas, pero, ante todo, necesita consolidar una intervención a nivel de las relaciones institucionales. Este atributo, junto a la definición del objeto y otros tantos problemas, se torna crítico e imaginativamente álgido. Una idea brillante y clara no es sinónimo de una intervención consecuente en las estructuras del sistema-mundo que habitamos. Lo que se pone en juego es la advertencia que nos insta a comprender el corazón ético-político de la responsabilidad que encierra cada uno de los argumentos centrales que este campo indexa. El trabajo concluye observando que, si tuviésemos que pensar acerca del tipo de investigación que esta construye, sin duda, tendríamos que sostener que es de carácter crítico. Crítico en la senda del interés de conocimiento que fabrica, ya que sus herencias genealógicas, que participan en la creación y emergencia de su conocimiento especializado, demuestran un marcado carácter poscrítico que incluye algunas herencias y legados de la teoría crítica occidental.

Palabras clave: educación inclusiva; alterdisciplinariedad; ámbitos de formalización académica; epistemología; metodología de la investigación.

SUMARIO

Este artigo apresenta algumas chaves teóricas e metodológicas para compreender as formas de conceber a pesquisa em educação inclusiva. O método utilizado foi o da análise documental crítica. A educação inclusiva impõe uma estrutura de conhecimento que opera no registro da heterogeneidade e da interreferência. Ela é, por sua vez, um terreno politicamente comprometido. É precisamente a política que define sua existência no mundo. Para que a educação inclusiva crie raízes, ela precisa de um corpo de ideias brilhantes e sofisticadas, mas, acima de tudo, precisa consolidar uma intervenção no nível das relações institucionais. Esse atributo, juntamente com a definição do objeto e muitas outras questões, torna-se crítica e imaginativamente agudo. Uma ideia brilhante e clara não é sinônimo de uma intervenção consistente nas estruturas do sistema-mundo em que vivemos. O que está em jogo é o alerta que nos impele a entender o cerne ético-político da responsabilidade que está no centro de cada um dos argumentos centrais que esse campo indexa. O artigo conclui observando que, se fôssemos pensar sobre o tipo de pesquisa que ela constrói, sem dúvida teríamos que sustentar que ela tem um caráter crítico. Crítico no caminho do interesse do conhecimento que fabrica, já que seus legados genealógicos, que participam da criação e do surgimento de seu conhecimento especializado, demonstram um caráter marcadamente pós-crítico que inclui alguns legados e heranças da teoria crítica.

Palavras-chave: educação inclusiva; alterdisciplinaridade; campos de formalização acadêmica; epistemologia; metodologia de pesquisa.

Introduction

None of the ontological expressions translated as base subjects and subjects under construction are, necessarily, politicized subjects. The delineation established by such a definition emphasizes the notion *of situated intervention*, determining how we can act when addressing specific relational, existential, structural, political, cultural, ethical, and pedagogical problems that affect multiple communities. The substrate of the notion *of intervention* works in direct relation to the heritage of Gramsci's thought. The issue is to rescue the political and critical value of such a notion. Let us remember that one of the dimensions of critical thinking lies in the ability to question those bodies of knowledge with which we interact. Especially, it reinforces its imaginative character, characterized by distorting—translating into other ways of thinking about something—our epistemological performances. If we transfer this interest to my field of work, I will argue that the political power of "critique" is sub-theoretical, metaphysical in nature, focused exclusively on the return of political theories from a post-structuralist perspective.

The nature of the ontological record of inclusive education occurs in multiplicity and imposes a procedural and relational character. Intervention always entails the development of pragmatism, that is, knowledge that embodies the reality of a multidimensional and multidynamic nature. Epistemologically, inclusive education is the result of the assembly, translation, and (re)articulation of constructive resources from an extradisciplinary basis. What I am trying to describe is the co-presence of constructive resources of diverse natures, sometimes originating from completely different academic geographies from each other. We can identify the confluence of various disciplines, inter-disciplines, anti-disciplines, etc. Such a degree of complexity demonstrates that we are in the presence of a territory configured from multiple heuristic convergences. This is presented as a cognitive enclave of mutual unintelligibility and permanent disarticulation. Inclusive education is a space for alterdisciplinarity.

The *interdisciplinarity* emerges from the contribution of deconstruction. It is characterized by altering the discourses that genealogically nourish—and, to a certain extent, differentiated and often unequal positions—the matrices of the constitution of the field, while simultaneously possessing the capacity to alter the dynamics of knowledge production of each of the intellectual formations with which they engage in dialogue. Inclusive education is viewed as a transformative mechanism —henceforth, synonymous with *alteration/alterity*— of the conditions under which knowledge is produced and its respective processes of legitimization.

