

**Discourses and Subjectivities in Education  
Policies in Chile: a Study in Rural Contexts.**

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I, Juan de Dios Oyarzún, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

## Abstract

The research seeks to analyse the relation between discourses, education policies and students' subjectivities in rural settings – schools and students – of three zones throughout Chile. The theoretical framework applied is based on post-structuralist postulates and concepts. This theoretical approach provides different conceptual tools to understand dominant discourses and techniques of power, which make possible an explanation and description of how neoliberalism operates through policies, which in turn affect and influence individual subjectivities. The purposes of this research are focused on a critical understanding of how neoliberal discourse permeates (or not) three educational policies in Chile, how they are deployed in rural schools and how these discourses and policies influence (or not) the experiences, decisions and future perspectives of rural students. These relations are mediated by geographical aspects and schools' practices, which also constitute part of the analysis developed. The study applied qualitative methods of research and analysis. Through interviews with policy makers, academics, teachers and students, the results show particular perspectives regarding the educational policies analysed, principally in relation to their lack of clear purposes and design, in a vagueness that shows traces of neoliberal discourse, among other features. In relation to the rural schools' practices, the study unveils specific assemblages, which relate intimately the strategies of the schools and the ones of the local business companies. The students, then, recreate their biographies and subjective perspectives responding to these influences, in an aspiration to accomplish the promise of a future that the educational policies offer them, but at the same time continuing the labour and social path which appears prepared for them in terms of economic functionality and precariousness. In geographical terms, the students live the tension between the rural and the urban, in the search of better life opportunities.

## Impact Statement

This research shows an original perspective to unveil the complex dynamics that articulate the enactment of education policies in the social sphere. Beyond the technocratic policy design and planning, this study analyses how education policy frameworks interact with other institutional actors and social contexts, where policy designs are transformed through a very particular process of implementation, influencing different aspects of the educational life, and showing a different face of education policies when they are put into practice in peripheral areas of a country.

This research is based on Chile, known as one of the countries where, during the Pinochet dictatorship between 1973 and 1989, neoliberal policies have been more radically imposed, and then deepened during the following two and a half decades of democratic government. This study deepens on the part of the cycle of the educational policy-making process, mainly in the design and implementation phases, interrogating what discourses have influenced their design, and what local practices articulate their implementation, and how the conjunction between discourses, policy design purposes and institutional practices influence students' subjectivities and life paths. In particular, this research analyses from a post-structural theoretical approach, how three education policies – curriculum, secondary TVET, and rural programmes – interact in specific ways in three rural settings across the territory – samples taken from the north, centre and south of the country - assembling particular forms of relations between the educational and the economic spheres of those geographical settings. The post-structural approach allowed to enlighten critically the discursive influence in these education policies, and provided conceptual tools to understand originally the set of institutional practices deployed in these rural educational contexts, along with identifying how this sum of policies and practices are related to subjective biographical narratives of rural students in their final year of secondary school, a time when they are projecting their educational, labour and personal futures.

The research design was developed under a qualitative approach, interviewing students, teachers, actors from the educational policy-making sphere

and academics related to each policy field; besides analyzing critically different educational policy documents and relevant sources.

This thesis offers a contribution to the social sciences and the educational policy studies. First, this research is an original piece of a study of sociology of education, the study of education policy from a sociological perspective, suggesting relevant further areas of social and educational research, mainly in the intersection between the educational and economic spheres at local levels. Second, this study expects to present an original approach to the three educational policies here analysed, highlighting different problematic issues regarding local institutional practices which affect the educational and labour paths of a generations of students, issues that can be considered in future policy reformulations and considerations. Finally, from an international perspective, the education policies and the geographical samples selected offer a deep insight to the educational landscape of Chile and Latin America, allowing an understanding of how the tensions of educational systems and local practices actually re-frame the whole educational experience in different places across the region.

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## Introduction

This is a study about the relation between education policies and students' subjectivities in rural contexts in Chile, in particular how the former shape and influence the rationalities and perspectives of the latter. This is an analytical review, as this research is mainly a critical analysis of policies and subjectivities, through the examination of primary empirical data from policy documents and in-depth interviews. But there is more at play here than educational policies and students' subjectivities. The study is mediated by places and spaces, as the student sample is constituted by rural students, providing a spatial variable that enables a comparison and contrast of the rural with the urban. The particular ways in which educational policies are deployed and enacted in rural areas are one focus of this research; both in relation to student experience. In addition, the role of teachers is relevant as enactors of policy, based on testimonies of how these education policies are perceived and implemented in these schools.

The theoretical framework provides a conceptual perspective based on a poststructural approach. This focuses on discourses, those rationalities and dominant regimes of truth (Larner, 2000) which establish the order of how things are and should be, how society is and should be organized, and how, immersed in such order, individuals should think and be (Ball, 2013). From this theoretical perspective, contemporary society – the political and economic order, mainly emerging from Western culture – is increasingly dominated by the neoliberal discourse, the rhetoric of a society working as a market in all its spheres, including individual subjectivities. From this point of view, discourses produce subjectivities. This production is not an abstract issue, but is deployed through specific mechanics and practices. Policies, and educational policies in particular, are part of those mechanisms or technologies which put into practice the rationalities of the dominant discourse. So, education policies are enacted via technologies that produce certain forms of subjectivity, as Michael Apple claims: "(...) we can say that the state produces policies but it, too, also 'produces' people" (2003, p. 17); and then, "(...) education is, at least partly, a process of producing certain forms of

subjectivity” (Cho & Apple, 1998, p. 287). To recap, in the research I will address in depth the mutual influences and contradictions between discourses, education policies and their local representatives – schools and teachers – and students, all these being mediated by geographical issues regarding rural zones, as the scenarios in which this analysis is carried out.

### Why study the education policies in rural contexts?

Where did this research idea come from? In 2011 I was doing my master’s thesis about school dropout in a very deprived neighbourhood in Santiago, Chile. I wanted to explore the cultural factors which might explain the rupture between schools and young students. I realized that the institutional profile of the student to be educated by the schools – written explicitly in the schools’ official policies – was an institutional dispositif (Bailey, 2013) expressing the expectations of the school regarding the students, their characteristics, their ways of thinking and behaving and how they should be at the end of the educational cycle, and thus how they should be inserted in society after school. The findings indicated an important distance between the profiles of the students in schools and the narratives of the students about themselves, regarding their biographies and expectations of the future.

For my doctoral research, I wanted to continue in my previous field of study and analysis, and to further expand into something wider: not only how schools perceive students, but how the State and education policies define a type of student, a particular student profile. That is, the nature of the State’s expectations regarding young students, what kind of citizen they should become, how they should be inserted in society, or even what type of society policies should shape. I then had to think about students to research. I was interested in vulnerable students from deprived areas and I believed rural locations would provide the appropriate context. This is due, in the main, to rural settings being a neglected area of study in Chilean educational research. In addition, the rural reality is of

personal interest to me. The influence of neoliberalism on the Chilean education system is an important and widely investigated contemporary issue. But the influence of neoliberalism on subjectivities is a topic still in its first stages of development and its application in rural contexts is even less well researched. Poor urban areas are more accessible and have been covered more by Chilean educational research than rural places; where rural areas have been studied, it has principally been from the perspective of indigenous issues. In addition, the problem of Chilean inequality is closely related to a very unequal education system (Valenzuela, Bellei and De los Rios, 2008), which leads to problems of poverty and marginalization. Chilean rural areas epitomize important aspects of poverty and precariousness, and their inhabitants also suffer the consequences of serious inequalities in education provision. It is a task undertaken by this research to go deeper into the problems of the rural settings, trying to visualize and reveal their peoples' voices in the academic and social fields, asking how rural students live and expect to live, and how these subjective views are interrelated with educational policies' purposes and features.

From this starting point, and after a long process of research and reflection, I decided to analyse those educational policies which talk about students' subjectivities, which express an explicit or implicit profile of *the student to be educated*, and which, through their objectives and contents, project an image of this student. I was interested in secondary schooling, particularly the final year of study, in which students are taking decisions, are thinking about their futures. While the national curriculum policy expresses explicitly the profile of the student it expects to shape, the secondary TVET policy and the rural educational policy provide other crucial nuances and specificities about rural education and rural students. I will explore these arguments in greater depth.

The curriculum seeks to deliver updated values, tools and knowledge to students in order to insert them into society in terms of responsibility, sociability and labour projection, among other functions. The curriculum is a cluster of contents and objectives, but it is also an embodied technology which expresses a model of pedagogical practice imposed on the subject. I am mainly interested in



secondary education policies, which are more connected to the labour market and the formal responsibilities of citizenship. I will analyse the application of the national curriculum in rural contexts, through rural schools.

But along with the national curriculum, there are two other policies relevant to rural settings in Chile that are the main concern of this study. One is the rural education policy, the programmes applied and adapted to rural students' and teachers' needs; this is relevant as it addresses directly the rural condition of the samples selected in this study. So, the study addresses how this policy is designed, implemented and received. The third policy in question is the technical-vocational education policy - or internationally known as *TVET*: Technical Vocational Education and Training - as one of the main paths followed by rural students in the country. The secondary technical-vocational path concerns the last two years of the secondary stage, and offers to rural students a clear and narrow exit into the labour market. A main part of this policy is defined by curricular contents, so in some points it is strongly connected with the national curriculum policy as an alternative secondary-educational path.

These three policies will be analysed in relation to rural students' subjectivities, providing a possible assemblage or *dispositif* of the Chilean educational system for the rural zones in the country. The policies provide features and conceptions of a profile of the student, a type of subjectivity to be developed by the governmental institutions. So their intersection may outline the project of the rural student and future rural worker as a path developed during the schooling years.

State policies, and here educational policies, are understood as political devices - from the public and private spheres - that seek to express values and world-views, attitudes and skills, as well as a successful project of social insertion for the students of a particular nation. Thus, poststructuralist ideas about politics and its discourses and modes of application provide a suitable framework to understand the nature of such public policies.

This investigation seeks to identify the profile of the individual to be educated by the Chilean education system via public policies and therefore the

type of subjectivities those policies seek to foster. The second stage of the research looks at the degree to which these particular policies have influenced the subjectivities of rural students in Chile.

### Some aspects of the Chile and its education system

As some aspects of the Chilean education system will reappear throughout this research, this section will present some of its main features for context and orientation.

But first, for context, some words about Chile. Chile inserts its history in the Latin American path. Our official language is Spanish, due to Spanish colonization from mid XVI century until independence in 1810. Therefore, our ethnic roots derive from a background of conflict between the diverse indigenous peoples of our territory and borders, and Spanish colonists. The Mapuche people are the main indigenous population. They still live in the centre-south of the country, and maintain strong disputes with the Chilean government over what they believe to be the illegitimate appropriation and abuse of their ancestors' lands initially by the colonists and more recently by large foresting companies.

Chile's population is over 17 million. During the last 25 years the country has developed significantly and is a noted example of economic reform and government privatisation. Average GDP per capita rose from US\$2,600 in 1991 to over US\$ 13,700 in 2016 (World Bank, 2016). However– Chile is struggling with serious issues of inequality. Our Gini coefficient is 0,454, until recently the highest among OECD nations (OECD, 2015). 33% of the country's wealth belongs to the richest 1% of the population (UNDP, 2017) and the national poverty index shows that 20,9% of the population lives under the line of multidimensional poverty. This figure diminishes in urban contexts to 18,8%, and rises in rural settings to 35,2% (INE, 2016).

Within the context of globalization the neoliberal policy frames have strongly influenced the Latin American political project. Nations like Chile, Peru, Brazil,

Colombia and Mexico, among others, since the 1980s and 1990s have been adapting and transforming their political and economic conditions in order to respond to their increasing dependence on global markets and neoliberal principles. Thus, the education systems of each country, with their specific characteristics and modalities, are analytically rich indicators of the social and individual models each territory seeks to develop and consolidate.

From a historical perspective, the reforms of the last 40 years have shaped the whole educational scope in the Chilean scenario. During Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship (1973–1989), particularly in the 1980s, there was a strong diminishment of the public resources allocated to education, along with a deep reform in the system, transferring administrative authority from the Ministry of Education to municipalities, fostering the entry of private schools, which were also subsidized by the State, and setting competition mechanisms between schools. One of the key factors was the introduction of a schools funding mechanism using vouchers distributed by the State, which allocated economic resources based on the number of students enrolled in a school (one student = one voucher) and the attendance rates (the vouchers were distributed by days of the year, so one day of attendance of one student = one voucher). While the former arrangement aims to establish open competition between schools to enrol more students (more students = more public funding), the second scheme tries to incentivize schools to control the students' attendance (better attendance rates = more public funding). This voucher system has been developed up to the present day. Nowadays, along with an important increase in the value associated to the vouchers, vouchers are also differentiated by socioeconomic characteristics of students (lower family income of the student = higher-value voucher), by geographical zone (more remote zone = higher voucher) and by secondary technical speciality (where the agricultural technical education has the highest voucher). In 1993, the first government after the return to democracy activated the co-payment system, where municipal and private-subsidized schools were allowed to charge an extra tuition fee to complement the public vouchers. This last measure has been eliminated under the current government of Michelle Bachelet (2014–2018), as it

was a factor which increased the social segregation between schools (Valenzuela, Bellei, & De los Ríos, 2008).

The above-described educational arrangements have another important premise: families and students are (or are supposed to be) free to choose the school of their preference. The State's expectation is that this free-choice policy will liberate the educational market, as schools compete to attract more students by improving their educational offer; the families and students will act as consumers who choose the best educational alternative in the market. Over time, further ingredients have been added to the system. For example, how could the schools advertise the quality of their educational offer to their potential consumers? In the final years of the dictatorship, the SIMCE (system of education quality measurement) test was created as a tool which sought to assess all the schools of the country over the years to measure and control the development of the results of the system. This test is still taken in different schools for different levels and subjects as a yearly educational census, and is the main tool that schools can use to advertise their results to the families of potential students.

Further policies in the Chilean education system include the design and implementation of a national curriculum in the 90s, which has since undergone further changes. This seeks to offer equal contents and skills to the whole population, which can thence be assessed by the SIMCE test. This test has also introduced some pressure on teachers, who, under a scheme of incentives, must seek to improve the SIMCE results of the students they teach. In recent years, since 2014, the government has created a teacher policy which has structured this scheme of incentives in a series of hierarchical levels, where teachers can access better labour conditions through improvement in their performance.

This set of policies has increased the competition between schools and introduced competition mechanisms among teachers and students. In this scenario, the proportions of public and private educational provision have changed over time, from almost 80% public provision in 1980 to 53% private-subsidized in 2015 (MINEDUC, 2015; Paredes & Pinto, 2009).

Finally, in general terms, the Chilean educational framework comprises early-childhood education (two years), primary education (eight years) and secondary education (four years). In the case of secondary education, there are two types: the scientific-humanistic and the technical-professional. The first is traditionally conducive to higher education through preparation for the PSU (university selection test, from its Spanish initials; this has become another mechanism used by schools to advertise their results to potential 'clients'); the second is officially implemented in the last two years of the secondary stage, and it commonly leads to the labour market or to tertiary technical education. Another distinction relevant to this research is in the rural education provision. This is mostly at the primary level, and rural schools are mainly multi-grade schools – with different school grades in the same classroom, as the schools tend to be located in remote areas, so only few students attend. Secondary rural education takes place in rural secondary schools, or in regular schools located in rural towns; formally both types of schools work as regular secondary schools. Some of these schools operate as boarding schools, considering that many of the students live in isolated areas in the countryside.

### Structure of this thesis

This thesis is composed of three parts subdivided into nine chapters, and a concluding section. The first part is structured in four chapters relating to the theoretical framework, a review of international recommendations and concepts regarding educational policy fields, the design and methods of the study, and its geographical aspects from a conceptual standpoint. The theoretical framework uses a set of poststructuralist concepts. I articulate different theoretical notions to provide an understanding of the rationale of the study, relating to discourses and neoliberalism, outlining how this perspective understands (educational) policies and the production of neoliberal subjectivity. The following second chapter introduces a review of diagnosis, recommendations and concepts of educational

policies from institutional documents in the international arena. Here, UNESCO's documents and reviews are used to illustrate the current discussions and discourses about the educational policies analysed in this research in the international scenario, offering a discursive context to the Chilean case.

The third chapter outlines the design of the study and the research methods applied in the investigation. The study design attempts to cover the most important variables of the selected topic of study. So, it is constituted mainly by in-depth interviews carried out with a sample of academic experts in education policy fields, policy makers, teachers and students. Besides this, some policy documents are analysed. Both the interview texts and policy documents are mainly analysed through a critical discourse analysis, as a method consistent with the theoretical framework.

The fourth chapter is based on geographical and development issues. It provides a conceptualization of the notions of space and place, the political and statistical definitions of rurality, and some critical features of the Chilean rural development model, as the scope in which rural education is deployed. It outlines some clues indicating a particular relationship between education and the economy in these scenarios. The chapter ends with a last section, replicated in all the following chapters, which recapitulates and develops the main discussion points of the chapter. These discussion sections are very important in the thesis, as they provide a synthesis of the crucial concerns and the original findings of this research, and they also organize the development of the central arguments of the study.

The second part is composed of three chapters about educational policies in Chile. Chapter 5 is about the national curriculum, chapter 6 concerns secondary TVET, and chapter 7 relates to rural education. The three chapters follow a similar structure, with specific variations in each case: the analysis of the educational policy structure from public documents and other sources, a national literature review about the policy, and the analysis of the interviews carried out with the academics and policy makers corresponding to each case. These chapters also conclude with a final discussion section.

The third part of this study draws on the interviews with teachers (chapter 8) and students (chapter 9). Chapter 8 analyses the perspectives and testimonies of teachers regarding rural education and the functioning of secondary rural schools, and the way in which the education policies previously analysed are enacted in particular arrangements and practices. This provides an understanding of how rural education is articulated in practice and how it is related to the local economic actors of these zones. On the other hand, in chapter 9, the students narrate their rural lives, their educational experiences, and their future perspectives in terms of education, work and the place they want to continue living. This chapter is an attempt to understand how the neoliberal discourse and the rural educational and economic frame are related to these students' lives, educational experiences and future perspectives, shaping their decisions and expectations, influencing and producing a particular type of subjectivity.

The concluding section is a synthesis of the main points discussed in the research – mostly presented in the discussion points of each chapter. It articulates the main findings of the thesis in a coherent line of argument to clarify the central contributions of this study.

Although each chapter presents a particular topic, each articulates a common argument that interrelates theoretical notions of the thesis, along with spatial issues, through policy aspects and subjectivity matters. The challenge is to relate theory and empirical data, data that in turn reshapes and challenges the theoretical concepts developed.

Finally, I want to express some words in relation to topics and issues that I could not address in this research; particularly gender and ethnic issues. I want to acknowledge that there are relevant gender issues around the topic selected, and that the analysis and results implicate part of them, especially in the TVET policy analysis and in the testimonies of the rural students interviewed. However, because of practical criteria in terms of maintaining the scope of the objectives, and preserving a focused line of analysis, I could not provide as broad an analysis as I would have liked. Indigenous issues could also emerge from this research,

mainly because indigenous communities tend to live in rural areas. As such, this relevant and interesting theme would also have enlarged too much the scope of the analysis made. I believe, that from these issues, future research complementing this investigation could emerge and contribute significantly to this educational field of study.



## Part I: Theoretical framework and design of the study

In this first part, structured as four chapters, I expose those elements which constitute the background of this research. First, the theoretical framework is articulated: concepts extracted from poststructuralist approaches are used in order to provide a coherent conceptual frame and critical tone. Secondly, I will present discourses and concepts from diagnosis and recommendations made by international organizations about the educational policies studied in this thesis, which work as context for the Chilean case. Then, the design of the study, its rationale, objectives and main research methods are presented. Finally, a third chapter addresses the idea of rurality, which can be understood as a bridge between the theory and design and the original material from this study, developed in the second part of this research. It is a bridge because it is still a background to the data and its analysis and discussion, but at the same time is part of an original review of concepts, policies and documents which illustrate one of the particular and crucial nodes of this research: space, place and development as elements that configure the particular scenario in which these education policies are deployed.

## Chapter 1: Theoretical framework

In this section I will present the theoretical perspectives and concepts which support this research, that is, those ideas which provide the original questions and the tone of this piece of writing. The Chilean education policies and the students' subjectivities will be analysed through the lens of the concepts and notions to be explained, and the findings will be related to the framework provided. The plan for this chapter is to build a theoretical scheme which corresponds with the questions and issues of this study, an organization of ideas that offers a clear, but at the same time complex way of understanding the objects and problems covered in this research. First, I will describe and define neoliberalism as the main discourse for the Chilean context. Secondly, I will enumerate those concepts extracted from the poststructuralist theories which will say something to the objects and matters of this investigation. Finally I will characterize a theoretical notion of the neoliberal subject, a model which will work as the reference to confront the empirical subjectivities from the original data of this research in later analysis. All this conceptual body expects to offer a coherent framework to this research, a perspective from which the Chilean educational policies and experiences can be critically understood.

### 1. Context: What is neoliberalism?

Neoliberalism is an economic, social, political and cultural project developed from ideological and anthropological foundations. This project affects every dimension of society, and each aspect of its influence can be researched and analysed in depth. Foucault (2010) analyses part of the foundations of these emerging ideas during the 1960s and 1970s, mainly in the work of Milton Friedman; the intellectual task of the latter was deeply related to the work of Friedrich Hayek, among others. While neoliberalism's complexity makes a clear and stable definition difficult, and despite the concept evolving in response to local realities,

I will however outline some of neoliberalism's main features, namely as a particular form of power and organization of social relations.

### **1.1. Governmentality**

First, neoliberalism can be understood as an ideology, a system of ideas which provide a comprehension of individuals and society. Neoliberalism basically extends classic liberalism's concept of economy and the market towards the whole social sphere. Its particular logic contains principles, rationalities and ideas that support its operation as values permeating the economy, culture and politics. As Larner states:

This body of ideas is understood to rest on five values: the individual; freedom of choice; market security; laissez faire, and minimal government. (Larner, 2000, p. 7)

So, neoliberalism is based on certain values, practices and realities; individuals collide with social and economic systems under the banner of progress within a concept of market logic. Thus the ideology of neoliberalism operates as a metanarrative (Peters, 2009) and is based on certain ideas that influence social organization. Its techniques and practices enact and embed moral ideas which complement Larner's five values and together they form a new common sense (S. Ball & Olmedo, 2013). Examples and roots of these ways of shaping society can be found in the governments of the USA (Reagan), the UK (Thatcher) and Chile (Pinochet) of the 1980s.

Neoliberalism, in order to respond to social needs via a particular project over time, needs and therefore creates institutional support that strengthens its logic. Foucault coined the word 'governmentality' (Foucault, 2010); it describes a concept that connects the notion of government to mentality, and thereby emphasizes the importance of understanding a government's guiding rationality under neoliberalism. Governmentality in relation to the individual relies on ideas

of responsibility and self-management, the active, enterprising, self-improving individual. So governmentality is a particular mode of government, establishing neoliberal rationality by implementing its goals and organizational preferences. It is based on market principles and prevails through the “consistent expansion of the economic form to apply to the social sphere, thus eliding any difference between the economy and the social”, whose “rational-economic action serves as a principle for justifying and limiting governmental action, in which context government itself becomes a sort of enterprise whose task it is to universalize competition and invent market-shaped systems of action for individuals, groups and institutions” (Lemke, 2001, p. 197).

It is important to notice another important feature of neoliberalism as a discourse, through the lens of ideology and governmentality, and that is its capacity to present itself as “already existing” (Lemke, 2001, p. 203), or that “there is no choice at a systemic level” (Davies, 2006, p. 436). The notion that freedom is an obligation (Walkerline & Bansel, 2010) reinforces the idea that the world works naturally under the neoliberal order, society works better and more efficiently. But the intellectuals and governments mentioned provide part of the historical origins to a neoliberalism that was politically and actively promoted.

To go deeper into the idea of neoliberal governmentality, it is a way in which governments recreate the conditions of social life, those boundaries and foundations that foster the possibilities for every citizen to live and act in society. This type of governing operates on certain discourses and rationalities and encourages certain values over others. So governing is not only a political issue, it is also a cultural one. In this sense, governmentality influences more than the conditions and forms of social action. It also reaches into areas where every individual perceives others (work colleagues, neighbours), individual or collective actions, institutions, public spaces, authority, the nation, etc., and also the way in which he understands himself (Foucault, 1982; Lemke, 2002). Thus, neoliberal governmentality is not just a matter of forms and practices; also at issue is the extent of its influence on the processes of individual subjectivation, as Read (2009) highlights that “neoliberalism is not just a manner of governing states or

economies, but is intimately tied to the government of the individual, to a particular manner of living” (Read, 2009, p. 27).

Neoliberal governmentality works, as previously noted, through the marketization of government and society as a replacement for the Keynesian welfare state (Larner, 2000), and it fosters “Deregulation, the central term and political strategy of neoliberalism, [which] is not the absence of governing, or regulating, but a form of governing through isolation and dispersion” (Read, 2009, p. 34). In turn, as Walkerdine and Bansel state: “the ‘social state’ gives way to the ‘enabling state’, and is no longer responsible for providing all of society’s needs (...) in order to maximise the entrepreneurial conduct of the individual (...)” (Walkerdine & Bansel, 2010). Thus, how does neoliberalism subjectivize the individual? Neoliberalism, through its particular type of governing and relations of power influences and permeates the individual process of subjectivation of individuals, through its particular paradox: as the system becomes more unrestricted, “it also becomes more intense, saturating the fields of action, and possible actions” (Read, 2009, p. 29).

It is interesting that the ‘enabling state’ of Walkerdine and Bansel does not suppose a sort of retreat of governing and exerting of power over the population through the discourse of the diminishment of the State and the liberalization of the economy, but rather a transformation of the means, goals and strategies of government:

Foucault’s discussion of neoliberal governmentality shows that the so-called retreat of the state is in fact a prolongation of government: neoliberalism is not the end but a transformation of politics that restructures the power relations in society. What we observe today is not a diminishment or reduction of state sovereignty and planning capacities but a displacement from formal to informal techniques of government and the appearance of new actors on the scene of government (e.g., nongovernmental organizations) that indicate fundamental transformations in statehood and a new relation between state and civil society actors. (Lemke, 2002, p. 58)

The above quote suggests that governmentality is deployed through a particular governance organization, one in which the governance is moving outside the boundaries of the State towards private institutions which provide new rules, practices and discourses which shape the articulations of society. So, the means of governing are changing from public to private, and the goals are based on “individual responsibility, privatized risk-management, empowerment techniques, and the play of market forces and entrepreneurial models in a variety of social domains” (Lemke, 2007, p. 45). Competition, as noted above, is the foundation and objective of neoliberal thinking, enabling important parts of systems and institutions, public or private, to generate strategies of enterprise.

In conclusion, although the concept of governmentality cannot be reduced and delimited in a rigid way, it is useful to focus on its fundamental features and outcomes. Governmentality is a way of governing through the marketization of government within every social sphere, employing private means to establish power relations that are infused with certain values (competition, entrepreneurship) and goals (productivity), which transforms and fosters the way in which we understand and relate to each other and perceive ourselves.

## **1.2. Other features of the idea of society as a market**

As I mentioned above, neoliberalism transposes market logic into other spheres of society. From the neoliberal perspective markets display three main characteristics: competition, entrepreneurship and freedom, each one very much connected to the others.

In relation to competition, Lazzarato states that the difference between Adam Smith’s belief in the natural tendency of society to exchange and contemporary neoliberalism lies in the neoliberal notion of competition, “as the organizing principle of the market” (Lazzarato, 2009, p. 116), whose logic is extended throughout different areas of society, from the reform of the Welfare

State to the constitution of each individual in their subjectivities and choices (Davies, 2006; Lazzarato, 2009). So, market and competition are intimately linked. Competition is the main feature and ethos of the market, and a space dominated by market conditions is one in which competition can rule the strategies of institutional and individual action. One interesting case regarding this competitive atmosphere – and also related to part of this research – is the labour market, where as entrepreneurs and employees, workers compete and strive within a particular and savage market structure. This notion of market and competition inside the whole labour space determines and influences not just labour relations but also the process of individual subjectivation, which transforms “the capacity to communicate, to feel, to create, to think, into productive powers for the capital” (Read, 2009, p. 33).

The impact of market logic on individuals relates to another important feature of neoliberalism: the concept of liberty. Hayek’s idea of liberty sees different spheres and institutions of society developing freely and spontaneously throughout human history; any attempt by a central or expert entity to design, plan or intervene and rationally order society, or part of it, is prone to failure (Gray, 1981). So liberty is the fundamental value of neoliberalism, the principle that conditions the proper order. The principle whereby individuals make their own choices within this proper order is freedom of choice. In political and economic terms, freedom of choice replaces the notion of social rights, benefits and services guaranteed by the State, and transfers to individuals the responsibility of goods and services provision in a market environment where, as consumers, they decide what and whom to buy. Hayek understands freedom more as an absence of external State coercion (O’Flynn, 2009) than as freedom to act in society. The emphasis is on the need for a market free from any coercion – “Freedom reigns when the economic system is free from human orchestration” (O’Flynn, 2009, p. 137) – rather than the freedom to access equally goods and services like health, education and pensions (Ball, 2012). Inequality, for Hayek, is not a negative outcome. On the contrary, it reinforces competition and development (Frankle Paul, 1980). Hence, it is not unfair that some can access better education than

others, since the outcome of free relations cannot be unfair. Free access to a good education as a right is less important than free choice, so education is considered as a consumer good – according to individuals’ economic possibilities. But Hayek and neoliberalism are not concerned with what choice looks like for those on the social margins.

The third concept associated with neoliberalism and the market is entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship is linked with the previously described concepts of competition and freedom of choice, and is made possible by both conditions. In a competitive scenario in which each individual has to seek their own goods and services and protect their own rights, the best model of success lies in the entrepreneur, who prospers most effectively in society, and by doing so delivers new advances to the economy and society in general. Thus neoliberalism, through governmentality and its narratives, promotes entrepreneurship, educating and configuring a new kind of active subject – the entrepreneur – with the skills and tools to thrive in the global economy (Ong, 2007).

### **1.3. An unstable or mobile reality**

Moreover, neoliberalism cannot be reduced to just one type of process or practice that is globally homogeneous. As Lemke explained, building on Foucault’s research, capitalism and neoliberalism are historically situated phenomena that can be developed or modified politically (Lemke, 2001).

Further to the concept of neoliberalism as an unstable process, Ong (2007) provides an interesting and illustrative framework to approach neoliberalism based on a definition that draws on two facets of the phenomenon, identified with a big ‘N’ and with a small ‘n’. Neoliberalism is conceived as the macro-level reality of neoliberalism, “as a dominant structural condition that projects totalizing social change across a nation” (Ong, 2007, p. 4), based on market-driven strategy and organization. On the other hand, neoliberalism is related to the micro-level of subjects and affects individuals and their intimate local ways of relating to each



other and to institutions, but with the same goal as Neoliberalism: to maximize the possibilities of gain through production (Ong, 2007). This wider conceptualization of neoliberalism allows us to understand and approach the phenomenon from different viewpoints, exploring its various scales, realities and tools via diverse methods of research and comprehension.

On this basis, neoliberalism is experienced as unstable and diverse, its nature changeable and dynamic due to its spread across different locations, cultures and social realities, where varying responses arise, causing forms and outcomes to vary in time and place:

Though understood as a regulatory regime, neoliberalism is not positioned as hegemonic or deterministic, but rather as located in networks of emergent and intersecting conditions of possibility. We emphasise that there is no singular, stable 'neoliberalism' but rather a set of dispersed discourses, positions and practices inflected by the specificity of the different contexts in which it emerges. (Walkerdine & Bansel, 2010, p. 492)

Thus, neoliberalism is not "a single set of philosophical principles or a unified political ideology (...) linked to a particular political apparatus", but a "multivocal and contradictory phenomenon" (Larner, 2000, p. 21), because there are "other practices of family, sociality, community (...) [that] come into play. There are complex histories and biographies which traverse the field of change" (Walkerdine & Bansel, 2010, p. 506).

Besides, neoliberalism, according to Ong's view, is also a "migratory technology of governing that interacts with situated sets of elements and circumstances." (Ong, 2007, p. 5). Its condition as a mobile and travelling set of principles is consistent with the idea that it is adaptable and able to take different forms according to the social environment, the institutional framework and culture. So, neoliberal policies also cannot be understood univocally. For example, in the global educational field "The new orthodoxies of education policy are grafted onto and realised within very different national and cultural contexts and

are affected, inflected and deflected by them (...)” (Ball, 1998, p. 127). Thus, the implementation of neoliberal policies and techniques is more than a top-down process, being rather one in which spaces, cultures and practices are imbricated in a complex and always local way.

From this perspective, neoliberalism cannot be considered as a pure body of ideas which simply bears down upon unreflective political settings, cultures and subjectivities; rather, it is a changing reality, varying according to the particular appropriations made by each context. Later I will discuss the possibilities of agency, how by being active and reflective, subjects can develop responses that might modify the dynamics of neoliberalism in different situations. One of the challenges for research is to investigate the instantiations of neoliberalism that Ong points out, and how at the micro-level of experience it is possible to detect specific modes in which neoliberalism and subjects are interrelated in particular spaces of society. In this research I will try to address both levels of neoliberalism, the macro level of education policies and the micro-level of subjectivities in rural contexts.

## 2. Poststructuralist concepts: Understanding how education policies are related to subjectivities

Building on poststructuralist notions, I will offer a definition of concepts that link society, government and subjectivities, which have specific features and implications and which frame the structure and orientation of this research. I refer to discourses, governmentality, technologies, assemblages and dispositifs, education policy and subjectivity. To give a preliminary outline: discourses are the main structure that underpin forms of social power and knowledge; technologies are rationalities-in-practice and strategies that foster certain types of subjectivity through various means; assemblages and dispositifs are linked to practical, institutional and technical ways in which governmentality is deployed; education policies embody discourses and technologies and are vehicles for particular forms of governing; subjectivity is an experience under construction which cannot be

assumed without critical analysis and definition. All these concepts are closely interrelated, even overlapping. In the next paragraphs I offer a clearer and deeper explanation.

## **2.1. Discourses**

One of the main concepts developed by Foucault is discourse, a complex and ambiguous set of principles and ideas. Discourses are ambiguous because they are not simplistic exchanges of obvious meaning through words, and complex because analysis of their content is difficult to explain and describe. According to Larner:

In poststructuralist literatures, discourse is understood not simply as a form of rhetoric disseminated by hegemonic economic and political groups, nor as the framework within which people represent their lived experience, but rather as a system of meaning that constitutes institutions, practices and identities in contradictory and disjunctive ways. (Larner, 2000, p. 12)

Hence, discourse is a system of meaning which acts in society and its components, institutions, practices and identities. But what kind of system of meaning? That relies on epoch, culture and context. Individuals do not create discourses, but discourses create contexts in which individuals develop their own subjectivities, influenced and framed by those discourses. From this perspective, discourses are articulated through the operation of power relations on every level of society and gain predominance when they come to represent best what is understood as 'normal'. Thus discourses are strengthened through practices and via institutions, and are propagated through different networks and mechanisms – through power/knowledge relations.

Furthermore discourses possess an abstract and unconscious aspect, relating for example to what is accepted as *common sense* or *how things have always been*. In this way "discourse is that which constrains or enables writing, speaking and

thinking” (Ball, 2013, p. 19). However, discourses acquire materiality through practices and institutions that are updated and given new forms and contents; thus “The materiality of discourse also draws attention to architectures, organizations, practices and subjects and subjectivities (...) as manifestations of discourse” (p. 21).

Beyond describing its particular forms, because discourses are beyond who speaks, and “can be grids, diagrams and equations” (Ball, 2013, p. 20), among other things, Foucault “was concerned to address the structures and rules that constitute a discourse rather than the texts and utterances produced within it” (p. 19). Discourse can be linked to the rationality underlying practices and institutions, and in terms of this research I am interested in neoliberal discourse, its rationalities and its State manifestations, governmental practices and public policies.

This key aspect of discourse as “related directly to power, regimes of truth and grids of specification – the dividing, contrasting, classifying and relating together of objects of discourse” (Ball, 2013, p. 22-23) – is connected to the concept of technologies, which links discourses with subjectivity and the neoliberal version of technologies of the self.

## **2.2. Technologies**

Technologies are related to *techniques*, as practical ways of deploying power in relation to others, under a certain rationality. This assumption implies that technologies are not a simple action that benefits or hinders others, but a rationality in action, a discourse enacted through techniques whereby an institution or entity frames and influences individuals. This concept can be better explained through State governmental technologies and networks of governance. As Lemke states:

Discourses, narratives and regimes of representation are not reduced to pure semiotic propositions; instead, they are regarded as performative practices. Governmental technologies denote a complex of practical mechanisms,

procedures, instruments, and calculations through which authorities seek to guide and shape the conduct and decisions of others in order to achieve specific objectives. (...) The semantic linking of governing (*gouverner*) and modes of thought (*mentalité*) indicates that it is not possible to study the technologies of power without an analysis of the political rationality underpinning them. (Lemke, 2007, p. 50)

Given that technologies are the practical deployment of a particular rationality and purpose, which work to 'shape conducts' and foster a certain type of subjectivity, I continue with one of their particular manifestations. First, I need to note that there are different types of technologies that partly express different discourses and dominant rationalities of each epoch or field of action. This is how it is possible to detect technologies of security, classification, performance, discipline and population control, among others (Ball, 2013), many of them operating through different practices and policies. But some of the main contemporary technologies operating under neoliberal rationality and governmentality are technologies of the self.

To understand technologies of the self it is necessary to recall neoliberal rationality and values and their specific purpose:

These changes need to be situated in relation to a broader set of social and political changes in the techniques and modalities of government, which have the aim and effect of producing new kinds of 'active' and responsible, entrepreneurial and consenting citizens and workers – an explosion in modes of governing. (S. Ball, 2010, p. 156)

The premise is based on the tenets of neoliberalism which foster a certain type of subjectivity. One of its key foundations is the need for individual autonomy and self-regulation. Neoliberal governmentality, unlike previous forms of government, does not aim to generate a system of explicit oppression, domination, order and security; instead, it is based on freedom, the freedom of choice and the

autonomous individual. So, the governmental technologies of the self do not act to force individuals to behave in a particular manner, but nurture them to make their own choices, provide their own goods, services and rights, through a government that seems absent, leaving civil society to take care of its own development and individual welfare.

Hence, technologies of the self promote individual self-government. An illustrative example is English educational reform over the past three decades, which have introduced a choice-based system where parents can, and gradually should, choose their children's school within a schools market. Something similar happened in Chile during the 1980s in education and pensions, where workers were gradually required to choose a private provider to administrate their savings. These types of policies illustrate technologies of the self (or could be also 'points of contact' between technologies of the self and technologies of domination), based on neoliberal discourse and the rationality of freedom of choice, self-regulation and autonomy, which also relies on the discourse of efficiency of private institutions (in contrast to public ones) and the rationalization of social welfare under a free-market economy.

### **2.3. Policies**

Poststructuralist literature characterizes public policies as tools and strategies deployed by the State and other governing institutions in the public and private domain. Thus while policies express political discourses that support governmental apparatus (Lemke, 2001), as an embodied technology with a particular rationality, they also strengthen and update the boundaries of State action:

First, the commonplace contrast between state formation and policymaking loses credibility, since the former is not a single event but an enduring process in which the limits and contents of state action are permanently negotiated and redefined.