Inclusive education imposes a knowledge structure that operates within the framework of heterogenesis and interreferencing. It is, in turn, a politically charged terrain. It is precisely the political aspect that defines its existence in the world as we know it. It is characterized by forcefully disrupting it. Unlike cultural studies, inclusive education does encounter a theoretical limit that could potentially hinder and confuse it. This is the preeminence of their Pharisaic reasoning, the one that nurtures the developments of the success of their cognitive failure. I refer to the imposition/transvestization of the epistemic and didactic model of special education to substantiate the theoretical, methodological, and lexical nature of inclusivity. Such a degree of error causes an obstruction in their semiotic systems. In order to delineate the depth that defines such a problem, it is necessary to construct an inquiry of the theoretical ideas and foundational narratives that determine its modes of enunciation and audibility, those which, subsequently, condition the interactions with its objects of analysis. Inclusive education needs to sharpen its commitment to theory. Otherwise, it will systematically be subjected to a system of discursive trivialization. The danger of this lies in the imposition of an analytical framework that operates without objective references to its nature. The commitment to theory is, without any question, a political commitment.

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"Inclusive education imposes a knowledge structure that operates within the framework of heterogenesis and interreferencing. "

Before determining under the logic of the regulations what the potential political commitments of inclusive education might be, it is necessary to examine the possible framework that would define its potential modalities of theorization. It is also necessary to explain how inclusive education could become a pivotal policy for interpreting reality. Let us remember that one of its purposes is to understand the signs of the present, as well as to determine what the political differences are, how they are marked, and the impact of their repercussions. Part of the problem with the theory is constitutive of the traditions of thought in what we call *pedagogy and educational sciences*, as it privileges a false system of intuitionism that neglects the empirical details of what is analyzed. Indeed, what I allude to, in Freirean literature, is known under the phrase *naïve curiosity*, a repertoire of fundamentally articulated statements about an intuitionist apparatus. Frequently, in pedagogy and educational sciences, individuals oppose the theory. They refer to it in a derogatory, caricatured manner, oversimplifying the work of those of us dedicated to it. There is no shortage of those who argue that theorizing is merely a desk job. This is entirely misleading. To engage in theory is to be immersed in reality itself; it means becoming an interpreter of its problems. The degree of simplification inherent in these arguments is out of place.

The trivialization of theory in the area I am examining here is a common occurrence. It can be described under the widely spread global expression: *it's daily bread*. This daily bread is the result of arbitrary elaborations, inherited by intellectual and political liberal progressivism that neglects the proliferation of a web of more sophisticated thought habits to explain issues of inequality, oppression, segregation, the lack of ethical responsibility in educational provision, etc. I will say it clearly, directly, and simply: inclusive education does not admit any kind of *clichés*. We need a theoretical revolution so that it can clearly intervene in the institutional rules of society and, consequently, the educational system.

For inclusive education to take root deeply in the world, we need a corpus of brilliant and sophisticated ideas, but, above all, we need to consolidate an intervention at the level of institutional relationships. This attribute, along with the definition of the object and various other issues, becomes critically and imaginatively intense. A brilliant and clear idea is not synonymous with a consequential intervention in the structures of the world-system we inhabit. What is at stake, through Mowitt's (1992) warning, is the ethical-political heart of the responsibility embedded in each argument that indexes the field of inclusive education. The tension lies here, in who listens and, in particular, how the conditions of audibility are configured for its phenomena of what we know under the label of *inclusive education*. Indeed:

> The belief in the necessary efficacy or significance of "speaking clearly," clearly and popularly, is based on very weak and highly idealistic theoretical foundations. Too often, politics, political force, and agency seem to be interpreted in a grandstanding manner, as if we had a speaker holding a microphone addressing an audience, interpreted as if the audience listens and desires to learn and follow, so that when they hear it, they follow in some programmatically predictable way. Few things are less certain today. However, critical intellectuals continue to concern themselves almost exclusively with *what should be said*, without paying attention to the fact that they are often not heard, or audible, or listened to, or listenable, capable, or even intelligible. Obviously, academics and intellectuals cannot easily interpret that their responsibilities demand more than just discovering and stating the truth. But there are also secondary and complementary truths that should not be ignored either, such as those related to how one "listens" to what is said in any meaningful or consequential sense. As Spivak pointed out, a key ethical-political issue is not only who should speak, but "who will listen?". (Spivak and Gunew, 1993, pages 193-202))

Theory should never be subject to unscrupulous manipulations, nor should it be used to make arbitrary statements or take positions for or against any subject: it is about promoting other ways of relating and thinking about a specific issue. An intellectual politically committed to inclusive education will reject any analytical and discursive trivialization promoted by liberal progressivism, which has strongly hijacked a significant part of its most consequential discussions.

> It can be asserted that theory triumphs over something called non-theory because if one compares a well-theorized and politically committed work with a poorly theorized and politically committed work: it is the theoretical analysis […] that will likely prove to be more 'politically' effective, at least to the extent that it is more aware of the political-institutional factors that affect its operation and development and, therefore, is less likely to be blindly shaped and controlled by them. (Hall, 1992, p. 5)

The construction of the theory of inclusive education does not aim to subordinate its field of significations to certain political ends—this is, to a certain extent, partisan. The phenomena that constitute it are, profoundly, political. The theory is highly relevant to their debates. Indeed, "any effort of empirical description takes place within a theoretically delimited sphere, and empirical analysis in general cannot offer a persuasive explanation of its own constitution as a field of research" (Bowman, 2008, p. 20). This is, in any case, an invitation to think critically. It is about understanding that "knowledge without accompanying justification for its constitution and existence is counterintellectual and, ultimately, counterrational" (Bowman, 2008, p. 23). This is the case of the intellectual circumscription or specific circumscription of truth known as *inclusive education*. The patterns of thought that circulate within the tradition of thinking in this field exhibit a pronounced anti-intellectual interest. This is what underpins Pharisaic reasoning. What is the theoretical necessity of inclusive education? In many cases, it is a condition of possibility. Inclusive education must deploy a critical interrogation mechanism regarding the nature of its political commitment, especially when the appeal becomes a blind commitment to fighting for the hegemony of a particular paradigm within a narcissistic disciplinary space (Bowman, 2008). Such blindness occurs in the record of ignorance.

What is the relationship between *critical theory and inclusive education?*

For any critical practitioner of this genre, this relationship is more than obvious. However, this interrelation at the theoretical level demands a detailed analysis of its specifics. The truth is that, within the vastness of its argument, it is possible to observe an oxymoron. Despite the fact that many educational institutions and teachers use some arguments in favor of inclusion to promote the transformation of educational communities, this objective is not always fully embodied. It is also common to observe how various individuals use the term in their diverse political and intellectual projects. The obstructions linked to its index of singularity are expressed through various types of responses, many of which are contradictory.

If we start from the assertion that inclusive education offers us a triple consciousness that disrupts the operating structures of the world-system, this triple consciousness is defined by: a) a political dimension that describes its purposes in terms of a political project aimed at altering the institutional rules of societal functioning and, consequently, the educational system; b) a dimension that describes it in terms of a knowledge project in resistance, an epistemology and an analytical strategy in resistance, which proposes a system of creative disruption to redefine the knowledge structures that help us read the multiplicity of problems that constitute its field of analysis; and c) an oppositional relational system of differential consciousness that recognizes that the ontological center of this movement resides in multiplicity, in the co-presence of multiple selves.

Inclusive education is a way of understanding and analyzing the complexity of the world-system we inhabit. It never reduces its significance to the mere consolidation of inclusive assimilation structures, which keep intact the oppressive structures that affect multiple groups of citizens. Within its analysis, it considers the study of the circumstances of social and political life that are amalgamated into educational practice and the exercise of the right to education. It recognizes that many of the difficulties affecting various communities are due to axes that act jointly and influence each other. This is a premise shared with intersectionality in the study of the diverse phenomena constitutive of oppression, domination, and inequalities. Whether we like it or not, the phrase *inclusive education* is deeply entrenched in the educational sciences. Now, whatever direction and intentionality it adopts is another matter.

One of the characteristics of this syntagm describes its potential in terms of an analytical instrument. As a general rule, inclusion is employed to address the issues faced by various student groups in their interaction with educational structures, which result in different forms of inequality. This is what makes it a resource to deal with the multiplicity of inequalities, violences in plural, silenced discriminations, etc., that affect various groups, and thereby build more just and inclusive spaces. Despite the increasingly intense demands from various student groups for

equal treatment, the reality is that they arrive at educational structures with vastly different experiences and needs. Addressing student differences through the grammaticality of individualism-essentialism imposes a multi-categorical effect that conveniently reproduces various forms of social and educational injustices. The discussion weakens when it refuses to understand that each educational experience can be positioned in more than one category or in more than one marker of oppression. The question is, in what way can inclusion become an analytical tool for considering the diversity of constitutive problems in the world intertwined with the exercise of rights in education, and thereby ensure strategies of equality and equity while respecting the ontological reality of each community? This is about being aware that the specific difficulties of multiple groups continue to be subordinated. Such awareness can only be achieved to the extent that we are conscious of the critique embodied by such an argument.