It follows that 'policies' that affect the very structure of the state are part of the ongoing process of state-formation (Lemke, 2007, pp. 48-49)

In terms of this study, policies are not neutral; they not only regulate or implement particular measures in a certain field of action, but they also mark a difference between individuals and practices, recognizing models and ethics to be accepted or fostered to the detriment of others. This way of understanding policies allows us to link these 'tools of recognition' with the subjectivity of the individuals, in terms of which:

This form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects. (Foucault, 1982, p. 781)

Hence, there are important consequences to the processes of individuals' subjectivation in relation to the development of public policies and the way in which they deploy particular values, contents and mechanisms of validation. The forms of particular public policies of governmentality encourage autonomy and freedom of choice, with "an emphasis on enterprise and the capitalization of existence itself through calculated acts and investments" (Walkerline & Bansel, 2010). In the next section I will go deeper into this topic, particularly in relation to education policies.

It is important to emphasize again that public policies under the rationality of governmentality cannot be defined or described univocally. As noted above, governmentality must be understood in relation to different levels and contexts as a 'mobile technology'. In the same way then public policies cannot be understood as univocal. Neither does neoliberalism erase everything that went before; it colonizes and hybridizes. Public policies as a rational measure are developed

through a complex process of thinking and writing, because “the state has always been a site of struggle, in which resources and ‘voice’ have been differentially distributed across genders, ethnicities and classes.” (Ball, 2010, p. 157). The subsequent outcome of the “policies themselves, the texts, are not necessarily clear or closed or complete. The texts are the product of compromises at various stages” (Ball, 1993, p. 11) or in different contexts. As Ball explains, there are “three contexts of policy-making – the context of influence, the context of policy text production and the context(s) of practice. Each context consists of a number of arenas of action – some private and some public. Each context involves struggle and compromise (...)” (Ball, 1993, p. 16). Hence, policies are also subject to the struggles and interests of different actors and ‘voices’, which in different contexts and stages determine hybrid policy outcomes, different policy texts and their subsequent practices. In other words, Bailey clearly explains:

Policy should not only refer to written and codified instructions or rules, such as policy documents, which are intended to guide conduct and practice, but should also denote complex processes of policy enactment, policy advocacy, policy influence and policy practice; in this way it is possible to explore how policy is disposed and performed in different material sites in different and contingent ways. In this sense, then, policy refers not only to formal codes and directives from a central authority, but also to a multiplicity of ‘material’ and ‘technical’ forms such as specific programmes, practices and institutions (...) (Bailey, 2013, pp. 813-814)

This approach towards policies is relevant, as it anticipates part of the features of educational policies in Chile applied in rural contexts. Policy is beyond the formal, ministerial, legislative text; it is beyond the bureaucratic practice, as it involves local and private practices and institutions. The neoliberal governance spreads the governmental action towards different actors, leaving the regulation and practice of policies under local logics and strategies. As suggested above, the ‘otherness’ of the State sphere in terms of policy implementation under a neoliberal discourse is based on the markets and private provision. This involves a



different complexity to policy analysis: when the State transfers part of its prescriptions to the private sector, the outcomes vary in diverse ways, problematizing the policy analysis task. This, as has also been mentioned, does not suppose the retreat of the State, but its transformation, as governing actions persist in new, sophisticated ways:

The liberal concern for 'governing too much' is rejuvenated and politically articulated in the post-welfare period, with individuals, agencies and organisations incited to take responsibility for themselves as enterprising and economic subjects of human and organisational capital. (Bailey, 2013, p. 816)

Preparing the field for later topics, and connecting the idea of policy with education, the neoliberal educational policy agenda is also under the pressure and influence of the neoliberal discourses and technologies, and as a particular policy case has been deeply studied and defined. Ball (1998) defines the new neoliberal orthodoxy in terms of five elements:

- (1) Improving national economics by tightening the connection between schooling, employment, productivity and trade.
- (2) Enhancing student outcomes in employment-related skills and competencies.
- (3) Attaining more direct control over curriculum content and assessment.
- (4) Reducing the costs to government of education.
- (5) Increasing community input to education by more direct involvement in school decision making and pressure of market choice. (p. 122)

Issues around governance (external assessment, costs) and market-based technologies (families choosing schools) can be detected in these principles. Part of this orthodoxy will be envisaged in the Chilean case in relation to the questions of this research. Anticipating this, the first four elements can be associated with the Chilean rural scenario, where particular assemblages show specific mechanisms in which schools manage themselves and students are educated for a

particular labour future. Likewise, the same Chilean case will show one of the key characteristics of all these theoretical perspectives and ways it can be empirically analysed, as policies are always located and contextualized, adapted and practised in different manners:

The five generic policies adumbrated above are polyvalent; they are translated into particular interactive and sustainable practices in complex ways. They interact with, interrupt or conflict with other policies in play (...) They enter rather than simply change existing power relations and cultural practices. (Ball, 1998, p. 127)

#### **2.4. Dispositifs and assemblages**

In this section I will address two concepts from the poststructuralist theoretical frame, so-called 'dispositifs' and 'assemblages', both in relation to concepts already covered (discourses, technologies and policies) and the concept covered below (subjectivities). I have put these concepts together in this part because they have some important things in common, despite the differences between them. Both concepts are particular, complex and even strange from a certain point of view. They respond to the complexity of the poststructuralist analysis of society, policies and institutions, never univocal or fixed, but always mobile, fluid and contextualized. These concepts try to grasp those aspects of society which are ambiguous, which cannot be understood from an isolated standpoint. Dispositifs and assemblages, as complex and multifaceted concepts, provide complex and multifaceted explanations and perspectives in relation to complex and multifaceted social institutions and policies, shaped by interrelated discourses, technologies and practices.

##### *Dispositif*

First, the 'dispositif'<sup>1</sup> can be more linked to a notion of policy, in terms of a governmental-technical strategy deployed by an institution (i.e. the State) in order to achieve or regulate certain purposes. Bailey (2013) explores this concept, providing a definition and its nuances:

The policy dispositif is thus a socio-technical formation of 'government', understood here as the 'conduct of conduct', and so *to some degree* its singularity will always reflect the dominant political rationality (...) [T]he dispositif is not an essential formation in this way; in fact, it is only essential in that it is a strategic 'battlefield', or struggle, over the governing of education. (Bailey, 2013, p. 809)

A dispositif is a socio-technical formation, so it involves both spheres, the social and technical. The social includes all the coordination, discussions, interests and tensions of a socially constructed process, and the technical facet applies specific knowledge upon a rational project. The socio-technical character is developed under the governmental purpose of the dispositif, and it is immersed in the dominant discourse, which in this case is assumed as neoliberal. This discourse shapes the purpose and the technical and social aspects of the dispositif, as a construct in continuous development and recontextualization. In other words, the dispositif is a discourse, a rationality and technologies put in practice through a concerted strategy and a variety of intervention with the objective of governing. This is the case with education:

Education in this sense, and to a certain degree, can be understood as a set of practices and processes which are regulated, in part and in different ways, by and according to strategies and mechanisms which are designed in the image of, and characterised by, what could be termed hegemonic or dominant discourses. (Bailey, 2013, p. 813)

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<sup>1</sup> The French is retained for its specific differentiation from the English 'dispositive' (similar to the Spanish 'dispositivo'), an issue which I will not go into in this research.

The deployment of neoliberal discourse – and I will address this in more detail in later sections – through dispositifs supposes a close relation with the influence and production of subjectivity. A dispositif is not a neutral set of coordinated actions, but an ideological agenda put in practice, which together with achieving social and technical goals fosters certain modes of subjectivation, attempting to influence the images of how individuals perceive or must perceive themselves in order to develop a social order driven by market criteria.

The concept of dispositif addresses the intersection of discursive and material features and elements in practice. Discourse involves not only rhetorical and symbolic, but material elements too. The materiality of the discourse is more explicitly deployed in the case of the dispositif, as a concerted practice which moves and allocates economic resources, intervenes in actual environments and places, and directs a coordinated strategy in order to change aspects of the material conditions of individuals and their practices:

It is a multifaceted concept which stresses the primacy of fluid, productive and mobile relations of power which, in partnership with knowledge, intersect, permeate, modify and produce subjectivities in concert with material objects and practices. Discourse remains important; however, it is the move to consider its conjunction with material culture that constitutes at least part of the novelty of the concept. (Bailey, 2013, p. 810)

In addition, the last characteristic of the dispositif is it can be detected in different levels of operation and intervention. The main strategy can be deployed in smaller actions, coordinated under the same socio-technical goal. These different levels can be expressed in different ways of organizing, different institutions and contextualized practices, which, in terms of this research, provides a wide spectrum of analytical tools to understand the shapes and consequences of national policies in certain local settings:

(...) whilst a heterogeneous, productive and 'singular' formation of discursive and non-discursive elements of education policy can be plotted (a molar-dispositif), it is also possible to identify and analyse individual mechanisms, such as organisations, programmes or events (micro-dispositifs), within this ensemble, and their particular micro-dispositivity. (Bailey, 2013, p. 811)

While the macro-dispositif can be detected in a wider – i.e. national, global – strategy, the micro-dispositif allow us to think and analyse specific 'events', 'organizations', 'programmes' or institutions which in particular ways translate the macro-goals into micro-spaces:

This means that micro-dispositifs can be tactical and strategic elements of a more general strategic drive, but also that there is a negotiation of sorts between the macro and the micro level (Bailey, 2013, p. 811)

This feature of the dispositif is crucial in providing an analytical tool to the policies-in-practice analysed in this research. The tensions between the national and the local will be seen, and the originality of the micro-dispositif in rural places will be a matter of inquiry. Hence, the dispositif can be organized in different levels and types of articulation, opening up possibilities of analysis, challenging the connections and translations between levels and places where the dispositif is interpreted, adapted and enacted.

### *Assemblages*

The second concept is the 'assemblage'. It is even more ungraspable than 'dispositif', as it involves ideas, conceptions and images which are not simple or straightforward to illustrate in the social and institutional spheres. This is because this concept assumes the complexity of discourses and technologies – even

dispositifs – in practice, arranged in a very fluid and unpredictable way. Moving towards a definition, Youdell and McGimpsey offer a reading of the concept based on theoretical notions of Deleuze and Guattari:

(...) [Assemblages] come together to produce, are trans-scalar and multi-order, reaching from the economy and state through culture and representation to subjectivity and affectivity (...) These might include economy, monetary flows, state, legislation, policy, institutions, organisations, social and cultural forms, discourse, representation, subjectivities and affectivities (...) in productive relationship rather than as static or independent elements (...) assemblage as on-going movement and [it] enable[s] us to encounter disassembly and reassembly. (Youdell & McGimpsey, 2015, p. 119)

So, the assemblage can be understood as a theoretical and analytical concept which provides multiple possibilities of addressing certain sets of actions related to a particular issue in society. It involves relations of institutions, policies, material and symbolic elements and subjectivities in different ambits of the social order, such as culture, economy, politics, family and education, among others. The key feature of the assemblage is its relational condition, how the different elements interact in a particular and local way: “(...) [the] assemblage emerges not from a centre but from multiple positions” (Youdell & McGimpsey, 2015, p. 120). This view allows us to understand the assemblage in its particular spatial-contextual position. How a set of institutions, texts, practices and subjectivities are placed in certain settings produces an original ‘assemblage’ of elements with diverse effects on each of those elements at different levels of analysis.

In this research, neoliberalism and education policies can be challenged in their particular assemblages in rural settings, while “Policy and discourse are each understood as potential and likely components of assemblages in this sense” (Youdell & McGimpsey, 2015, p. 120). The subjective response is another element at play, and in parallel how schools enact national policies and practise certain strategies in order to accomplish their institutional goal is an objective which

is also influenced discursively. All these components constitute a possible assemblage; this possibility will be questioned and problematized in the course of this study.

Recapping, and in order to clarify the two concepts defined above, while discourses, technologies and policies address to specific ambits and levels of the power relations in society, from rationalities to techniques; in the case of dispositifs and assemblages they outline the particular sites and strategies in which those discourses, technologies and policies take place in diverse and dynamic ways. I would say that while dispositifs can be more related to institutions, programmes or events, where technologies and policies are represented and embodied in practical and material terms; assemblages can be identified to coordinated or uncoordinated set of actions and relations at different social, institutional and individual levels, where different spheres of society are assembled. These concepts will be applied later in the findings of this research.

## **2.5. Education and Subjectivity**

### *2.5.1. Subjectivity*

The assumption of subjects supposes the existence of a subjectivity, a field in which individuals develop their own biographies and projects as a personal but also collective narrative of themselves. This biographical process is called in the social sciences 'subjectivation' or 'individuation'. But the subject is an experience and a concept that is still under discussion in terms of the relation and struggle between social structures (neoliberalism, social class, institutions) and agency (individuals, collectivities), and which analytical and empirical level prevails over the other. Different positions are presented throughout the social sciences in relation to this issue, but that is a matter for a different study. I present the consideration of the field of subjectivity from a poststructuralist perspective.

The subject is the result of a process of subjectivation (Foucault, 1988), so it is not an essentialist concept; it does not pre-exist discourse or power, but is a social construction in which individuals and society interact, generating particular types of subjects, and the individuals respond actively from their own experiences and particularities (Ball & Olmedo, 2013). In turn, a process of subjectivation corresponds to a double dynamic: “On the one hand, subject relates to the state of subjection ‘to someone else by control or dependence’; on the other hand, it refers to the self-configuration of an identity ‘by a conscience or self-knowledge’” (Ball & Olmedo, 2013, p. 87). This characterization causes us to consider that power relations play a fundamental part in constituting the subject: a “productive power constitutes and constrains, but does not determine, the subjects with whom it is concerned.” (Youdell, 2010, p. 137) Thus, Foucault and Butler argue, the subject is formulated and activated (Butler, 1997); there are social power relations which produce and demand certain types of subjectivities, but at the same time, individuals respond from their own subjectivity through a continuous process of formation, a continuous beginning and a continuous end (Ball & Olmedo, 2013).

Moreover, Butler’s conceptualization goes further, seeing the subject as updating itself in its own performances in life and society, in a continuous process that relates to the ways in which the body presents itself in social conditions in which it emerges. So actions and discourses work in the field of subjectivity, creating its own narratives and conditions of possibility (Davies, 2006). For Butler the social systems of recognition or intelligibility play a key role in the possibilities of subjectivation, by updating the codes of inclusion and exclusion of a particular setting, establishing the levels of acceptance and recognition.

Educational policies and institutions can be considered a fundamental setting in which society forms and fosters the process of individual and collective subjectivation. Schools act as particular systems of recognition, which put values and contents in one setting. As mentioned above, the education policies of curriculum and assessment deliver particular models of the individual and society.

Furthermore, again, the processes of subjectivation, immersed in contexts of neoliberalism and governmentality, cannot be considered stable and homogenous



but must be conceptualized and researched with “all their contradiction, incoherence and instability” (Walkerdine & Bansel, 2010, p. 493)

### *2.5.2. (Educational) Policies subjectivize*

In every field of society public policies probably generate regulations, intervening in spaces and social groups, encouraging certain logics and values aiming to foster a model of society and, within it, a model of individual, of subject. Educational policies are deployed through diverse mechanisms and organizing principles. But here I will outline specific roles of public policies in education, in particular how education policies are mechanisms to foster certain types of subjectivities and displace others.

The question of how to shape a particular kind of subjectivity supposes a process of formation, a strategy of education which not only involves the school system, but also other parts of the modern institutional framework that in one way or another form different aspects of individuals. Nonetheless, the school is perhaps the primary institution where attitudes towards autonomy are formed. Thus, in this study it is important to carefully examine the ways neoliberalism permeates (or does not permeate) educational policy in contemporary societies, and how schools deploy those policies. One particular dispositif is seen in the construction and analysis of studentship profiles, the learner having to be educated through particular educational policies; how a policy recognizes an ideal student or the model of the individual expected to be trained:

Such a discourse, present in policy and deployed in classrooms, has the power to shape who is understood as successful. It provides a framework through which children are constituted as good learners to varying extents and it specifies a model of the ideal that each child should strive toward. (Bradbury, 2013, p. 6)

In addition:

Schools, alongside other discourse-propagating sites, are central agents in providing students with repertoires through which they can make sense of themselves, what they do, and why they do it – for instance, by the way a school constitutes its priorities, how the teachers speak and act, how a school conceptualizes and foregrounds certain practices and relegates others, and how it constitutes its infrastructure and policies. (O' Flynn & Petersen, 2007, p. 461)

This construction and definition respond to certain preferences as to what is considered good, apt or suitable. In turn, the definition of this profile sets not only the ideal learner, but also, by contrast, the undesirable student. In other words, the ideal learner states who is included in the system, but also who can be excluded from it (Bradbury, 2013). Hence, the model of the student to be educated, and what it means to be educated, is also the framework of meaning for the student; it is the project of the present and future to which students can adhere and identify, but also may reject, in a particular process of subjectivation:

Government is manipulative in this sense and it contains and shapes the conditions of possibility available to school students. (Davies, 2006, p. 430)

Moreover, this profile also generates a framework of progression, whereby a whole education policy can establish the phases and the achievement criteria through a methodical process of evaluation and development. This point links to another neoliberal technology in current education, namely the mechanisms of assessment. To the extent that every phase and process in education can be evaluated and measured, the whole system is moving towards the contents and goals of these assessments, and the process of formation and subjectivation among students takes place through the techniques of measurement and comparison (Bradbury, 2013).

Additionally, anticipating an upcoming part of this research, and also drawing on some of the ideas introduced above, it is possible to outline particular values and contents expressed around student profiles and students' subjectivation processes under neoliberal education policies. The student profile should match the neoliberal type of individual, which contains concepts and features common to neoliberalism, such as productiveness, entrepreneurial-ness and autonomy, among others (O'Flynn & Petersen, 2007). Therefore from that perspective "the role of schools is to prepare students as enterprising workers and citizens with the prerequisite skills, knowledge and values to survive in a volatile and competitive global labor market." (Down, 2009, p. 51)

Here I point out possible education policies which can be analysed as having the goal of fostering a particular type of subjectivity: the curriculum as the instrument that frameworks the contents and values of education; and the policies of assessment and accountability which generate the standards to be attained and – in a permanent feedback loop with the curriculum – constitute the basis of the model student to be educated. While this research has a focus on the former, it also considers relevant to this issue other education policies related to rural life as the empirical setting of this research. These other policies will be explained later in the design of this study.

In addition, responding to the previous definition of policies, the implementation of education policies like curriculum and assessment can be incoherent in part (Bradbury, 2013); discussions, texts and practices may differ, manifesting the 'multivocal' character of policies and the struggles of their development. Therefore it is necessary to consider the difficulty of finding clear traces of the rationality that underpins certain policies as sites where different struggles and interests coexist.

One of the key issues of this research is the relation between policies and subjects. As long as policies impact the subjectivities of individuals, education policies *subjectivize*. In this respect, policies are not neutral sets of contents and values, but texts and actions with purpose, carrying ethics and a model of subject and society:

On the one hand, political rationalities provide cognitive and normative maps that open up spaces of government which are intrinsically linked to truth. State agencies produce and proliferate forms of knowledge that enable them to act upon the governed reality. On the other hand, the state is constituted by discourses, narratives, world-views and styles of thought that allow political actors to develop strategies and realize goals. What is more, these symbolic devices even define what it means to be an actor, who may qualify as a political actor and citizen (Lemke, 2007, p. 48).

As mentioned above, the rationalities deployed through technologies are also embodied by policies; in other words, policies are driven by rationalities, and rationalities are put in place by policies. And at the same time, policies represent particular technologies. The neoliberal rationality contains particular values which in turn foster particular kinds of subjectivities, offering specific 'narratives', 'world-views', 'styles of thought' and 'strategies'. Education policies, and in particular curricular policies, contain an even more explicit set of contents and values since education seeks to inculcate knowledge and skills in individuals in order to make them fit into and succeed in society. This cluster of contents and values are transmitted to students in the schools and classrooms, and provide forms of 'intelligibility' (Davies, 2006), strategies of recognition, which individuals are required to adapt to and appropriate. The appropriation of these sets of values and contents allows the students to remain in the system, to be included in it. In contrast, failure to appropriate or the rejection of the values may lead to exclusion:

The acts of skill acquisition are thus modes of subject formation, and this formation takes place within a set of norms that confer or withdraw recognition. (Butler, 2006, p. 532)

In turn, Davies asks:

We must take responsibility for examining the documents and discursive practices that are taken for granted in our schools and universities, and ask: what conditions of possibility are they creating and maintaining for us and for our students? In what ways do those conditions of possibility afford our students a viable life? And in what ways may they be said to fall short of adequate care? (Davies, 2006, pp. 436-437)

However, it cannot be assumed that education policies permeate directly into individual subjectivities, since the fact of accepting the idea and experience of subjectivity means we must acknowledge the idea and experience of reflexivity and agency:

This should not be confused with a determinism in which subjects are passively and inevitably shaped according to one set of discursive practices within a monolithic moral order. Butler's subjects have agency, albeit a radically conditioned agency, in which they can reflexively and critically examine their conditions of possibility and in which they can both subvert and eclipse the powers that act on them and which they enact (Davies, 2006, p. 426)

So, there are possibilities of adaptations, misadjustments and resistances from the subjects who deliver or receive the implementation of the policy, because "policies pose problems to their subjects. Problems that must be solved in context." (Ball, 1993, p. 12)

In short, education policies subjectivize through the delivery of contents and values, but also take place in particular contexts and contain possibilities of response. This study will analyse firstly whether neoliberalism has influenced the values and contents of the Chilean educational policies, and secondly what the responses to these policies have been in rural contexts.

### 2.5.3. Possibilities of resistance

It is important to recognize that just as a certain set of values and practices can be adopted by individuals, they can also be rejected and resisted by them, generating a different dynamic of power. Those dynamics and responses can vary through time and place, and “to the extent that neoliberal governmentalities have become increasingly focused upon the production of subjectivity, it is logical that we think about subjectivity as a site of struggle and resistance.” (Ball & Olmedo, 2013, p. 85)

Two main characteristics define the resistance of power from a Foucauldian perspective. Firstly, we need to answer the question of what is being resisted. Secondly, what implies resistance in relation to subjectivity?

In relation to what is being resisted, the answer relates to power, but comprises “not so much ‘such and such’ an institution of power, or group, or elite, or class, but rather a technique, a form of power” (Ball & Olmedo, 2013, p. 86) , or the effects of power, which “are linked with knowledge, competence, and qualification” (Foucault, 1982, p. 781). Techniques, technologies, forms and effects of power are deployed, for instance, by policies of assessment, comparison and competition from one side, and policies which deliver discourses, values, contents, narratives and world-views from another, with each one related to and fed by the other, generating a whole construct that constitutes the education system. So resistance is linked in opposition or difference to those rationalities or definitions of the individual:

(...) from the perspective of the commodification critique, resisting neoliberalism means refusing the expansion of the market and insisting that a genuine subject cannot be reduced to a mere consumer, that the free labourer has aspirations that cannot be reduced to calculations of interest (a longing for solidarity, justice, or sharing). (Feher, 2009, p. 31)

Then, the implications of resistance in relation to subjectivity are linked to the possibilities of self-definition and liberty. According to Lazzarato:

Foucault calls these creative strategies of resistance 'counter-conducts': they open up processes of 'autonomous and independent' subjectivation, that is, possibilities for the constitution of oneself. (Lazzarato, 2009, p. 114)

So strategies of resistance make possible a struggle for self-definition in which individual subjectivities can be constructed over and against neoliberal discourses, narratives, techniques and policies, through a refusal of what we 'are'; and this can be considered as a 'concrete liberty':

Foucault's work (...) recognises the courage displayed in refusing the mundane, in turning away from excellence, in unsettling truths (...) (Owen, 1994). It is an invitation to the practice of 'concrete liberty', which is localised and flexible, a liberty which is created in and through acts of resistance and processes of self-definition. (Ball & Olmedo, 2013, p. 94)

It is interesting to study possible strategies of resistance in the context of research regarding the impact of neoliberalism on the subjectivity of the individuals, as a possible outcome of a conflict between subjects and policies and their discourses and technologies. This issue will be problematized in the analysis and findings of this investigation.

### 3. What type of subjectivity does neoliberalism foster? Towards a definition of the Neoliberal Subject

#### 3.1. Neoliberalism and the production of subjectivity

The influence and effect of neoliberalism on the individual can be explained by asking what are the points of contact between the neoliberal discourse and the individual's rationality, his institutional links, his history, his perception of his present and his perspective on his future, in short, all that the individual considers valuable, his identity and his own subjectivity. To touch again on notions of neoliberalism in its symbiosis with the market and its consequences, the market logic of competition highlights three effects of neoliberalism on individuals and their subjectivities: responsibility, accountability and consumption.

In relation to responsibility, individuals have to take individual responsibility for their own problems and risks that society poses; as mentioned above, the liberal idea that each person is an economic agent who chooses freely and rationally means that every social decision made by an outside source, such as the State, could lead to a misreading of people's necessities and therefore to a misuse of available resources. As Lemke (2002) points out:

The strategy of rendering individual subjects 'responsible' (and also collectives, such as families, associations, etc.) entails shifting the responsibility for social risks such as illness, unemployment, poverty, and so forth, and for life in society, into the domain for which the individual is responsible and transforming it into a problem of 'self-care'. (p. 59)

This last quote links the question of responsibility to privatization as the way to institutionalize social relations, social rights, goods and service provisions, and consequently certain types of subjectivities to be fostered within this new type of private institutions. The responsibility for and administration of public goods and service provision, including education, are transferred to a new situation in which the individuals have to relate to each other and institutionally under a new logic and contract (Larner & Laurie, 2010).

Moreover, Ball and Olmedo (2013) state in relation to school teachers that a new form of subjectivity is emerging in response to a new set of practices and



requirements which individuals are obliged to accept and adapt to. These are rules that demand performance and accountability, a combination of governmentality and discipline mechanisms that continuously assess in relation to performance, producing a grid of intelligibility in relation to which teachers and students are compared and categorized. Individuals in this case incorporate the notions of productivity, performance and outcomes as an essential component of their behaviour and mode of working and relating.

With regard to consumption, and again related to rational and free choice inserted into a market environment, the development of the notion of consumption in individuals' lives is striking. Consumption has become one of the key features of neoliberalism and its influences upon individuals' subjectivities (Walkerdine & Bansel, 2010). In these terms the analysis of the shift from a subjectivity based on principles of citizenship to one based on consumerism is interesting. While the citizen's criteria are based on collective and public foundations, the consumer makes judgements individually based on rational choice and cost-benefit calculations (Clarke & Newman, 2007).

### **3.2. Elements and features of the neoliberal subject.**

In this part, I will point to some of the main features of the profile of the neoliberal subject, in order to define those elements and rationalities of neoliberalism that are inserted in different institutions, frames of reference, values and logics of current forms of social organization and governmentality, the educational field included. Some of these topics have been covered in previous parts, but this section seeks to offer a schematic overview of the constitution of the neoliberal subject, as a key conceptual element to relate to in the later empirical data analysis. These faces can be interrelated, sometimes they even touch similar features, but each of them tries to develop a particular idea regarding this model of subjectivity.

### *'Homo Economicus': the anthropology of competition and the productive man*

As noted above, competition inside a market economy is a key aspect to understanding the neoliberal subject, a competitive individual. As Read (2009) explains, the 'homo economicus' is developed under the shift of market principles from exchange to competition; but again, inside the neoliberal project, competition is not only a characteristic of business relations, but of every sphere of the human and social condition. The market and economic logic are increasingly embedded in social life – the economization of the social. Next to the concept of competition and the cost/benefit calculation are interests, risk, marketing and investment, among others.

These notions focus on the diverse processes of subjectivation among individuals, and tie the economic life to the subjective life. So one important feature to consider in this research is related to local forms of the economic life and their markets, and how specific development models influence education policies and subjectivities. The neoliberalism has to be analysed in its particularities to understand its connections with policy practices and subjectivation processes.

The productive face of the homo economicus can be illustrated in the image of the neoliberal worker, who:

(...) is portrayed neither as an economic actor, rationally pursuing financial advantage, nor as a social creature seeking satisfaction of needs for solidarity and security. The worker is an individual in search of meaning, responsibility, a sense of personal achievement, a maximized 'quality of life', and hence of work. Thus the individual is not to be emancipated from work, perceived as merely a task or a means to an end, but to be fulfilled in work, now construed as an activity through which we produce, discover, and experience our selves. (Rose, 1990, pp. 103-104)

The neoliberal worker, like previous images of the capitalist worker, is strongly tied to the dynamics of the economy, but instead of just accomplishing a specific task inside a chain of production, the worker is invited to identify with the

values of enterprise, to perceive it as a space for self-development, improvement and better individual professional alternatives. This research will problematize this perspective of the worker in rural settings, as the project of the professional future for secondary students in their final schooling year.

Finally, the notion of a productive individual is linked with the notions of 'useful' and 'worthwhile', and it is understood in terms of how it is possible to maximize productivity across a wide range of activities in the fields of work, study and leisure. The neoliberal subject cannot waste his time, and has to choose the most useful activities among the options for action. Those activities that are 'useful' are those activities which lead to productivity, or are part of the strategic process of formation, which in turn reflect an investment in human capital (O'Flynn & Petersen, 2007).

#### *Individualist and autonomous (for choosing)*

The competitive individual inside the market logic has not a sense of collective achievement, but one of individual achievement (Brown, 2009). The root of individualism is the notion of the rational individual of classic economics, wherein the sum of individual interests can achieve development and economic balance. But also, inside the value of self-interest there is a political conception of society, where, in political terms, an individual vote is not a vote based on collective issues, but on individual or private ones. Thus, the meaning of collectivity is weakened as individuality is strengthened; i.e. the worker is concerned with his own personal interests, not the collective interests of his segment in the company – even less by an idea of a working class. Under neoliberal logic, it is more important to develop the individual career through the labour market than to foster the organization of the workers in the defence of their rights into trades unions, organizations that on many occasions generate actions against the sense of efficiency in a company (Read, 2009). In summary, private interests are privileged over the public good (Mitchell, 2003).

Tightly linked to individualism is autonomy – but not any autonomy. The neoliberal subject must develop an autonomy for choosing as a rational individual in the pursuit of self-interest. Autonomy is then not a determined moral value; it is a response to the neoliberal institutional framework, which demands individual decisions among alternatives in buying, investing, studying, housing and living (Larner, 2000). In turn, the term ‘autonomy’ is not noted for its connection with ‘independence’, but its bond with the individual (non-collective) capacity to choose and the rational capacity to do so.

Bradbury (2013, p. 8) noted different characteristics of the neoliberal individual that can be linked to different aspects and dimensions of neoliberal culture within Western society. From these, the ones that emphasize attributes associated with autonomy for choosing are the capacities of self-regulation, introspection and reflection, which can be highlighted as features connected with the autonomy of rational choice within diverse alternatives and different spaces and systems of the society, based on a cost/benefit rationality.

### *Human Capital*

Despite Human Capital theory (Schultz, 1961; Becker, 1962) being developed before the establishment of neoliberalism in the 1980s and 1990s, and having been applied, at times, in non-neoliberal context, it currently can be identified as part of the neoliberal set of ideas and principles and contributes to the description of current pressures from neoliberalism to individuals’ subjectivity:

(...) the rise of human capital as a dominant subjective form is a defining feature of neoliberalism (Feher, 2009, p. 24).

The concept of human capital, in its current iteration, refers to the investment made by individuals in order to develop their particular skills, in relation to the need of continually increasing their effectiveness and the

profitability of market institutions. Human capital exists in parallel with the financial capital or physical capital of a company or enterprise. In neoliberal economies human capital is a crucial conception of human labour, and it has become part of the resources and infrastructure of the economy, in which, as well as in business and services, it is possible to invest and develop a human project, a process represented in policies of lifelong learning and techniques of self-improvement, like life coaching, mentoring, counselling, etc. Thus, the neoliberal subject perceives himself as human capital under development, in which he can invest, with a proper strategy, taking those decisions and undertaking those activities that could add value to his skills, profile and career (O'Flynn & Petersen, 2007). In relation to education, human capital is:

(...) the set of skills that an individual can acquire thanks to investments in his or her education or training, and its primary purpose [is] to measure the rates of return that investments in education produce or, to put it simply, the impact on future incomes that can be expected from schooling and other forms of training. (Feher, 2009, p. 25)

But at the same time, when the individual invests in himself through education and skills acquisition, he does so not only to do 'a better job', but to increase his own personal 'value', which, like any other economic capital, can be appreciated or depreciated:

(...) insofar as our condition is that of human capital in a neoliberal environment, our main purpose is not so much to profit from our accumulated potential as to constantly value or appreciate ourselves – or at least prevent our own depreciation. (Feher, 2009, p. 27)

The notion of a competitive CV is linked to this idea: education is not only practical skills, but also a system of meanings, a narrative of the self, in which the

individual deploys all his education itinerary, his skills and experience in order to be competitive in a competitive labour market. As neoliberalism expands the market logic into all spheres of social life, it does not avoid permeating personal subjectivities as well. So individuals considered as human capital can “be conceived as the managers of a portfolio of conducts pertaining to all the aspects of their lives.” (Feher, 2009, p. 30) Ideas of responsibility and autonomy are also suggested in this quote.

Even though the last reflections upon neoliberalism link the notion of human capital to the new autonomous entrepreneur of the self (to be addressed in the next section), as the individual who invests actively in himself in order to be more valued economically, the roots of the theory of human capital are based in the assumption of the strong connection between economic growth and education. This has had political influence in the international sphere and in different factions of the political spectrum, as “Historically, the relationship between national economic growth and the development of human capital has become the ‘conventional wisdom’ among both conservatives and social progressives” (Down, 2009, p. 53). This theoretical postulation “promotes the idea that economic productivity is intimately connected to the skills level and ability of the workforce, which can be upgraded by education and training” (Koo, 2016, p. 47). What I try to express here is that despite the implications of human capital and neoliberalism in the production of an individualistic and entrepreneurial subjectivity, this feature neither replaces nor is disconnected from the original statements of human capital theory, where there still exists a strong connection between economic – thus, industrial and technological – development and education and skills training. The particular way in which these facets of human capital are enacted in rural settings in Chile will be a focus of this research.

### *The entrepreneur*

The notion of the entrepreneur is someone that sees himself as the subject/object of entrepreneurship, the image of the self as an enterprise. The point here is that

this is not limited to business activity; the neoliberal subject undertakes action to make an entrepreneur of himself, he is the goal of the investment, he looks for personal success and well-being in relation to a process of self-making (Bradbury, 2013). Here the notions of individualism, private interest and human capital take an illustrative shape. Kelly (2016) states:

The cultivation, conduct and regulation of the self is a never-ending project shaped by an ethic of enterprise that promises to support, facilitate and energise this project (...) The self as enterprise is required to think of itself, imagine the work that it should do on itself within a widespread, embracing set of normative terms that seek to position the self as entrepreneurial, active, autonomous, prudential, risk aware, choice making and responsible. (p. 14)

The entrepreneur is shaped by the neoliberal discourses and governmentality. Recent governments have developed and encouraged the fostering of a society of entrepreneurs in the context of globalization (Ong, 2005). In turn, discourses about human capital, development, innovation and individual freedom have permeated the diverse processes of subjectivation across many societies (O'Flynn & Petersen, 2007) – as an OECD report of 1989 is explicit in these terms, as it calls for an 'enterprising society' (C. Ball, 1989). The skilled entrepreneur contains the individual connotation of development and innovation, and has the advanced and technological tools to thrive throughout the knowledge society and economy (Ong, 2005).

To conclude this section about the features of the neoliberal subject, these describe the first narratives of a type of subjectivity, which provides conceptual insight into the empirical analysis of this study. Which of these features are currently enacted in rural students' subjectivities in Chile is a task to be developed critically, as Feher (2009) points out:

“The question remains, however, of knowing who is the subject of neoliberalism or, more precisely, of knowing what type of subjectivity is being simultaneously presupposed and targeted by neoliberal policies.” (p. 23)



## Chapter 2: Concepts and understandings about education policies

This chapter provides additional conceptual notions, but in this case, they are directly related to the education policies analyzed in this research (see Introduction): curriculum, secondary TVET (Technical Vocational Education and Training) and rural education. While the previous chapter offered the main theoretical insights which allow to observe critically the study objects of this research; this chapter gives the concepts, ideas and understandings about what these education policies are or should be, for the improvement of educational systems, or pursuing social justice purposes. So, in other words, this chapter shows an ideological and technical set of ideas which frames the political discussion about these educational policies. While curriculum studies possess an own corpus of conceptual development, TVET and rural education tend to be conceptually framed by the main international organizations – i.e. UNESCO, World Bank, IMF, IDB, OECD, UNDP, among others - which research about these topics, offering policy recommendations to the countries and their governments. On the other hand, unlike TVET and rural education, curriculum policies are less considered by the international organizations and tend to be indirectly related to research and reports about skills to the world of work, which simultaneously are more closely related to TVET policies. Summarizing, the conceptual and ideological corpus addressed in this chapter, will be based on theoretical insights in the case of curriculum policy, and from international reports in the case of TVET and rural education.

Then, for TVET and rural education I use mainly UNESCO because it's the main international organization looking at education policy, and which in various cases provide a dialogue or debate with other dominant perspectives – represented by other international bodies as OECD and World Bank- in every educational field. I assume that these studies can present an explanatory perspective in order to map and situate the debates, tendencies and discourses about each topic. In addition, and highlighting a previous statement, these

analyses can provide the discursive global context in where the respective Chilean educational policy is developed.

Regarding this last point, I clarify that the ideas and concepts to be exposed are not necessarily related to the Chilean educational policies historical formulations themselves, so it is not an issue of this research to detect direct influence on their design or development. This chapter is, instead, an overview of the conceptual and ideological landscape which prevails and circulate around the educational policies analysed, or at least part of it, and expects to offer a link between the post-structural theoretical framework presented above and the educational policy analysis itself, which constitute part of the core of the original findings of this thesis. I think that this chapter can give a wider policy context to the educational policy analysis to be made later at a national and local level, and to understand the current state of the discussion of each topic in the academic or international sphere. These ideas are outlined in order to offer a group of concepts and notions which in the following chapters, the Chilean policy analysis can interact with and refer back to.

In relation to curriculum policy, I start with a particular set of theoretical ideas that complement the discursive approach of this investigation. The point of view to be addressed is the critical approach developed by Michael Apple (1993, 2004; 2006), who develops a theoretical critique towards western curriculum, and seeks to contribute to the generation of a democratic curriculum. Secondly, I present the ideas and trends which have dominated the international discussion regarding TVET policy from UNESCO documents. This analysis is made through the lens of the theoretical framework presented in the first chapter, relating and contrasting these ideas and recommendations to the poststructuralist and neoliberal concepts outlined there. Finally, following the type of analysis of the previous case, I will analyse rural education policy recommendations and ideas from an international perspective (UNESCO and institutions associated), discourses that offer a context of the current status of rural education in the global arena.