> **Inclusive education is a way of understanding and analyzing the complexity of the world-system we inhabit.”**

Inclusive education is a critically-deliberative praxis that, as such, demands a better understanding of its essence. The concept of inclusion as an analytical instrument is utilized in markedly different ways when addressing a variety of social, political, and pedagogical issues and problems. Those who practice it seriously argue that one of its fundamental ideas acknowledges that each of the forms of inequality affecting the trajectories of multiple student groups and their markers never operate as independent entities; rather, they mutually construct each other within the context of a specific social formation and, consequently, act together. The use I have made of inclusive education for several years is primarily analytical and/or heuristic in nature, mainly dedicated to solving problems—both material and subjective—with a common interest in the tensions, oppressions, and creative openings faced by diversity, conceived in terms of multiple singularities. The use of inclusive education as a heuristic device means that it can take many different forms. What truly makes our actions genuinely inclusive is not the imposition of the term "inclusive education," nor its genealogical framework, nor its subjects of analysis or textual references, but rather the way we frame our relationship with specific objects of analysis; in other words, the way we think about something. This is what I insistently refer to as *epistemological performances or habits of thought*.

The foundation of inclusive education lies in what it does rather than what it is. This argument may seem contradictory, as a significant portion of my intellectual work falls within what we know as the search for the *index of epistemological singularity*. The distance delineated by the equation constitutes a call to avoid the normativity of any definitional system that restricts its vast possibilities for creativity. Without a doubt, understanding what inclusive education is becomes urgent to reorient each of its points of contradiction. We must not overlook their creative and thought-distorting capacity. Here, the substantivation *deformation* is employed in terms of creative transformation, which allows rescuing the lexical genesis of the word itself—namely, the action and *effect of disfiguring*. Its epistemic load indicates a system of removal, dislocation. This is the foundation of the word's prefixation mark, while the action potential is accompanied by the strength of its suffix.

What are some of the analytical uses of inclusive education? To answer this question, it is necessary to revisit one of the defining dilemmas of inclusion, which informs us that it partakes in the power relations and cultural representations it challenges. In this way, some of its dimensions are specified in the interpersonal, disciplinary, structural, and cultural realms of power. Each of these dimensions is crucial for examining how their theoretical contours address specific issues that embody the modes of existence of multiple social collectives. The analysis of the operating patterns of power is in no way an academic whim; rather, it represents a central purpose that we must learn to document in our analyses, beyond the analytical determinants exhausted in their historical function, contributed by classical Marxism. The four dimensions are intrinsically interconnected. Let us not lose sight of the fact that power relations inform us about how people relate to each other, emphasizing which groups or individuals will be (dis)favored within certain socio-educational and socio-political interactions.

The use of inclusive education through an analytical lens highlights the multifaceted nature of individual identities, intersected and positioned in unique ways in relation to specific power dynamics. Each of these markers of oppression and inequality mutually influence one another to shape the biography of

each individual. This is what allows us to assert that there is no single way to understand inclusion and its cultural and political uses. Indeed, inclusive education can be interpreted as "a way of understanding and analyzing the complexity of the world, of people, and of human experience" (Hill Collins, 2019, p. 34).

What makes inclusive education an analytical tool? Fundamentally, its way of thinking about highly complex phenomena that resist any form of analytical or interpretive determinism. At the very least, it acknowledges two things: the complexity of people's lives and the complexity of the social contexts in which these problems are embedded. A historically established area of analysis among its practitioners is that of social inequality and, consequently, educational inequality. It is common to observe that most of the critical or mainstream works indexed under the label of inclusion or inclusive education place emphasis on this issue. Even many of their current definitions are redundant on this point. Their analytical grammar emphasizes and "adds layers of additional complexity to the interpretations of social inequality, recognizing that the cause is rarely attributable to a single factor" (Hill Collins, 2019, p. 35). The appeal of this statement lies in the recognition of various types of interactions, predominantly of a neo-materialist nature.

Another dimension of analysis pertains to power. We know that it presents a regenerative and performative nature (Ocampo González, 2017). For authors like Hill Collins (2019), this is endemic to the world-system, whereas, for Foucault (1970), it presents a nature that follows the logic of the virus. The analytical interest in inclusion within power relations underscores the particular organization of some of them. The inclusive framework must always take this configuration into account. The understanding of inequalities within a group must be examined through what Lugones (2021) calls *coalition politics*. Power relations are always the result of mutual construction. This allows for the documentation of how the educational and social trajectories of students are influenced by multiple factors, which impact them in diverse and interrelated ways. To a certain extent, the analytical framework provided by inclusive education should teach us to understand how various systems of power operate in an interconnected manner. These relationships must be addressed through their intersections. As a heuristic device, inclusive education serves to examine each of the aforementioned dimensions.

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A third property resides in the relationality that inclusive education constructs. Relationality is the foundation of coalition politics. Thus, it entails a historical commitment to various social groups and divisions. Relationality is an ontological demand aimed at the creation of other modes of relationships, coexistence, and cohabitation. This is the primary ontological demand faced by inclusive education, along with the recomposition of readability criteria for certain groups amalgamated in the ontological exteriority characteristic of modernity. Relationality is what defines the need to conceive education under the understanding of "globally inclusive." Indeed, the "idea of connection or relationality is important, whether it is the relationality of multiple identities within the interpersonal realm of power, or the relationality of the necessary analysis to understand how class, race, and gender collectively determine global social inequality" (Hill Collins, 2016, p. 36). We must not lose sight of the fact that power always constitutes a relationship. The relational thinking rejects any form of disjunction; rather, it is framed within the strategic conjunction of the one and the other. Its interest lies in the fact that "the object of analysis shifts from focusing on what distinguishes the different elements to examining their interconnections" (Hill Collins, 2016, p. 36). Relationality takes on various forms within the genre and mode known as *inclusive education*.

A fourth dimension of analysis is framed around the social context, whose analytics "emphasize the importance of specific historical contexts in the production of knowledge" (Hill Collins, 2016, p. 36). Indeed, the American theorist argues that this analysis "derives from the impetus that considers social inequality, relationality, and power relations within a social context" (Hill Collins, 2016, p. 37).

A fifth property positions complexity as a critical tool that analyzes "how social inequality, power, relationality, and social context are interwoven, introducing an element of complexity into the analysis" (Hill Collins, 2019, p. 37) of social issues. Let us not forget that inclusion itself is a way of analyzing the complexity of the world we inhabit. Despite having clarity on this matter, it is important to recognize that

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social justice alone does not constitute the goal of inclusion. Even so, the relationship is not entirely apparent. Social justice, while serving as an analytical tool that provides insights to understand the complexities of an increasingly uncertain world, and to act within it, does not in itself guarantee its intended purpose. Inclusive education is never a closed intellectual project; rather, it takes different forms of application and is informed by multiple means. It is something that can be utilized in many ways. It is a project in constant construction. This attribute is a clear manifestation of open fields or intellectual systems in permanent construction.

If we had to consider the type of research this constructs, without a doubt, we would have to assert that it is of a critical nature. Critical in the path of interest in knowledge that it creates, since its genealogical inheritances—which participate in the creation and emergence of its specialized knowledge—demonstrate a marked post-critical nature, including some inheritances and legacies of critical theory. Despite its investigative intensity, it becomes a frequently employed phenomenon both within and outside academia; one that defines it in terms of an alterdisciplinary discourse. This means that by coming into contact with various academic geographies, it generates a mechanism that disrupts their knowledge production dynamics. Therefore, it contributes to the decentering of its theoretical, empirical, and analytical languages and objects.

What makes inclusive education frame its purposes and research interests in critical terms is, in part, the desire to undertake a profound critique of certain conceptual frameworks, disciplinary logics, methodological forms, and rationality schemes linked at some point to its main concerns and ethical-political advocacies. The invocations and appeals inherent to this unique intellectual genre aim to challenge the imagination that explains inequality, particularly the types of inequalities that can emerge from critically democratic arguments. This is the foundation of an analytical micropolitics, a substantive attribution that defines inclusive education as a knowledge project in resistance.

Another of its features derived from its critical imprint consists in recognizing that it constructs a critical praxis related to how individuals and social and cultural collectives build an inclusive framework, a diagram of mobile and transitive positions whose manifestations are applied in daily life. This type of praxis is crucial for combating any form of social injustice or oppression. Such recognition allows us to assert that both their research and critical praxis can be found everywhere. This interconnection must always be on our minds. "Research and practice can be effective without explicitly considering each other. However, the union of the two can generate greater benefits than each one separately" (Hill Collins, 2016, p. 41).