## 1. Theoretical issues around curriculum policies

Regarding ideology and curriculum, Apple has explored in depth the linkages whereby ideology, and in particular liberal and neoliberal ideology, has influenced curriculum policies and structures. For him curriculum policy is always influenced by dominant cultures and values, as “The curriculum is never simply a neutral assemblage of knowledge, somehow appearing in the texts and classrooms of a nation. It is always part of a selective tradition, someone’s selection, some group’s vision of legitimate knowledge. It is produced out of the cultural, political, and economic conflicts, tensions, and compromises that organize and disorganize a people” (Apple, 1993, p. 1). This quote echoes, again, Ball’s (1993) description of the production of policies mentioned in previous sections, which also describes the conflictual nature of the policy-making process. Apple highlights the dominant influence of neoliberalism on curriculum policies in the contemporary period, in the way they strengthen two lines of discourse:

The seemingly contradictory discourse of competition, markets, and choice on the one hand and accountability, performance objectives, standards, national testing, and national curriculum on the other has created such a din that it is hard to hear anything else. (Apple, 2001, p. 411)

We see the preponderance of market logic with its correlate of competition and free choice values as key neoliberal influences in the curriculum contents, and on the other hand, the increase in technologies of accountability and testing, which are generated by the definition of curriculum standards. These standards, in turn, are defined by values of enterprise and industry requirements, or in other words, by what is most useful to the economy and labour market (Apple, 1993). This issue links the national curriculum to national systems of testing in current education trends.

National curriculum and national testing systems are identified as juxtaposed policies, which in a neoliberal context and discourse are developed under a mercantile notion of education. While the curriculum provides the minimum contents and standards to be taught in schools, the testing system assesses the level of achievement to those standards. Both generate information that ranks schools and students, which in turn provides information to parents so they can make the best possible choice as to where to educate their children; this information also enables schools to classify students in more sophisticated ways:

A national curriculum may be seen as a device for accountability, to help us establish benchmarks so that parents can evaluate schools. But it also puts into motion a system in which children themselves will be ranked and ordered as never before. (Apple, 1993, p. 7)

With regard to equality, one interesting point raised by Apple is the existence of a paradox. The explicit purpose of the curriculum is to provide equal and common contents for everyone, avoiding any differentiation among the population, but there are two flaws inherent in this. Firstly the testing system, by ranking, generates inequalities of practice and outcome (often realized in grouping or dividing of children – as in the separation of academic and TVET routes) and it reproduces and at the same time obscures other issues related to poverty and marginalization:

The criteria may seem objective; but the results will not be, given existing differences in resources and in class and race segregation. Rather than cultural and social cohesion, differences between 'we' and the 'others' will be socially produced even more strongly and the attendant social antagonisms and cultural and economic destruction will worsen. (Apple, 1993, p. 7)

So cohesion is replaced by the segregation of winners and losers in a ranking table, which in turn reflects a continuing relationship between attainment and social background.

The second flaw is related to the national/common culture or equal contents that the curriculum is meant to deliver to all students, ignoring the diversity of cultures, classes, gender, races, geographical contexts and historical particularities that may coexist inside the same society: “if we are concerned with ‘really equal treatment’, as I think we must be, we must base a curriculum on a recognition of those differences that empower and depower our students in identifiable ways.” (Apple, 1993, p. 8). This issue is particularly important in relation to the nature of the curriculum applied in rural settings, which are in diverse geographical settings and some of the most deprived areas of Chile.

Finally, while Apple is interesting and valuable in terms of this research, especially because of the issues raised, he is more influenced by the social and class conflict perspectives of Marx and Bourdieu and particularly Gramsci, in terms of how the dominant discourse that underpins public and educational policies represents the interests and culture of a certain social group. From his point of view, the curriculum policy-making process is a result of complex relations between the State, the dominant class and the industry, among other powerful actors. He claims the possibility of recontextualization of the curriculum contents and principles inside the pedagogical practice, where marginalized actors (teachers, students) and social classes as agents can contest and generate a reflexive practice where the curriculum is again reframed in the classroom (Scott, 2007). For this research, while those perspectives are recognized as important and form the background of the study subject, they are not considered directly. The dominant discourses, as mentioned above, are the product of a complex network of relations, a ‘microphysics of power’; they are not shaped by individuals, but the individuals and social groups are formed and strengthened through discourses (Ball, 2013).

## 2. International discussion of the TVET policy

The TVET policy discussion, as its name suggests, is eminently technical, with a strategic role in the education system and in the economy of countries, regions and worldwide. Its main theoretical discussion is based in technical aspects; TVET's role in the knowledge economy, the role of lifelong learning processes, the relation between the workplace and learning, different successful or failed experiences, etc.<sup>2</sup> I would say that more than a specific TVET theoretical framework, there is a thinking applied from other theories, such as the human capital or capabilities theories. Moreover, as a field of study, TVET is framed inside curriculum studies, as a specialist field, but related in a stronger way to the economy and development spheres. In this section I will analyse part of the discussion led by UNESCO, to which contribute several scholars and specialists in the field, to give a general perspective of the discussion, its main discursive features, and to situate the argument of the Chilean case.

In the last decades UNESCO has developed and produced different forms of evidence and recommendations in relation to TVET policy, which constitute part of the educational policy agenda that this international institution seeks to promote. As a brief overview of these publications<sup>3</sup>, the starting point was in 1989 in the UNESCO General Conference in Paris, where the participating countries generated agreed a resolution called the *Convention on Technical and Vocational Education*, the first agreements regarding TVET policy framework and general orientations. Following this, two major international congress have been organised on TVET matters - Seoul 1999, Shanghai 2012 - providing a new series of general agreements and updated orientations. As result of the Seoul conference, the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and

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<sup>2</sup> For an example of this argument, see the *Handbook of Technical and Vocational Education and Training Research* (2008) maybe the largest compilation regarding TVET research and policy, among other diverse topics. Another interesting analysis is made by Gough (2010), former director of UNESCO-UNEVOC, who synthesizes issues of investment and the role of TVET in the global society, an attempt which I would not qualify as a proper theorization of TVET, but which provides an important reflection about this type of education nowadays.

<sup>3</sup> Until 2016, year of conclusion of this research.

Training was established, dedicated exclusively to the provision of sources, evidence, proposals and cooperation frames for the development of TVET worldwide. Before the Seoul congress, TVET issues tended to be subsumed within other educational policies reviews. From 2000 onwards, the TVET specific studies and documents published increased, these included policy briefs and institutional newsletters, reports of UNESCO board meetings about progress on the TVET agenda, national and regional reports or recommendations, articles about specific features of TVET (i.e. teachers, pedagogy, gender issues, sustainability, etc) in the academic field, and general recommendations to all the nations members. My review was based mainly in the longer documents, where a deeper argument can be developed, or specific short declarations with higher political relevance. Both are generated to have impact on a global audience – inside and beyond national or regional frontiers. Before addressing the selected documents, I would also note the following documents that also contribute to the discursive construction of TVET within UNESCO.I:

- ✓ *International Conference: Reorienting TVET Policy Towards Education for Sustainable Development. Final Report (2009).* UNESCO-UNEVOC.

TVET in the frame of Education for Sustainable Development decade (2005-2014).

- ✓ *Transforming TVET - from idea to action. One decade of UNESCO-UNEVOC (2012).* UNESCO-UNEVOC.

A selection of priority themes for the Centre's goals.

- ✓ *SHANGHAI CONSENSUS Recommendations of the Third International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education and Training 'Transforming TVET: Building skills for work and life' (2012).* UNESCO.

Result of the third congress agreements between the participant countries, in terms of strengthening policy agenda, recommendations for the countries regarding TVET and potential ways of collaboration.

- ✓ *Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) (2015)*. UNESCO.

Confirmation and updating of the goals and recommendations established in 2001 (see next paragraph), in the frame of the UNESCO's Sustainable Development Goals 2015-2030 (Goal 4: "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all").

- ✓ *UNESCO TVET Strategy 2016-2021. Report of the UNESCO-UNEVOC virtual conference (2016)*. UNESCO-UNEVOC.

Brief summary of the conference discussions and enumeration of the key recommendations for a TVET strategy for the period 2016-2021.

The publications on which I focus my attention were identified in terms of their wider contribution to the construction of a TVET policy discourse. Particularly, the main publication reviewed is *Revisiting global trends in TVET: Reflections on theory and practice*, edited by UNESCO-UNEVOC, which is written by different authors, divided in different chapters, exploring different specific topics of analysis and research regarding TVET policies. This is one of the most significant attempts to generate a coherent corpus of evidence, theory and recommendations related to different issues around TVET worldwide, and it sets out an original technical and ideological agenda around the orientation that this education policy can pursue in different contexts. Another important publication and a more extensive set of organised recommendations is *Unleashing the Potential Transforming Technical and Vocational Education and Training (2015)*, from UNESCO. Here themes around governance, management and funding are addressed in depth. But there are other relevant documents, and institutional declarations reviewed in this section; one, that constitutes a milestone in the TVET discussion, is the UNESCO's *Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education (2001)*; and the subsequent *Revising the 2001 Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education. Report of the UNESCO-UNEVOC special virtual conference*



(2014), from UNESCO-UNEVOC. The first one, which follows up on the Seoul international congress and the creation of UNESCO-UNEVOC, it presents the main orientations and ‘announces’ the primary relevance of this policy topic in the UNESCO agenda, and it is an historical reference in terms of policy debate in different institutions and national governments. The second one, is an updated reflection on the tenets presented in the 2001 document, and seeks to maintain the validity of the original recommendations, adapting its contents to new challenges in the educational and labour spheres.

## **2.1. Qualified workforce for the economy and its development**

From UNESCO perspective, at its origins, TVET started with an eminent social goal, which was to include the poor in the workforce of the economy, to provide a fast path whereby they could access better and more highly qualified opportunities. This process started in the secondary level of schooling, linked with a conception in which the tertiary education was not an option to the lower classes, so this bridge between education, skills and work should be developed in a more general stage:

The process of ‘vocalization’ of secondary education began in the 1970s with the aims of promoting the social inclusion of less privileged groups in education and training, narrowing educational gaps and avoiding social fragmentation. (Maclean & Pavlova, 2013, p. 45)

Evidence of this beginning, as I will show in further sections, is still present in the current TVET provision, quite clearly in the secondary level, where the majority of the enrolment comes from lower socioeconomic segments of the population. So, there is still a perception in which the technical education is the education for the poor, a fast path towards the labour market, and along with that a possible relief for material deprivation.

But over time, this 'social' approach started to shift towards a more 'functional' one, in which the economy, not the individuals, was the centre of concern for education systems, and in particular the TVET. One of the origins of this shift is related to the 'human resources' rationality, which instrumentalized the workforce, inserting sophisticated technologies, calculations and strategies to rationalize the work distribution functionally. This shift changed the order of meanings and purposes of the TVET, and given its technical character close to workplaces, the system started to be viewed and implemented through policies which emphasized the functional character of its provision, strengthening its competencies approach and the rationalization of the skills training:

The human capital/HRD (Human Resource Development) debate generates a more functional (not pure educational) approach to skills development that impacts on general, pre-vocational and vocational education, and changes the nature of secondary TVET. The demand to strengthen productivity and employability of individuals through the development of work-related skills (...). So the change is from an education-driven to a functional model of skills development within secondary schooling. (Maclean & Pavlova, 2013, p. 49)

Henceforward, the human resources approach moved towards, and in parallel with, the human capital approach. This approach fosters the notion of capital in the individual aptitudes, the human workforce as another source of capital which can grow, can be qualified and can contribute to the economy and development of markets. This vision has become predominant in the TVET discussion in the last decades. Tikly (2013) gives a critique of the World Bank perspective regarding TVET: while this financial institution mainly links this type of education to the economic growth through the human capital approach, Tikly opposes it with the UNESCO vision:

In the case of financial institutions such as the World Bank, for example, policies to promote TVET are principally seen as an investment in human capital and as a

means for supporting economic growth. The underlying view of development in operation is an economic one in which 'progress' is measured in relation to levels of economic growth and prosperity. UNESCO's long-standing interest in TVET on the other hand has been linked to a more human-centred view of TVET as a means for supporting sustainable development. (Tikly, 2013, p. 1)

This issue is certainly central in the analysis of this policy; the economic-oriented feature of the TVET policy appears in the basis of its origin and development, and comes along with the historical itinerary of capitalism and neoliberalism. Referring to Damon Anderson, Tikly adds:

(...) TVET first emerged in the context of the industrial revolution in Europe and North America as part of a philosophy of 'productivism' (...). [T]he quest for efficiency and profit was the principal dynamic of the new industrial mode, and (...) in this context TVET was perceived to have a fundamentally instrumental function in providing the necessary human capital required by industry. Human capital theory has been the dominant approach adopted by global financial institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and by national governments (...). In this approach gross domestic product (GDP) is understood as the most significant indicator of development. (Tikly, 2013, p. 5)

Nonetheless, there are UNESCO perspectives (UNESCO, 2015) where the goals of equity and access in relation to TVET policy are linked with its contribution to economic growth and the needs of the business sector, perspectives historically related to the human capital approach. Equity and access are matters of discussion in the UNESCO discourse.

The TVET system can be seen as closely related to the *homo economicus* outlined previously in this study, as it is a policy which seeks to develop a particular type of individuals, productive workers – as human capital – for the “global knowledge economy” (Tikly, 2013, p. 6). As will be outlined in depth in the further

analysis, the human capital approach and concept constitutes a key trend in education policies, and explicitly in TVET policies, because of the intimate relation between ‘capital’ and ‘human’ workforce. Somehow in this ambit of the educational system, the broad definition of ‘education’ is narrowed, simplified towards a deep connection between education and specific workplaces.

## **2.2. Entrepreneurship education**

Badawi (2013) provides a basis to relate and include the role of entrepreneurship education as part of TVET provision. First, conceptually, what is the background of entrepreneurship education (or EPE)?

Initiatives to use the power of education to enhance individuals’ entrepreneurial mindsets, and raise awareness of entrepreneurship as a viable alternative to paid employment, gave rise to educational programmes that can be grouped together under the heading of entrepreneurship education and training. (Badawi, 2013, p. 283)

So, for this author, there is a strategic link between TVET and EPE, the first with its connection with the labour markets, and the second with its perspective in which entrepreneurial skills can provide a path to independent work, along with the features of flexibility and autonomy. The use of the term ‘mindset’ in the quoted paragraph is interesting, which incorporates a notion that can be linked to the development of a certain subjectivity, a way of framing individual rationalities with entrepreneurial-oriented contents, values and skills which “should be considered as generic skills for all” (Badawi, 2013, p. 280), encouraging the emergence of entrepreneurial subjects.

According to Badawi, international bodies have developed and promoted the EPE, a trend that began to spread from 2001 onwards – after the UNESCO conference of that year and its recommendations, which also supported

entrepreneurial features in TVET policies (Unesco, 2001, pp. 1-4). This is shown in the EU Expert Group report of 2008, which concludes that:

If it is to make a success of the Lisbon Strategy for growth and employment, Europe needs to stimulate the entrepreneurial mindsets of young people, encourage innovative business start-ups, and foster a culture that is friendlier to entrepreneurship and to the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The important role of education in promoting more entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviours is now widely recognised. (EU, 2008, p. 7; in Badawi, 2013, p. 280)

In this case, first the statement starts with the connection between education and growth and employment, a link that is deployed through certain attitudes and behaviours which stimulate the entrepreneurial mindsets of individuals and the formation of start-up policies. Here, again, appears explicitly the notion of mindset, along with an idea of culture that can be understood as discourse, as a body of ideas which should be spread.

Following on from the previous reflection and citing another example from Badawi, the OECD, in one of its work documents related to competencies in education (2010), *considers EPE as one of three pillars for building the individual*. It adds:

In most OECD countries, value is placed on flexibility, entrepreneurship and personal responsibility. Not only are individuals expected to be adaptive, but also innovative, creative, self-directed and self-motivated. (OECD, 2010, p.8; in Badawi, 2013, p. 280)

So, in declarations from two international bodies appear features and strategies *for building the individual*, to, again, foster a certain type of subjectivity based on characteristics related to autonomy and self-responsibility. The EPE project is seen as integrated with the TVET provision, as a path which should be

offered and strengthened under the frame of the current changing and flexible economy and its labour market. It is questionable whether the intention is to adapt the TVET policy to the contemporary labour market needs, in terms of training the workforce; or whether the TVET policy should promote the entrepreneurial forms of the current labour market, developing EPE schemes. Probably both possibilities are correlated and coexist in these recommendations and reports, and in both there is reference to the emergence of new, entrepreneurial individuals, mindsets and subjectivities.

### **2.3. To connect with a training itinerary, and lifelong learning**

The 'Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education' document, adopted by the 2001 UNESCO Conference in Paris, was a landmark in the TVET discussion among international organizations and governments. This document sets the key issues to be debated around the issue. One of the important concerns and proposals of the document is based on the insertion of the TVET in the so-called lifelong learning process, in which the students and workers should be inserted in the context of the knowledge society and a dynamic and changing economy. There is a need of permanent updating of knowledge and skills, in order to stay valid and employable. According to UNESCO, the TVET and the lifelong learning should:

Offer possibilities of personal development and professional advancement by providing flexibility in programme administration and curriculum design to facilitate smooth lifelong learning and continuous entry, exit and re-entry points (UNESCO, 2001).

As the TVET offers, generally, a shorter educational path, both in secondary and tertiary education, its insertion in the lifelong learning chain seems to match smoothly with the first stage in the lifelong learning process. This flexible and

adaptable model of lifelong learning is connected with the human capital approach, as it delivers updating and development of skills and knowledge, building a better-prepared worker, more attractive to the changing markets. As I pointed out above, there is a double goal in this educational strategy, as keeping workers updated supposes better or more stable labour opportunities for them, and at the same time the economy can continue its rampant march towards innovation and growth.

In terms of subjectivity formation, lifelong learning, and the role of TVET within it, constitutes a technology in which the educational system is permanently latent, with *continuous entry, exit and re-entry points*. It appears as an offer (there it is, flexible and accessible whenever you want), but as an obligation too (if you do not train yourself permanently, you could become outdated or downgraded); lifelong learning helps you, but forces you too. Anyway, the relevance and effectiveness of lifelong learning is still a matter of debate. There are very different levels of formality in each system; for example in some national contexts lifelong learning is part of the qualifications framework (as in New Zealand and Australia), and in others is just an unregulated market with very variable types of courses and providers (as in Chile), where it is not possible to link the TVET levels (secondary and tertiary) in the same process or system.

#### **2.4. The 'alternative discourse': to develop citizenship, capabilities, sustainability and transformation of the workplace**

Then, there are other sets of features and guidelines related to what can be called an *alternative path* (or discourse), which mixes progressive, humanist and ecological thinking, aspects such as sustainability, citizenship and rights. This so-called (by me) 'alternative path', tries to point out one of the theoretical premises of this research, in which the alternative to the hegemonic discourse appears broken, dispersed, unarticulated, intellectually atomized. Despite this, I will try to outline this alternative discourse, first under the influence of Amartya Sen's capability approach (1985, 1999), and secondly using some words from UNESCO

about inequality and a more empowered role of the worker. This analysis, along with the previous ones, will contribute later to assess the trends and predominant notions in the educational policies in Chile.

First, relating to the capabilities approach and its relation to TVET policies and recommendations, Tikly (2013) summarizes the key tension in which this approach can be contingent to the TVET discussion:

As exponents of sustainable development and of capability theory approaches argue, whilst economic growth is important it is not an end in itself and human-centred development needs to be conceptualized more holistically than simply in terms of increases in GDP and in a way that incorporates environmental, social and cultural factors (...). Related to this criticism is that rather than see education and skills as a good in themselves, exponents of human capital theory prefer to see them as an objective factor in production (...). There is often a positivistic bias in human-capital-inspired writing and research and the lack of an overt normative framework for engaging with issues such as inequality and marginalisation. (p. 12)

So, as also mentioned above, the TVET policy seems to be in permanent demand from the labour market, the industry. Probably it is impossible to avoid this tension because the skills-based approach of the TVET path has been widely discussed and assumed internationally, in part because of its propensity to fit directly and in the short term into the necessities of the company and the factory. The capabilities approach, and then part of the UNESCO one, tries to mediate in this tension, to inflect this relation education–workplace introducing elements from humanism. The task is not easy.

What are then Sen's capabilities? They have a relation to the notions of agency, freedom and autonomy; they are a concept linked with liberties, the freedom to be and to do (not Hayek's freedom 'from' a coercive State; see chapter 1), and related to TVET: "capabilities also imply the freedom and opportunities that individuals are provided with through TVET to convert whatever resources they may have at their disposal into achievements or outcomes of different kinds."



(Tikly, 2013, p. 19) Capabilities enable the cultivation of personal and collective projects; they are the sum of skills and opportunities of various natures, which can be developed and supported to achieve different possibilities, goals or outcomes. A policy frame based on capabilities generates policies to support and ensure the flourishing of the capabilities and opportunities present in every individual inside a social group. From this perspective, the TVET path should join to that purpose, and strengthen capabilities in students and workers, in order to settle and promote the opportunities and possibilities in everyone.

Why can be this be seen as an alternative to human capital, and a strategy to overcome social inequality? Because capabilities are beyond common skills as mere means; they are more diverse and deeper properties in human beings (besides skills, they are goods as health, or love), and because they are in everyone, they are also unequal in society:

Evaluating equality in terms of capabilities requires a prior recognition of different types of disadvantage and of how they interact in different settings, if misrecognition of a learner's capabilities and rights in education is to be avoided. (...) This is also to acknowledge that an individual's capability set (the sum of the opportunities that learners require to achieve whatever they choose to value in later life) will differ depending on forms of disadvantage including rurality, gender, disability, ethnicity and sexual orientation. (Tikly, 2013, pp. 20-21)

In this case, there is a rationality and diagnosis in which some features of human beings are understood as 'capabilities'; that group of properties are unequally distributed in society, so policies, including TVET systems, should take account of those differences and consider them in the policy design. TVET can be a tool to combat inequality, through the strengthening of those capabilities in individuals (skills, ideas, features). Despite this, there are critiques towards the depth in which the capabilities approach addresses social inequalities in education, as in the case of gender, particularly when the social, cultural and political contexts of countries add complexities to the characteristics of the education provision, and

the actual possibilities that individuals have access to education (Unterhalter, 2003).

Besides this link with inequality, Tikly also links capabilities with the notion of sustainability, such that they can aim “to develop a human-centred response to globalization that is based on principles of environmental, economic and social sustainability” (Tikly, 2013, p. 14). This idea opens the field of TVET to other skills and knowledges beyond the technical, getting closer to ethics and political ambits of the learning process:

Preparation for sustainable livelihoods is considered a particular responsibility of TVET, while social sustainability involves the development of an ethic of social responsibility in firms and organizations, as well as in the actions of individual workers. (Tikly, 2013, p. 15)

To recap, the discursive importance of Tikly’s paper, equally part of an UNESCO publication, is the connection of the TVET policy with other fields besides the technical skills and the match with the labour market, fields of human capabilities, inequality and sustainability. These arguments bring the TVET discussion over into areas of humanism and ethics, and with them, politics and social issues.

The UNESCO revision made in 2014 to the 2001 recommendations gives a more specific view regarding these issues. The novelty, compared with previous perspectives, is the stronger proximity of TVET to political and social issues and goals, leaving in a secondary role those features related to productivity and the match with labour market needs. The 2014 document states:

The 2001 Revised Recommendation sets the basis for changing the target of VET from economics to individuals. This conceptual change implies to reconsider national strategies focused on satisfying supposedly market needs (...) and put forward VET that is transformative for the individuals and hence for the structures

of work. VET that is transformative implies an education that, as noted in the 2001 Revised Recommendation, does not adapt to current work and societal structures but aims to challenge and transform those. The transformation implies a system of VET geared towards responsible professionals that create, foster and demand quality and just employment. (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2014, p. 6)

This, undoubtedly, constitutes a thought-provoking argument, where the TVET is not just for matching with the labour market – even adding other features such as providing ‘integral education’ – but aims to ‘transform’ it. This argument attempts to defy the functionalist purpose of TVET, tries to understand it as a path in which students/workers can become aware, taking Tikly and Sen’s words, of their own capabilities, not just to find a future job, but to get there and reshape it, transform it towards fairer conditions, not accepting the current forms but projecting and acting in the way they believe the workplace “‘should be’, that is, a world where work and life are in harmony” (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2014, p. 7).

What other issues from the labour world are included in this transformative objective assumed by TVET? Technical-vocational education, according to these perspectives, besides a wider and stronger institutional support (academic, technological), they agree with Tikly regarding the sustainable development required for the economy. Also they argue that TVET can bring about the reduction of “youth unemployment” with “decent work and active citizenship”, in order “to combat discrimination and promote inclusion”, an education which should “be driven by principles of quality, equity, access and relevance” (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2014, pp. 10--11). This perspective can contribute to “(...) poverty alleviation (...) [and] the challenge of inequality and a vision of shared prosperity” (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2014, p. 9). Another concern of the document is the inclusion of the informal sector in the concerns of the policy. A subsequent question can be raised about the means by which these goals can be addressed, how technical training can involve these kinds of features in the current TVET system and its educational institutions.

Furthermore, there is no clear position regarding the funding of the TVET here, whether private and/or public, nor discussion of the role of the different contributors, which hinders an analysis about governance issues in this policy framework; in the UNESCO publication *Unleashing the Potential Transforming Technical and Vocational Education and Training* (2015), UNESCO does articulate a position regarding these factors. Here, there is a promotion of the diversification of the TVET provision, the need of incorporating private actors to the system, in terms of institutions delivering TVET, business sector participating in governance schemes, and diversifying the funding sources of TVET, including the private sectors and the workers/students. However, It can be questioned to what extent these policy governance recommendations are pointing to the same direction as the principles claimed in the previous UNESCO's declarations, and how different discourses can be managed and merged in this policy discussion.

In summary, from these discursive analyses there are important social roles assigned to the TVET systems, some technical, but others eminently political. From the Chilean case I will be able to discuss to what extent this is happening and can be possible. This 'alternative path' is important in relation to this research as it constitutes, in some way, the ideological and discursive 'other' by which the TVET and the education policies analysed can be contrasted, scrutinized and understood.

To conclude this section, I recast the big picture outlined here. The intention was to present a critical approach towards the global discursive trends that have guided the international conversation about TVET policies worldwide, assessing whether these discourses correspond to other hegemonic or alternative discourses. I used mainly the UNESCO perspective, and different authors from its international publications, which offer a specialized panoramic view of the issue and its discussions, problems and recommendations. The main issues highlighted are based on the nature and purposes of the TVET policy, the influence of the labour market on its provision and the possibilities of offering an 'alternative path', definable and coherent, which can challenge it. At this point, the TVET global

discussion seems to respond to global economic tendencies, or it collapses into the neoliberal discourse and its technologies, in which the education system operates as an economic institution. I have not referred in depth to governance issues, so I will not state that the TVET system works as a market, but at least it serves the market. This review provides a context to the Chilean case, allowing for an analysis of the points of contact between the global-international perspective and the national-local situation at the level of policy formulation, its texts and practices.

### 3. Discourses about rural education from an international perspective

This section offers a conceptualization of rural education, as a conceptual corpus of ideas developed by UNESCO and collaborators. In a research field which lacks systematic theorization – as with TVET policy as well – UNESCO provides a way of understanding rural education, its problems and priorities, and approaches to project its development towards the future. In the UNESCO view of rural education we find a conceptual framework to understand rural education, and situate the Chilean case in a broader context. I will present and analyse two reports regarding rural education: *Education for rural transformation: a conceptual framework* by the International Research and Training Centre for Rural Education (INRULED), sponsored by UNESCO, and *Education for rural development: towards new policy responses*, a joint work between the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and UNESCO, both part of the UN. Both reports address issues related to rural education, and have been main contributions to the policy field. Each organization involved pursued its diagnosis and recommendations from its own fields of expertise, but both encompass the situation of rural areas today and present rural education in the context of development goals. From these documents it will be possible to detect agendas, concerns and purposes, which together articulate a common global discourse regarding rural education, which illustrates the current state of the art of the discussion regarding the rural education policy.

### **3.1. Rural education as a component of rural development**

One important contribution of the UNESCO/FAO work, in relation to this research, is a view of the connections between education and development in rural zones worldwide. The connections are characterized in two strands: in the convergence of conceptually separate fields, and in the functional role of education, through its contribution to rural development. So, first, the convergence between rural development and education purposes is indicated in the following points:

- focusing on poverty reduction;
- recognizing the potential of indigenous knowledge;
- promoting the use of participatory approaches;
- emphasizing community involvement;
- coping with state retreat within the context of structural adjustment programmes and liberalization policies;
- adopting an holistic view of the development of the rural space;
- preparing rural people for off-farm employment by building knowledge and skills capacity;
- understanding the complementarity of urban/rural linkages;
- developing partnerships with NGOs and the civil society;
- focusing on gender issues; and
- focusing on HIV/AIDS issues.

(Atchoarena & Gasperini, 2003, pp. 52-53)

This convergence is developed along with some historical problems regarding poverty, gender and indigenous issues, acknowledging the changes and risks provoked by the liberalization of the economy, the subsequent transformation of the rural–urban relations – which leads to the transformation of

the rural in itself – and, for example, the appearance of new health problems such as HIV; this last issue is more evident in Africa than in Latin America. The approach also seems to be differentiated from other development agendas from international financial institutions – World Bank and IMF – as communitarian and participatory strategies through the role of civil society and NGOs are considered important actors in this standpoint. From this perspective, the analysis is more situated in a political-democratic strand than in economic-based types of plan. In fact, the report acknowledges this tension regarding development visions (or discourses):

(...) development policies have been shaped by two approaches to development which reflected contradictions within the UN system. On the one side, the specialized agencies of the UN put emphasis on social justice and human rights. On the other hand, the so-called Washington consensus promoted a development model based on liberalization, deregulation, privatization and a decreasing role of the state generally leading to increased inequalities. (Atchoarena & Gasperini, 2003, p. 53)

But the approach presented by the authors becomes problematic when they present the second strand in this understanding of development – education, regarding the contribution of education to the development of rural zones, as understood in terms of supporting the economic growth through the agricultural activity. For instance in relation to education and agriculture – the key economic activity of rural areas – “According to human capital theory, the educational level of the agricultural labour force has an influence on agricultural productivity” (p. 56) (p. 56). In practical terms the contribution of education to the economy can be explained in:

Three forms:

- Education can improve the quality of farmers’ labour by enabling them to produce more with their available stock of production factors (other than labour);

- Education can increase the efficiency of resource allocation;
- Education can help farmers to choose more effective means of production by adopting new techniques. (Atchoarena & Gasperini, 2003, p. 56)

So, the report here seems to take an unexpected turn, where the previous democratic principles are translated into an economic approach based in the human capital postulates, which assumes the contribution of education as an engine for economic growth and productivity – which also seems to be the proposed understanding, ultimately, of development. The discursive field presented mixes approaches, ideas and practical strategies, which, as can be seen in the Chilean discourses too (see chapters 5 and 6), seem to be disconnected as ambivalent binaries of declared intentions/institutional practices, broad principles/policy prescriptions, general objectives/specific technologies. These discourses and recommendations mix principles of democracy and human rights, translated into practices based on human capital and market-driven development, in an ambivalence where ethical statements and general objectives are not always linked with coherent policy recommendations.

Moreover, the report addresses also another point related to the concerns of my research, which is associated with the issue about the political priority that the rural areas have for the government authorities, and which role rural settings play in the development model. The document inquires whether the consideration of the mentioned convergences between education and development in rural areas, and the development opportunities that those convergences can offer to the well-being of the countries – why are rural policies and rural education policies not a priority in the governments' agendas?

Given the oft-reiterated commitment of governments to reducing poverty, why is there not greater investment in basic education in rural areas? The main reason seems to be that developing country governments have other priorities that absorb their attention and resources. Public expenditure patterns reveal that most countries' real priorities favour urban development rather than rural development



(...). Meanwhile, indecision and hesitant initiatives prevent any serious increase in resources allocated to basic education in rural areas. (Atchoarena & Gasperini, 2003, pp. 105-106)

As I pointed out in relation to the development model for rural areas in Chile (chapter 4), where the rural development/economic policy appears as disarticulated or absent, here UNESCO/FAO researchers understand the issue as a matter of political priorities in terms of financial investment in education. And again, as will be presented later, in Chile, where rural schools are closing because of financial problems, no actual policy is articulated. This government approach can be understood as technologies of management-control by distance, based on economic rationalities, where the rural community is considered through the lens of those technologies. So, rurality seems to be a place of omission or neglect in relation to governments' priorities and the subsequent education policy designs and development models – this issue will be treated in depth in the further discussions of this research.

### **3.2. What is rural education? A definition**

One question that could arise from this discussion is whether rural education is something clearly different from national or urban education modalities, or just adopts some adjustments of those main components. Considering that this question can have different answers and positions, the UNESCO/INRULED report tries to provide an idea of the concept:

- Integrated system composed by literacy education, basic education, vocational/technical education and adult/continuing education.
- A comprehensive change agent and an integral part of the rural socio-economic development.
- Package of academic knowledge and practical skills.

- Common endeavour demanding coordinated inter-departmental/cross-sectional cooperation via education, labour, agriculture extension, health, population welfare, trade, etc. (UNESCO/INRULED, 2001, p. 8)

The definitions offer different perspectives to analyse what rural education is conceptually. First, rural education can be seen as a combination of established education modalities (basic, TVET, continuing), which in rural settings should be integrated and applied in a specific manner. Then, rural education also is part of a wider range of policies under what can be called a *development model*. This range of policies considers the necessity of coordinated cooperation from different policy fields around rural issues, mainly around agriculture and other economic activities. Going back to the question about what rural education is, and what its specificity is, the answer seems to highlight features of coordination, spatiality and economic activity. The rural policy design is – or should be, from this report – based in the coordination and adequacy of different policies – some of them national policies, others maybe at other regional or local scales – in certain places and zones defined as rural. The possibility of a rural policy exists as long as there is strategic coordination and contextual application; both components can constitute a rural policy. So a rural education policy falls in the same rationale, and rural education can be understood as coordination of different education policies, applied contextually to rural settings; and at the same time – and this is another particularity of the UNESCO definition – rural education is more than just education and is connected with other policy fields, mainly labour, agriculture and development. The linking of education and development could be problematized depending on the approach applied to this field; in a development strategy understood mainly as economic development – as in the Chilean case; see chapter 4 – education would again be subsumed within the economic imperative and understood from that perspective through different discourses and technologies, coming together in disarticulated *assemblages* (Youdell & McGimpsey, 2015). In Chile, rural education is not a specific State education policy, nor a coordinated arrangement of educational policies – these last two options can be situated, for

instance, under the administration of the Ministry of Education – nor a strategy coordinated by the main authority in rural development issues, the Ministry of Agriculture. This diagnosis can be extended according to UNESCO/FAO, for whom in the case of rural-technical education: “Within the public sector, [rural educational] institutions are in most cases affiliated to various ministries and government agencies, often without clear overall coordination” (Atchoarena & Gasperini, 2003, p. 248). This last topic will be addressed in more detail in later discussions about the Chilean case, and the idea of assemblage will be problematized as well.

### **3.3. Skills and TVET in rural education**

The reports mention the development of TVET policies as crucial in resolving the current problems of rural areas and populations. The diagnosis, again, is based in the transformation of the rural in the context of a changing and global economy – again, education appears at the service of the economy. The process should adapt efficiently to the context in order to follow a successful developmental path. In this scenario, TVET systems appear as an ideal tool in order to enhance people’s possibilities:

The last-changing dynamics of rural-urban interaction and the long shadow of the global market that has touched some of the remotest villages generated demands for flexible and adaptable skills and opportunities for their renewal even in the rural communities. Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) has to be seen in the perspective of lifelong education learning continuum and has to be responsive to both formal and informal economic sectors. (UNESCO/INRULED, 2001, p. 39)

And the UNESCO/FAO research team adds:

Globalization and the need to maintain, through skill development, international competitiveness appear as the strongest force. Associated with globalization is the deep transformation of labour markets, including in rural areas, and the need to adjust training systems and policies accordingly. (Atchoarena & Gasperini, 2003, p. 249)

Such rhetoric and its assumptions allow the interpretation of two main trends in relation to rural education. First, the 'global market' with its 'international competitiveness' discourses can be translated, in practice, into the creation of new industries with related working skills and requirements. And second, TVET systems should restructure their educational schemes in order to update their modalities to these new requirements. Both elements lead to a closer relation between industries and education, closer because while the economy constantly changes – crisis being one type of change – the industries' dynamics are reconfigured permanently, and permanent updating of the educational curricula and pedagogies is more indispensable:

Implications of the transformation of rural labour markets for skill development are critical since training for agriculture, as an explicit goal, is increasingly challenged by the need to prepare for non-farm employment as well as for coping strategies in a rapidly changing environment (...). The rapid and deep transformation of jobs and skills is probably the most powerful motivation to change training provision. A lot of attention has been given to the occupational transformation in industry, as a result of both changing work organization and new technologies. (Atchoarena & Gasperini, 2003, pp. 245, 249)

That permanent updating happens through a closer relation between education and economy, schools and companies (UNESCO/INRULED, 2001, p. 39, quoting congress of the organization). This education–industry linkage in the TVET spectrum expects to offer a proper transition between both domains, where pedagogies and training can be more connected with the actual skills needed in

the workplaces, a perspective strongly connected with the principles of the human capital approach.

Also, the above ideas are related to discourses of a 'learning' / 'knowledge' / 'skills-based' society (Ball, 2009), where contexts as a global society are based in knowledge as the key element in economic development, and purposes stated in terms of building rural communities are in accordance with the dominant trend towards successful development. These objectives give to the TVET provision a significant role, as long as "Beyond agriculture and rural development, training policies are considered critical to meet the challenges of knowledge- and skills-based societies" (Atchoarena & Gasperini, 2003, p. 249). And how does this linkage between TVET and learning society/communities operate practically in rural settings? The same question is paraphrased by UNESCO in relation to lifelong learning:

What does the concept of lifelong learning and the goal of a learning community mean in the context of a rural village? It means providing every individual with the conditions for continuous learning for improving his/her lot. (UNESCO/INRULED, 2001, p. 43)

In terms of production of subjectivity, in this idea it is possible to note the connection of lifelong learning, and TVET within that alternative, with a technology of 'continuous learning' under the promise of 'improving' people's possibilities of present and future (as an active technology of the self). The learning community, based on the knowledge society, offers paths of skill-based training, flexible options, strongly connected with workplaces and the demands of the economy, in order to 'improve' people's lives. This scheme should operate continuously, under the risk of becoming outdated with the passage of the changing global economy. To recap, TVET policies should operate flexibly in the current rural transformation, because the changing economy changes continuously the features and skills of workplaces. From this view, TVET plays a functional role in relation to the economy in the context of rural development.

### **3.4. The rural educational policy agenda**

UNESCO/INRULED gives an education policy framework proposal which articulates three components: equity, quality and efficiency (p. 19)(p. 19). In terms of equity, the emphasis is on matters of access, the prevention of school dropout with the tension of poor children and young people's needing to work earlier, plus the uncertainty of the real benefits of schooling in social contexts where education is not clearly valued. All this in scenarios of remoteness, which present a challenge to connectivity, and structural difficulties related to single-teacher and multi-grade schools, which in many cases lack institutional support or sufficient preparation.

In terms of quality, this is connected mainly with issues of relevance. Quality and relevance are understood in relation to teachers' training for rural areas, and the pertinence of learning contents and didactic materials: "Serious efforts are needed to re-examine and re-orient in many situations the curriculum, content of learning and textbooks that would respond to the 21st century challenges of building a learning society in rural areas" (p. 33) (p. 33). Thus, relevance is assumed to relate to the 21<sup>st</sup>-century challenges of building a learning society; it is more an adaptation of the often-outdated rural curriculum to global trends than relevance in terms of what is locally relevant for rural places. But at the same time, the report recommends that curriculum contents must be "responding and adapting to diversity of needs and circumstances of rural learners" (p. 33) (p. 33), in what seems to be a double understanding of relevance: to the international standards, and to the local contexts. It is possible to say more in terms of relevance, as will be analysed later. Chilean rural education has poor application in terms of contextualization in curricular contents and skills, and what is considered as relevant is a problematic issue which relates to the purpose of rural education inside of the development model in Chilean rurality. There appear relations and influences between the educational and economic fields, which are materialized in specific mechanisms or assemblages.

Moreover, both documents address the problem of centralization regarding the curriculum policy design process and decisions, as such logic imposes national criteria on all social and geographical spaces, forgetting the diversity and particularities of different settings: “The centralized control of curriculum development and state-produced textbooks, the norm in many developing countries, fail to recognize the reality of diverse rural circumstances”. This is diversity that is expressed “in terms of ethnic, linguistic, cultural, gender and hybrid identities”, respect of which “is an essential aspect of human rights and a measure of progress towards building a democratic society” (UNESCO/INRULED, 2001, pp. 34, 35). Accordingly, a constant exercise of contextualization of the curriculum to rural settings is needed, in order to respond to the demand for and goal of recognition of the diversity and pertinence of the contents, where the role of the agriculture is crucial for rural areas. But unfortunately, UNESCO/FAO has a negative diagnosis in relation to this claim:

(...) it is still extremely rare to find interventions where contextualization of teaching and learning is the main focus (...). A number of difficulties are shown to be associated with this, including the constraints placed upon teachers by workload, general conditions and lack of experience as well as the driving force of examination-oriented learning which acts against the introduction of more flexible approaches to teaching and learning. (Atchoarena & Gasperini, 2003, p. 178)

Hence, central decision-making – where the examination policies are designed and planned – and the precariousness of the teaching conditions both militate against the quality–relevance goal of the policy recommendation. As was analysed in chapter 5, the centralization of the curriculum definitions and the application of a national testing system – both technologies deployed through specific governance modalities and rationalities – are also issues in the Chilean case, and a systematic and flexible adaptation to rural contexts is still a pending task, as will be illustrated in the next section of this chapter.

In relation to the efficiency component of the UNESCO recommendation, it is a concept related closely to matters of management and governance. Along with the problem of centralization, the institution perceives that this difficulty has another facet in its lack of connection with the civil society. In other words, the document encourages partnerships between the State and the civil society organizations, in particular within the NGO sector. From this angle, the recommendations criticize the excessive role of the State provision of education, an issue that requires a counterpoint which can be provided by private organizations, which in parallel opens the door to different types of civil and local participation in rural education (UNESCO/INRULED, 2001, pp. 35-36). The absence of public-private partnerships, and the passive involvement of rural people in education governance, is a problem that implicates a deeper critique of the ways in which governments relate to and consider rural population:

(...) governance in developing countries bypass (Sicilia-Camacho & Fernandez-Balboa) the politically voiceless – those who suffer multiple deprivations on account of their income, ethnicity, gender, religion and because they live in rural areas ... The poor in general and religious, ethnic and cultural minorities, in particular, bear disproportionately the burden of deprivation from essential public services including education (...). The facts clearly are that the social sectors, especially the priority items of human development and education for the politically inarticulate and invisible rural poor, have been crowded out from government budgets by such items as heavy military expenditures, keeping afloat loss-making public enterprises in urban areas, subsidies that do not often reach the poor and external and internal debt-servicing (UNESCO/INRULED, 2001, pp. 34, 37, quoted in Atchoarena & Gasperini, 2003).

This last quote portrays the invisibility of rural space and population, as ‘voiceless’, or, as pointed out above, that rurality is a secondary concern in the governments’ agendas. Excessive centralism (in effect urbanism) is accompanied by a disempowerment of those who are beyond the boundaries of the capital/urban/central areas of regions and countries, in a relation that recalls



Massey's postulates regarding spatial inequalities (Massey, 2004b). The particularity of this power inequality is portrayed, along with the differences in resources allocation, in spatial visibility/invisibility, in relation to governmental priorities, and in terms of how rural areas are formulated by the State, as was outlined in chapter 4, in relation to residual categories of naming and understanding rurality. In several ways in this research, the rural is represented by its negation, oblivion, invisibility or voicelessness. This issue will be problematized in later discussions, in relation to the Chilean case and the educational policies analysed.

In summary, this section presented part of the discursive features from UNESCO reports on rural education. In their development approach, rural education has an important role in rural development. That role is contextualized in a rurality under a strong process of transformation, changes led by the dynamics of globalization, mainly economic. The reports wander between strategies that encourage local development, but mainly through efficient adaptations of rural education to economic needs and global trends. The last case of TVET recommendations illustrates this point, where capabilities are reduced to skills, strongly connected with workplaces and industrial needs. This seems to be the direction which rural education should follow as its developmental strategy. Along with that, the reports offer meaningful conceptualizations of rural education and the problem of its irrelevance in government agendas, rural voicelessness, which is shown in the lack of contextualization of curriculum contents in rural places. All these issues are adding material for later discussions in this research.

## Chapter 3: Design of the research

This research rests on a primary premise: policies influence individuals, and individuals respond to policies actively, incorporating their tenets or creating alternative subjective responses and life paths. In this case the contents and values of educational policies affect the subjectivities of rural students in some way, either strongly or weakly, and they respond to those contents and values, to that project of the individual, either integrating it or creating alternative paths of personal development and future ways of life and social integration.

So, the research project contains two main stages of study, the first focusing on the policies, and the second on the students; an analysis then follows which provides similarities, influences, contrasts, resignifications, enactments and other forms of mutual relation. I will analyse education policies to identify those principal values and contents which configure a model of the individual to be educated, the narrative of the student and future citizen and worker, trying to identify its main rationality or rationalities, its ideological and political influences and logic. To this end I will (1) analyse public policy documents, (2) collect the perspectives of main policy makers and researchers, and (3) collect the views of rural teachers about the educational policies, programmes and official materials, along with their evaluations in relation to their implementation in rural contexts.

Following on from this, I will research the perspectives of rural students to find their life projections, their histories and the principal meanings that they evoke in relation to their lives, their education, community and society. In other words, I will elicit their own narratives about themselves and their social and cultural environment, based on their own voice and subjectivity.

Finally, I will explore critically and analytically the relationship between these discourses and narratives – the policy and the subjective – and try to see if the project of the individual that the State seeks to deliver to Chilean students is evident in the subjectivities of rural students, that is, whether they integrate those narratives or, through the construction of their own narratives, create an

alternative path of personal and social development. Also, important will be the ways in which the policy is enacted in rural settings, how the policy is deployed in practice to meet its objectives and the logic of the Chilean educational system.

Recapitulating, the study entails an analysis of three educational policies with respect to their influence within rural subjectivities from a qualitative perspective. The qualitative nature of the research stems from the attempt to explore the scope of the discourses and subjectivities and their subsequent narratives. There are important contents, values, meanings, ideological and political struggles and histories here, among other themes and articulations. The selection of the qualitative methodology seems to best accommodate these goals and topics. Later in this chapter I will outline the main techniques applied for collecting and analysing this qualitative data.

## 1. Research questions and objectives

Here I present the questions and main objectives which motivate and guide this study. The methodology applied expects to address the questions and objectives here presented; and the results will address the issues expressed in these questions, without limiting further analysis and discussions.

### **Questions:**

- i. What are the main rationalities and values that characterise and define education policies in Chile, and specifically, how the student profile is defined?
- ii. What are the main values, meanings and trajectories articulated by rural students regarding their lives, their education and society?
- iii. To what extent do the discursive features and student profile of the educational policies analysed act on and 'make up' the subjectivities of rural students?

iv. What is the role of the rural and spatial spheres in the educational policy definitions and the students' narratives?

**Research objectives:**

Main objective:

➤ To analyse the relations between education policy discourses and rural students' subjectivities in Chile.

Specific objectives:

➤ To identify critically and analytically from policy texts and their main related voices, the discourses and the profile of the student to be educated by the Chilean education policies.

➤ To collect the subjective narratives of rural students and to identify the main values, meanings and trajectories through which they speak about their lives, their education and society.

➤ To set these individual narratives over and against the policy subject projected within policy documents and consider their commonalities and differences.

➤ To inquire if the rural and spatial aspects are present in influencing educational policies' definitions and students' narratives.

## 2. Definition of the sample

In relation to the study sample, as noted in the rationale section, as a first stage regarding the policies, I collected data from official policy documents, then from policy makers, academics/researchers and teachers relevant to this research. Regarding policy makers, I interviewed one representative of each policy studied, contacting the main national authority regarding each educational policy. Therefore, I interviewed the head of the Department of Curriculum and Evaluation,

and the person mainly responsible for the development of the Technical Professional Education Policy in the Ministry of Education. Along with them I interviewed members of the board of the National Agricultural Society (SNA from its initials in original Spanish), a key actor in rural education policy, which has had an historical role in its implementation – greater explanation on this will be provided in the seventh chapter. These last interviewees were selected in order to cover a ‘gap’ in the Ministry of Education, as it does not have a proper department or official division responsible for rural education; the SNA therefore fulfils an interesting role in this research, in terms of private influence and enactment of the policy.

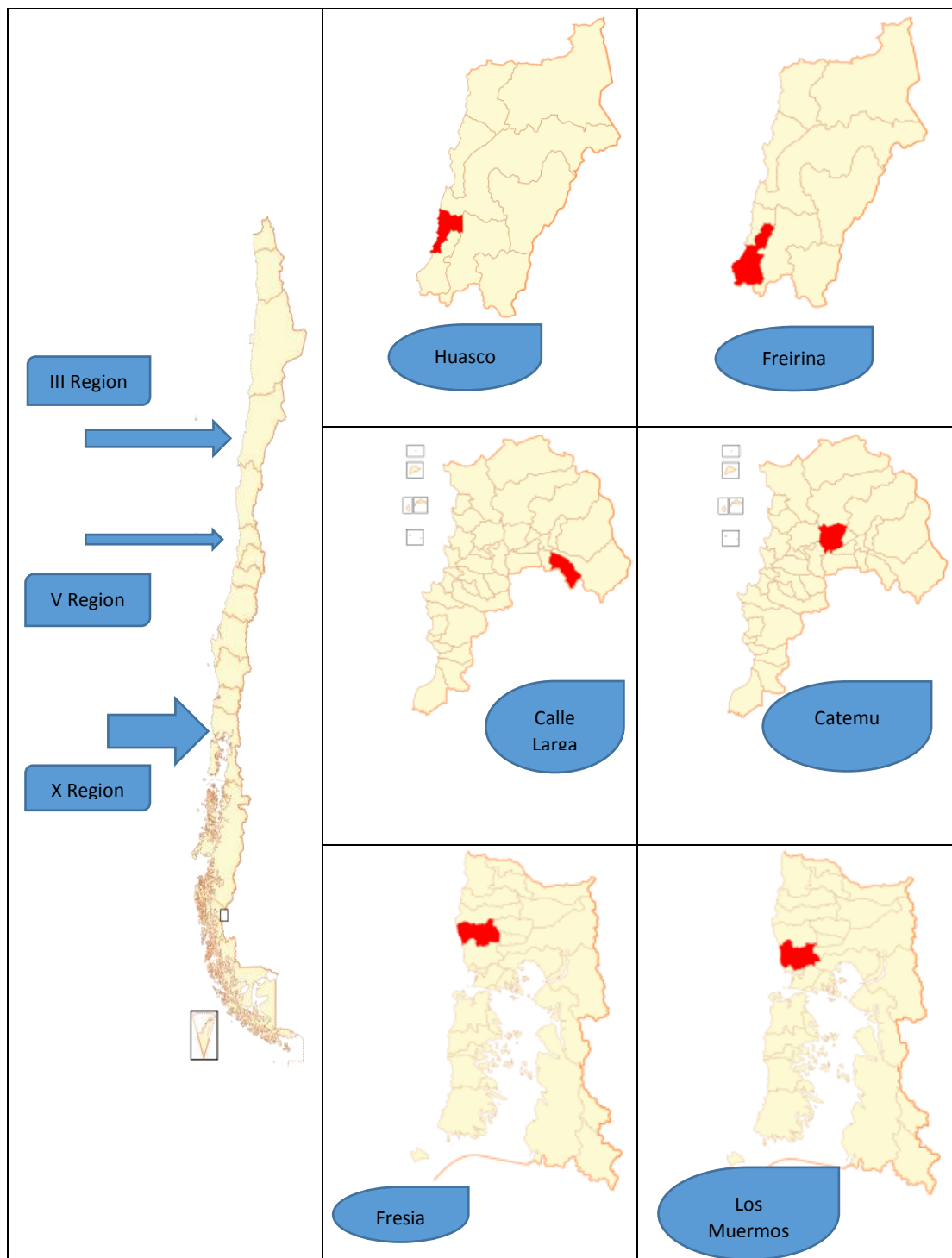
As for academics, I selected and contacted academics who have made a significant contribution to the literature on curriculum, TVET and rural education policy in their researching and teaching, and who are recognized in the academic sphere as specialists in these topics. I interviewed one of the former heads of the department of curriculum and evaluation, leader of the curriculum reform process in the 90s and 2000s and current academic at a prestigious private university in Chile. Besides, I interviewed two more researchers who work on curriculum issues in order to collect different views on the current Chilean curriculum. In addition, I interviewed two academics who specialize in Chilean rural education. Finally, I interviewed two researchers in TVET policies. Excepting the first case – who is a former policy maker and current academic – all the researchers interviewed were selected for their ability to provide a critical view of the policies, an external analysis offering a different perspective from those given by the official authorities.

Concerning teachers and secondary-school students, I mention again that the focus of this study is secondary education, because this stage leads to higher education or entry to the labour market, as well as the acquirement of civil rights and responsibilities, so is a stage when the future can be thought and problematized, and decisions have to be made. Besides, the age of secondary education, normally between 14 and 18 years old, may be more appropriate for raising narratives and biographical detail, than to work these topics with younger students. Furthermore, Chile is a long and thin country – 4,329 km long and an

average of 180 km wide – surrounded by the Andes mountain range in the east and the Pacific Ocean in the west; it has a desert in the north, a Mediterranean climate in the centre and very rainy weather with a forest and lake landscape in the south, which reaches as far as Patagonia, with the Pampas and the Straits of Magellan. I mention this to show Chile's geographical diversity. Due to this, it also has social and cultural differences, particularly in the rural zones, where the countryside changes radically from zone to zone, different native cultural roots shaping various characters, traditions and idiosyncrasies throughout the country. Bearing this in mind, it is important to select a sample that tries to represent the cultural and geographical diversity of rural territories. I therefore choose representatives from the three main areas of Chile: the north, the centre and the south. Then I selected six different schools, two from each area, and interviewed one teacher and three students from each institution.

In the selection of the geographical areas for the study and schools in these areas, I tried to attenuate the distance between the school principals and teachers, and myself as an unknown researcher from the capital of the country, in order to generate a relation of trust. I did not contact directly schools in rural areas, rather I opted to find a "bridge", a familiar and trustable face between myself as researcher and the schools to be studied. So, I contacted Chilean academics in regional universities, who, independent from their discipline (education, sociology, psychology), work regularly and directly with schools in this type of zones. Once contacting them, and presenting my research project, I detailed the sample that I was searching for - schools that should have secondary schooling, TVET alternatives, located in rural zones, municipal or private-subsidized, without tuition fees and no selective (these last features in Chile are associated to schools where students from low socio-economic backgrounds attend).

Table 1: Map of Chile, the regions and the rural communes of the schools:



Own elaboration. Images sources: Wikipedia.org

In each case the academics offered several alternatives, and looking closely at the characteristics of the schools, I chose two schools per area, and I asked my contacts to introduce me to each school' principal. I then presented myself by e-mail and phone conversations to the principals of the schools, explained the

research project, and the teachers and students I hoped to interview. Once the fieldwork began, I was able to work these issues with more detail. In each case, and according with my research purposes and needs, I selected a representative sample of students, reflecting some nuances between them: students who have lived their whole lives in these rural areas plus a minority who have lived in other places before; a few students with good academic records and the majority with average results in their class; females and males, and all from low socio-economic backgrounds (as the majority of the students of these schools). In addition, students were divided according whether they had chosen an academic or technical-vocational route, one group representing students following the scientific-humanistic path, and the other students following the technical-professional one. Each group was expected to provide a perspective from each educational path, in order to inform future discussions regarding these matters.

Similarly, teachers were selected for interview also according to the goals of the research, a group who teach in the scientific-humanistic path, i.e. whose expertise is more related to the common national curriculum, and another who teach in the TVET one, i.e. closer to the secondary TVET policy; three males and three females, and all of them with at least 5 years of teaching experience in rural zones. Regarding rural educational policies and programmes, both groups were considered closer to them, as the schools were settled in such areas, so they were familiar with that kind of support or regulation (provided by the policies or programmes).

I tried to distribute teachers and students in similar numbers according to each educational path, but in the case of the students more technical students were available at the time of the interviews in the schools, which gave a particular character to the research, as will be developed throughout this writing.

Hence, the sample of students and teachers by zone is summarized as follows:



*Table 2: Sample of the study*

Zone	Rural locality / school	Interviewees
North	III Region, Commune of Huasco / School 1	1 teacher / 3 students
North	III Region, Commune of Freirina / School 2	1 teacher / 3 students
Centre	V Region, Commune of Calle Larga / School 3	1 teacher / 3 students
Centre	V Region, Commune of Catemu / School 4	1 teacher / 3 students
South	X Region, Commune of Fresia / School 5	1 teacher / 3 students
South	X Region, Commune of Los Muelmos / School 6	1 teacher / 3 students

So, in summary, the whole sample<sup>4</sup> comprises:

3 policy makers (including SNA)

7 academics

6 secondary teachers

18 students (last year of secondary school).

### 3. My experience in this research fieldwork: ethics, strategies and issues

All the interviews were developed in April 2015. The following table shows the specific weeks of each group of interviewees and the zones:

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<sup>4</sup> Minor strategic modifications were made to this original plan, that are going to be explained in the introductions of chapters 8 and 9.

*Table 3: Dates of the interviews*

<b>Group of interviewees</b>	<b>Week of the interviews</b>
Policymakers and academics	30 <sup>th</sup> , March to 4 <sup>th</sup> , April 2015  27 <sup>th</sup> to 30 <sup>th</sup> , April 2015
Teachers and students from the central zone	6 <sup>th</sup> to 11 <sup>th</sup> , April 2015
Teachers and students from the north zone	13 <sup>th</sup> to 18 <sup>th</sup> , April 2015
Teachers and students from the south zone	20 <sup>th</sup> to 25 <sup>th</sup> , April 2015

All the interviews were made in person and recorded by the same electronic device, which was visible during the whole interviews. In general, the recording was well received by the interviewees, the adults took this naturally; and students instead of being inhibited by being recorded, seem to feel that the presence of the recorder confirmed the importance of the interview and their testimonies in the space of my research.

The interviews were conducted using different approaches and strategies. While with the policy specialists the anonymity was not an important issue for them, with the policymakers I tried to acknowledge and address their research and management experience beyond their current participation in a government or institution, so their knowledge expressed through the interview could be balanced against their participation in policy processes, and their potential critical views in terms of policy history and the challenges of improvement in the future. With the academics, I introduced the interviews by attempting to reinforce the value of their knowledge about the historical itinerary of each educational policy, and encouraged them to explain the problems and critiques that they perceive regarding these topics. While the policymakers tended to support and defend the

current policy design and implementation; the academics, were inclined to provide critical views about past and present policy ideas.

With the teachers, one of the main issues in relation to the interviews was to be clear regarding the analytical purpose of the research, I wanted to assuage any concerns or expectation that the research would be judging or assessing their schools. Such expectations would be very reasonable in an educational system based on inspection and assessment, issues that I will come back recurrently through this study. So, I underlined the message that there were no positive or negative direct consequences to their schools as a result of this research - only the possible impact of my thesis and its publications in the academic arena or the policy debate – so they were free to give their opinions in this anonymised interview. Also, teachers, in some cases, showed insecurity regarding the relevance of their provincial experience in such isolated environments. I made clear the importance of their experience and knowledge in their pedagogical practice in these rural settings, and the value to me of their perspectives as a key component of the policy analysis in this research.

As regards the students, like the teachers, there were an inclination to think that I was going to assess them in some way, and that could bring potential benefits for them. But the main issue with these interviews was that, in specific cases, students were very shy and silent, and I had difficulties in getting them to express or elaboration accounts of their lives and their educational experience. To get beyond superficial responses was a continuous challenge, to get out of commonplaces and unveil their concerns, aspirations, frustrations and fears. Here, the non-structured type of interview<sup>5</sup> helped me to introduce spontaneously new ways to connect with their experiences. However, silences and brief responses were also considered as part of the data analysis, and the expression of particular features of subjectivity.

Moreover, within the social context of my country, my bodily appearance and my way of talking were also issues, these served to indicate my privileged

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<sup>5</sup> See next section “Techniques and analysis of research”.

socioeconomic origins; in addition to my postgraduate student status in a foreign university generated a larger cultural distance between the rural secondary students and myself. A key point was to share the importance that their biographies had to me as individual and researcher, my personal commitment to my research topic, and how their testimonies would make a fundamental contribution to the study. It made sure to remain fully attentive to their words, take notes, and explore with them the different topics raised during the interview, it followed up initial questions by engaging directly with their responses and exploring issues they had raised.

Regarding formal aspects of the ethics of this research<sup>6</sup>, as I mentioned earlier, I made contact with all the policy makers, academics and teachers to explain my research and its purposes, and to ask for their interest in participating in this study before beginning the fieldwork. In relation to the students, as all of them were in their last year of secondary schooling and between 17 and 18 years old, I first approached their teachers to receive permission and recommendations for potential young interviewees. All the interviews were made on school grounds (offices, common spaces, classrooms and libraries) and assented to by the interviewees. Also, I gave a letter<sup>7</sup> to the participants before each interview informing them about the research and their roles in it, the anonymity of their names, the confidentiality of the data extracted from the interviews, and their option to discontinue the interview at any time.

#### 4. Techniques and analysis of research

This research is based on a sociological and poststructuralist approach and has two main study objects: education policies and narratives from rural students. In the case of the educational policies, I want to detect those discourses, values and

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<sup>6</sup> Ethics form of this research attached in Annexes section.

<sup>7</sup> Letter attached in Annexes section.

tendencies that enable understanding of the ideological and political issues and trends that support the policies' texts and voices. To these ends, I will use critical discourse analysis (CDA). In the case of the students, it will be necessary to overlay their narrated experiences, thoughts, projections, values and meanings in order to define subjective personal narratives. The method of analysis on this occasion will be narrative analysis.

*Table 4: Research techniques and methods of analysis*

<b>Source</b>	<b>Technique</b>	<b>Method of Analysis</b>
Policies (Texts)	-	Critical discourse analysis
Policy makers	Semi-structured interviews	Critical discourse analysis
Academics	Semi-structured interviews	Critical discourse analysis
Teachers	Semi-structured interviews	Critical discourse analysis
Students	Unstructured interviews	Narrative analysis

**i. Policies, policy makers, academics and teachers: semi-structured interviews and critical discourse analysis**

In this study I used semi-structured interviews (Flick, 2014) for interviewing policy makers, academics and teachers. All three may be considered as 'experts' (Flick, 2014) on educational policy issues from their own perspectives; all can make observations and offer reflections relevant to policy and can contribute to distinguishing the different discourses, contents, values and meanings that coexist in policy texts, practices and strategies. Why semi-structured interviews? Because they allow us to enquire into a particular topic with a flexible approach, in which the interviewees and interviewer can enter into dialogue and go deeper into a particular field of knowledge or experience.

In the case of policy texts, I will use CDA, as:

In texts discursive differences are negotiated; they are governed by differences in power which are themselves in part encoded in and determined by discourse and by genre. Therefore texts are often sites of struggle in that they show traces of differing discourses and ideologies contending and struggling for dominance. (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 11)

CDA allows exploration of the meanings, structures, relations of power, ideologies and trends that are immersed in the policy texts, and from there, allows the construction of narratives related to the type of individual to be educated by the policies, its values, definitions and features.

CDA is a key tool for extracting significant information from speakers' words, and this technique is also historically related to poststructuralist studies. To apply CDA, as Locke (2004), quoting Fairclough, points out, is:

(...) to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out [of] and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power (Fairclough, 2013, p. 93, in Locke, 2004)

And:

A primary focus of CDA is on the effect of power relations and inequalities in producing social wrongs, and in particular on discursive aspects of power relations and inequalities (...) This includes questions of ideology (...) ways of representing aspects of the world, which may be operationalized in ways of acting and in 'ways of being' or identities, that contribute to establishing or sustaining unequal relations of power. (Fairclough, 2013, p. 8)

So, firstly, CDA is relational, i.e. it examines “what [it] is in particular that discourse brings into complex relations which constitute social life: meaning, and making meaning” (Fairclough, 2013, p. 3). But from a poststructuralist perspective, these relations are not neutral; rather, they take particular forms of power, so the work of analysis seeks to detect the relations between power and discourse (Fairclough, 2013), that is, how, in terms of subjectivity, discourses have the power of shaping and influencing subjectivities. The question is how to align the categories and analysis of the text with the categories and analysis outlined in the theoretical framework presented in chapter 1. For this purpose, the interpretative process is the main tool of CDA (Meyer, 2001), as it “views the systematic analysis and interpretation of texts as potentially revelatory of ways in which discourses consolidate power and colonize human subjects through often covert position calls” (Locke, 2004, p. 2).

Why is this type of analysis ‘critical’? Because “it assesses what exists, and what would exist on the basis of a coherent set of values” (Fairclough, 2013, p. 7). So CDA is not limited to detecting social problems and inequities; rather, by identifying them it is able to offer alternative forms of social justice. So, as Fairclough notes, “critical analysis aims to produce interpretations and explanations of areas of social life which both identify the causes of social wrongs and produce knowledge which could contribute to righting or mitigating them” (Fairclough, 2013, p. 9).

Finally, in regard to the education field, Locke points out that:

“in respect of educational research, [CDA has the] potential to reveal what power is diffused through the prevalence of various discourses throughout an education system, at both the micro-level of individual classrooms and the macro-level of large-scale reform.” (Locke, 2004, p. 2)

In this way, this investigation will sketch the influences of neoliberal discourses on individual subjectivities in rural contexts, as well as at the policy level, and the relations between them.

Having presented those tenets which explain what CDA is and its main purposes, I shall now explicate the ways in which I translate these tenets for my particular data analysis. Acknowledging that many of the authors here referenced share a common methodological ground, they also have specific variances, different nuances and techniques. One of my methodological challenges is around this 'translation' for the needs of my research, as "The primary issue here is how the various methods of CDA are able to translate their theoretical claims into instruments and methods of analysis" (Meyer, 2001, p. 18). In this research I apply the principles of CDA explained above, but in particular I will develop critical questions related to the purpose and theoretical framework of this study, questions which will guide the analysis of the data.

So, I will borrow the principles that underlie CDA as a broad method, and review particular nuances in part of its perspectives. The discourse-historical approach (Wodak, 2001) provides some insights into my research; one in particular is related to the context of the discourse, where the discourse is situated and open to contextual interpretations:

With socio-diagnostic critique, the analyst exceeds the purely textual or discourse-internal sphere. She or he makes use of her or his background and contextual knowledge and embeds the communicative or interactional structures of a discursive event in a wider frame of social and political relations, processes and circumstances. At this point, we are obliged to apply social theories to interpret the discursive events (Wodak, 2001, p. 65).

Following Wodak's own empirical practice (see Wodak, 2001, p. 73), I will develop my own set of questions to guide my critical analysis of discourse. These questions are the basis of the method, representing the particular technique taken from the principles of CDA, which this research will apply in the case of policy texts



and discourses from the different actors interviewed. These questions of analysis are designed in order to extract from texts (from official texts, and the texts transcribed from the interviews; in this last case, texts refer to spoken words) those ideas, features, meanings and images which together refer to and recreate a discourse. The discourse to be sought and detected is the neoliberal one, part of the core of the theoretical framework of this research. Possibly there will be other discourses in the different policy sources; they will be mentioned and plotted in the analysis chapters, and considered in their specific ideological weights and articulations. Using Fairclough, and also in resonance with some features of the theoretical concepts applied in this research, there is a discourse struggle for hegemony:

One aspect of this ordering is dominance: some ways of making meaning are dominant or mainstream in a particular order of discourse; others are marginal, or oppositional, or 'alternative'. (Fairclough, 2001, p. 124)

This quote also refers to another important feature of discourses, that those alternative discourses can also exist inside the dominant discourse, so the resistance can come from inside, and in spite of itself can sometimes be functional to the dominant discourse. This paradoxical assumption will be clarified below in the analysis in relation to the neoliberal subject and the rural students' subjectivities.

An empirical study using the poststructuralist lens will make an attempt to 'check' whether the theoretical assumptions actually apply, or whether they are being reframed, updated or transformed in specific settings, cases, subjects or areas in society. This methodological approach considers also the possibility that neoliberalism may not be the dominant discourse in the specific scenarios of study. In any case, whether the theory is confirmed, recontextualized with new meanings, or rejected, this research will try to provide a strong set of data and further analysis in order to base its final conclusions and interpretations.

Before outlining those questions for analysis, a last analytical consideration can be made. It also refers to Fairclough's (2001) perspective in relation to discourses and practices. This is connected with the definitions of discourses outlined in chapter 1, where a discourse is more than an articulation of words, being rather a rationality in practice. Fairclough highlights that:

The motivation for focusing on social practices is that it allows one to combine the perspective of structure and the perspective of action (Fairclough, 2001, p. 122).

So, where the structure can refer to those meanings and rationalities which articulate a discourse, it is updated and enacted in the practice in its diverse representations. In this research, especially in the case of teachers as interlocutors of what is happening in schools, of how the policy is put in practice, it will be interesting to analyse the enactment of those policies in such particular and isolated geographical scenarios, and how central prescriptions are internalized and developed in different strategies in schools. The practice was not observed, it was only extracted and interpreted from the words of the teachers and other interviewees. The inclusion of practice, as will be shown, was one of the novelties of this research. Fairclough refers to the dialectical features of language and practice, a permanent divergence and contradiction between them, as will be seen in the differences between the policy texts and the different visions of the interviewees (policy makers, academics and teachers), and the differences between discursive intentions and what is actually happening in rural schools and students' subjectivities.

## **ii. Students: non-structured interviews and narrative analysis**

In the case of the rural students' interviews, this study will build in a dialogical way the subjective narratives of the students' lives drawing on their own voices, experiences and reflections. Here it is important to elicit their histories, meanings,

evaluations, values and projections in society, the narratives of their lives. For this purpose I used unstructured interviews and narrative analysis to explore the words and speeches of these individuals.

The selection of unstructured interviews is based on the need to generate an open and dialogical space in which the students can think and speak freely about themselves and their lives. I seek to let them construct their own stories and reflections, as “what an unstructured interview does is give responsibility for determining the structure to the interviewee who has to ‘lead the way’ and ‘tell the story’”, in order to talk about their own “individual’s life experience” (Gillham, 2005, p. 45).

In relation to narratives, “the definition of ‘narrative’ itself is in dispute” (Andrews, Squire, & Tamboukou, 2008, p. 1), as narratives cannot be labelled in a unique and fixed manner. Narratives are articulated series of experiences, chronological events, world-views, meanings, unconscious matters, themes, contexts, resistance, social construction and social structures, among other things. For this research, I will outline individual narratives which seek to show dimensions of the rural students’ subjectivity. The ideal way to draw an autobiographical narrative from an unstructured interview would be to ask the first question – i.e. “Tell me about your life” – and then just leave the interviewee to speak and let his subjectivity, his experience and perspectives emerge without any other guidance. But such an ideal case is not easy to achieve among rural adolescent students. So, topics to be covered will include his life, his relations, his stage of school and his perspectives about the future; and the interviewer will use them as a guide, a reminder. So when the narrative does not emerge naturally and fluently, the interviewer will try to provoke the subjectivity to emerge through disconnected stories, ideas, thoughts, experiences, which at the end will constitute an unorthodox narrative:

Narrative construction produces a life story in a literary format as an integral part of the research, making a range of disconnected ‘raw data’ coherent in a way that appeals to the reader’s understanding and imagination (Kim, 2011, p. 83).

Narratives are relevant to this research because from one perspective it matters “the way power intervenes in creating conditions of possibility for specific narratives to emerge as dominant and for others to be marginalized” (Tamboukou, 2008, p. 90). This perspective puts the narrative in interrelation with its *grids of intelligibility* (Butler, 2004), those dominant discourses and technologies which provide the frame in which subjectivities can emerge, in a tension between agency and structure. So these students’ narratives will be analysed in relation to the neoliberal tenets (discourse) and education policies (discourses in practice, technologies, dispositifs, assemblages). At the same time “humanist and poststructuralist traditions of narrative research are brought together by the shared tendency to treat narratives as modes of resistance to existing structures of power” (Andrews et al., 2008, p. 4). These quotes are linked to the possibilities for rural students to reproduce or resist dominant discourses that might be held in the education policies, so narratives permit study of these possibilities and their range.

### **Issues of the data analysis process**

Regarding the data collected and its subsequent analysis; as all the interviewees were Chilean, the original data is in Spanish, so all the quotations and references made in this research have been translated by myself, procuring a balance between the faithfulness to the original words, their meaning and the need of proper comprehension in English language<sup>8</sup>. As it would be expected, there were cases where the translation from the Spanish was not as faithful as I would like it to be. Slang and specific words from the Chilean oral culture were not possible to translate exactly, so in those cases I rephrased sentences, and presented these cases to other Chilean and British graduate fellows to check the translations, seeking the optimal translation between the local original meaning and the English

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<sup>8</sup> A sample of three translated interviews can be found in the Annexes of this thesis.

understanding. In only a few cases, and because their complete originality, specific words were left in their original Chilean-Spanish language, and a brief description in English added in brackets in those quotes.

The transcription process, in general, did not pose any great difficulties. Field notes helped to rebuild the tone and main arguments of each interview. Despite that in some regions, and especially among young students, accents can vary, nonetheless the words and sentences were generally audible and possible to transcribe. The main challenge regarding this, was related with the expression of the silences and the shy mode of some students, and how the transcription could represent those nuances. Besides the formal ways of expressing these particularities in the transcriptions – i.e. making explicit those silences through a specific sign or style – I tried to analyse the data just after each interview transcription, to keep a fresh idea of these details. So, although the data analysis was based on transcriptions, I tried to complete the transcription as soon as possible after the transcription, in order to maintain the freshness of tone of the original conversation.

All the data analysis, in its different variants, was in recurrent relation to theoretical assumptions and concepts, as a dialogue between theory and empirical evidence, but also as a way of testing the pertinence of theory in this research case, its possibilities of adaptation, translation and contestation. The literature review in each policy case (see chapters 4 to 7) was a source of triangulation with the testimonies, mainly in relation to the policy specialists and teachers, in order to get an articulated story in each set of arguments and perspectives, which in turn needed to be coherent in relation to the actual policy formulations. This triangulation, in specific cases, provoked an expansion of the literature review, in order to check extra sources of information from the academic and policy fields, with the goal of finding specific details of a policy, or contrasting perspectives in relation to particular opinions or perceptions in the interviewees. As I will discuss later, the Chilean academic literature related to TVET and rural education policies is concise, and the policy specialists' interviewees were part of that specific

academic circuit, this also produce a strong coherence between the interview materials and the literature and policy documentation.

The analysis process took as first reference the topics used in the semi-structured and unstructured interviews. So, the codes applied<sup>9</sup> were in part related to these topics too. But, the analytical questions that guided the specific analysis varied in relation to the strategic purposes of each group of interviews, and the analysis type applied. From this standpoint, the questions that guided the critical analysis of discourse applied in policy specialists and teachers was the following:

- Are neoliberal tenets (governmentality, market-based technologies, etc.) present in the education policies (purposes, structure, definition, regulations, diagnosis, etc.) in Chile?
- Is the neoliberal subject portrayed in the profiles of students present in the education policies?
- What are the specific articulations (meanings and practices, dispositifs and assemblages) in which these discourses are represented in the policies applied in the rural Chilean case?
- If the previous questions and their responses outline an alternative discourse, how is it articulated? How are these articulations positioned in relation to the neoliberal discourse?

These questions, few but complex, are the guide from which the analysis was developed. Each question involves different nuances and specific points of analysis (specific features of the neoliberal subject, specific technologies or aspects of governmentality, specific dispositif articulations, etc.). But as noted above, these questions constitute the guiding rationale of this research put in practice in an analytical way. So, the analysis will not present a structured set of sections in which each question is methodically answered, but will present different aspects of data analysis which will refer to these questions, at the same time drawing on my theoretical framework and looking for some verification of this through the

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<sup>9</sup> The codes applied in the data analysis for each group of interviews is attached in the Annexes section.

empirical work. These questions contribute to the codification processes, and add the specific tone to the analysis developed.

As mentioned previously, the interviews with students were organised around a set of guide topics, these were then used to facilitate the narrative analysis of the student interviewees. The coding process followed these set of topics, basically as a biographical sequence which, under the strategic purposes of this research, included key subjects around each period of their lives, their families and their institutional relations. While the interview questions respond to this biographical purpose, the narrative analysis also respond to the goals and theoretical assumptions of this research. In this case, the analysis followed these guiding questions:

- What are the key aspects and milestones of students' lives in relation to education and their future perspectives?
- How do they characterize and interpret their own experience of schooling?
- Why did they choose the scientific-humanistic or technical-professional educational path?
- What are their expectations of the future in relation to work and where they will live? What are the elements that constitute and frame that perspective and decision?
- How do they perceive themselves in relation to the rural environment?

Hence, these questions are used strategically in order to interrogate the theoretical framework of this research, the neoliberal discourse and the education policy purpose and its definitions; from these questions I expected to find that narrative information which can be related to the previous elements, and to, again, contribute to the coding process with a specific tone and orientation. Where the discourse expresses ideas, values and types of subjectivity, the narrative speaks about individual subjectivities which are confronted and analysed in relation to the neoliberal subject model and the profile of the students presented in the policies.

## Chapter 4: Rurality as a space/place under a development model

This chapter addresses what I consider a necessary background in relation to rural space and development. As this research is based on a particular type of setting, the rural one, the question about how space and rurality are understood needs to be conceptualized. So the first part of this chapter is a conceptual section about the theoretical definitions of space and place. The second part is about rurality itself. The third part will be about the Chilean development model, as the economic context within which educational policies are deployed. This section is included in this 'contextual chapter' because it relates to economic and political matters, which complement the geographical concern of the first two parts. I will finish this chapter with the first discussion points of this research. These will concentrate the focus of my analysis and guide the structure of this study – and its possible readers too.