A thorny attribute: the scopes of definition of inclusive education

One of the main characteristics of inclusive education is the challenging definition of its uniqueness index, that is, its scientific identity, as well as the assertion that describes the consecration of a complex political project and a knowledge project in resistance. Inclusive education rejects any ontological determinant that emphasizes essentialist forms which are turned into pathologies, disorders, or deficits of certain groups. Rather, it is concerned with the question about the multiple existential modes of the human condition. Characterized by its challenging definition, it informs us why many of its practitioners find it difficult to reach a consensus on its potential core agreements, problems, categories, etc. Even the question about its epistemological foundation remains a vacant topic among its research agendas. Even among those who have posed the question coexist with more uncertainties than enlightening answers.

Much of the intelligibility material that allows us to delve into the understanding of its authentic object stems from methodological changes of a poststructuralist and postmodernist nature in the humanities, sharing, to a certain extent, the anti-humanist predicament that predominantly affects multiple disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. One of the main obstacles faced by this territory is expressed through its epistemological

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delimitation, partly as a result of the heterogeneity of thought traditions and objects that do not necessarily share the same language or theoretical and/or political purpose. Adding to this is the methodological diversity and the inequality in the background of practitioners and constructive resources. Studies on inclusive education must be conceived as a spatiality in which it is easy to become disoriented. The constellation of phenomena resists being read from traditional disciplinary frameworks, in part, because the nature of its units of intelligibility is in a state of constant flux. Moreover, none of its convergent resources enjoy a specific location, much less a specific delimitation within a given paradigmatic framework. What we find at the core of its epistemological framework is flexibility and plurality.

The epistemology of inclusive education is always a situated cognitive construction that enhances its interaction with broader issues concerning the localization of its knowledge in multiple and varied sites. The epistemic culture of inclusive education informs about the dynamics of the practices that underlie this field. In simple terms, they are the gears that create and guarantee the emergence of specialized knowledge. The process of knowledge production is always a reflective task. Such an interpretation of a constructivist order aims to understand how cognitive objects are produced. Such a process sometimes involves a deconstructive action.

Studies on inclusive education correspond to what I have termed areas of *academic formalization*, that is, the definition of a primarily epistemological and methodological matrix that aids its practitioners in focusing their attention on the multiplicity of issues that, in some way, are connected to this field, one of a contingent nature, intensely political and with complex levels of definition of its scientific identity. In its critical task, it works to substitute a thought image that induces a universal signifier intended to understand that inclusion — phenomenon— and inclusive education —the specific circumscription of truth— is a set of images that tends to impose a grammar centered on the assimilation of certain groups, without altering the institutional functioning rules of society, that is, those configuring the design of each societal structure. This is what I mean when I argue that inclusion is a structural phenomenon. This conceptual framework aids us in questioning the power relations and cultural representations with which it is involved. Inclusive education, from my theoretical and political standpoint, is expressed through a dispersed multiplicity of theoretical, conceptual, ontological, ethical, political, and methodological roots, and through the recognition of the openness of its knowledge structure and its object towards exteriority. Each of its roots corresponds to critical influences that articulate various practices of inclusion mediated by the psychic desire for social justice. Inclusive education informs us that we are facing a horizon of transformations in the field of practices that produce its cultural and political significance.

Let us not lose sight of the fact that inclusion—a structural and relational phenomenon—expresses a markedly structural, relational, and political nature, as well as a relational and procedural ontology that, by engaging with many fields of research and thought, unfolds an alterdisciplinary action that impacts not only the movement of meanings within each of its fields but also alters, modifies, and interrupts languages, conceptions, theoretical objects, etc. The primary task of alterdisciplinarity is the interruption and/or creative modification of each of the fields it comes into contact with. For its part, inclusive education—a specific jurisdiction of truth—responds to a cognitive organization matrix interested in providing the means to understand its knowledge and ethical, political, and methodological practices. Given the complexity of its phenomena, it acknowledges that these cannot be exclusively confined within the paradigms of each of the disciplines that inform its developments. The above allows us to observe that we are engaging with a body of phenomena that are difficult to define. However, above all, they progressively construct an object whose forms of cognitive control can only be understood in the exteriority of its object, that is, outside and beyond its traditional imputations. Such an exercise clearly establishes a postdisciplinary stance by describing the type of intellectual articulations that emerge from it. The nature of the knowledge of inclusive education is postdisciplinary in character.