### 1. Space and Place

This research analyses the relations, disconnections, points of encounter and conflicts/contradictions between education policies and students' subjectivities in rural areas in Chile. So, there is on the one hand the policy and on the other the subject, but there is also a space between, a context, an environment that is not neutral and has its own life and properties: that is rurality. Rurality is the zone(s) in which the policies are implemented, but more than that, is the immediate social world in which the subjects are discursively affected and shaped. How does this particular environment influence the students' subjectivities? Which conceptual tools allow me to address the question of the relation between rural space and subjectivities? In keeping with a poststructuralist analysis, these are the questions that motivate this part of the thesis.



## 1.1. Conceptualizing place and space

To begin with, I will introduce the distinct but intimately related concepts of place and space, drawing from social studies in geography, in particular the definitions and applications of Doreen Massey (2001, 2004). Space and place are socially constituted, place as the geographical area in which a society is settled and developed, and space as that reality in which the society and the geography are imbricated in a relational manner with the territories beyond their local frontiers, with the regional, national, the global and the structural (Massey, 2004a, p. 6). So place cannot be understood without space and neither can space without place. From this perspective the spatial and geographical relations are the key to understand questions and problems about society, because “it is relations between regions, and not merely characteristics of regions, which matter” (Massey, 2001, p. 7). Instead of talking about the identity or the social characteristics of a place, Massey talks about “relational identities” (Massey, 2001, p. 7). Place identities are influenced by spatial relations, and the space is reconfigured in every place, because place is a site of struggle, of negotiations and conflict between spatial and geographical relations (Massey, 2004a, p. 7). The space is the relational aspect between the local and the global, among other scales of relations (Massey, 2004a), and the “‘global space’ is no more than the sum of relations, connections, embodiments and practices” (Massey, 2004a, p. 8) which recreate a particular discursive horizon.

Another way of encompassing this perspective is illustrated in the ambiguity of the possibilities of agency and identity of a place in the context of the space beyond its borders, or the global space. The complexity emerges from the paradox of the lack of any essence in the relational identity of a place, as it has no essential identity or culture, and at the same time the existence of agency in the same place, as the local is not just a product of the dynamics of the (relations with the) global (Massey, 2004a, p. 10). So the place has an identity, not as a pre-existent and romantic essence, but as a result of the geographical relations of the space, through agential properties of the place, where there is active response. The local

agency is not a particular recreation of global forces, like a mere enculturation, but can be a political contestation, a political reformulation of the local–global tension; there is a struggle recreated and responded to (Massey, 2004a). In the local agency coexist traditions, minorities, ideologies, histories, successes and frustrations; and again paradoxically, as a result of their own historical responses in relation to the other, the outside, the global. There are identity and agency in coexistence, and both aspects are constituted recursively.

To conclude, Massey sees the dichotomy of space/place as a complex dynamic of relations, rather than a territorialized site in which the world is confined (Massey, 2004a). Space and place are to be understood in their reciprocity, as a sociological and geographical approach to the social experience. Place is at the same time a space, and space configures places.

## **1.2. Place and space and the division of labour in capitalism and neoliberalism**

From Massey, one of the key factors to understand the configurations of places and spaces, to comprehend their inequalities and positions of power, is related to the capitalist order of the economy, its industries, companies and different chains of organization and production. The organization of work is settled in geographical ways, and it reflects as well the hierarchic (and therefore, unequal) order that each organization develops in itself. It is quite clear that in many instances the managerial positions of a company are in certain cities, and the industrial work is in others. Massey (2001) develops this idea in the case of London and the North of England, London as the place in which the owners and managers live and work, and the North the place where the workers live and do the industrial labour. This logic can be extended to the global scale, where the rich countries of Europe or North America are the places where the main offices of the largest companies of the world are located, and Mexico, Turkey, Viet Nam or India the countries where the cheap workforce exists, and the manufacturing work is done. This organizational situation brings differences not only in the type and the quality of the labour but in incomes, range of decisions and labour stability, among other

things; this recreates divergent cultures, wealth or poverty, modes of development, practices, forms of subjectivation and biographies. Hence, inequality is a consequence of uneven distribution of the chains of production of firms and industries, a matter of relations of production, which together generate a “new spatial division of labour” (Massey, 2004b, p. 122), new configurations of space and place, a new “geography of the social structure” (Massey, 2004b, p. 116). What is new in this way of organizing work – its global scope, its complexity, its variability, its culture and ethics? There are new issues around new technologies and the replacement of human functions, the externalization of some tasks (Massey, 2004b) and along with that new forms of contracts and contractual relations between the managerial positions and the workers, and among the workers equally.

From another perspective, and building on the previous paragraphs, it is not possible to analyse the phenomenon of the capitalist and neoliberal division of work without recognizing the agential properties of each place. Therefore, from Massey, even the spread of capitalist/neoliberal and transnational enterprises to local territories does not elude particular appropriations and recreations of the practices and discourses that bring these enterprises to each territory and its culture; to ignore this risks accepting uncritically discourses:

[the] way in which the story of globalization is often told; of capital spreading out across a smooth surface. Third-world economies just lying there, awaiting the arrival of multinational corporations. Talk of space in terms of depthlessness is to play yet again into the classic tale of neoliberal globalization triumphant. (Massey, 2001, p. 16)

The classical hierarchical organization of work is updated by the neoliberal mode, which implicates extensive transnational expansion, market capitalization, externalization by cheap workforce, new management by distance, external accountability, contractual flexibility, and influence and participation in the governance structure of a country or region. These techniques (or neoliberal

technologies) are deployed in places which as a consequence constitute new configurations of spaces, and within them discourses, practices and subjectivities, not by simple enculturation, but by conflict, negotiation and contestation.

### **1.3. (Rural) place/space and policies**

There are two concerns between place/space and policies that I would like to cover in relation to rurality, as the main geographical issue of this research: the national character of policies and the denial of local particularity, and the strategic orientation of policies in terms of economic geography.

So first, from a geographical perspective public policies' definitions and implementations can be analysed based on the core–periphery tension, in which the definitions and designs of specific policies are thought nationally from the centre, from the capitals, from which the main offices of the State are governing and planning. The political economy of the State limits the financial possibilities of designing policies specific to each context and its particularities. With this dynamic, the core perspective becomes the true and only diagnostic of the national (and sometimes global) reality, forgetting or denying the marginal places, which for several reasons seem not to matter for the national approach: “you can't have a 'core' region without the simultaneous and inter-related construction of 'non-core', or 'periphery'” (Massey, 2001, p. 7). What ends up happening is the design of a *national* policy, with small modifications applied to limited local realities, and the national approach risks losing pertinence and efficacy depending on each context, offering wrong solutions to misdiagnosed problems, sometimes with unanticipated, untoward consequences. This is one of the issues that I address in this research regarding national education policies applied to diverse rural places.

In the national policy-making process, there is also another issue from the place/space perspective and relating to the consideration of geography. Even when specific geographical and social contexts are considered, based on Massey,

it is difficult to address their specificity acknowledging the complexity of the space to the detriment of an essentialist and conservative perspective of what a place is:

The essentialism through which regions are defined and the lack of recognition of their constitutive inter-relationality can be seen as part of a modernist *Zeitgeist* which had a much more general purchase on the imagination. The assumption of, for instance, an isomorphism between space and society (communities in their localities, cultures in their regions, nationalities in their nation-states) was not simply 'wrong' in the sense of not true, nor was it, in spite of the nationalisms and exclusivist parochialisms for which it has performed such an essential legitimating function, always and only politically 'reactionary'. But it certainly did have, and has, powerful regulatory and political functions. (Massey, 2001, pp. 10-11)

Research on rural zones can tend to rely on romantic and optimistic views that obscure the complexity of this subject of study. The countryside is a site where national and global trends threaten to transform the soul of this hypothetical romantic lifestyle. Alternatively, policies can perceive marginal areas as places where development should arrive through strategies which have succeeded in urban areas or nationally, because the rural population are considered as stragglers of development who must be included in the national path, in the national economy and the market. But these perspectives cannot acknowledge the relational tensions of (neoliberal) progress, in which inequality is produced by the same model of development, so different places are connected spatially more closely than they appear from an essentialist view, where every place appears as isolated and possessing a unique and differentiated essence.

The second point is based on the strategic purpose of policies in terms of the development of the economy throughout specific geographical landscapes. As has been pointed out above, the chain of work of the economy affects deeply the geographical distribution of power and resources, with the big cities being the places in which coexist institutional decision-makers, managerial positions and wealth; and the marginal zones are where the secondary players are installed. But

the issue here is not only the private-organizational aspect but the public one, as determined by public policies that generate incentives for certain activities in certain types of places, certain alternatives of technical and professional education, certain distributions of the land, certain environmental regulations, certain tax structures and other frameworks and policies that promote forms of distribution of the economic activity across a territory:

'national' economic strategies will have geographically differentiated implications and (and this is probably the more important point) different national economic strategies will have different distributional (including geographical distributional) effects. (Massey, 2001, p. 6)

Places become strategic for determined economic and political objectives, which bring with them policies, technologies and discourses (Massey, 2004a), in an interrelated dynamic between the national and the local, the global and the regional, the centre and the periphery. Paradoxically, the centre–local tension of the policy-making process is joined by the neoliberal structure of governance, the Keynesian way of supporting regions is replaced by the free-market way, and the new governance is characterized by self-provision of development with the support of the institutional macroeconomic framework (Amin, 2004) and the new managerial administration of the State by distance, externalizing and privatizing, setting performance aims to be evaluated externally, freeing the internal organization of 'public' institutions, depriving them of their public character.

#### **1.4. Place and space, identity and subjectivities**

This study explores the constitutive effects of neoliberalism in policies and subjectivities. The space/place approach highlights the relational tensions of geographical development considering the inequalities in the capitalist organization of work, the distributional character of national policies and the lack

of recognition of the local by the national character of public policies. This economic and political framework recreates new spaces, new relations between places, and alongside certain types of territorial identities and individual biographies and subjectivities. The neoliberal subject, described previously, is consistent with this approach of the neoliberal space configured and reconstructed in different places, and the possibilities of subjectivation that can emerge from these types of contexts. From one side, the organizational, economic and political articulations derive in material conditions in which the territories constitute their possibilities of life and subjectivation. That materiality, as the landscape, the natural and technological resources, wealth or scarcity, the material patrimony, even the “embodied relations which are extended geographically as well as historically” (Massey, 2004a, p. 10), constitutes the possibilities in which identities and subjectivities are developed. This is the material aspect of the identity of a place and space, which is immersed in and joins the discursive dimension; from Massey (2004a) I therefore take ‘identity’ defined by material and discursive features.

The discursive dimension of the spatial identity is understood from two possible viewpoints. The first relates to how a place can be discursively constructed, defined, described or referred to, in other words, how it is narrated:

Geographical imaginations (for instance of regions and of regional uneven development) are not simply mirrors; they are in some sense constitutive figurations; in some sense they ‘produce’ the world in which we live and within which they are themselves constructed. (Massey, 2001, p. 10)

Here we speak about the performative power of speech, as part of the verbal dimension of a discourse: the narrative of a place also constitutes the identity of that place, and ‘produces the world’ that refashions the self-comprehension of a territory and its social experience. This narrative is produced; again, this is relationality between places, reconfiguring spaces. The narrative produced by the

local population and culture is influenced by the external narrative, which at the same time indicates and describes what the centre is and what the periphery is. So narratives can constitute identity, but also inequalities, as narratives can reinforce the centrality of the centre and the marginality of the periphery. What is said and how a place is understood are parts of the identity forged in the same place and its geographical relations from a spatial perspective.

This viewpoint analyses the discursive aspect of spatial identity, but, and as mentioned in previous sections, discourse goes beyond speech; it is constituted by and constitutes practices, rationalities and common senses, deployed through particular technologies and materialities. The practices recreated in places, under particular economic and political structures, also constitute the identity of those places, as the subterranean language that affects the possibilities of understanding territories and social groups. And once more, practices are also relational:

An understanding of the relational nature of space has been accompanied by arguments about the relational construction of the identity of place. If space is a product of practices, trajectories, interrelations, if we make space through interactions at all levels, from the (so-called) local to the (so-called) global, then those spatial identities such as places, regions, nations, and the local and the global, must be forged in this relational way too, as internally complex, essentially unboundable in any absolute sense, and inevitably historically changing (...)  
(Massey, 2004a, p. 5)

Thus, spatial identity corresponds to that cultural aspect of the relational tension of territories, geographies that discursively are understood in a certain way by themselves and by others, under certain material conditions, signified by narratives and updated by practices. Individual subjectivities, then, are reinvented under these spatial and social identities; they are their discursive, material and narrative framework of reference, before which they developed their biographies, their personal narratives, acknowledging and appropriating their territory, but also contesting and reconfiguring the same identity of the place.



This research tries to introduce the question of which type of space constitutes the rural areas (places) in Chile, and which kinds of cultural, economic and political characteristics are related to the policies and subjectivities researched, or how these subjectivities and education policies report about the rurality and its specific and socially constructed space.

## 2. Outlining 'rural'

This part of the research aims to provide a response to the question of what 'rural' means nowadays. It is based in findings related to the national and international definitions of rurality, and how these definitions create (or neglect) spaces/places discursively and technically. This part is based in international reports from different institutions (WB, OECD, CEPAL, UNDP) and scholars' perspectives, which deal with this debate and present it in a broader perspective, giving a context to the argument.

The starting point is the problems related to general understandings of the rural situation, and how these can lead to misinterpretations of what a territorial experience and its geography actually are. The seriousness of this issue is based in its influence in the definition of public policies, through the construction of discourses in which the rural-other appears in a diminished place.

The rural today is more than a lagging reality; it is constituted by complex places and spatial relations, with non-linear processes of development, with particular cultures, practices and connections – particular spatial relations. The rural is alive beyond its local-official frontiers; it is present also in the urban as a dynamic where populations live with their own understanding of the world, their history, projecting their future as individuals and communities. The geography of the rural is changing; it is hybridizing between rural and urban characteristics; it has been disconnected internally across countries and regions. The last part of this section, about the Chilean rurality, will offer some responses to these assumptions.

The agricultural activity is one of the key factors in the current rural situation. What is under consideration is the role of rural territories and their economy in the development of a country and a region (Dirven et al., 2011). Before going further, it is important to reconsider the traditional view which matches rural with agricultural, and ask whether nowadays the rurality has expanded its scope of activities and connections. The CEPAL consensus stopped identification of the rural with the agricultural, and broadened the range of agricultural activities acknowledged in rural territories (Dirven et al., 2011). The World Bank agrees with this diagnostic, as does the OECD, pointing out that 25% of activities in rural areas are non-agricultural (44% in Asia), rather being “commercial activities, manufacturing, and other services” (De Ferranti, 2005, p. 43). Despite that, the main and most representative activity in rural settings remains the agricultural. But this new perspective assumes that a process of urbanization is happening in the rural areas, with ruralization in the urban areas. This means that rural dynamics based in agricultural activities are emerging in the cities, and labour activities which usually take place in the urban areas are being developed in the rural areas.

Concerning the role of the agricultural activity in the economy, and related to the assumption whereby the rural life is (or should be) in retreat, the World Bank states that rural natural resources, although their contribution to the national and regional economies in Latin America is declining, are still a key factor of development across the countries in the region, representing one-third of its exports (De Ferranti, 2005). In fact there has actually been an expansion of the agricultural activity, which is not reflected in the national GDPs, as the prices of the sector have decreased. The UNDP states that the economic figures do not show the contribution of agriculture in a broader chain of production, in more interconnected industrial-spatial processes. In summary, the standard figures do not represent the complex situation and the role of agriculture in the economy and society (UNDP, 2008).

Thus, the rurality, more than retreating, is being transformed and located in diverse settings, rural and urban sites which influence each other. From this point of view, the agricultural work, rather than diminishing, is diversifying in new,

hybrid ways where the traditional activities are being combined with others derived from further industries. In any case, one way or another, the rural labour dynamic is changing, and not fortuitously:

The transformation of rural labour markets has much to do with domestic and external macroeconomic pressures. In the context of globalization, the degree of vulnerability of agriculture and therefore of rural labour markets to international economic change is greater. (Atchoarena & Gasperini, 2003, p. 242)

However, it cannot be neglected that processes of migration from the countryside to the big cities are still happening, especially in Latin America and other parts of the world (like Asia). This phenomenon reflects the problems of the rural territories in retaining their population, offering narrower alternatives of working and living than the main cities: "This situation has changed with a large proportion of rural regions having negative natural balances and continuing to lose population, particularly younger residents." (OECD, 2006, p. 26). This issue will be returned to in the empirical research in relation to the labour perspectives of the rural students.

From the OECD's (2006) conceptual attempt to establish a 'new rural paradigm', Kay (2009) argues that since the 90s the 'new rurality' notion has been appropriated in Latin American academic circles and international bodies in order to define and study the changes in the rural world of the region. The 'new rurality' is a conceptual effort in response to the changes provoked by the global and neoliberal order, a way to offer solutions and opportunities to the new problems generated in the rural sphere by the internationalization of the markets. There are two main interpretations regarding the new rurality. The first is related to the "growing diversification of the rural activities and the importance of the non-agricultural jobs and incomes" (Kay, 2009, p. 613); the second focuses on rural challenges including aspects around "poverty, environmental sustainability, gender equity, the revaluation of the countryside, its culture and people", aiming

to “encourage decentralization and social participation, to overcome the rural-urban division; and to guarantee the viability of the peasant agriculture” (ibid.).

Following Kay, the new rurality is being analysed in four axes by the scholars and policy makers in the region: the work outside the farm, the growing flexibility and feminization of the work, the more intense connections between the rural and the urban, and the escalation of the migration processes between countries. Kay (2009) argues that while the diversification of the work has not brought substantial improvements to the rural people’s lives, the flexibility of the work has included women, but under a very volatile and insecure labour scheme. Acknowledging the thesis around the closer relations between the rural and the urban, these have not stopped the emigration process of the poorest rural workers searching for better opportunities outside their national frontiers. So, although neoliberalism has propelled important changes in the forms of production and commerce, opening new doors to the rural world, on the other hand many peasants “have become mainly providers of cheap and flexible workforce for capitalism (...). The diversification has become a strategy of capital accumulation and higher welfare only to those farmers with higher resources” (Kay, 2009, p. 624).

In this scenario, education plays a role too, in terms of responding to the new labour market conditions, enabling possibilities for human and local development. UNESCO/FAO perceive that education can open doors to spaces beyond the agricultural work, as “a higher level of education increases the endowment of human capital and therefore opens access to higher non-farm wages” (Atchoarena & Gasperini, 2003, p. 244). The non-farm jobs are understood as those derived from urban settings, or the industrial change that is happening in the agricultural activity too. The *human capital* allusion also touches part of the issues of this research, which will be addressed in later sections. What is most relevant in terms of this study, as relating to discursive features of rural education, is to figure out how rural development is defined, and what the role of education in that scenario is. Also, the representation of rural education in the Chilean scenario will be challenged, expecting to add new perspectives about how the new rurality is framed in these particular contexts.

A last point is related to the statistical definitions of rural territories. Its importance is connected with the first point of this discussion, specifically because such definitions are the base for the design of public policies across the countries. There are different perspectives around the issue; for instance the UN recommends not adopting uniform criteria to assess diverse realities, avoiding the application of external rationalities and calculations to particular realities and their contexts.

In the case of Chile urban areas are defined by a population living in concentrated housing with more than 2,000 inhabitants, or between 1,000 and 2,000 with at least 50% working actively in secondary or tertiary activities. Urban tourism centres are considered exceptionally as having a concentration of more than 250 houses (Dirven et al., 2011). So rural is everything that is not urban. From the official records, rural lacks its own definition; it is understood by opposition, and is ultimately a residual category. From this national official definition, the rural population in Chile reaches 13% (out of 17 million approx.).

International bodies contribute with different definitions and calculations of a rural territory. Applying each criterion to the Chilean case, its rural population varies in important ranges. The OECD defines a density criterion (a density below 150 residents per km<sup>2</sup>), and applying this measure in Chile, 42% of the population would be considered as predominantly rural. The World Bank adds to the OECD threshold of 150 people/km<sup>2</sup> a criterion of remoteness, including zones a distance of more than one hour's travel time from cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants (De Ferranti, 2005). With this approach, the rural population in Chile reaches 36%. The CEPAL approach states that a rural area is defined by the OECD density definition (<150 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>) plus at least 35% of the population being economically active in agricultural activities; in that case the Chilean rural population is represented by a 21% (Dirven et al., 2011). Based on a methodology by clusters, and centring the analysis in the agricultural practices, the UNDP states that the rural population in Chile is as high as 39% (UNDP, 2008).

To conclude, important discussions about the rural territories, their social realities and definition have taken place during the last decade. Institutions and theorists agree that dichotomous distinctions are no longer reflecting the complexity of the rural–urban dynamics and gradients. So the rural is not understood as a marginal situation beyond the frontiers of the urban, but rather as a geographical, social and economic reality which is processing its own adaptation to modernity, that is changing and hybridizing, which is colonizing urban spaces and at the same time is being influenced by urban tendencies too. Other common ground from these debates is in the gradual experience of the urban and rural territories, the central role of the agricultural activity as an economic and cultural aspect of rurality, and the access to and connections from cities as an influential factor in the transformation of the spaces and places. In relation to this, the notion of ‘rurban’ can be useful: rural practices in urban places, and urban practices in rural zones, with many small and mid-size towns and cities representing this mixed experience (Dirven et al., 2011). Finally, the different definitions and calculations presented of what is rural nowadays, and the different outcomes in their applications in the case of Chile show that this is an ongoing matter, an unresolved issue. Every definition gives a different version of rurality, calculations with different and crucial consequences when identifying territories, which bring different rationalities to designing and planning public (and educational) policies.

### 3. Economic Development Policies for Rural Areas in Chile: Historical and Political Review

In this section I will examine the economic policies for rural zones in Chile, or in other words, the development model for these areas, if one is articulated. I do not outline an argument separating the historical and political-economic perspectives, but bring both perspectives to bear in a unified story, highlighting specific nuances and ideas when the case makes it necessary.

First, let us begin with what is understood by development, specifically rural development. Sutcliffe (1999) outlines the “prevailing idea of development” as a “journey” from a “starting point” towards “a final destination”:

The form of travel is characterized by the transfer of labour from low-productivity agriculture to higher-productivity industry and modern services, and all nations end up at more or less the same destination, where high consumption matches the high productive capacity. Many other things follow more or less automatically in the wake of economic progress, including more education, urbanization, more access to medical services, longer lives, democracy and human rights – in short, modernization. (Sutcliffe, 1999, p. 135)

This narrative is based in a strong economic perspective, where improvements in all fields of society are an outcome of the first and main economic development. This view can be connected with the neoliberal discourse described above, as the economy spreads its logic, in one way or another, towards the rest of the aspects of society, including the individuals and their subjectivity. Furthermore, Sutcliffe points out the main criticisms of this idea, which basically state that this model generalizes and normalizes the path of each country and culture, forgetting the histories and particularities of the nations, and the project of development that each one seeks to follow. Thus, this general idea of development can be seen as a discursive rhetoric, as it appears as the global understanding and rationality of what development is and what its goals and strategies should be.

In relation to rural development, it is possible to outline a less caricatured and more complex definition, where the concept is connected with a specific territory inside the context of a region or a country. Paraphrasing Pezo (2007, p. 96), this concept should incorporate the particularities of the rural settings, and must be focalized in “the wellbeing of its people and their surroundings, along with harmonizing with the development of the whole country (...). The rural development contemplates interventions in the social, economic, cultural,

environmental and political spheres, deployed in or towards rural areas by initiative and through diverse actors". In the next paragraphs I will analyse if this particular definition is corroborated in the Chilean case, or if a more 'global' conceptualization of development holds primacy in this discussion and in the policy framework of this country.

From a general historical perspective, since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there are three milestones regarding rural development and its policies. First, during the governments of Alessandri (1958–1964), Frei Montalva (1964–1970) and Allende (1970–1973), there was an important process of agrarian reform, which changed the property and productive structure of the land and the agriculture, passing from a semi-feudal or 'complex large state' (Pezo, 2007) to an expropriation and redistribution of the land among small peasants. This happened with land assessed as underutilized, and then redistributed under a notion of social justice, seeking in the same way to change and develop the agrarian production system to make it more participative and effective. This process started gingerly with Alessandri in 1962, was deepened by Frei with a structural agrarian reform and radicalized by Allende, who changed the shape of the tenure of the land in Chile in significant ways. As context, during these decades and since the 1950s, Chile, traditionally an export-oriented commodity country, was trying with difficulty to introduce an import-substitution model, through a development of industry and the manufacturing sector. This attempt was stopped during the next period of Chile's history.

So, the second milestone was the Pinochet takeover in 1973, which brought down Allende's government and its socialist project and began the military dictatorship (1973–1989). According to Gwynne and Kay (1997), this regime deployed a so-called counter agrarian reform, returning land to some of the original owners affected by the previous agrarian reform, giving other portions up for auction (among those able to pay), and keeping a third part for medium and small peasants already benefited by the agrarian reform. Much of the land of the smallest and poorest peasants was taken from them.



Along with this process, the neoliberalization of the economy and the State during the 1980s opened the economy to the international markets, the export-oriented commodities strategy was reassumed with new vigour, and the agricultural sector was put under a strengthened scheme of competition. The small 'parceleros' (peasant-farmers) who had retained ownership of their lands were not able to subsist and compete under these conditions. The lack of support from the State for the peasants compared with medium and large owners led to the sale of the land by small farmers to the large proprietors, entailing a "Dramatic re-concentration of land (...) making the distinction between the large-scale capitalist farmer and the small-scale peasant farmer even greater in export-oriented regions" (Gwynne & Kay, 1997, p. 8). But the internationalization of the economy led to crisis, along with the big recession of 1982, so the State had to generate measures of support and protectionism for the medium and large farmers and agricultural industries – paradoxically betraying in some way the neoliberal premise of State non-intervention.

In summary, the rural economic policies during the dictatorship, which laid the foundations for the development model in these zones, were based in "the support of the medium and large agricultural enterprise, through a public investment in land productivity, instead [of investment in] its tenure" (Viveros Zapata, 2010, p. 11). This policy was set within a national policy framework – so rural policy was neither an exception nor a specificity – which led the whole nation towards a neoliberal project of society, economy and State. This structural reform of the State, according to Pezo (2007), can be described in two main trends: "a weakening of the State against the market forces for the purpose of social promotion and productive investment, and a rationality of the development and social policies which became compensatory of the unintended consequences of the new worldwide economic order" (Pezo, 2007, p. 97). The rural development strategy was based in an economic perspective, and the market was in charge of the well-being of the people and the development of the country. In relation to rural development discourses, economic policies replaced the notion of the peasant by that of the small farmer, the first understood from his social and

political condition, the second from his productive possibilities, as an economic agent (Viveros Zapata, 2010). Along with that, the government started increasing flexibility of the work, stable contracts being replaced by flexible ones, joined with a lack of protection of the workers and a lack of support to their capacities and opportunities of organization (Kay, 2009).

The third historical milestone was the return of the democracy (1989). In short, the democratic governments have kept the bases of the neoliberal model installed during Pinochet's dictatorship, but manifested a concern about the problems of inequality and social exclusion as results of the model. The Concertación governments coined terms such as 'inclusive growth' or 'growing with equity', and developed social policies to support disadvantaged populations, but without touching the core of the economic model, even strengthening it and evolving it; for instance they "maintained and even deepened Chile's exposure and insertion into international markets." (Gwynne & Kay, 1997, p. 6) In the case of the agricultural producers, the internationalization of the economy brought more competition, higher production and better incomes, the big firms being the beneficiaries of this dynamic, and the small farmers being unable to thrive under these conditions and without effective support from the government, thereby continuing the tendency of the 1980s. In terms of the search for balance between growth through the strengthening of the market and equality through social policies, Gwynne and Kay state that:

Policy makers in the Concertacion government have tried to marry the positive elements of neoliberalism with their concerns about equity and sustainability. However, the emphasis is now on continuity rather than change, on competitiveness rather than protectionism, on private entrepreneurship rather than state intervention, on limiting social demands to what is economically and politically feasible, and on technical competence rather than ideology. (1997, p. 9)

Hence, the democratic governments from the 90s until 2014<sup>10</sup> – four *Concertación* (centre-left coalition, 1989–2010) and one *Coalición por el cambio* (centre-right coalition, 2010–2014) – deepened a similar pattern of development inherited from the dictatorship, with a strong accent on the economy and the free market in many spheres of society even beyond the economy – education, social security, health – and positioning the State in a subsidiary role. Chile has maximized its export-oriented role and a productive development model based on improving its international competitiveness, with a strong public investment in infrastructure – which has permitted better connections between rural and urban places – enhancing its financial system and opening the country to wider markets through free trade agreements (Moguillansky, Ramírez, & Furnaro, 2013).

Along with this historical account, I will outline an argument about the absence of a development model for rural zones in Chile and provide a review of unarticulated rural policies. First, the absence of a development model for rural zones in Chile is one of the key conclusions of the OECD report about rural development in Chile (OECD, 2014), which is shared by other researchers such as Pezo (2007). This last author describes the scenario for Chilean rurality in three levels of production with their main actors and roles. First the big companies, highly modernized, linked to the exportation and the global agricultural markets, associated with other economic sectors of the country or international investors. Second, big or medium units of production, moderately modernized, oriented to the national market. And third, small, familiar producers oriented to direct consumption or local markets, in low-profitability sectors, in an asymmetric relation with big productive and commercial chains, in situations of poverty, with low education levels and marginalized from the agricultural modernity. According

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<sup>10</sup> The current, and second, government of M. Bachelet is carrying on a process of reform in several policies and the role of the State in them. It is preferable to assess whether this government is changing substantial aspects of those policies and the role of the State once their reforms are more crystallized. For now, it is questionable whether the changes really touch the neoliberal model of development, or part of it.

to official records, this agricultural sector is composed of 278,000 small units of production and 1.2 million people approx. (Pezo, 2007, p. 93).

So, how is the State facing this rural situation from a policy perspective? The main and biggest tool of State policy for rural settings is INDAP (National Institute for Agricultural Development, translation from Spanish), which basically is a “monetary assistance agency for productive development plans” (Viveros Zapata, 2010, p. 15). Its main objective is:

To promote economic, social and technological development of small farmers and peasants in order to help increase their business, organizational and commercial capacity, their integration to the rural development process while optimizing the use of productive resources (INDAP, 2014, p. 8).

Although INDAP was created during the 1960s in the context of the Agrarian Reform, since the dictatorship it has reoriented and reinforced its productive role, becoming the main policy tool for rural areas in Chile. The rest of the institutions of the Ministry of Agriculture, on which INDAP administratively depends, are quantitatively and qualitatively smaller, and generally have the goal of regulating and informing the economic activity of the agroindustry.

Therefore, and in relation to the absence of an integrated rural policy or a model of development for rural areas in Chile, the OECD judges the policies to assist the rural population to be isolated and disarticulated (OECD, 2014). A similar diagnosis is made by Pezo (2007), who highlights the commodities export-oriented focus of the model, detached from policies of social development, and notes the subsidiary role of INDAP, which has failed to promote autonomy among the organizations and peasants; the rest of the rural population is left with “focalized policies, aid measures, which are compensatory and ‘minimalist’ (...) [and] contribute little resources with social ends” (Pezo, 2007, p. 98).

Viveros Zapata (2010) outlines a discursive analysis of the rural development in Chile, and points out discursive elements towards the politicization and

economization of the rural population during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century onwards. The peasant was politicized during the agrarian reform period and debate, and commodified during the dictatorship until the present day. This last period constitutes a process in which the rural development takes place in the “macro scenario of market integration, which means that [the State] transforms its guidelines and subsidizes the transfer from a family subsistence economy towards a rural family microenterprise” (Viveros Zapata, 2010, p. 13).

However, not only the individuals and their lands have been strongly economized, but also the rural environment itself, the natural world. Under the new rurality debated in a previous section, from that discussion and its proposals appears the diversification of work pathways for the rural population; one such relates to tourism, and the exploitation of the natural resources through the paradoxical discourse of the sustainable development. Paradoxical because as sustainable it is sensitive to the natural environment and its future, but at the same time it is exploited through the touristic industry, which adds to the notion of sustainable development a particular way of capitalization of nature (Viveros Zapata, 2010).

Territorially speaking, Moguillansky et al. (2013) argue that the rural and productive development policies in Chile have not considered a territorial approach; instead they have implemented a single national productive policy, ignoring or obscuring the big differences among regions and sectors of the industry. The disparities between regions in terms of diverse economic indicators, such as poverty, employment and productive development, among others, are not visualized as a matter of public policies, but as a market regulation issue, providing information for the agents’ decisions (Moguillansky et al., 2013, p. 5).

So, in summary, since the dictatorship Chile has implemented a rural development model based in its economic activity and its export-oriented profile, acknowledging and reinforcing the internationalization of the markets and the insertion of the agricultural activity within them, which has brought practical and discursive consequences for the peasants and small farmers. They are no longer assumed as peasants but as micro-entrepreneurs, and their small farms as

microenterprises. The rural policies have a strong productive bias, leaving the development of these zones under the support of these kinds of policies and the insertion of the agriculture in all its levels in the free market.

As continuation of the topics related to rurality of this chapter, later in this study (chapter 7), I will present the analysis related to rural education, its general and historical development, its main policies and programmes, the Chilean literature associated, and the outcomes generated from the interviews to policy specialists.

#### **4. Discussion points**

To conclude this section, I will outline a brief reflection relating this chapter on space and place to the definitions of rurality and the Chilean rural development. There are conceptual crossovers between the theoretical approach described about space and place, and the discussion about rurality. I will elaborate some of them.

##### **4.1. New understandings of rurality**

This chapter does not describe a fundamental social transition of the rural to an urban dynamic; rather, the transition is 'hybrid', in the form of convergence, from rural to urban and from urban to rural, as stated above: an urbanization of the rural and the ruralization of the urban. Agriculture plays a key role in this interpenetration of experiences, as it is the economic activity that identifies the rural interactions between individuals, communities and institutions; agriculture is trespassing on the limits of the rural, changing urban spaces, mainly those adjacent to the rural zones. The modern division of labour, transiting from a familiar and communal agriculture activity in rural areas towards an industrial-capitalist mode, in which the work is divided in a bigger chain of production – as pointed out above

regarding space/place and labour – which connects rural and urban areas in a common process of scale production of commodities and their derivatives.

The space and place approach should acknowledge the obsolete institutional understandings of the rural. Rural places are being transformed by space relations; urban and global trends intrude into the rural and change it. It is possible to analyse the assumption about rurality as a new social experience from the lens of the space/place theory, which problematizes the issue, the definitions and their consequences. Then, the new institutional definitions and calculations try to consider the diagnosis of a new and hybrid rurality. Despite these conceptual and statistical efforts, it is not possible to say that these new categories point out the complexity of the space and place relations. So, theoretical and qualitative tools can provide other analyses and comprehensions of the rural, a task that I am trying to develop in this research.

#### 4.2. Spatial inequalities

Related to the uneven chains of production in the neoliberal economy, which emphasize the core–periphery distinction, are the managerial positions in the main urban cities and the industry, or in this case agricultural work in the peripheral areas, such as the rural ones. The possession of land by large companies and private owners, leaving the smaller companies and owners dependent on the conditions imposed by the big markets, along with the introduction of new technologies and forms of scale production constitute a change in the ways of organizing labour and its chain of production. In the case of Chile, nowadays there is a territorial distribution of roles and positions, where the rural retains the manual agricultural work, and managerial hierarchies are distributed in rural – as in traditional families and owners – urban or intermediate zones.

This issue is connected with the rural development model of Chile, and adds to the assumption of the uneven spatial chains of production, the changes in the tenure of the land and the labour structure. So the neoliberal space is framed by

political and economic development models, as in the case of Chile, where the places and spatial relations are changed through policies and projects, and the global-market-based economic structure brings changes in the whole social landscape of the rural.

### **4.3. The national and the local**

With respect to policy-making processes, and the question about the national–local (core–periphery, again) tension of the design and implementation of public policies, rural policies are mainly designed from an economic perspective or through development policies. Regarding education policies, the case of Chile shows an education policy that is predominantly national, leaving the local to the initiative of private providers. The rural education policy considers minor adjustments or complements to the national strategy.

Also important in relation to the policy-making process are the new definitions and calculations of the rural and urban territories. There are important consequences in the policy design and implementation under assumptions based on different statistical definitions. There is the risk of designing policies based on a misunderstanding of territories, experiences or situations. The poor definition of rurality in Chile (as a residual category) leads to the writing of policies which are responding to obsolete or misdiagnosed problems. Rural education policy may be one of these cases. As the rural is defined by its opposite (lacking its own definition), this study will ask if the rural education is also related to a lack of acknowledgement from the policy perspective. This issue will be addressed in more depth in later chapters.

### **4.4. Narratives about the rural**

In relation to the material and discursive dimensions of the rural definitions, discourses, the narratives and practices related to rural settings; there is an



important influence regarding the common notions and comprehensions of the rural, from inside and outside of those experiences. The ideas of the rural as backward and poor areas, where the development has not arrived yet, and where there is a need of integration into the national path of the development, is mainly a narrative from 'the core' respecting the periphery, which is then appropriated and incorporated into the self-perception of the rural. So, the value is outside, and the lack of opportunities (and future) is inside. These discourses reinforce this type of individual perceptions, and influence the character of the rural institutions. This study addresses the discourses that define rurality from the policies, and the narratives that represent the subjectivities of rural students, giving a combined overview of the situation.

#### **4.5. Rurality, development and education**

Finally, in relation to the 'new rurality', this research will relate the development model to education policies as articulated through neoliberal discourse. Whether the 'new rurality' corresponds to a variant of the neoliberal discourse will be a matter of discussion, taking the Chilean rural education as the case of study. The market-driven development model may correspond to the market-driven educational policies in Chile, the one reinforcing the each other, and leading to particular practices and subjectivities in rural settings. In one way or another, the neoliberal economy of the dictatorship and post-dictatorship periods and its subsequent structuring of labour market opportunities shapes the future perspectives of students under the rural educational frame in which they have built their study or work alternatives.

## Part II: Education Policies in Chile: National Curriculum, TVET and Rural Education

The purpose of this group of chapters is to present a critical analysis of education policies in Chile, by attempting to relate these policies with the previous post-structural-critical theoretical framework, specifically to verify the existence of neoliberal governmentality issues in the policies, discourses and technologies in texts, practices and perspectives; as well as neoliberal types of subjectivity -mainly from the human capital approach- in policy objectives, profiles of students to be educated, curricular structures; and tensions in issues of governance and institutional articulations. As it is not entirely clear what it is meant when I speak about education policies in Chile, I will draw on Ball's approach (1993) to clarify. Policies are mainly but not only laws, government decrees or official policy texts; they are also local practices and strategies, interpretations and arrangements from the official texts and prescriptions; even where there appears to be an absence or a lack of policy, there can be other institutional arrangements and practices which prescribe, govern and subjectivize. From these possible cases, the approach in this chapter is based on two main strands of analysis: the policy texts themselves but mainly the institutional and discursive influences over those texts and its subsequent practices, and strategies which, as will be seen below, constitute key parts of the same policies in all their dimensions.

I am going to present an analysis of three policies, which again appear differently in their forms and relevancies. But first I shall move back into the foundations of this study in order to understand the methodological decision regarding these specific policies. This investigation seeks to analyse the convergences and tensions between the profile of the student to be educated in education policies in Chile and the process of subjectivation from rural students in the same country. Which educational policy better informs this student profile? The curriculum policy, which explicitly outlines this profile. But as I am discussing rural students, and along with them the rural context and experience, there are

two more policies that touch on this educational rural experience in a particular way: the rural education policy and the technical-professional educational policy. While the first one is directly related to the territorial background of the cases selected, the technical professional – internationally called TVET (Technical Vocational Education and Training) – appears as a fundamental path in rural students' lives. The common scientific-humanistic curriculum and academic path in secondary schools is the option taken by only half of the students at national level; the other half, mainly the poorest – and among them the rural – follows the technical alternative. But again the previous issue related to policy and its forms appears: where the national curriculum is a settled policy text and practice; the rural and TVET ones are projects of future policies, dispersed ministry texts, online material and changing institutional practices.

Therefore, I will look into the diverse texts, and into the discourses and views which allow for the articulation of these kind of policies; and with them, a student profile of the national curriculum-based one, alongside the rural and the technical student. These policies talk about curricular contents, which institutionally assembled, put into practice and synthesized in a student profile articulate paths to be followed by students, a way of understanding themselves and a landscape of alternative futures, and modes of relating with the world of work. This feature is fundamental because it implies a response from students, which strains their subjectivities and may activate their reflexivities in particular ways. I expect this analytical exercise to allow me to present the convergences and tensions from these three policy perspectives, and the questions, features and challenges that arise.

In each case I will use a similar scheme of analysis, with some particular variations depending on the policy. In all of them, but with different attention, proportions and orders. First, I mention that these chapters are related to theoretical topics and the international discussions - mainly from UNESCO reports and associated documents – related to the policies presented in chapter 2, which may act as a frame of discursive influence for its national-Chilean version; sources that will appear as references during the analysis presented in these chapters. So,

in this set of chapters each policy will be introduced and analysed from their official formulations and related governmental sources. Afterwards, and as a key part of these chapters, I analyse the perspectives about each policy from the viewpoints of policy makers and/or academics specialized in each correspondent field. The latter views constitute original data derived from this research and, are complemented with correspondent Chilean academic literature so as to illustrate an in depth critical analysis of educational policies addressed in this study.

The differences in attention, proportions and orders mentioned for each section will be applied according to the structure and orientation of the argument presented for each policy. In each case the particularities will be introduced and explained, but in all of the cases I hope to present relevant discursive issues, which allow me to shape the explicit and implicit purposes of each policy and the individual models that lie beneath them.

## Chapter 5: Curriculum policies and the Chilean case

The Chilean national curriculum has been subject to a range of analyses and critiques by researchers, especially since its main configuration during the 90s. The following review of national policy texts provides the frame in which I will present the views of the interviewees in this part of the study.

In this chapter I will address issues about the Chilean curriculum policy, first describing a brief outline of its history, and then presenting its discussion in the national academic literature. Then, I will analyse the curriculum policy itself, its goals and general structure, and the profile of the student to be educated; this constitutes a compact critical-analytical discursive exercise, using the lens of the questions presented in the methodological chapter and taken from the theoretical framework. Subsequently, I will go into the interviewees' views, opinions and perspectives, from which I will extract those discursive elements which engage with the theoretical framework and assumptions of this study. These interviews are going to be analysed critically again (using CDA), presenting those ideas which relate to curriculum policy and which allow me to respond to the questions regarding discourses, technologies, dispositifs/assemblages and aspects of subjectivity. As in the rural education chapter, but differently from the later TVET one, this chapter presents the discussion in the domestic academic literature separately from the analysis of the interviews. This decision is based in the more substantial and mid-term material available from the literature, papers which were written around the time of the big curricular reform in the late 90s, which can provide a contemporary view of the matter, while the interviews are a reflection from today and have different elements and scope.

## 1. The national curriculum in Chile

In this section will be presented the Chilean national curriculum policy, starting from a general historical review, presenting some studies about this curriculum and its genesis, and finishing with an analysis of the curriculum policy itself, from the questions of this research.

### 1.1. Brief history

The current compulsory Chilean educational system is divided into three stages: two years of early-childhood education, eight of primary education and four of secondary education – besides tertiary education that is not compulsory. The focus here is on the secondary education and its curriculum structure, objectives and values. This particular stage connects compulsory education with the labour market or prepares the student for further studies in higher education. In relation to higher education, the PSU has had an important impact on the contents of the secondary education curriculum, generating a synergy between these contents and the topics and standards of the test (Cox, 2004).

The Organic Law of Education (LOCE) was published on the last day of Pinochet's dictatorship (1973–1990). Thereby the State provided minimum guidelines for curriculum content. The most important curriculum designs, updates and reforms over the last 20 years were in 1996 for primary education and in 1998 for secondary. Both changes established the basis of the current Chilean curriculum. In 2009 a new general law of education (LGE) replaced the LOCE, passed mainly due to the demands made by the secondary student movement in 2006 for a more equal and with better quality educational system. During the preparation and promulgation of this new law, the curriculum was reviewed and updated. These changes, along with the original reform of the 90s, were made under the government of the *Concertación*, the centre-left coalition.

The last revision was in 2013, under the government of Sebastián Piñera, the first centre-right president since the return of democracy. Each change has contributed to the present curricular framework and all have been justified with an appeal to the need to modernize the contents to fit the societal requirements. Additionally, the State has developed new programmes of study, which give a practical alternative for framing classroom contents. While the curriculum frame or base is compulsory, the programmes of study are optional, as a principle of freedom of teaching prevails in Chile, and the schools have the ability to decide to follow the State programmes or design their own.

## **1.2. Studies about the national curriculum in Chile**

In regard to the study of the national curriculum as a policy, the work of Cristian Cox (1999, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2011), an academic and former Head of the Curriculum and Evaluation Department in the Ministry of Education in Chile between 1998 and 2006, has been one of the main sources of information to clarify the causes of the reforms and paths of the national curriculum during the last 25 years, and before. Other authors have followed the history of the curriculum policy, and many others the pedagogical implementation of the curriculum in specific fields and subjects. The historical-political and the technical have been the main academic areas interested in the curriculum policy so far in Chile.

Historically, after the promulgation of the LOCE on 10 March 1990, the *Concertación*, which succeeded the military regime, had a strong concern in its first decade of government regarding the maintenance of a balanced and peaceful atmosphere in the political field and in society in general – after the traumatic events of the 1970s, when the country was politically divided and the military forces irrupted violently and took control of the government. In the return of the democracy, the right-wing coalition, which supported the previous dictatorship and formed the opposition to the *Concertación* governments, was allowed to have

an important presence in the parliament<sup>11</sup>, balancing the forces acting within it and thus also the decision-making process regarding public policies.

The discussion of the national curriculum policy was immersed in a polarized scenario, and therefore took some time to be formulated and reformed. After failed attempts in the first government of Aylwin (1990–1994), in the second of Frei (1994–2000) it became possible to develop an institutional discussion about the structure and contents of the curriculum, respecting the original tenets of the LOCE, in which it was only possible to state, from a national perspective, the main and minimum guidelines of the curriculum's contents. Different actors of the political spectrum of those years participated in this process –teachers, business associations, national and international experts - and it included a consultation process with the teachers and their representatives. The primary-education curriculum reform in 1996 and the reform of the secondary curriculum in 1998 were the results of this work. The later reform of 2009 responded to the necessity of readapting the contents after more than one decade had passed and it was eventually integrated into the process of reform of the new LGE. But the basis of the national curriculum contents can still be found in the reform of 96–98, so this particular process and its political dynamics are the key ones in order to find the main political and ideological guidelines and tensions of this policy.

Around that time, Avalos (1996), wrote:

two aspects of national policy — economic growth and international competitiveness on the one hand, and equal opportunities for the population as a whole on the other — have been articulated in educational policies and change proposals affecting education in general (...) (pp. 217-218)

And subsequently:

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<sup>11</sup> The electoral system is defined as 'binominal', and is based on a calculation that makes very difficult to generate important majorities in parliament, instead the two big coalitions tend to be balanced being obligated to negotiate permanently.



To present the model of a market economy and the goal of competitiveness not just as a social goal but as principles that should work alongside pedagogical reform proposals otherwise focused on collaboration, critical and creative thinking and a broad social orientation, may be problematic. (p. 231)

These paragraphs point out the central tenets of the educational debate. Here, the main questions were: How to articulate a social-democratic education model from the heritage of the dictatorship, including its prevailing neoliberal economy? How to balance an educational system based on market principles with equity and quality for everyone? The national curriculum tried to, therefore, balance the necessity of competitiveness and equity, harmonizing notions of skills and rights, autonomy and collective patrimony, values included in the dictatorship's LOCE and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This process recalls Ball and Apple perspectives mentioned in the previous sections, where the curriculum is a process of conflict, negotiation and tension, where different actors pursue different interests and visions – ideologies too - of education and society. The vision which prevailed was linked with the more powerful discourse and its representatives, a discourse that was internally represented and internationally influenced under increasing neoliberal tenets:

It is important to recognise that the 'external' factors, such as the particular circumstances of Chile's transition to (and consolidation of) democracy, the shifting relationship between the state and civil society, and the requirements and constraints imposed by a free market, export-oriented economy, are not merely broadly contextual in character for they penetrate deeply and directly into the educational and curricular changes which have been introduced. (Aedo-Richmond & Richmond, 1996, p. 198)

These ambivalent guidelines between democratic and economic growth principles were also influenced by international pressures:

A number of national and international factors were evident during the development of these curriculum guidelines. Preoccupation with norms of coexistence, citizenship, and justice were among the foremost concerns in a country formulating curriculum (...) There was an interest in the international “state of the art” in school curricula, particularly as related to the competitiveness of the Chilean economy. (Valverde, 2004, p. 178)

In relation to the international influences and tendencies, an important issue in regard to the development of the curriculum policy was the growing interaction with technologies of assessments deployed through international tests and standards. The World Bank has stated of the Chilean case that “disappointing international test results have led to renewed focus on teaching-learning practices and re-drafting of the primary curriculum.” (Holm-Nielsen, Thorn, & Prawda, 2004, p. 3). Valverde (2004) studied and explained the strong interaction between the TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) progression model and the contents of specific subjects in the Chilean curriculum, and Cox (2011) points out the necessity of dealing evenly with the influence of international tests such as PISA, as well as responding to Chilean national identity and values in the framing of the curriculum structure and contents. Later on, in a study for UNESCO, Moder (2014) raised a critical point about the right-wing government of Piñera (2010–2014), which after the 2009 reform carried out a further curriculum review (2013) which replaced part of the structure and the operating model of its previous version, hindering the advances developed until then in relation to international standards, for instance, stopping the rise in PISA national results for the first time since the reforms of 96–98. These views can be analysed and interpreted under the neoliberal discourse and the increasing power of technologies of assessment – a point also raised by Apple in the previous section – which rapidly gained terrain not only in the curriculum policy development and discourse, but also in the way of governing from the State (the Ministry of Education ), intensifying the role of tests as the technology which indicates and measures educational quality, teachers

performance and students' improvements; in other words, the evaluation and orientation of the whole educational system.

Finally, Cox (2011) remarks that the processes of student mobilization in 2006 in response to the serious problems of quality of the educational system in Chile, which led to the educational reform and the replacing of the LOCE by the LGE, were not against the curriculum or its contents, but the educational system in general and its structure. Certain teachers became the main critical voice in relation to the curriculum reform, in regard to its implementation and parts of its design and contents. For Cox, this leads to the conclusion that such criticisms are based on the lack of preparation of the teachers to adapt their practices to the goals and definitions of the national curriculum, not because they lack responsibility, but because of the deficiency of the teacher training provided by the higher education in Chile, and of the alternative in-service training. This particular view will be contrasted later from the perspective of one of the interviewees, where despite issues around teachers training in Chilean higher education, which is very unequal as a result of a strongly segmented and commodified university system; the curriculum policy-making process has been questioned because its deficient participative aspects, being teachers the main excluded sector.

### **1.3. Contents, principles, orientations, sources and objectives: towards a profile of the student (subject) to be educated in the national curriculum in Chile**

I present here an analysis of the 2005 changes – basically the 1998 version of secondary education (the stage under analysis in this research) with small modifications – and also those of 2009 and 2013 to find more recent clues about the values and objectives of current education. Features present in the content are analysed, namely those values and objectives of the national curriculum which were found throughout different policy documents.

Initially, a connection is identified across the principles found in each version of the national curriculum the basis and beliefs of the national constitution of the

republic, as the values of freedom and equality, the importance of human rights and social duties. The sum of features is synthesized in the notion of citizenship, the inclusion to society and the connection with the labour market. In terms of explicit principles and values, the external texts referred to are the national constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

At the same time, the contexts and sources of each version show some important differences. The context of the version of 98 was that it was based in the first study done in several years about the curriculum, and responded to a necessity of consolidating a State policy across the nation. But in the version of 2009, there is a response to the social demands of the more recent years, the introduction of a progressive analysis of the curriculum, including internal studies and surveys, the results of the national (SIMCE) and international tests (PISA, TIMSS) as well as the comparison with the experiences and policies within the OECD, plus a process of public consultation to teachers and other relevant actors. In the last version of 2013, along with the national and international sources mentioned for the previous version, there is a more intense review of the international experiences, including the cases of Argentina, Germany, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, the United States, Finland, the United Kingdom and France, among others. It also included displayed benchmarks built by different international associations, such as the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Council of Europe. From this point of view, technologies of assessment play an increasingly important role in the curriculum frame and design, and the maps of progress appear as a new technology of control which despite of seeking to provide a more structured curriculum frame to the schooling process, they also prescribe and follow the learning processes of students, controlling also the teachers practice.

In a deeper analysis of the texts, it is possible to identify certain values and trends in which the policy shows an identity through contrasting ideas. In terms of the profile of the student and the production of subjectivity, we detect different features that struggle across the policy. There is an unresolved tension between orientations towards an individual affirmation and a more collective concern. From

one side there is a focus in developing self-esteem, critical thinking, autonomy, the strengthening of abilities and skills, and the capacity of entrepreneurship; but at the same time there is a concern for the common good, a centrality in the family, the participation in society and the appreciation of diversity. On those aspects there is a continuity in the development of the three versions of the national curriculum in terms of principles and objectives, with some minor differences that equally show interesting changes between them, but in general they show these ambivalences and tensions as well.

The 98 version classifies its objectives in the areas of growth and self-affirmation, thinking development, ethics education and the person and his environment. The 2009 one repeats the same scheme adding technologies of information and communication. In 2013 we find a restructuring of the organization of the areas of development; they are now divided into 'dimensions' – physical, affective, cognitive, cultural and civic, moral, spiritual, proactivity and work, plans and projects – while keeping the previous insertion of technologies of information and communication.

The reforms' paths have a common base of social and individual values, based on the features of autonomy, social and labour skills, and entrepreneurship, mixed with a sense of responsibility to society. The concepts derived from these orientations seem to introduce stronger notions of self-progression, wider abilities and a broader meaning of respect for diversity in the current times.

In summary, considering the described modifications, the student profile of the national curriculum can be defined under the following characteristics:

- Personal development, self-determination and self-projection
- Capacity of reasoning
- Productivity, rigour, flexibility
- Entrepreneurship, innovation, creativity
- Connection with subsequent alternatives of study or work
- Social and democratic sense
- Orientation to human rights and social responsibilities

- Little emphasis on a common cultural basis or recognition of cultural diversity

*A contested subjectivity.*

Hence, in Chile's national curriculum one cannot find a clearly defined notion of the subject, in terms of a univocal view of the individual. It offers mixed comprehensions of the student and the citizen to be educated, which is consistent with previous features noted about the policy texts and the policy-making process (Ball, 1993), and Apple's (1993) perspectives regarding the conflicted nature of curriculum policy in terms of differing interests and world-views. It is possible to detect the neoliberal features characterized in the previous sections of this document, and I suggest that those features prevail over others related to democratic perspectives or the rights approach, since the former are articulated in a more consistent way, generating a profile closer to a high-skilled and individual-rational perspective, rather than a communitarian-collective or citizen type of subject.

The way in which these general guidelines and political intentions are grounded in particular curricular contents, is an issue that will be addressed through the perspectives of the interviewees presented in the next section. In this first analysis, the ambivalence between different principles and orientations is an issue which covers the whole curricular frame. In relation to the neoliberal subject, the notion of human capital is presented in several definitions regarding skills and attitudes towards the world of work and the contribution to the economy. The idea of the entrepreneur also gains space throughout the curriculum versions. In relation to autonomy, this feature is ambivalent as autonomy in the curriculum frame is related to the development of self-confidence and individual freedom, but also autonomy is connected to the development of rational thinking in order to make proper choices. Here, notions of individual freedom and rational thinking (and choice) can be linked to an idea of an individual, free and rational subject. Although it cannot be inferred that the curriculum explicitly promotes individuals to participate in a neoliberal market and society, these characteristics can be functional to such kind of social order. Finally, the presence of the homo

economicus in the curriculum, the competitive and productive man, is also a matter of critical analysis. While is evident its inclination to a skilled and efficient individual – ideas related to human capital as well - the notion of a competitive person is not clear in the explicit definitions of the policy. Nonetheless, it may possible to connect the features of entrepreneurship and skills into an idea of a competent individual apt to unfold himself in a competitive society.

In any case, there is a challenge to detect the most important tendencies among the education offered to the students through the National Curriculum. I can characterize the National Curriculum as a negotiation-conflicted field between democratic and neoliberal ideas. It is under the important, but not exclusive, influence of neoliberalism and its individual values and characteristics, the type of subjectivity that fits in a marketized society.

## 2. Perspectives from the academy and the policy-making sphere

This section presents an analysis of interviews conducted with four actors all related in some way to national curriculum policy - all of them will be named by a nomenclature clarified as follows: *CurrPM-1* (Curriculum Policy Maker) is a current policy maker of the curriculum and assessment department of the Ministry of Education; *CurrPM-2* was a former policy maker of the department of curriculum and assessment of the Ministry of Education, one of the leaders of the curricular design of the 90s, and current academic. *CurrAc-3* and *CurrAc-4* (Curriculum Academics) come from the faculty of education of a public university in the country. While *CurrPM-1* and *CurrPM-2* can provide an internal perspective of the policy design and administration, *CurrAc-3* and *CurrAc-4* offer perspectives closer to a critical view of the policy. The analysis and opinions of these interviewees expect to offer different perspectives to this matter.

The section is divided in five sub-sections: first about the background and history of the policy; then an analysis of the structure and purposes of the curriculum policy; third, a review of the influences towards the curricular

definitions; an account of the profile of the student outlined in the national curriculum; and finally, a last section around the lack of recognition of the social diversity by the policy.

### **2.1. Some history and context as background of the principles which underpin the design of a National Curriculum**

Previously in this chapter, it was already outlined the general itinerary of the history of the Chilean national curriculum since the 90s. In the following paragraphs I will present other aspects of this history, starting with the consultations and negotiations related to the first reform. CurrPM-2 points out that there was a process of consultation, particularly in the curricular version of secondary schooling, under the triad of the Ministry of Education, teachers and academic experts in the field, with special attention paid to the teachers, with whom in 97 the process was wider and more intense. This consultation delayed by one year the launch of the new curriculum, but teachers were informed beforehand about the new curriculum frame. From another perspective, CurrAc-4 sees the curriculum policy development of those years as an elitist process, which excluded the Chilean Association of Curriculum and the Teachers' Union: "an elitist process, plans and programmes afterwards transmitted by external institutions". Another study from the Chilean academy states that:

It is undeniable that there was a consensus regarding the necessity of reforming the curriculum, and its design was a prolonged and serious process; to identify in it a 'participative' gestation is not sustainable. Actors were incorporated from the labour and business worlds, but directly from the educational field much less so. In fact, the proposal for secondary education (...) was debated in the schools in a time which did not exceed one day (Donoso, 2005, p. 122).

This debate is related, again, to Apple's (1993) analysis in relation to the disputes about the contents and objectives in a national curriculum, where social



class interests – the ‘elitist process’ highlighted by CurrAc-4 – permeates the discussion, and ideas from a small group of policymakers and consultants prevailed over the voice of the teachers’ union, their interests and pedagogical perspectives. Therefore, there is a conflicting history, with different views regarding it. CurrPM-2 is aware of some of these critiques towards this process, which will be addressed in later parts of this section.

Continuing with the references to external actors in this process, in the previous section I described the curriculum design process in the context of a delicate political atmosphere, the post-authoritarian years where the conflicts and polarizations were for the most part carefully avoided. So, the national curriculum, as an important and new public policy contains some features from that atmosphere, translated in a tensioned group of contents, which represent different and balanced perspectives in the same policy. But according to CurrPM-2, this was not the case, from his experience of leading this policy-making process:

The curriculum doesn’t pass through the Congress, the curriculum doesn’t pass through explicit negotiations between the government and its political opposition (...). There was no opposition in education. You have to imagine that. There was no real opposition in curricular issues (...). So, was there negotiation [with the opposition]? I couldn’t say that. Did I consider the right wing were inside the elaboration teams of the curriculum? No. Not at all (...). It is not negotiation that defines it [the curriculum-making process], although in parallel there was a spirit of inclusion in the government, a very, very clear one. (CurrPM-2)

The importance of this testimony lies in the possibilities of deconstructing the context, influences and actors who have been able to imprint their voices in the curriculum debate and development. If the curriculum, as the previous sections affirms, is an ideological conflicted field, it is important to clarify in that case which influences and positions had part in the process. From CurrPM-2 there was no explicit negotiation with the right-wing opposition; rather, it was a process carried out without important interferences from that perspective; so, the *delicate*

post-authoritarian political atmosphere did not influence the process as I had interpreted. Therefore, the post-authoritarian heritage was not translated in respecting a balance between opposite political positions, but into a similar style of governing in terms of a top-down process, mainly conducted by technocrats and consultants without meaningful participation of other relevant educational actors. But the question about different influences and positions in the curriculum, which played (and may still playing) different roles which in its design, is still valid. The consultation process was very limited, and because of that the political and ideological debate was partly excluded from the curricular design. But this does not mean that the political conflict between those who held the power and those who claim they were excluded from the process was eradicated. All the policy cycle – its debate, design and implementation (Ball, 1993) – was criticized by the teachers' union and other academic experts. Despite this their critiques were scarcely incorporated in this mostly went unheard. In relation to the ideological influences, despite its lack of participation, the curricular outcome equally presents an ideological conflict, where the pressures of the neoliberal frame inherited by the dictatorship (and also increasingly influential internationally), in tension with the claims for democracy after 16 years of an authoritarian regime, were features present throughout the process.

Continuing with the analysis of historical issues in relation to the genesis of the national curriculum, CurrPM-2 believes that the modified versions of 2009 and 2013 show a patent continuity, a positive progress, which at the same time illustrates “a society capable of producing agreements about what it expects as a profile of the student to be educated”. For instance, the contribution of the 2009 version in relation to its predecessor, the original 96–98 version, is the connection between the transversal objectives of the curriculum and the contents to be covered, a link which also shows a more coherent project, where the general goals and the key ideas are tied to specific contents to be taught in the classrooms. The 2009 version shows more control of the policy objectives and their actual implementations by the Ministry – intensifying the disciplinary attributes of this technology. This issue also raises the question about the flexibility of the

curriculum, the margins of action that it allows teachers and schools; as pointed out in a previous section, the former law only prescribes the frame, the minimum guidelines to be taught, which guarantees two basic principles: freedom of teaching and a common national base of contents. These principles can be argued, as it will be analysed later, because the large amount of contents of the curriculum frame (leaving small margin to changes or additions from schools or teachers), and the pressure deployed by the national testing system (which was based on the official curricular contents).

This role of the assessment system, specifically the SIMCE test and the PSU, is crucial in the curriculum policy critical analysis. The department in charge during these processes was the Department of Curriculum and Assessment, which designed both pedagogical instruments nationally, so both policies were related, and the curricular contents were assessed by these national tests. According to CurrPM-2 “the pressure in favour of implementing these [curricular] definitions, and no others, in the areas assessed by the SIMCE is total”. Something similar happened with the PSU, which in 2004 replaced the former PAA (academic aptitude test) as the mechanism to enter the university system. From CurrPM-2 again, this redesign of this tool at the beginning of the 2000s was not only to improve this type of test, but mainly to match the contents measured by the test with the curriculum contents of the last two years of secondary education. The old PAA assessed other contents and ‘aptitudes’ more related to previous years of that educational stage. This new design put pressure mainly on the private schools, usually attended by the most privileged families of Chilean society, schools which, because they had the resources, were able to develop their own curricular programmes, which respected the guidelines of the national curriculum but not the specific contents and programmes offered by the Ministry. The PSU changed this situation, and demanded all types of schools impart the curriculum framework at all levels. CurrPM-2 adds that this change “aligns with the immense majority of the best educational systems in the world, where admission tests to the university system are all referred to the [national] curriculum, and that is what we did”. Synthesizing, the former policy maker explains three forces which act in support of

the curriculum implementation: the first is *time*, as a process of adaptation is needed by teachers and schools; the second is the mentioned assessment mechanisms, which put the pressure on the primary and secondary educational systems; and the third, although measures are still being implemented, is the teacher training provision, which pushes the faculties of education and pedagogy in universities and institutes to provide training in line with the curricular definitions. This last 'force' has been reinforced through the 'Inicia' (Initiate) test, a test that measures the subject knowledge of teachers; despite being voluntary, it is starting to show important influence in the teacher training system and in teachers' own perceptions (Ávalos, 2014). In the present, the discussion about the new law about the 'teacher's career' involves a series of assessment milestones, one of which is the debate around the compulsion or otherwise for pedagogy students to take an enabling test once they graduate from their undergraduate studies, a test which would assess curricular contents.

Thus, the assessment technologies took a key role in relation to the curriculum policy and the whole educational system in Chile. This fact provoked the translation of contents and skills into standards and measurements, putting pressure to teachers and schools in order to implement the curriculum in the classrooms. The political debate around the objectives and contents of the curriculum policy seems to be even more weakened through a technocratic policy making process which interrelated curriculum and assessment in a very strong manner. Control, discipline and assessment appear as the core technologies which underlie the national curriculum design and implementation in Chile.

## **2.2. Purposes and structures of the policy: a tensioned field**

The Chilean national curriculum seems to interact with different axes in its original purposes, between distinct groups of ideas and objectives; one axis related to integration and democracy and the other to economic development and competitiveness. The first axis puts the emphasis on matters of citizenship and critical thinking, and the other on work skills and competencies for the needs of

the economy. CurrPM-2 gives an account of those poles, and suggests that the main critics argued that the curriculum “went to the side of competitiveness, and the curriculum had an imprint, a bias towards that side. It is very interesting to ask where that interpretation comes from”. In relation to this critique, CurrPM-2 argues that “the makers took special care that it would not be so [biased towards competitiveness], but there is an external opinion from the left that it [the curriculum] has a bias in favour of competitiveness, more than [features of] cohesion, social integration and democracy”. The curricular reform was controversial, and CurrPM-2 published in 2001 a document called ‘Six misunderstandings about the curricular reform’. In it, CurrPM-2 makes a defence of the recently designed curriculum in six debated points: the importance of contents and not only processes in learning; the importance of transversal objectives which incorporate not only relational values but also cognitive skills as well; the importance of not only group-based pedagogical activities but also individual activities; the preponderance of teacher and national assessment over self-evaluation or co-assessment; the basing of the curriculum in different international sources; and that the minimum curricular contents do not constrain the freedom of teaching stated by the law. Nonetheless, this defence does not cover issues related to general or ideological tendencies, such as democratic values or skills for the economic development; it shows only part of the academic and political atmosphere regarding the new national curriculum. Regarding the issue about minimum contents and freedom of teaching, one of the key current policy makers of the Department of Curriculum and Assessment, CurrPM-1, points out a feature of the current curriculum version, a result of the 2009 and 2013 updates, compared with the 98 version, which is the change from curricular framework towards curricular basis, where the semantic difference between what is a frame and what is a basis speaks for itself. The current version acts as a base of knowledge, instead of framing the contents and competencies to be taught in the curriculum, in what constitutes a change of perspective in order to harmonize the tension between the compulsory nature of these bases and the principle of freedom of teaching. The curricular basis expects to be a more flexible model of policy, a versatile basis from where contents and teaching practices can be

adapted. But as was pointed out in the previous section of this chapter, the changes between the three versions of the curriculum are not significant in terms of contents and objectives, but only in terms of organization and pedagogical aspects, so the claim of curriculum overloaded by contents and competences remains valid.

Going back to the ideological debate, CurrPM-1 asserts that there is more than an ideological and pedagogical problem; this is also a political matter in terms of the need of “a balance in which all those different actors can be interpreted and can feel that the curriculum is ours and not only of one line or another” – recalling again ideas around groups of interests and ideologies intersected in the curriculum policy debate. In another passage CurrPM-1 states:

I believe that, well, the curricular definitions are a battlefield. Not a battlefield, but ultimately it is, is a dispute in some way... I don't know if 'dispute' is the best word, but it is a political negotiation (...), not in the partisan way, but about how we understand our common life (...)

Again here, according to the previous analysis made about the curriculum policy in this chapter, despite the lack of 'political opposition' mentioned above, the idea of the curriculum policy as a particular 'negotiation' or 'battlefield' is relevant. So, independent from the justifications, there is a tension, a political inclination which marks the curriculum as a whole. The problem around this proposition arises in the analysis related to technocracy and assessments policies. Recapitulating this issue around the controversial issues of the curriculum, the original policy-making process was developed – and in some points it is still working in a similar way – through a technocratic and top-down process, which was even more absent of political debate with the introduction of the strong connection between the curriculum and the SIMCE and PSU at the beginning of the 2000s. However, the contents, objectives and inspirations of the curriculum frame still denote a dispute of ideologies, values and priorities that mirrors a discursive conflict between democratic and neoliberal perspectives. From this

standpoint, while Apple would denote a conflict of interest groups, a poststructuralist approach would imply a matter of discourses. While the political debate was diminished by the technocratic character of the policy-making process of the curriculum, the policy still can be analysed as a “battlefield” of discourses and rationalities, and despite being translated by a technocracy, it still reflects the discursive conflicts of the Chilean society of the 90s. The later versions of the national curriculum inherited this tension and continued the original discursive tendency argued in this research. CurrPM-1 thinks that the 2009 and 2013 versions have a clearer disposition towards a connection with the economy than the original versions of the 90s:

The current one (...) has a stronger thing about having...about developing skills for the work world, maybe in another moment it was more about the development of autonomous and critical thinking (...). [The current curriculum] has an approach closer to the perspective of economic sustainability.

The tension between principles also takes the form of a ‘duality’, in which the applicability of the contents acts as a guiding principle:

In all the [curricular] sectors this duality between being capable of being, of having receptive abilities and productive skills too (...) is very strong, with an approach of competencies I would say. Like being able to develop skills which allow you display the abilities that you are developing in real contexts and concrete situations. (CurrPM-1)

So, the analysis points out an ambiguity, this double perspective in which different views of ‘how we understand the world’ enter to negotiate in the curricular ‘battlefield’. Alongside the diffuse idea of ‘receptive abilities’ are the capacities of processing reflectively knowledge and values; the notion of ‘productive skills’ is made clearer, as the words ‘producing’ and ‘skills’ are

connected, features related to the productive homo economicus and the human capital approach through the skills for the economy and the world of work.

This last duality also allows us to think about the previously mentioned competencies approach. The issue here can be understood in from two points of view, the first is the contents / competencies debate also sketched in the previous section of this chapter, where the contents appear as static and too theoretical, and the competencies as flexible knowledge to put into practice in life and in work. According to this standpoint, CurrPM-1 states that the new general law of education (LGE) “tried to embody an emphasis more in learning and less in contents”, a learning which “is needed to manage some things to display that learning”, an emphasis “in learning, in what you can do with that”. This conception of practical learning can be closer to the idea of competency, which complements and in some way seeks to improve a contents-based curriculum frame, change which was developed in the 2009 adjustment, where CurrPM-1 participated, and she remembers that there were “pressures from the academic world (...) [towards] a too content-based curriculum”. The second point of view is correlated with the way in which this debate and each concept is assumed. For instance, as CurrPM-2 pointed out above, contents can be understood as key knowledge in an education process, the minimum base that is needed as a national curriculum policy; and in the case of competencies the academic Victor CurrAc-3 states that, at least universities, are making efforts to change their curricula towards a competency base, as a way of invigorating their courses and educational offers, increasing their practicability in the world of work. But at the same time CurrAc-3 puts the notion of competency in the Chilean educational context, where according to his view the concept changes its original meaning linked to psychology studies in the late 40s, where “the competency has not to do with only a final capacity [understood] as a performance”, but is also connected with individual “motivation” and personal development. Now, in the Chile of the last three decades the concept has acquired a different meaning:



(...) the concept of competency is rearticulated and takes a very special meaning inside a discourse, we could say, neoliberal. It is linked, for example, to the concept of human capital. I would say that one of the centres of the neoliberal approach nowadays is the concept of human capital for various reasons. (CurrAc-3)

Competencies under the neoliberal discourse can be translated as skills in the 'human capital' meaning, as pertinent skills for applying practically, for work, for the economy and the labour market. This allows to understand this concept (competency) under the conceptual umbrella of a (neoliberal) discourse, which permeates the term with a particular meaning (related to human capital and skills for the world of work), adding new purposes and consequences to the curricular policy formulation.

Another subject around the purposes of a curriculum policy is its 'national' scope: Why have a 'national' curriculum, and what are the implications of that national pretension? There appear two strands of interpretation: equality and cohesion. The equality principle was also pointed out when it was reviewed as part of Michael Apple's postulates and the tensions with the issues of diversity – a common curriculum erases cultural differences – and assessment – which instead of equalizing, differentiates by ranking. Looking at the interviewees' perspectives both strands are justified as political objectives relating to the need to provide equal education, and doing that, to promote cohesion and a common culture as a national identity component. In relation to equality:

We don't have different learning expectations by, by, by any variable, nor by socio-economic level, nor by class, nor by...I don't know, gender, or [territorial] regions, mmm, we have the same expectations for all boys and girls who study in the educational system in Chile. (CurrPM-1)

CurrAc-4 also believes that there is a more profound issue underlying the equality principle, a 'compensation' principle, in which bigger problems are resolved at a different or smaller scale, and that would be the case for the national

curriculum logic and the whole educational system along with it, under the assumption whereby:

If there is inequality of opportunities at the macro level, the school at the micro one resolves it, gives to everyone the same opportunities, the same library, the same technological equipment, and all the other things.

Besides the questionable efficacy of this compensation goal, which can be interpreted as another purpose of this technology, this assertion also talks about the role of the State policies in the Chilean context. From this 'compensation' hypothesis it is possible to infer a policy frame in which the State resolves the social problems through specific policies, but, in some way, accepting the rules and dynamics in which society configures itself; in the post-authoritarian Chilean case, society remains strongly organized by market principles and the neoliberal discourse.

In any case, the curriculum is connected in some way, at least in policy rhetoric, with an equality principle, and that is one of the reasons of this 'national' scope of the policy framework. There is also the matter of cultural cohesion, where all students – and all Chileans in general, as primary and secondary education is compulsory by law – should learn similar contents, values and skills, which together constitute a common base of knowledge. Again, that does not mean that the educational experience is commonly and equally shared, as many problems regarding inequality in education persist, but there is still a political objective of equality and cohesion. Regarding the cohesion purpose, CurrAc-4 states that:

From the political point of view, the curriculum seeks the continuity of the State, the continuity of society; that is, it is also a political instrument, it seeks social cohesion, the national identity – those are the tasks of schooling. The curriculum in some way assumes this and that is the way it is.

Here also appears a notion of technology, a technology of control and discipline. The same CurrAc-4 highlights that “the curriculum is a tool which regulates what happens in the classroom (...). What it seeks is to normalize, standardize and control”, and in another passage that the curriculum “is a political cultural instrument which seeks to influence the future generations through schooling (...) it is essentially a power device, with the power of selection”. The problematization of cohesion and equality purposes, under the idea of normalization and control, is relevant for the analysis of the curriculum policy and the other policies undertaken in this research, as it assigns to them a strategic role, a role which is connected with previous and future issues of this study, about the tensions between critical thinking and human capital, citizenship and entrepreneurship. But as was pointed out above in the analysis of the policy texts, this common basis is weak in cultural contents (as the case of the lack of recognition towards indigenous populations) and stronger in skills and attitudes. The versions of curriculum navigate with difficulties facing two challenges: one articulating a political problem – cohesion-, and the other an economic problem – competition. This unresolved tension, such as they are, are left for schools and teachers to resolve. Some if this last point will be addressed in the eight chapter from rural teachers’ perspectives.

### **2.3. Political and institutional influences upon the national curriculum**

In this section, I will outline views regarding the institutional, discursive and technological influences on the curriculum policy in Chile. Some of them are explicit actions and influences in the policy-making process; others frame and form the rationale which underpins and articulates the policy. I will start with CurrPM-2’s perspective, as one of the protagonists of the current curriculum framework. He states:

We have a contemporary curriculum, of democratic inspiration, of course, in terms of values, and connected internationally, aligned with what we were working for seven years with the World Bank.

The influence of this joint work with the World Bank is qualified by Donoso (2005) as neoliberal and technocratic (pp. 114, 126), as it works with the same frame dictated by the neoliberal State inherited from Pinochet, and it applies reform ideas closer to technical definitions in curricular contents and their subsequent assessment system. This is what can be understood as a curriculum reform 'connected internationally', as it operated under the influence of the World Bank and other international trends, as a 'new orthodoxy' (Ball, 1998) in international educational reforms – which is still visible today.

CurrAc-3 presents a particular conceptual scheme to understand this influence, where the neoliberal influence shapes ideas and practices which originally come from different theoretical settings – as he outlines above in relation to the case of 'competencies' under the neoliberal rhetoric. Again, this is the learning process "as a mere behavioural process, assessable and without its link with the problematic of [student] development, where lies the problem of the [students'] rights. This does not come directly from the neoliberal model, but it fits with (...) behavioural perspectives, which matches maybe not with the model, but with the, I would say, neoliberal arguments" (CurrAc-3). Among relevant research regarding the relation between behavioural psychology and neoliberalism, Binkley (2011) studied the application of this relation in the coaching and training of workers in enterprises, and how this approach promotes an 'enterprise subjectivity'. Besides, this neoliberal rationale translated from behavioural disciplines, according with CurrAc-3, "is linked with the concept of accountability, which is related with the problem of standards, learning standards (...) but is the articulation that characterizes the neoliberal approach. One can see it easily in the statements of the World Bank". This claim of a learning process reduced to its behavioural dimension in the curriculum, is connected to testing technologies, which are based on learning and behavioural standards, rather than in a deeper

understanding of the 'student development'. This diagnosis is shared by CurrAc-4, who sees that besides the World Bank's original influence, currently the OECD and the PISA test also have an important influence in the curricular policy in Chile, as it is "very aligned with the OECD criteria, in relation to measurement, standardization, homogenization, comparison". This academic perceives a tension between the human development curriculum discourse, an integral curriculum, and the "standardization through the acquisition of competencies", or competencies assessed under a standard international model, or under the influence of that model in the case of the national assessment system.