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"The epistemology of inclusive education is always a situated cognitive construction that enhances its interaction with broader issues concerning the localization of its knowledge in multiple and varied sites. "

Inclusion, as a phenomenon, constructs a form of relational visuality and generates various cultural meanings that directly and immediately impact different types of epistemological and methodological constructions in each of the dispersed academic geographies it encounters, and which, in turn, nourish its developments in genealogical terms. This phenomenon generates a specific circuit of production and transmission of its most significant contents, which equally affect the meaning of its theoretical, empirical, and analytical objects, as well as its mechanisms of social reception. Inclusive education as an intellectual circumscription should never be reduced to a heterogeneous set of theoretical and/or methodological practices. We must conceive it in terms of an expanded constellation of intellectual practices that ensure inclusion by addressing the diversity of issues that arise within specific cultural practices. It is for this reason that inclusion is intricately linked to a multiplicity of analytical dimensions. Understanding it exclusively in the direction of its signifier mainstream is to condemn it to failure. This appeal entails a profound renewal of the research methodologies and analysis techniques employed when interacting with a specific phenomenon.

Despite the fact that inclusion constitutes an unavoidable reality within academic structures, it has encountered various obstacles in promoting a system that reorganizes its mechanisms and research practices, which delineate what inclusive education studies are or would be. It is a sanctioned trend not to think in this direction in pedagogy. Let us remember that, as a field of study, pedagogy is a space that enshrines accumulated knowledge in practice.

What are some of the dimensions addressed in your discussions? First and foremost, these occur in the registry of the overflow of the positionality of their units of intelligibility. The understanding of each of them is characterized by "opening and indicating spaces of problematicity, providing the materials to enrich the debates that could occur within them" (Brea, 2003, p. 6). Inclusive education is a shaky, liminal ground where many of its "[...] foundations crack and wobble, revealing their inconsistencies and weaknesses, their lines of instability and dismantling" (Brea, 2003, p. 6). Research on inclusive education debates its educational dimension by addressing its social and political implications, as well as the forms of power organization and the types of cultural representations it produces. Furthermore, it problematizes the conditions of the ontological shift that implicitly involves access to or understanding of its intellectual authenticity.

Among some of the most recurrent issues inherent to the field is the marked inflationary nature linked to the publication of its works, crossed by a circle of epistemic reproduction, and a certain thematic normalization that leads to an imaginative stagnation. From this, ephemeral and inconsistent debates arise as a result of such obstruction. In addition to this, there is a lack of theoretical and epistemological reflection due to the misunderstanding of its intellectual foundation of a post-disciplinary nature, the complex qualities of its object, and the disorganization of its methodological instruments. Ontologically, there is a set of obstructions linked to recognition policies, particularly to the legibility criteria of certain cultural groups that become systematic objects of analysis. A double challenge then arises: How to avoid reducing subjects to mere objectification schemas? It is about transforming them into subjects of knowledge. The objectification always leads to the creation of abject forms of knowledge.

Inclusive education, as a field of social, political, and cultural practices of an educational nature, is affiliated with a body of knowledge whose morphological regulation operates in heterogenesis and the eventual emergence of a new field of study, under a critical perspective of a post-disciplinary nature. All of this suggests understanding its field of phenomena in terms of: a) sociocultural practical belief, b) specific circumscription of truth that formalizes its cognitive content, and c) academic formalization scenario that enhances the understanding of its assembly and critical methodological regulations.

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Table 1. Scopes for defining inclusive education

Practical Belief	A specific circumscription of truth that formalizes its cognitive content	Academic formalization scenario that enables the understanding of its assembly and critical methodological regulations
Inclusion	**Inclusive education**	**Studies on Inclusive Education**
Conceived as a phenomenon and field that traverses all areas of human development and alters each territory it interacts with. It is trans-relational and inter-disciplinary, as well as political, structural, and relational in nature.	It corresponds to the type of intelligibility grid of a post-disciplinary nature dedicated to the production of a new object that belongs to no one, despite arising from multiple genealogical entanglements of dispersion.

The order of its production occurs within epistemological nomadism and diasporism. It does not subscribe to any particular theoretical or methodological practice. It is a phenomenon that is only audible to the exteriority of each of its constructive resources. | It pertains to the formalization domains of the field, and consequently, to its research practices.

Inclusive education practices always generate cultural significance. |

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Research on inclusive education reveals an unknown triple heuristic consciousness: social, cultural, and political studies. These seek to intervene cognitively within the field of presuppositions that permeate the phenomenon, as well as to guide their analyses on how each of their presuppositions becomes a relevant social fact. The aforementioned facilitates the description of its object or, henceforth, its objectual network, a mesh of epistemological understanding integrated by phenomena of multiple natures and textures. This raises a critical question: How is the dynamic of a critical relationship with its object established? The difficulty lies in identifying the determinants of understanding its object, which cannot be easily localized through the centering operation within specific academic geographies. Indeed, the constitution of this object is regulated by a social and cognitive articulation accompanied by an affective settlement of its socially instituted practices. Affective settlement is what I describe under the denominator of the *sculptural principle and the audibility of inclusion,* whose impact powerfully affects the minds of its users or practitioners. The objectual network of inclusive education demystifies the insurmountable wall imposed by disciplines, those that dogmatically profess the separation of objects from others that determine their political, aesthetic, ethical potential, etc.