In addition, in relation to international institutions, CurrPM-2 also mentions the influence of CEPAL, specifically in one key publication<sup>12</sup> from the beginning of the 90s, about education and its transformations for the current times (CEPAL, 1992). The policy maker explains that although the text offers a proposal which seeks to equilibrate principles of integration along with principles of competitiveness, it presents a clear bias towards and emphasis on competitiveness, being a trend much more developed than that of integration. Despite that, and going back to the previous topic about the critiques on the bias of the curriculum, CurrPM-2 argues that this imbalance is not present in the curricular definitions: "I would dispute that the curriculum was with that bias, and the first test for seeing that is the transversal objectives. If you want to see the ideological bases and the values options, do analyse the transversal objectives, how economic they are". This last proposal was also advanced in the outcomes presented in the previous section of this chapter, outcomes which showed a combination of trends, making it difficult to conclude clear tendencies. From that conclusion, this study addresses the curriculum policy issues as a negotiation field, a tension between principles which show ambivalent faces of the dominant discourse which underlies the policy. Analysing the CEPAL book (1992), it also shows a certain ambivalence in its proposals and objectives between citizenship and competitiveness, between policies linked to integration and those linked to

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<sup>12</sup> In the original Spanish: "Education and knowledge: the axis of productive transformation with equity".

performance, knowledge production as a driver of development. Again, even in its background, the national curriculum shows this tension.

On the other hand, CurrPM-2 mentions a UNESCO publication as another influence of the curricular development (Delors, 1996). The report *Learning: The Treasure Within* sketches four pillars of learning, which mix different forms: the gratuity of knowing, as the interest and pleasure of knowledge as an end in itself; learning for making in practical terms, related to professional competencies and the needs of the labour market; learning incorporating elements of tolerance, respect and cooperation; and critical thinking as an 'internal journey'. Also, "In a world in permanent change, one of its main engines seems to be the innovation, both social and economic, there must be conceived a special place to imagination and creativity" (Delors, 1996, p. 101. From its translation from Spanish). Again here there are different ideas, views and values which overlap to each other. The influences of WB, CEPAL and UNESCO talk about a curriculum policy immersed in the international debate and influence, mirroring a discursive conflict which increasingly is resolved towards a global neoliberal hegemony and influence.

#### **2.4. The profile of the student promoted by the curriculum**

Now I will move into the analysis of the profile of the student to be educated by the State through the national curriculum. Here again arise issues from different, potentially antagonistic fields. The task in the further discussion is to elucidate which discursive trends prevail and have a more powerful influence over the policy. CurrPM-2 appeals to the previously mentioned UNESCO report about the four pillars in education, and states that the profile of the student from the curriculum:

(...) mixes the humanistic Western education, which touches an autonomous being, capable of moral discernment, potent, educated, democratic, capable of citizen coexistence and of valuing this coexistence (...), not only respectful, but generous

(...). It conjugates well the tension in which all contemporary curricula have to deal between the global and the local, between the nation and globalization.

This tension is also illustrated in other “oppositions” or “poles between imagination and discipline and rigor (...) the type of subject that is being educated, imaginative, flexible, open (...) open to the world, loyal to the nation (...) and of course [features of] pro-activity and creativity, and I think that it is the word entrepreneurship”. CurrPM-2 points out that the last curricular adjustment of Piñera’s government – the first right-wing government after the dictatorship – has an accent on “activity and entrepreneurship, which has to do with contracts and confidences; it has to do with the capacity of individual planning in respect to projects (...)”. The current policy authority, CurrPM-1, agrees in relation to the autonomy principle of the curriculum towards the profile of the student, which “is also responsible for his own learning process, committed to building a world”. Again here the neoliberal subject can be found – although not exclusively – in an autonomous-rational, productive-flexible, entrepreneur individual, developed through skills which can increase his human capital to be inserted in the world of work, and functional to the growth of the economy. The notions of ‘individual planning’ and ‘responsible for his own learning process’ are related to an idea of autonomy linked to self-responsibility; values and skills connected to the neoliberal governmentality, where the responsibility and access to social welfare depends on the individual provision of goods and services (chapter 1).

The tensions within the curriculum and the profile of the student are outlined through definitions which allow of more questions than responses. Beyond the policy makers’ original intentions, the curriculum incorporates these elements, which in that specific frame acquires ambiguous meanings. Paraphrasing, the question is: to be creative / flexible / autonomous / active / responsible for what purpose? The answers are related to the economic and political lives of society. CurrPM-1 describes this scenario in the following way:

There is a double tension in the curriculum. What do you want? To produce, ultimately (...) available people to employ themselves and to work actively, and be very good employee-workers? Or that they also have the abilities to live in society, questioning the world that we have, capable of changing the things that need to be changed, and to manage, in what is called citizen education? This duality that the OECD also does, as skills for working and skills for living.

CurrAc-4, for his part, opines that:

It is not a curriculum around ends, but it is instrumental (...) to the economic system, not to the human being. In other words, the [government] can say that we are going to educate a complete person, but the curriculum builds a subject who knows maths, who renders PISA and SIMCE tests – but there are no such tests in arts subjects. And what is measured is what counts.

So, the student's profile reflects this duality, and CurrAc-4 gives another clue to clarifying the different tendencies in the curriculum, in relation to the social and economic conditions in which the country bases its development. This issue connects with the discussion in the previous chapter about the Chilean development model, a model driven mainly by the markets under an economic perspective. It is not that the political elements are completely absent in this model, but they seem to be in a secondary role. And this is what can be inferred from CurrAc-4's argument that there is talk about an education which seeks to educate a complete individual, which actually deals with a duality of discursive positions, but at the end of the day, the balance falls into the needs of the development of the country, a curriculum situated in that discursive context, under those values and economic objectives, through those technologies aiming to produce a student 'who renders tests'. The previous analysis of the competencies structure of the curriculum is also linked to this point about technologies of assessment and the profile of the student. CurrAc-4 again gives an interpretation:



A competitive student, in the deepest understanding of the concept 'competent', is a competent student, someone that uses his capacities to solve problems in life. In fact, now the curriculum by competencies is fashionable (...) the performance is an expression of the competence, and the performance is something observable and measurable.

In this complex policy construct, the structure by competencies appears as a multi-functional strategy, in order to update the curriculum to a mode based on the practical application of skills and contents in different social and labour contexts, and also a mode which is connected to an assessment system through the measurement of objective learning standards. These insights allow us to illustrate the tendency in the curriculum policy and the type of student to be educated under a curriculum framed by skills, and measured by a strong national testing system. The dynamic between curriculum and assessment influence a profile of a student continuously measured under ambivalent principles: around democratic or humanistic principles, i.e. citizenship and respect to diversity (as CurrPM-2 would claim); but also under the measurement of standardized contents and skills, which define a "behavioural" learning process (as CurrAc-3 would claim), closer to the productive homo economicus.

To recap, the profile of the student to be educated and what it means to be educated as constructed within the curriculum policy, from the perspective of the interviewees – academics and policy makers – displays an uneven duality of values and purposes, between democratic values and skills for the economic development of the country – or skills for the world of work – a duality which also shows a polyvalent deployment of concepts of autonomy, flexibility and creativity, with a clear bias towards entrepreneurial interpretations. All of this is set within an assessment frame defined in relation to competencies, which makes competent students under a competitive economic context guided by market logics.

## **2.5. The problem of diversity**

As a last point, I will mention the issue related to diversity, a national curriculum for a diverse social, cultural and geographical context. This topic arises from one of the tensions identified by this research: the rural/urban difference is a relevant point in terms of diverse educational settings, carrying the risk of implementing a unique, centralized national curriculum which loses pertinence and meaning to rural students and the educational institutions in general. This topic is also connected with the idea of equality outlined above, the purpose of an equal education for all, which provides cohesion and identity. But this set of objectives, contents and competencies may result unfamiliar in particular contexts.

CurrAc-3 points out that the policy “is not a curriculum which incorporates in a meaningful way the cultural diversity, the ethnic diversity, and even less the pedagogical diversity.” In that way, he continues, “the curriculum is tremendously homogenizing”, when it should be at the service of the students’ processes of individuation, of individual self-formation in terms of the capacity of providing your own biography, your own identity. In this way, the curriculum provides a standard set of competencies and contents, which, in some way, neglects the individual development, imposing a homogenous set of values and world-views functional to the neoliberal development model of the country.

From another perspective, a key one in the Chilean context – as in many Latin American countries – ethnic diversity needs to be recognized, with the presence of indigenous populations in different regions of the country, which at the same time correspond to different indigenous cultures and traditions. The curricular policy has made small, symbolic concessions, mainly in terms of contributions for the education of specific indigenous languages – the majority are not recognized in the curriculum – in schools. As CurrAc-4 states:

Chile has constitutionally recognized eight ethnic groups, with eight dialects, and the scholarship system, the schooling as political instrument, defines Spanish as the only official language. Imagine the tensions that exist between schooling and the cultures.

Instead of recognizing, promoting and legitimizing the indigenous cultures, CurrAc-4 adds, the curriculum “seeks to normalize, homogenise around the performances which express the achievements [pursued by] the policy”, in what constitutes a political contradiction, between the constitution and educational policies. Although the indigenous issue is not addressed in this research, it is an important characteristic and a problem in many rural areas in Chile, and in part reflects the problem of lack of recognition of the rural history and social features mentioned in chapter 4 (about rurality). The critique and difficulty regarding the homogenizing nature and implementation of the national curriculum policy is crucial in terms of this study, as its purposes and characteristics, and the profile of the student to be educated by the policy, overlap with the national pretension of this educational model. How rural students deal with and relate to this model is something to be addressed in further chapters.

### 3. Discussion points

#### **3.1. The neoliberal print beneath a conflicted curricular field and a tensioned student profile**

The Chilean national curriculum has been analysed as a conflicted policy field. This is not because it was actually debated between different related groups or actors, rather the opposite. The policy-making process of the 90s – the core of the current curriculum – was mainly a technocratic process with limited participation of related actors and the implementation of a small consultation process. Despite the fact that the last adjustments to the curriculum involved a wider consultation, the character of the process remained pre-eminently technocratic. So the struggled nature of the Chilean curriculum lies in the discursive conflict beneath it, from perspectives that deal with democratic-humanistic values and ideas to neoliberal trends linked to notions of entrepreneurship, human capital and self-responsibility within the context of a neoliberal development model (chapter 4). I say ‘conflict’ – following CurrPM-1 and the “battle field” term – because both rationalities,

democratic and neoliberal, although they eventually can converge, in this case they appear in separate lanes, with purposes and values that do not dialogue between them. In this conflictive arena of discourses, the neoliberal one seems to prevail; the curriculum functions in a national development model, providing skills and competences for the world of work, and immersed in a governing rationality (governmentality) which seems to be more worried to assess and measure common standards, than to teach and develop political autonomy and critical thinking.

Therefore, the student profile assumed by, embedded in and produced by the curriculum has a design, structure and orientation that also reflects this tension, and its neoliberal imprint. While the first analysis of the history and the policy texts were not that conclusive in terms of the profile of the student that the State seeks to educate through the curriculum, the analysis of interviews provided a clearer viewpoint. While the text is ambivalent and presents divergent features, two external factors appear as decisive in this analysis: the development model and assessment technologies. In the original curriculum of the 90s, the influence of the neoliberal development model in the framing of the curriculum frame seems more fundamental than the inspiration from democratic principles, influence that increased in the two later adjustments (2009 and 2013), giving a functionality to the curriculum associated with a society and government regime thirsty for economic growth and international competitiveness, with the resulting mentality that students should be taught for a similar purpose. The assessment system stamped this trend when it generated common standards, where contents and skills are easier to assess, rather than meaningful learning processes or a deeper consciousness of citizenship.

### **3.2. Curriculum and assessment as a neoliberal dispositif**

It was mentioned in the previous discussion point that the close and intense relation of the curriculum policy and the assessment system is evident in the Chilean case. Indeed so close it would be difficult to analyse the curriculum policy

leaving aside the assessment one, as they complement to each other, and make more effective each implementation. Where the curriculum seeks to be applied at the national level, the assessment system presses schools and teachers to teach the official curriculum in order to perform better in the tests – and along with that to be rewarded by different incentives framed by the market-based educational model, where parents choose and pay for education, and students compete in a selective university model. And where the assessment system seeks to provide general analysis and information to a ‘managing at a distance’ mode of governing, which ranks, rewards or closes schools by their performances; the curriculum provides those common standards based on contents and skills to be later evaluated by the national tests.

Curriculum and assessment as interrelated technologies of discipline and assessment, together constitute a particular neoliberal dispositif of governmentality. Together they control and rank schools, teachers and students; make schools compete with each other, give incentives to teachers to perform better in tests, and subjectivize students through the development of skills, self-responsibility, a sense of entrepreneurship and rational thinking. As highlighted in the paragraph above, CurrPM-2 states that the strategic purpose of the assessment policy is to strengthen the curriculum implementation. I call this strategy a ‘dispositif’, where technologies from a common neoliberal discourse converge in a more effective construct. Each technology depends on the other, and together build and shape a particular educational system, under principles (or technologies) of competition, selection and control, promoting a particular type of subjectivity in students.

### **3.3. Geographical (rural) diversity: a forgotten dimension**

Finally, as pointed out in the last sub-section of the interview analysis, the national scope of the Chilean national curriculum erases meaningful social, cultural and

geographical differences that coexists in the country. The most eminent case is the indigenous one, but I also claim that socio-geographical differences are forgotten, particularly that which speaks to urban and rural distinctions. As outlined in chapter 4, Chilean rurality experiences important changes to be considered, and as it will be presented in chapters 7, 8 and 9, wherein academics claim for a recognition of the rural in the education system, and rural students and teachers live and enact the educational dynamic in particular modes. All the rural particularities prevail notwithstanding the homogeneous curriculum and assessment policies, not thanks to them. But also the rural educational actors enact these policies in a particular way, where the practice is affected by the policy prescriptions, and the policy is represented through specific practices in rural settings.

As can be seen an important issue for this research is the lack of relevance of a socio-geographical dimension in the curriculum frame, where spaces and places are forgotten or caricaturized through general and simplified images distant from the rural experience. This oblivion is consistent with the residual category defining a rural territory in Chile (chapter 4) in which rural space is left aside by official policy. How schools, teachers and students deal with this policy frame, is a matter that will be addressed in later chapters.

## Chapter 6: Technical-vocational education policies

This chapter focuses on secondary TVET policy in Chile, as a pertinent educational policy in relation to *the rural*. The chapter is structured in two sections. First, I will present the analysis of the official policy documents and sources. Then, I will analyse the interviews carried out with one policy maker and two academics regarding the Chilean secondary TVET, as sources of a wider and critical perspective towards the policy. This section will include also relevant Chilean academic literature that refers to these issues.<sup>13</sup> The final section presents a summary of the main discussion points provoked by the chapter.

### 1. Technical secondary education policies in Chile

Secondary technical-professional education in Chile is provided in the last two of the four years of secondary schooling, and it is an alternative to the scientific-humanistic general path which seeks to lead to further, academic, tertiary education. During the military dictatorship during the 1970s and 1980s, along with the deregulation of the whole educational system and its schools, the TVET schools were transferred from the administration of the Ministry of Education to the local municipalities, leaving as an exception 71 schools which remained under the control of business associations representing different industries. Before the curricular reform during the 90s, under the deregulation inherited from the authoritarian government, the TVET specialities reached more than 400, a number which has been drastically reduced and reorganized in the recent years (Sevilla, 2012). During the last two decades the average registration of the TVET path is around 45%, and students from the lower quintiles of the socioeconomic

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<sup>13</sup> This scheme differs from the one applied in the previous chapter, where the literature was presented in a separate section from the interviews. In this case, I decide to present them together as the topics, analysis and times of the publications better correspond to and complement the interviews, offering together a more consistent analysis.

distribution make up 90% of the enrolment (Gallart & Sevilla, 2003; Larrañaga, Cabezas, & Dussailant, 2013).

The secondary TVET in Chile seeks to connect with tertiary TVET or provide the tools for students to be inserted in the labour market after school. According to the curricular bases for technical-professional education of 2013 (MINEDUC), there are, nowadays, 34 specialities, some of them with particular sub-specialities (17 in total), distributed in 15 economic sectors. Every speciality is described according to a graduate profile, which states the competences needed for the specific work field. There are general competences, common for all the specialities, and technical competences associated with each speciality. Each speciality also points out the context of the labour activity in terms of its broad economic activity, indicators about that labour field, and the outcomes that are expected from that work.

Among the general competences mentioned, it is possible to outline a profile of the graduate or student to be educated by the policy. These competences are referred to as “competences which transcend the labour world, and are applicable to other ambits of the person’s lives, because they are oriented to their integral training” (taken from the secondary TVET curricular basis; MINEDUC, 2013a, p. 12). This quote links to part of the capabilities approach proposals, in terms of the wider skills relating to wider purposes in individuals’ lives. But reviewing the characteristics which outline this profile, there appear the following: communicative (point 1) and reading (2) skills; working responsibly (3), respectfully (5, 6), collaboratively (4), carefully (11) and efficiently (9); disposition for lifelong learning (7) and IT management (8); deployment of initiative administratively and financially (10); and taking informed decisions about savings, insurance, debt and investment (12). Although there is no definition of what ‘integral’ training means, the work-oriented characterization of this integral education, which is supposed to be wider than the ‘technical’ skills or competences related to the vocational specialities, is clear. It is interesting how the document outlines this profile of the graduate from secondary TVET education, what notions of education and integral training are supposed in it, and to what extent they are different from the



academic scientific-humanistic path. The issues that I want to pursue from this are related to the purpose of technical-professional education in the context of a neoliberal-capitalist economy: Are there any issues associated with the fact that students are being trained mainly for the world of work? Is that the intrinsic goal of education or at least of TVET education? Or does the 'integral education' exist only for the scientific-humanistic and academic path, while the TVET path is just training for working in different or specific jobs? What are the social, political and subjective repercussions of such an education model? I will seek to problematize these and other questions in the following paragraphs.

The TVET policy is an alternative to the main curriculum (scientific-humanistic) policy. It is included as a different path in the general policy – the national curriculum, and the LGE – and the unique guidelines are stated in the curricular bases for technical-professional education mentioned above. For now, the TVET policy has not been formulated as such – i.e. in a law, official regulation, specific ministry department or division, etc. – and currently it is in a process of formulation through a specific strategy, partly as law projects and official texts, after decades of unregulated TVET provision.

The current government of Michelle Bachelet (2014–2018) is leading this process of discussion and formulation of the policy. The Ministry of Education website offers a brief description of this process, which through dialogue with different stakeholders is basing the policy in “four axes: quality and pertinence, inclusion and orientation, articulation, and governance” (MINEDUC). Quality and pertinence are related to the requirements of the labour market; inclusion and orientation are understood in terms of access, vocational orientation and increase in the social estimation of the TVET; articulation concerns the business and industrial world and the formal recognition of previous knowledge acquired; and governance articulates the sectors of education, economy and labour, along with the participation of employers, workers and TVET providers. Besides those axes, the summary adds a goal of the creation of a qualifications framework, leading to an integrated TVET system. These declarations state a policy project which seeks to involve and position the TVET provision within the jobs-markets stakeholders

and to connect the TVET stages in a clearer path of training. This takes place inside a governance scheme which involves industrial and governmental actors from fields external to the educational – i.e. interrelating the Ministries of Labour and Economy with the Ministry of Education. This main intention of involvement and connection of the policy shows an historical position isolated from its educational and social context. Besides, these purposes are not thought only from a technocratic level; rather, the policy represent a discussion held throughout the last years, rescuing part of the features and practices that in isolation and atomized were occurring in different local experiences. This research will check the status of these ideas and purposes in the rural education practice.

To conclude, the Chilean TVET policy for secondary schools is based on very recent general curricular guidelines, texts which, along with the policy project under design, provide the principal ideas and meanings of this policy. The characteristics of the secondary TVET student profile differ between their intentions (general, integral) and their specificities (very technical and oriented to the world of work). This tension, also happening in the curriculum policy (see the previous chapter), appears here with less ambivalence, and the work orientation is stronger. Despite claims which advocate for this type of priorities, as will be seen in the next section, and recapping part of the purposes of this this research, I will try to problematize this issue and analyse its consequences in rural education and students' subjectivities. The policy will be analysed mainly observing the human capital assumptions (chapter 1) and the alternative ones (first section of this chapter), plus other features regarding the *neoliberal subject*, elements which will provide the (critical) analytical concepts to study this policy.

## 2. TVET in Chile: policy-maker and academic discourses

The TVET policy is analysed here from the perspective of one of the policy makers directly responsible for its reform (named here as *TVET-PM* [TVET Policy Maker]), and from the analyses of two related academics who have studied these policies

(*TVETAc-1*, *TVETAc-2* [TVET Academic]). In the case of the academics, I complement the discourses captured from the interviews with other published studies or papers from the literature reviewed. This section encompasses five different topics and aspects of the TVET policy: the absence of a policy, the approach of the system, the profile of the student, the class and gender bias of the TVET system, and its internal lack of articulation. The interviews and the texts transcribed - along with the education policies - are analysed from a critical discourse analysis, with the objective of detecting those discourses which sustain the policy, here again based on the guiding questions which seek to detect those neoliberal or alternative discursive trends, rationalities and technologies.

### **2.1. The absence of a policy**

Regarding the absence of a policy, one of the interviewees, TVET-PM, member of the technical-professional secretariat, the office in charge of the design and provision of guidelines for the TVET policies in the Ministry of Education in Chile, states that the ministry does not have a proper technical-professional education policy, and one of the goals of the current administration is to promote and design one at the secondary and tertiary level. One of the reasons for this is that the topic has been gaining space in the political agenda, acknowledging that to date it has not been given much importance; the TVET policy agenda has struggled to be considered, discussed, funded, prioritized. So, if there is no existing TVET policy, how has the system been operating until now? The policy-maker points out that there is a general education policy, and within it there is (or should be) a distinction of the technical-professional alternative in the curriculum. The TVET system works from curricular bases and study programmes, and it is supervised by the same actors of the general education system. In summary, there are curricular guidelines, there is the secretariat thinking the policy, but implementation, formally, is the responsibility of no specialized department or division. How can we call a policy a policy if it has no formal definition? I will continue using the term in its loose official definition as a quite unregulated system; as we have seen in the

sections above, the nature of a policy is wide and conflicted, as an act of governing with different actors involved in the different stages of its development (Ball, 1993).

The two academics interviewed corroborate this diagnosis regarding the Chilean TVET policy. One of them, TVETAc-1, states that:

The secondary technical-professional education is characterized by an inaction regarding the decision making (...) without questioning whether the structure or model of provision is adequate for the Chilean reality.

TVETAc-2, the second academic interviewed, asseverates that the lack of attention to the TVET system from the political authorities is not consistent with the high proportion of enrolment in secondary TVET in Chile – around 45% of students follow this educational track. It is not easy to find a shared reason to understand this situation, but TVETAc-1 gives a possible hypothesis:

[T]he idea that (...) this education (secondary TVET) simply reproduces certain patterns of inequity, and that those skills which are needed in the enterprises are not trained in the school but in the workplace (...) makes it easy to leave the secondary TVET just as it is now (...) to do nothing.

The above quotation infers that currently there are two possible problems with the TVET: one is the concern about the segmented socioeconomic distribution of the enrolment, comparing the technical-professional and scientific-humanistic paths, the first being chosen predominantly by the poorest segments of society; and the second is the lack of pertinence and poor training provided by the secondary TVET from the perspective of the employers. From another perspective, TVETAc-2 refers to the lack of consideration of the young (student) perspective when the design or implementation of the policy is thought, adding a second

problem of pertinence: the TVET is not pertinent to the students' expectations and cultures.

In summary, the TVET policy, and in particular its secondary, but also its tertiary version, is functioning under an unregulated framework, supervised by an unspecialized office, and responding to minimum curricular guidelines, which in some way give a place to its provision. But really here we are talking about the absence of a policy, a policy formulation which since almost a decade has been in constant development, but never ready. Beyond its nuances, this problem presents a policy with low importance to the State agenda, always postponed, deliberately forgotten and positioned as irrelevant. Later I will explore some theoretical connections with this issue in the context of rural education.

## **2.2. The policy approach and the profile of the student**

In this part, I will condense what I planned originally as two separate analyses: that of the objectives of the secondary TVET in Chile and that of the profile of the student to be educated in it. My original idea was to present first the purposes and then the profile, both from the perspectives of the interviewees; but reviewing these themes I realized that they have quite a lot in common, maybe too much. This is because the profile is, in part, the embodiment of the purposes, and the purposes can be better clarified through the profile. So, in this section it will be possible to glimpse, together and alternately, the policy purposes and the profile of the student in the secondary TVET policy.

Regarding the goals, I am going to present the purposes of the TVET policy from the perspective of the interviewees, their guidelines but also their tensions and contradictions. At the first approximation, there appear certain obscurities in the policy, especially when describing and analysing its historical trajectory and its main definitions.

With respect to the profile of the student to be educated by the secondary TVET pathway, from the interviewees' words (discourses), again the ambivalence

is seen: a profile built from tensioned grounds, what could be a reflect of the same ambivalent policy purposes. I have already sketched out this student in the review of the policy in the previous section; now I will analyse this issue from the academic and policy-maker perspectives.

To start with, TVETAc-2 states the basic strategic ambiguity of the TVET policy regarding its purpose: “job placement and/or continuation into higher education”, objectives which appeared from the 90s curricular reform and replaced “a system [based only in] early labour insertion”. Where we can find a positive wide purpose in the policy, it is also possible to notice a vagueness, a lack of strategy and a site of struggle. In this research, I try to evaluate what the consequences of this ambiguity are or can be.

From TVET-PM, another pair of purposes can be found: “a purpose of developing qualified workforce for the needs of the country, which is projected as a vehicle for social improvement”; in other words: “the [TVET] education is a development driver, but also a driver of social mobility”, an integral education which can constitute “the beginning of a life project” and “the education for a citizen (...) related to productivity and competitiveness”. Furthermore, it is “a curriculum related to the demands of the productive sector” but also “provides tools to students for being autonomous subjects, with the capacities of building personal projects, instead of a relatively limited path for an early exit towards the labour market”. In relation to the profile of the student to be educated through the policy, the student “has to be capable of contributing to the country’s productivity and competitiveness, [but] from a wider scope, because I believe that we have to be capable of installing the idea of the citizen” (TVET-PM).

These quotes show part of a tension in the TVET policy, its recurrent self-explanation of what is and what is not, or how it is generally conceived (‘a short pathway to the world of work’) and how it should be correctly understood. In any case, the TVET is under this pressure from the labour markets, the productive sectors and the (market-oriented) development of the country, and at the same time navigates through these political concerns; the policy is not left only under those influences, but is thought as a mechanism for social justice and

comprehensive education. An underlying question can be: Is the TVET only training for the fluctuating demands of the markets? And for specific or different workplaces? Why could this be a problem? What is wrong in filling workplaces and educating with skills which generate job opportunities? To some extent, for the Ministry of Education the TVET path cannot appear tied to the markets and industries; it should be something more. But here I problematize whether this 'something more' is certainly 'something' with relative importance in the policy definition and implementation, and in later chapters, how it is enacted in rural schools and how this affects, or does not affect, students' subjectivities.

Going further into this ambivalence, there are some variabilities in the labour market demands of TVET, differences which give relevant details to understand how the policy design and implementation work in practice. TVET-PM points out that even with the purpose of offering continuity until later stages in the educational system, while "we want the technical school to develop not only technical skills, but also socio-emotional abilities with the possibility of accessing higher education", there are other pressures or needs that should be resolved first:

There are some specialities of high employability in which the students finish their secondary education and are hired rapidly, such as the mining, electronic, metal-mechanic specialities (...). Here, I would say, it is not necessary that the continuity of studies be immediate.

The country's "technician of the future" should also relate to the territorial needs of the "productive surroundings" and its possibilities of "entrepreneurship"; this is because "all the background information from the productive sector indicates that there are required more and better technicians" (TVET-PM). The productive sectors and markets, in which the TVET can fit in an efficient and fast way, present a tempting offer. The quotation above exposes that sense of velocity in which it seems that there is no other option than to accommodate the pressure from and demands of industry. The ways in which this pressure and these demands are enacted differ among different settings and circumstances; at a national level

the system is fed by information and statistics, negotiation meetings between industrial and business association leaders and government representatives; at school level the influence is deployed mainly through local meetings and informal agreements between schools and companies. In any case, these dynamics are not planned through settled and official mechanisms, but are practices developed over time, where actors of an unregulated system try to accomplish their goals (schools looking for their students' insertion in the labour market or in technical higher education) and defend their interests (enterprises looking to fill their current or future workplaces).

Rephrasing, behind this scenario there are three key issues: the industrial development of the country, which needs proper workers for its internal objective – the continuing growth and development of the economy – where any time gap between the needs of industry and the supply of labour for the workplace has economic consequences; the schools, which try to offer efficient technical paths ending in a proper workplace, goals also related to a market-based school system, in which schools try to show positive figures on employability or higher education to current or future students' families; and third, the individuals, students/workers, who are under this pressure too, as subjects trained to secure a labour supply. How can an integral education be provided under these circumstances? How is a subjectivity achieved under these educational and labour conditions?

Regarding the relation between TVET and the development of the country, TVET-PM thinks that there is a challenge in making some industrial sectors – such as mining and salmon production – more attractive to young students, especially in rural zones, when instead they consider moving towards urban areas and the connected industries: “the country needs technicians, and technicians in the sectors which are strategic for the development of the country”. For this purpose, the policy maker believes that the role of the teacher is important: they have a say in the vocational orientation of the students; they can transmit the motivation needed to follow certain technical paths according to the needs of the country:



If the professor does not understand how a technician contributes in the value chain of a productive sector, it is unlikely that he can transmit the motivation that a person needs for a labour trajectory (TVET-PM).

This is a further step in the argument: there is a normative demand to contribute to the country, but in a particular way, inside the 'value chain' of the economy, which it is the citizen's duty to support. It is inferred that the vocational orientation of a student can or should be guided towards the needs of the country – or the industry. This guidance also provides a notion of where the better opportunities are, where the 'value' is – and how you can be valuable too. Again, there are subjective implications in these perspectives, which appear closely related to gain in human capital in order to be attractive to the markets, implications which can also influence the perspectives of students.

Moreover, questioning this productive and market orientation of the TVET policy, it appears to be a blind alley: the nature of the TVET is – or must be – in relation to its nearest surroundings, "it cannot but be pertinent to their demands (...). [I]f you have a good TVET it has to be integrated into the business enterprises. If you don't have that, then what? What internal guideline is going to permit you to dispense with it?" (TVETAc-1). What is being argued here is that there is no alternative for TVET policy than to respond to the markets and industries; that is its first and preponderant goal. In relation to the discussions in previous sections, the political concerns of the TVET role are obscured under this assumption, and the tension between economy and politics tends to fade; between a functionalist human capital and an alternative, capabilities approach, the balance seems to be tilted towards the former.

Even the profile of the student in the policy intends "to channel him [the student] in a sort of funnel which determines him to work or study in a unique and exclusive ambit"; this dynamic education-workplace, according to the studies of TVETAc-2, is experienced by the secondary TVET students as "very narrow and unsatisfactory", because it offers a limited track towards later work experiences, specific skills for specific workplaces. This assumption is different from the lifelong

learning purposes of the TVET system mentioned in the UNESCO recommendations in chapter 2, where the notion of training which educates a flexible worker who can fit in different work scenarios is part of what the current changing (neoliberal) labour markets are demanding. The multiple or ambiguous purposes of the Chilean TVET policy generate:

(...) many cultural resistances or common senses in educational actors and also in families, with respect to a system or a type of education which actually (...) tends to *deschool* and [only] trains for working, and that is a problematic knot which persists; it is still present as an irresolute issue (TVETAc-2).

Advancing along this line of argument, again, issues related to the influence of the human capital theory over the TVET policy in Chile appear. Skilled workers are needed for the growth of the economy, for the knowledge economy, the country's development. The "technical-functionalist approach [envisages] education for work, an education destined to train human capital necessary for the productive apparatus, without seeing it from a broader social perspective" (TVETAc-1). This perspective, following TVETAc-1, "acknowledges the technical education as a vehicle for achieving higher productivity, because it is integrated *into the educational system*". So, the human capital approach is translated in the TVET policies, according to TVETAc-2, through the influence of the work skills model, which provides a frame of skills or competences where each technical pathway is structured and guided. Certain skills are needed for certain positions, according to the particular workplaces; each technical pathway offers a start to workers towards deeper specialization inside an industry and its companies. The human capital approach positions the TVET policy inside a bigger strategy for the development of the country, and adds a new form of capital – inside the 'value chain' – to the economy.

To finish this part, I would add one last interesting characteristic to the profile of the student – not in this case from the viewpoint of policy, but considering the type of student who pursues secondary technical-professional

studies in Chile; it is related to a particular type of reflexivity. In a path where the options are narrow, but accordingly also clearer, TVET students are in a position to project their future academic and labour steps and are under pressure to do so with considerable precision; they are “students who know why they are there and what they want to do later (...). [T]hey bring forward their vocational options (...). [T]hey, more than others, need to visualize what they are going to do in the future” (TVETAc-1). As TVETAc-2 states, even students’ complex possible trajectories – some work after school and save money to come back to higher education; others go directly there, others directly to work – are “related to a clarity or a reflection about their own personal situation and the challenges which that condition implicates” (TVETAc-2). This last feature introduces the next part of this policy analysis, one related to the class bias in a policy historically addressed to certain populations of students, who under precarious conditions are challenged to project themselves into the TVET path and its possibilities.

### **2.3. Class bias and gender bias**

There are particular and very clear features in the secondary TVET system which are elaborated by the interviewees, which are its social biases, particularly in two explicit ambits: class and gender. I will outline them briefly in this part. This aspect is related, again, to the historical assumptions by which the policy was started and has been developed through the educational system in the country.

From its diffuse origins the technical path in education appears on the one hand as a medium for training workers for specific industries, thus helping in solving the problem of the poverty of young students, offering an education able to bring rapid employment and its consequent urgent (low) income. The TVET historically “is (...) related to the question regarding what to do with the poor through the educational offer” (TVETAc-2). This social concern, although during the last decades and years it has adopted a broader perspective, looking to generate an educational path that can provide a feasible alternative for a wider portion of the population, remains with a strong class bias:

In practice this [system is] highly segmented. It is segmented because it is where the poor study and that is radical; this is to say, looking at the enrolment graphics you realize how the secondary TVET concentrates on the two poorest income quintiles. (TVETAc-2)

There are important discursive issues regarding this situation, in terms of rationality, practice, language and materiality. This is because the secondary TVET path – and in general the tertiary one too – is a road to be followed by the poorest segments of the population, and also provides worse material conditions in future workplaces, compared with students who follow the scientific-humanistic path and/or undertake a professional/university tertiary education. This is also a historical issue which has continued across generations. In the consideration of the future alternatives followed by students, there are also other class meanings associated with this division, preconceived views regarding who should follow a determined educational path (one for the rich, another for the poor), which ultimately contribute to the reproduction of inequality in Chilean society.

But, how does this segmentation operate inside schools? The social class discourse is expressed practically through an articulation of expectations built from students, classmates, teachers, families, along with other actors involved; these expectations become aspirations, and aspirations which are translated into particular decisions and options. In this body of discursive and inter-subjective construction, students develop higher or lower expectations of themselves, which open or constrain the consequent educational paths:

In less vulnerable schools which have higher academic performance, you see that the profile of the TVET student in relation to the scientific-humanistic path is defined in a certain manner as for students with particular capacities and limited expectations (TVETAc-1).

I would say, regarding the quote from TVETAc-1, that those ‘capacities’ are strongly influenced by those ‘expectations’ the students have about themselves. Again, there are discursive assumptions which recreate prospects and self-esteem regarding students’ own possibilities and capacities; in that scenario students with lower expectations tend to follow the TVET path, and in this way they reproduce the inequality of the social and economic order. I will now look into the expectations regarding further studies in higher education, to verify whether this mentioned pattern continues in this issue.

There is ambivalent evidence related to the continuation to tertiary education among secondary TVET students. In terms of expectations, and from an historical perspective, there is an important increase in the continuity to higher education studies among secondary TVET students – around 71% expect to continue (Sepúlveda & Valdebenito, 2014). This figure is higher than suggested by the expectations from the parents towards their children – 43% expect that they are going to pursue tertiary studies; this historically shows an important rise, comparing the percentages throughout the last years and decades (Sevilla, 2012). But along with this, studies show that the actual enrolment of secondary TVET students in higher education is 19% in the first year, and another 18% in the second, compared with 51% and 22% in the case of the scientific-humanistic students respectively; and 19% of the TVET students in higher education drop out, compared to 10% of scientific-humanistic students (Sevilla, 2012). So, almost half of the TVET students who expect to follow tertiary studies, according to the above statistics, do not do so. There is a correspondence between income quintile, the secondary educational path followed, and the actual possibilities of continuing in higher education or passing directly into the labour market. This is another point which illustrates the social bias of the TVET path in Chile, bias which is founded in social (expectations) and material (economic) grounds.

To finish, I want to devote one paragraph to presenting a rough idea of an issue which came up in the interviews, but was not addressed with sufficient depth by the interviewees, which is the gender bias. TVETAc-2 mentioned that there is a gender segmentation in certain TVET specialities; some of them tend to be chosen

predominantly by females, mainly from the service sector, and others by males, like specialities from metal-mechanic and electricity sectors (Sepúlveda, Ugalde, & Campos, 2010). While older specialities with strong gender bias, such as secretary training, have disappeared following the most recent curriculum reforms, there still are particular differences in the certain technical pathways followed within genders. Though this is also possible to perceive in traditional university careers, the income differences in the Chilean labour market make this issue more serious, because it is possible to notice an intersection of bias between class and gender (poor and female) in certain TVET specialities, which constitutes an aggravation of the situation.

#### **2.4. Disarticulation**

The previous section acts as a bridge to this concluding part of this chapter about TVET policy in Chile, which concerns the diagnosis of disarticulation of the TVET policy between its secondary and tertiary levels, and with the other actors of the economic industry.

Sevilla et al. develop a systematic critique of the disarticulation of the secondary and tertiary technical-professional systems (Sevilla, Farías, & Weintraub, 2014), arguing that there is neither coordination between the secondary and tertiary TVET levels in terms of curriculum articulation, in relation to courses or entry exams, nor reciprocal institutional support of any kind, for instance in developing common strategies for community needs or for local development. There are two possible roots to understand this complete decoupling: one is related to the policy design, where no systematic strategy exists to articulate the system; and the second is related to the market-driven structure of the system, which provides the opposite incentives in pursuit of achieving this educational and institutional articulation. I will go further into these issues in the following paragraphs.

In relation to the policy design problem, Sevilla et al. go in depth into what is perceived as a crucial problem in terms of long-term TVET paths for students – the lack of articulation by the pertinent public authority. In summary, the attempts of articulation between educational levels are isolated, few and with limited resources/public funds. There are also other occasional attempts of articulation in specific cases from private initiative (i.e. between a private school and a private tertiary institution); but in both cases such attempts are intermittent, have not been systematized in order to generate evidence for a future policy, and are far from constituting a policy.