Research on inclusive education can be conceived in terms of a space of mutual understanding linked to the production of cultural, political, and relational meaning. As such, this typology of studies establishes a postdisciplinary research field —intersected by multiple heuristic convergences— and, probably, multimethodological. The methodological status upheld here has the mission of demanding some empirical justification. I use such an adverbial form to position the discussion in the imaginative game, whose interest is not only directed towards producing new knowledge but also reconsidering some of the most thorny issues circulating within the intimacy of this field from other angles of vision. All this allows for the dismantling of discussions arising from other research fields. Now then, what is the critical distance established with the intellectual circumscription called *special education*? Addressing this question involves accepting the no less unorthodox invitation to analyze the foundations and relationships of the discipline designated as special education, its history, and its contents.

> "Understanding it exclusively in the direction of its mainstream signifier is to condemn it to failure. This appeal entails a profound renewal of the research methodologies and analysis techniques employed when interacting with a specific phenomenon. "

This reflection can begin by questioning the roots of knowledge in special education. As a starting point, I will argue that the dominant rationality defining what is known as special education is the subject of a vacuous theory and senseless interpretations. I have sufficiently argued in this document the importance of avoiding the confusion of the purposes of education in terms of general and pompous constructs. The impact regulated by the organic nature of such problems acknowledges that "the intellectual, academic, commercial, and professional structures surrounding the expansion of the special have been responsible for creating barren fields of study and practice" (Thomas & Loxley, 2007, p. 42). In addition to this, there is a problem related to the understanding of the meaning, scope, and nature of special education. Its knowledge is subject to false legitimacy and to an inappropriate and unnecessary reification of scientific knowledge. Many of the advances experienced by the discipline are due to changes in the political and social climate, rather than the actual disciplinary thought processes of its practitioners. This same phenomenon occurs with inclusive education. In this way, the supremacy of extratheoretical regulation over intratheoretical regulation is established. Despite this, there is no significant elimination system observed regarding the type of knowledge we have about other human beings.

Conclusion

I will say it bluntly: the quintessential predicament I observe at the ontological heart of inclusive education, when studied on its own terms, informs us of a chant of an anti-essentialist nature that arises from the critical center of antihumanism. This is the dominant form that should embody its power. When it sings to anti-essentialism, we are in the presence of the ontic salutation of difference, a semiotic system that avoids being captured by any operational technology of the normocentric regime of difference. Inclusive education destroys all expressions of essentialist binaries that solidify the support of mainstream discourse. The conceptual critique and political agency developed by inclusive education work to counteract the progressive advance of the capitalist revolution, which crystallizes various forms of anonymization and social atomization. It is about ensuring uninterrupted conditions of disruption across various fronts of society. Anti-essentialism is, therefore, the foundation of the politics of difference, one that ratifies a completely unknown ontological register.

Put bluntly, inclusive education is the endless demand for justice, and with it, the task of modifying the rules of the dominant discourse. We will name this property, inspired in Bowman (2022) and Laclau and Mouffe (1985), *transformationality* of thought, that practitioners of a singular academic geography crystallize. The anti-essentialist perspective can be explained in terms of a multiple transformation movement that instigates change both within and outside academic structures. The knowledge of things or essences is obsolete. The epistemological articulations of inclusive education occur through diasporism and theoretical nomadism, whose articulations are embodied through "transformation, deformation, alteration, substitutability, combination, reciprocity, translatability, effectiveness, and performativity" (Bowman, 2022, p. 5). Inclusive education is synonymous with the alteration of intellectual practices and systematically opposes the constitution of paralogical territories, that is, a territory intricately varied which, in its very nature, is homogeneous.

The anti-essentialist appeal argues that identities are constructed discursively and that, along with their agencies, they are plural and transitory. The evolving path is its main property. It is about preventing both identities and their agencies from being affected by criteria inspired by essentialist rationalities. Moreover, anti-essentialism does not deny real things—that is, the existence of the referent—but rather structures its analyses based on them in order to promote an analysis of formal logics and to avoid attachment to any system of fixation/fetishization of essences or the forms of reductionism implicit in any interpretative unit.

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