The tertiary education institutions are financed through students' fees, along with credits and scholarships, a financial scheme that works always in individual terms, which at the same time constitutes the main revenue stream for such institutions. In other words, this system operates as a market, where the tertiary TVET institutions have to attract the largest number of students possible, in order to maintain their finances and maximize earnings. Under this equation, the monthly or annual fee charged to students will vary in relation to the length of the tertiary career: the longer it is, the higher the monetary contribution. This logic works against a curricular articulation with secondary TVET education institutions, as it is not convenient to validate curricular subjects between schools and TVET higher education entities, because as long as subjects from secondary education would be validated by a tertiary institution, it would suppose shorter tertiary careers and with that, lower incomes to the TVET institutions. Any other articulation would happen by 'good will' or 'social responsibility' from the institutions, or would be part of a marketing strategy, for example to generate associations with secondary schools in order to capture more eventual future students.

Furthermore, according to the interviewees, the problem of lack of articulation in TVET policies is related not only to the relationships between educational entities, but also those with the productive sectors, because even when secondary TVET schools try to offer pertinent alternatives of technical

education, they in many cases fail in that purpose, designing an educational offer that does not correspond to its relevant social and economic context:

I believe that there are no local or regional policies or educational projects; there are specialities which possibly have a territorial approach in the fish sector, the mining sector, but I don't see socio-productive actors interrelated and provoking something powerful which helps the educational process of students (TVETAc-2).

Regarding this lack of pertinence of some technical specialities offered in public secondary schools, TVETAc-1 believes that those decisions are made by municipalities through isolated processes disconnected from the students' preferences, the possibilities of articulation with tertiary education or the updated needs of the industry. It is important to clarify an apparent contradiction of arguments in this study: on one side the market-driven rationality of the TVET policy is stated, but at the same time schools fail in this attempt to deliver educational paths that match with the productive sectors' needs. In fact, there is no contradiction, only different consequences of this market system in its set-up. The strong segmentation provoked by the market structure of the educational system in Chile generates schools for each social class: poor schools for poor families, and rich schools for rich families. The market generates competition, winners and losers, and on the poor institutional side there is precariousness, lack of resources where the needs tend to be bigger. So, despite the market orientation of the secondary TVET, schools, in designing their own specialities to 'offer' to students, often fail as they do not have the economic resources to teach based on accurate information or data, or minimum research tools to provide guidance in their decisions. Many secondary schools design their TVET curriculum according to their intuition, their common knowledge; this information is often quite lucid, but at other times the schools cannot update it correctly.

To recap, the TVET system fails to articulate an organized educational system which coordinates its main public and private stakeholders, and it fails at structuring a clear and defined educational alternative; and further, each TVET



path does not articulate pertinently its offer through a clear educational itinerary or an articulated curriculum between educational levels (Souto-Otero & Ure, 2012). Moreover, the market logic which orientates and finances the TVET schools – and all the schools in Chile – generates a curricular market dependence, but at the same time a precariousness which leads to schools' failure in their own attempts of providing pertinent educational paths to the labour market. Despite that general condition, we will see that in rural settings this mismatch education–labour market is becoming less of an issue, as the industries are much more limited and the relations schools–enterprises are much more intense.

### 3. Discussion points

#### **3.1. Ambivalent traces of the neoliberal subject in the Chilean TVET system**

The type of subjectivity promoted by the TVET curriculum guidelines, along with other characteristics of the system, shows different nuances in relation to the neoliberal subject presented and proposed in this research. The Chilean definitions are more closely related to how to educate/train a worker-employee than to an autonomous entrepreneur, and the homo economicus is more productive than competitive. These features are also closer to a disciplinary regime of technologies than to a governmental one related to technologies of the self. From this standpoint, in this TVET frame are traces of a pre-neoliberal and an industrial worker, and fewer of an entrepreneur and flexible individual. These assumptions also reflect part of the UNESCO diagnosis and recommendations (chapter 2), which promote features of entrepreneurship and a qualified workforce for the needs of the economy. The Chilean case seems to be closer to the second group of observations, and the secondary TVET student is more trained to become a qualified and pertinent worker to the needs of the industries and companies.

But in relation to the neoliberal subject, the human capital approach is strongly connected to the Chilean policy – and to part of the UNESCO perspective

too (chapter 2). This perspective assumes the TVET system as a tool to develop the economy and its growth; it becomes part of the same dynamic of growth under a neoliberal development model based on market forces and private investment. The TVET student is more related to this model in their contribution to the industries than encouraged to undertake new entrepreneurships – this role seems to be given to other actors (classes) of society and other types of secondary (private) and higher education (elite universities).

### **3.2. Flexible students/workers to specific workplaces?**

The previous point is related to another ambivalence: the TVET system and policy is encouraged to offer, by UNESCO and others, a flexible path of self-development through a lifelong learning process (a governmental technology of the self), which corresponds to a changing economy and insecure labour system, rather than to a narrower pathway to fill specific workplaces. But as was mentioned above, the Chilean TVET provision is designed to train a qualified worker pertinent to the industries' needs, more than a flexible and autonomous individual able to follow different technical paths of self-development. This assumption differs from the governmental lifelong learning trend promoted in order to provide flexible and adaptable workers and entrepreneurs to the economy. The Chilean TVET student and profile corresponds to the profile of an industrial employee who historically belonged to the poorest segments of Chilean society, so there is a class role in this type of educational path and industrial labour, both closely linked.

### **3.3. The problem of the absence of a policy**

Acknowledging the nuances and ambivalences of this assumption, despite having (minimum) curricular guidelines, the Chilean TVET system is claimed to be unregulated and lacking an (articulated) policy. In terms of a policy analysis, the

TVET system is considered as a forgotten topic, a displaced subject in the political agenda of the State and the country; this is strange when the system deals with almost half of the secondary students of the country, mainly the poorest ones, so is far from irrelevant in terms of educational provision. This is the third time this research has found an absence of a policy: in addition to above in relation to the rural territories definitions and the rural development model. I could also add the lack of importance of geographical distinctions in the national curriculum frame. This will be a main issue of the analysis in the next chapter regarding the rural education policy, where the technical path is eminently present, and schools are under the prescriptions (or lack) of spatial and (economic) development described above. Slowly this research is talking about forgotten policies deployed in neglected spaces/places, how the educational dynamics are enacted in those scenarios, and how students' subjectivities are developed.

### **3.4. An inconsistent 'alternative discourse'**

Lastly, some words about the possibility of an alternative discourse, which could be related to the idea of a TVET student who is educated to be more than just a qualified worker, but an integral person – a notion related to the capabilities approach outlined in this chapter, where education, more than skills, provides comprehensive capabilities related to all resources and dimensions of individuals. This discourse is eminently absent or unarticulated in the policy analysis and the policy views from the academics and policy maker interviewed. The first expectations of an integral student profile have slowly vanished with each turn of the page of this chapter, and the topics and problems are focused in technical and economic analysis of the policy. The political critiques are made in relation to the excessive focus of the system towards economic logics and needs, besides a social-class-biased educational path. The human capital approach is present in the TVET system definitions and purposes, and possible capabilities are reduced to skills for the world of work and the needs of the development model of the country.

## Chapter 7: Rural education: searching for a policy

This chapter presents the analysis and findings related to rural education policies. The chapter is structured in two main sections, concluding with the main discussion points. The first section will start presenting general and historical statistics about rural education in the country, as an introduction to this subject, and as context for the main analysis. Then, I present rural education policy in Chile, its programmes and initiatives, suggesting what will be one of the main focuses of the analysis, a discourse where, again, rural education is based on an absent policy. Then, also in this first section, I will present a literature review about rural education in Chile, which summarizes the few perspectives and short analyses of this topic that have appeared in the Chilean academic world. The second and main section presents an analysis of the interviews carried out with three policy actors related to rural education in Chile, academics and policy implementers, their perspectives, subtle discourses and ideas related to the standpoint of this research. Finally, as I anticipated above, and following the structure of the previous three chapters, there will be a last section which briefly summarizes the main points of discussion of this chapter, as a way of specifying those critical aspects of this topic.

### 1. Rural Education Policies in Chile

#### 1.1. General statistical review of rural education in Chile

This section presents historical statistics regarding rural education in Chile. The objective is to introduce a general overview of rural education in the country, this consists mainly of descriptive statistics, such as enrolment and attendance, progression and completion, and academic results in rural zones and schools. The figures presented were selected because they offer information about representative characteristics of rural education in recent years, to illustrate some

of the main educational issues in those geographical areas; they draw from various official information that is publicly available. However, in the publications of the Ministry of Education, academic results from national standardized tests only have been systematized since the beginning of the 2000s, and educational information from administrative data about rural schools (in comparison with urban ones) has been studied only in the recent decade. Other governmental sources, as the CASEN<sup>14</sup> survey, have been used by international organisations (UNESCO, CEPAL) to illustrate aspects of rural education based on questionnaire responses. In all these set of statistics, while they refer generally to “rural schools” or “rural students”, this information very rarely includes an analysis of gender sub-groups; however where available these are included in the following tables.

*Table 5: Enrolment per geographical area (in thousands)*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Urban</b>
2008	331	3.353
2009	327	3.371
2010	320	3.328
2011	306	3.297
2012	300	3.249
2013	287	3.250
2014	274	3.268

Own elaboration. Data from Study Unit, Ministry of Education.

*Table 6: % of school attendance in rural areas, by sex*

<b>Year</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Rural-Women</b>	<b>Rural-Men</b>
1990	64,9	53,5	53,7	53,3
1994	68	58,8	58,8	58,7
1998	72,9	66,1	67,4	64,8
2003	75,5	69,7	70,8	68,6
2006	74,7	70,5	71,5	69,6
2009	73,4	70,2	70,9	69,5
2013	76,1	71	71,7	70,4

Own elaboration. Data from CEPALSTAT | Data Bases and Statistical Publication (CEPAL).

<sup>14</sup> National Survey of Socioeconomic Characterization.

Table 5 shows that school enrolment in rural areas has decreased drastically in the last decade, much more dramatically than in the urban zones. Regarding school attendance (table 6), despite the gap between the average of the national percentages and the rural ones having declined in the last two decades, rural attendance still remains below the national figures, with a slight better situation in the case of rural female students comparing with the males one in the same geographical scenarios.

*Table 7: % of population between ages 15 to 19 that completed primary education in rural areas, by sex:*

<b>Year</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Rural-Women</b>	<b>Rural-Men</b>
1990	93,5	85,2	86,9	83,7
1994	94,5	87	88,4	85,7
1998	95,9	89,9	90,1	91,2
2003	98,3	96,1	96,7	95,6
2006	98,7	97,9	98,3	97,6
2009	98,8	97,7	98,5	96,9
2013	98,7	98,6	98,5	98,2

Own elaboration. Data from CEPALSTAT | Data Bases and Statistical Publication (CEPAL).

*Table 8: % of population between ages 20 to 24 that completed secondary education in rural areas, by sex:*

<b>Year</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Rural-Women</b>	<b>Rural-Men</b>
1990	51	19,7	23,7	16,1
1994	58	26,1	28,4	23,9
1998	64,2	30,9	34,2	27,9
2003	73,9	45,6	48,8	42,8
2006	80	60,8	63,3	58,5
2009	80,9	67,0	69,5	64,5
2013	84,2	74	79	69,3

Own elaboration. Data from CEPALSTAT | Data Bases and Statistical Publication (CEPAL).

*Table 9: % of population between 15 – 19 years old, not in education or employment:*

<b>Year</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>Rural</b>
1990	17,6	29,7
1994	15,6	26,7
1998	15,1	22,5
2003	13,4	18,9
2006	13,7	17
2009	16,6	17,4
2013	11,8	14,0

Own elaboration. Data from CEPALSTAT | Data Bases and Statistical Publication (CEPAL).

Table 7 shows that primary school completion in Chile had reached almost universal coverage nationally in all geographical areas. But it still not the case for secondary schooling (table 8). Despite an extraordinary improvement in the last 25 years, there are 26% of rural young between 20 and 24 years old who have not finished secondary school, numbers that increase in the case of men to more than a 30%. These figures suggest relevant issues in relation to the transition within primary and secondary schooling in rural students, or the interruption of studies during the secondary school. In fact, table 9 shows that according to the last evidence, a 14% of young between 15 and 19 years old are not studying nor employed.

*Table 10: % of access to Higher Education\*, by geographical area. Years 2009 - 2015:*

<b>Year of entry</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Rural</b>
2009	40,8	23,5
2010	42,4	24,9
2011	45,2	26,5
2012	45,9	26,6
2013	49	30,1
2014	49,5	30,4
2015	49,3	31,6

Own elaboration. Data from Study Unit, Ministry of Education.

\* Considers only the access of student who graduate the year before from secondary education.

Table 10 illustrates an important growth in the percentage of rural students accessing to higher education in the last decade, but the large gap between urban and rural students has remained steady during the same period.

Table 11: SIMCE test scores\* by geographical area, 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, Language and Mathematics. Years 2004 – 2013

Year	Lang 4 <sup>th</sup> g / Urban	Lang 4 <sup>th</sup> g / Rural	Mat 4 <sup>th</sup> g / Urban	Mat 4 <sup>th</sup> g / Rural	Lang 8 <sup>th</sup> g / Urban	Lang 8 <sup>th</sup> g / Rural	Mat 8 <sup>th</sup> g / Urban	Mat 8 <sup>th</sup> g / Rural
2004					253	235	255	238
2005	258	240	250	230				
2006	255	243	250	229				
2007	256	243	248	228	255	238	258	238
2008	262	250	249	230				
2009	263	251	255	236	253	241	261	243
2010	272	260	255	236				
2011	268	258	260	245	255	245	260	244
2012	269	255	263	245				
2013	265	253	257	241	255	246	263	243

Own elaboration. Data from Study Unit, Ministry of Education.

\* Levels of achievement (approx.): Advanced: 281 +; Intermediate: between 241 – 280; Initial: 240

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Table 12: PSU test scores\* by geographical area, Language & Communication and Mathematics. Years 2009 – 2015:

Year	PSU L&C / Urb	PSU L&C / Rur	PSU Mat / Urb	PSU Mat / Rur
2009	490	441	491	446
2010	487	440	490	444
2011	490	443	493	450
2012	491	442	493	447
2013	491	432	494	438
2014	491	441	494	446
2015	491	447	496	453

Own elaboration. Data from Study Unit, Ministry of Education.

\* Maximum score in each test: 820 points (approx.).

SIMCE scores historically have had a very slow evolution in Chile, and figures comparing urban and rural scores do not follow a steady pattern. In 4<sup>th</sup> grade of primary education, the gaps between these geographical zones have decreased marginally in the period 2005-2013; and in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, while in Language the difference has been reduced, in Mathematics it has remained stable, even increasing slightly between 2005 and 2013 scores. In the case of the PSU test for accessing higher education (table 12), the situation is equally discouraging, there is an average gap of 40 points approximately during the last decade between rural and urban students.



These statistics reflect several important issues regarding rural education and the situation of rural schools and students. As this chapter's analysis will show, rural education policy has been historically a forgotten place of the educational policy agenda; and have consisted of disarticulated programmes and initiatives. Despite significant improvements at national level since the 90s - rural education included -, rural students continue to be one of the most disadvantaged groups in the country. This could provoke important repercussions in students' subjectivities (see chapter 9). Because, in spite of wider access of rural students to all levels of the education system, they still are in a clear position of disadvantaged in relation to their urban fellows. Figures on school attendance, secondary school completion, academic results, and access to higher education – in addition to those on young people out of the school and unemployed, and the decline of rural schools' enrolment – indicate the differences in opportunity, progression and school experience between urban and many rural students. As I will show in chapter 9, rural students expectations regarding their academic and work futures is a crucial issue in terms of the constitution of their subjectivities. The general picture illustrated in these numbers translate very directly into the biographies and narratives of the students I interview, in relation to their sense of life prospects and their imagined futures.

## **1.2. Policies, programmes and initiatives**

Educational policies applied in rural contexts have been developed according to an education established in line with national and urban needs; this is in a society where, according to the Chilean Institute of National Statistics (INE), the rural population reaches 13% (INE, 2010, see chapter 4). In Chile, as in other countries in Latin America, primary rural education is based on multi-grade schools, where students at different educational levels and ages share the same classroom and are educated through didactic practices adapted to the diversity of the group. According to the Ministry of Education (2013b), this type of rural school in Chile accounts for 3,876 of a total of 12,114, but students at primary and secondary

levels comprise 250,000 of a nationwide total of 3,000,000. This different ratio is explained by the lower number of students per school in rural areas, which ranges from 1 to 500. Forty-two per cent of these schools had only one teacher (San Miguel, 2005).

Furthermore, the rural education is divided in primary and secondary, where these 3,876 primary schools and also 281 secondary schools are recognized as rural by the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC, 2013b). All the programmes that are going to be presented later in this section refers to rural primary education, because all the secondary schools operate like every other school in the country. In other words, for the Ministry administration, rural education is mainly primary education in rural settings, deployed through multi-grade schools; rural secondary schools are officially acknowledged, but there are no official policies or programmes to organize or support them. Besides this, there is another group called 'agricultural' schools, which coexist among other related TVET specializations; some of them are rural, others are not. One of the interviewees of this research, from the National Agricultural Society (SNA) in Chile states that there are 139 agricultural secondary schools in the country; this means schools which actually impart agricultural studies in their TVET alternative.<sup>15</sup> The agricultural schools are mainly recognized as rural and are located in rural areas, but there are others in semi-urban settings, towns and small cities located in zones which are eminently rural, maybe not from the official records, but, for instance, corresponding to the criteria developed from the PNUD – or the criteria applied in the sample of this research – in relation to the definition and classification of rurality, where the agricultural activity and industry act as a bridge that interconnects the rural and the urban (chapter 4). This complex distribution and nomenclature starts to speak of a rural education policy which lacks clear structuration, and a lack of comprehensive understanding of what rural education is.

As was described earlier (see Introduction), the educational system in Chile financially works through a voucher mechanism, so the monetary transfers from

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<sup>15</sup> MINEDUC states that there are 169 agricultural schools, but is understood as a wider agricultural scope, which involves agricultural and maritime specialities (MINEDUC, 2013b)

the Ministry to schools are based on the number of students inside the classrooms daily. The agricultural voucher or subvention is the highest among TVET schools, which means many schools seek to offer this type of education in order to receive this higher income, schools that in many cases lack minimum standards. There is also a special subvention for multi-grade schools – otherwise it would be impossible to sustain schools with one teacher and a few students. This, again, confusing set of supports under the umbrella of a multifaceted voucher policy constitutes an unstructured – or absent – conception of rural education. Rural education receives higher economic support if the TVET specialization is more expensive to provide – as seems to be the agricultural case – or if the school is located in extreme zones; the criterion in this last case is not the rural nature of a school, but its distance calculated in relation to urban places. Both subventions function as technologies of incentives under economic logics (expenditure, costs associated with matters of distance and transport).

Besides these structural policies, there is another group of partial initiatives which seek to contextualize the national educational scheme into the experience of rural settings. The first and main attempt of contextualization of the education system to rural zones over the last 25 years, following the dictatorship of Pinochet, was in 1992 in an initiative called the Programme of Rural Primary Education. It was inserted into the ‘MECE plan’, - ‘Improvement of the Quality and Equity of Education’ – and sought to adapt the guidelines of this national plan to rural contexts (so it was called ‘MECE rural plan’). The programme gave special funding to develop strategies to train teachers so they could acquire the skills and methods which would adapt the educational process to their schools’ context, to generate spaces of connection and common thinking between teachers around teaching practice via ‘microcentres’ and to provide materials for and insights into schooling. This educational programme has been the main one focused on rural contexts, and synthesizes the policy developed to address this issue. Since 2011, this group of initiatives has partially continued, but not under the name MECE – reflecting updated nomenclature since the 90s – among other actions, mainly through the strengthening of the microcentres programme, the delivery of updated didactic

materials and the development of planning guides for curriculum content adapted to rural settings. Besides this, in 2001 the *Enlaces Rural* – Rural Liaison – programme, an extension of the original *Liaison* programme developed largely for urban areas, was launched with the purpose of spreading information technology nationwide by the strategy of training of teachers to use these advances.

This last set of efforts are nowadays organized through an (apparently) unique programme for rural education, whose only official space for information is a website titled *Educación Rural*<sup>16</sup>. Analysing this source, the programme consists mainly in curricular support for teachers, through the supply of contextualized material and guidelines in order to implement adequately the national curriculum. This programme and the ‘microcentres’ are the only initiatives operating in relation to rural education – at least according to this website. The website also provides ‘supporting material’ and is focused on the teacher’s role; but it is a tool delivered to all public schools, so it is not contextualized or designed specifically for rural teachers. In addition, the only formal document available to be downloaded from the website is a public decree – No. 968, two pages in length – which allows and regulates in general terms the operation of the microcentres. Finally, there is a broader statement under ‘Teachers’ professional development in rural territories’, which presents, I would say, the purposes that the current educational reform seeks to achieve in relation to rural teachers; but besides the microcentres and the curricular support, there is nothing new regarding rural education policies or programmes. This statement is focused mainly on multi-grade schools, and includes declarations such as:

The purpose of education in these schools is to offer to all students the opportunity to access the skills and learning referred in the national curriculum.

Also:

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<sup>16</sup> rural.mineduc.cl

Teachers' professional autonomy is related to the necessity of revitalizing the teachers' rural professional organizations for the informed design of teaching and not only the reception of predefined instructions and procedures.

The importance of this statement in terms of this analysis is that it offers a sort of official discourse regarding rural education. Aside from the fact that the text has grammatical errors – I mention this detail as indicates a lack of care regarding this matter – the statement presents a consideration and understanding of rural zones and their multi-grade schools, acknowledging their cultural and geographical particularities; but in practice, there are no other policies or programmes than those presented above. And, as the quotes above refer, the practice is problematized by the prevalence of a national policy, and the consideration of its contextualization. There seems to be more in the words than in the policies and practices, and in the meantime the national assessment system, based on SIMCE and PSU tests, remains unchanged; these are not contextualized, so the curriculum adaptations to rural settings are marginalized from the assessed contents. That is why these programmes have been evaluated under the criteria of coverage and the results on the SIMCE test. While the first indicator of coverage showed an efficient territorial extension of each programme, the second about results did not show promising outcomes, only relative improvements. The studies regarding rural education will be presented and analysed in the next section. In brief, rural education policies appear to be more an adaptation of didactics than a substantive re-focusing of the model of education, the curriculum and its main purposes and strategies. This aligns with the UNESCO/INRULED diagnosis (detailed in chapter 2), where one of the problems in terms of relevance in rural education is linked with the centralism in the programmes' design and governments' perspective.

Moreover, unlike the other two policies analysed in this group of chapters – the national curriculum and TVET – no policy document shows any kind of profile of the student to be educated by rural education. So, it can be inferred that the

*hidden* profile of the rural student outlined by the rural education policy is no different to the one described by the national curriculum or the TVET documents.

Before continuing, I would like to devote some words to what can be understood as a rural education policy, and why despite its discoordination and unsystematic design – if there is an actual design, or just a sum of isolated initiatives – I continue making reference to a *policy*. As the research lacks a definition of rural education policy from the theory, I will use the INRULED definition outlined in a previous section of chapter 2. That definition assumes rural education as a set of coordinated policies, applied and contextualized in rural settings. So, recapping, there are two principles here: one, the policy as a coordinated intervention; and secondly, the policy as a contextualized strategy. It is possible to postulate a third way, that there could be a traditional, specific rural policy, a policy with its own structure and purposes, like the Chilean curriculum policy for example, or the rural education policy of Uruguay (ANEP/CEIP, 2016). Regarding this last option, there is no independent rural education policy in the case of Chile. But the other two principles provoke a deeper analysis in order to make a fair judgement. First, regarding rural education policy as a coordinated initiative, in the Chilean educational policy frame there is not a coordinated set of national policies with a rural approach. There are isolated and disconnected programmes and different supports for rural education and its teachers, and in the Ministry of Education there is no formal department in charge of those actions. Regarding the criteria of contextualization, there are curricular tools directed to primary rural teachers, such as the microcentres, which is an initiative focused only on primary rural teachers. From these cases, it is possible to talk about contextualized actions. But there still are two points that prevent us from talking about an established rural education policy. The first is that the INRULED definition refers not to a coordinated *or* contextualized set of interventions, but rather a coordinated *and* contextualized group of policies. Even if we accept that there is an application of a sort of contextualization principle, it is not united by a coordination to identify a rural education policy. And second, all the contextualization efforts are focused on primary education and the multi-grade

schools, the secondary level is not considered, much less the tertiary one. This last point again speaks of a very fragmented set of actions, without a clear, coordinated plan and purpose. In the same way, all these strategies are far from the conceptualization offered by UNESCO/FAO (chapter 2), which relates rural education to a wider strategy of rural development – a strategy which, as was analysed in chapter 4, is considered as ‘absent’. There is a lack of a coordinated and systematic State rural education policy, and the government’s approach lacks any concerted relation to an idea of rural development.

So, why am I still using the word ‘policy’ in relation to these disarticulated initiatives? Because – and this problem also appeared in the TVET policy analysis – the understanding of policy applied in this research draws on Ball’s analysis (1993), where policy can also be a disorganized group of actions, run by different actors, influenced by stakeholders and put into practice differently in similar or dissimilar contexts. Rural education is still going on in rural settings, even if this happens in tension with a lack of coordinated or unified State policy. And this analysis will allow a critical discussion about the features of the rural education as a policy, pointing out its tensions, problems, interests and particularities.

### **1.3. Studies about education in rural contexts**

As I pointed out above, the rural education policies in Chile have developed different strategies in order to provide tools and knowledge to teachers to adapt the contents and methodologies of the curriculum to the students’ context and their social and geographical territories. Unfortunately, those efforts have not produced the desired improvements, and despite some advances, the inequalities of the educational system in Chile have in the rural education one of their most significant examples. Various studies and the official statistics indicate that rural students achieve some of the lowest results in the SIMCE test in the country; they have also shown that the reality of rural education lacks appropriate support needed for its context and particularities. This way of evaluating education policies, i.e. through SIMCE indicators, is another discourse and technology which

provides a centralist understanding of rural education, and shows the extent of involvement of the State in education provision.

In this section, I will outline the main issues concerning Chilean rural education identified in the national literature review carried out for this research. In general, there are few studies regarding rural education, noticeably fewer than those based in urban cases; there are only general reviews and isolated research topics covered from atomized efforts in the Chilean academic world. This situation is a reflection on the state of rural education general; rural education seems to occupy a marginal position in the governmental priorities, and in the educational academy. In this section I present the few studies and articles regarding rural education in Chile from the last two decades.

Basically, here are six publications reviewed, in which it is possible to identify the micro-research agendas in each case. One of the authors is Javier San Miguel (2005), who during the 1990s and 2000s led the rural education programmes at the Ministry of Education, so his position, acknowledging the problems and challenges that persist in rural education, tends to be presented from the perspective of. Then, Carlos Moreno (2007) leads the unique undergraduate programme of Rural Pedagogy in Chile, his main and only topic of research is rural education, and he is one of the actors who has tried to articulate a coherent academic discussion related to rural education issues. He has a critical perspective about rural education policies in Chile, mainly because of the lack of relevance of the policy in the official educational agenda. Guillermo Williamson (2004) leads a postgraduate programme in Local Human Development in the south of the country, he is close to topics of rural and intercultural education and development. In the political arena, he also was regional authority in education in his zone during the 1990s. Williamson connects issues of development and education in rural spaces, providing a critical approach towards the Chilean rural development model and the role of rural education in it. Carmen Gloria Núñez (2013a, 2013b) comes from educational psychology, and has researched the effects on rural communities of the closure of rural schools in Chile in the last decade, again she is critical of these aspects of rural education policy. Finally, the article of Gallego, Rodríguez



and Sauma (2007) is the only relevant publication by this group of academics in this field so far; rural education has not been an important matter in their priorities. This article focuses in general aspects of rural education regarding costs and academic results, and generates proposals to government.

As I indicated earlier, these articles and their authors, do not compose a coherent body of research, or a coordinated academic network which contribute systematically to the rural education subject and policymaking debate. Instead - and acknowledging the value of each isolated effort, which in each case offer relevant discussions to the subject of rural education - they provide a discontinuous corpus of research, focused on fragmented issues of rural education, a generation of evidence from different standpoints and concerns. As I will explore later, the invisibility of rural education in the educational policy agenda, is reflected in the relative invisibility of these studies in terms of academic and policy discussion.

Thus, to start with, Williamson (2004) and Moreno (2007) confirm the points made in chapter 4, in terms of the complexity of defining the limits of the rural areas in relation to the urban. The official delimitations of what constitutes the rural are narrow – a community or small town of a maximum of 2,000 people or less; for instance, the construction of a paved road does not necessarily urbanize a zone or a community, and sometimes the official denomination changes for reasons such as this. Nowadays, the limits of the rurality are diffuse and in a process of changing, and new categories and concepts are needed to update the social reality of the rural life with all its dimensions. This issue has impact in policy design processes, where a lack of understanding – or even the negation – of a concept of rurality impacts in programmes and initiatives without clear perspectives and coordinated goals.

Williamson (2004) mentions that the rural education has achieved almost complete coverage – all the population have access to primary and secondary education - since the early 90s. From that diagnosis, the main problems, which again relate to the country as a whole, are not the general coverage, but the inequity and the lack of quality of the education system. Governments' strategies

have been focused in targeted policies, technologies which deploy a type of neoliberal governance and governmentality (Posner, 2012), arguing that inequity can be overcome with better quality, especially by focusing on poor areas and social groups, as those that comprise the majority of the rural communities. This was the main reason for the creation of the MECE – Rural programme in 1992 did make improvements in those areas; the SIMCE results have increased too, but the inequity between the rural areas and urban areas remains high (Gallego, Rodríguez, & Sauma, 2007).

One of the problems identified by San Miguel (2005), and consistent with the UNESCO/INRULED perspective (chapter 2), is the lack of pertinence of the contents and pedagogy deployed in the rural settings. The efforts made by the governments in developing the skills of the teachers to adapt the curriculum have not had the expected effect in the classrooms, even though there have been delivered tools, such as adapted guides for teaching certain subjects and material to work in the classroom, in order to promote significant learning processes for these student populations. There have been no studies that evaluate or analyse this type of strategies of contents' adaptation or other significant variables.

In like manner, the multi-grade system of teaching has brought diverse challenges to the pedagogy of the rural education, and has been an important issue regarding the attainment of the educative goals in the sector. According to San Miguel (2005), there still are challenges to the development of innovative strategies by the teachers, and to the creation of a positive dynamic inside the classroom where, for instance, the older students can help the younger ones creating an effective learning community. One of the best considered initiatives has been the microcentres, in which the teachers of a certain rural area meet to exchange experiences and provide feedback on their own work in the schools (Moreno, 2007; San Miguel, 2005).

One of the problematic issues in current rural education has been school closures, carried out mainly because of the decrease of rural population in the last decades. According to Núñez (2013), the closure of 819 schools between 2000 and 2012 has brought negative outcomes to the rural populations, particularly in

regard to the lack of information from the local authorities during the time prior to the closure, and the loss of a communitarian space in which people could develop other kinds of activities to vitalize their community and their social bonds. This issue is strongly connected with the analysis made from the UNESCO documents (chapter 2), regarding the 'voicelessness' and 'invisibility' of rural areas, showing concrete signs of government priorities, where the strategy is based on closing schools and providing transport facilities to move students daily or weekly towards schools located in urban or semi-urban settings. This 'policy' represents an evident lack of consideration of the 'rural voice' from a centralist governance strategy, and an economic rationality towards social issues regarding rural life; policies and decisions are based on distance technologies under cost/benefit calculations.

Finally, other initiatives such as the *Rural Liaison* programme, the implementation of the full school day, and support for students with special educational needs have delivered extra backing to rural education, but each initiative has diverse outcomes and the majority of them have not been studied in depth (San Miguel, 2005; Williamson, 2004). The extra funding required to finance schools with small groups of students has been an unresolved issue for the government, and one of the causes of the closure of schools (Núñez, Solís, & Soto, 2013). In relation to this point, the administration of the public schools by the local municipalities – another structural education policy from the 1980s: 82% of the total in rural areas; the rest privately subsidized – has generated a diversification of the educational realities and outcomes, in relation to the administrative capacity of the municipalities or the priority that the respective authority gives to education in its territory (Moreno, 2007).

This brief review, based on the scarce sources of Chilean academic research and analysis regarding rural education policies, despite the isolated contributions in each case, still serves to identify certain problems regarding rural education. Issues around urban-rural educational inequality, lack of support to teachers, insufficient pedagogical resources and innovation, curricular standardization

which inhibits the possibilities of adaptation to rural realities, and closure of rural schools and financial problems are the main examples.

This research – along with other educational policy topics and analysis - also seeks to contribute to this specific literature. While I begin by demonstrating the ‘erasure’ of the rural from education policy in Chile and the irrelevance of much general education policy to the rural experience, I seek to outline a set of perspectives and offer some empirical evidence (this literature review included) to indicate some ways forward for rural education policy, both from practical and academic standpoints. In addition, and regarding particular issues raised from the literature, I address in particular the implications for rural schools of curricular standardization and the national assessment model, and their direct impact on teaching practice in rural schools. I also provide evidence and analysis regarding technical-professional education in secondary rural schools, and how this type of education is enacted in rural schools in relation to other local institutions – mainly business companies and industries – in the absence of an articulated education policy. Finally, this research expects to present the voice of rural students in relation to their marginality within policy, an original contribution to the rural education discussion from the perspective of this forgotten crucial actor in the academic literature and policy debate.

## 2. Perspectives from academics and (private) policy makers

As an introduction to the interviewees, presented in the chronological order of the interviews during the fieldwork, the first – to be referred to in this research as ‘RuralAc-1’ (Rural Academic)– is a teacher and academic, coordinator of an undergraduate programme about rural education and local development at a public university in Chile; the second – ‘RuralAc-2’ – is a PhD in Education and coordinator of the master’s programme about local and human development at another public university in the south of Chile; and the third is in this case a group of three persons, members of an agricultural business association in the country

(the National Society of Agriculture – SNA; I will call all these interviewed as ‘SNA’), which has one educational office which administrates 20 of the 132 agricultural secondary schools in Chile. The first two interviewees are considered experts in their respective fields: RuralAc-1 in rural pedagogy, and RuralAc-2 besides rural education in topics of development and intercultural and indigenous education. The SNA representatives were interviewed on their experience in rural education administration, but also as key actors in the rural education policy implementation. During the Pinochet dictatorship, the transferring of State schools to municipalities excepted 20 of the agricultural schools, which were transferred to SNA because of its knowledge in rural education and agriculture.<sup>17</sup> So, from this point of view, SNA will be considered, besides its expertise gained from its experience, as a policy implementer, and from that position as a policy designer too, as it develops its own plans and strategies in rural education, a function permitted by the Chilean law of education under the principle of teaching freedom (article 3 of the LGE). Continuing, I will analyse the main passages, ideas, discourses and perspectives from the interviewees towards the Chilean rural education policy.

## 2.1. An absent policy

Have you ever heard someone talk about rural education in Chile? (SNA)

(...) in any public discourse, he has never mentioned the word *rural*. Never. It has been a year with this minister [of education] and he hasn't mentioned the word *rural*! (RuralAc-1)

These quotations show the interviewees' mood regarding the relevance of rural education in the Chilean context. A sense of oblivion and lack of importance in the perspective of the State in relation to rural education influences the diagnosis of rural education as a low priority for governments, and the current state of rural

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<sup>17</sup> A similar process occurred with another 50 schools, which were transferred to other associations and corporations.

schools is a reflection of that lack of attention, which translates as a non-existent formal rural education policy. The interviewees offer different hypotheses in relation to this issue. RuralAc-2, for his part, explains this absence by an equality principle among all schools, “without any distinction (...). [H]ence, I think that there is no policy in rural education”. Here appears a sense of centralism in the policy, which also appeared in the curriculum policy and in UNESCO’s perspectives, where the national prevails over the regional and local erasing special or different treatments of schools, populations or zones. This centralism is connected with a lack of a sensitivity towards social diversity. I will develop these issues in depth below, as a key factor to understand this sense of absence in the rural educational policy in Chile. This issue is also linked to the rural development model, where the rural and distant (from the main cities) zones and their particularities are also erased (chapter 4).

The interviewees addressed the issue about the rural diversity, or whether rural spaces are actually different from urban ones, in order to argue the absence of a rural-oriented policy as a problem. RuralAc-1 states that:

(...) rural inhabitants have a culture which belongs to them, they have their own language, they have [cultural] landmarks that are part of them, and which must be recognized and addressed in their educational process

So, there is a rural culture, locally and historically developed, linked to geographical and social-relational aspects strongly connected with the agricultural activity. This activity is a medium between rural inhabitants and the land where they live, so inasmuch as the agriculture modalities and organization change, the rural life changes too. The issue about the development model is important, because, as was analysed earlier, in the Chilean case it appears as historically and politically imposed in the last 50 years, through policies which in different ways make visible or invisible the rural voices. The current neoliberal model organizes a market-orientated development based on private investment, which has provoked

changes for the rural inhabitants, in their work possibilities and in their relations to the land and the urban settings around them.

These rural particularities are being neglected by the State policies in Chile under what is defined by RuralAc-2 as a “political-theoretical approach which does not recognize the territorial diversity of the country”, which is translated in the educational field under the notion of a “unique school”, that is, “the idea that in Chile there is only one school [and] any modification has to do fundamentally with certain curricular adaptations (...) but no more than that”. This has neglected the possibility of a particular policy for rural areas, because “if it weren’t for the multi-grade schools, they would be all the same”. This view is shared by the SNA managers, who perceive that the policy consists in “programmes which are basically national, and which do not have much relation to what is happening to a young student, or how to take advantage of the resources of their locality”. So, from these perspectives, the rural educational policy is based on uncoordinated initiatives, curricular adaptations made, paradoxically, by the central government, and in primary education on the establishment of multi-grade schools, which logistically have brought increased economic costs to the State, provoking the closure of many of them in recent years. These rural school closures can be considered as another serious symptom of the lack of sensitivity of the central government towards distant locations, “because the view that they have in Santiago, where all the policies, programmes and projects are identified, does not understand that [rural] schools, even if they are very small, play a key role in the territorial development of regions” (RuralAc-2). Again, rural voicelessness and invisibility are consequence of these strategies based on economic rationalities applied through a model of distance governance.

All the educational initiatives and decisions regarding rural education are imprinted with a centralist perspective considering the country as one national social landscape. This national strand is understood as eminently urban. As most of the student population is located in urban areas in Chile, there is a strong bias towards those perspectives, which also tend to be more concentrated in the urban experience lived in Santiago, the main capital, and two or three other large cities

which monopolize the conception of the urban. The diagnosis can be outlined in educational policies designed with a “strong urban character” (RuralAc-2), and the rural schools are limited, in the best of the cases, to adapt “policies that are implemented for urban sectors” (SNA). The urban is understood here in curriculum contents framed by urban experiences, an urban perspective which is translated in rural education policies with a lack of systematic rural teachers’ support, as there is no systematic policy regarding this matter, poor understanding of the multi-grade classroom, lack of support to rural secondary schools, and agricultural TVET education – and TVET education in general – left in the hands of private or isolated initiatives. In short, as the whole bureaucratic and public administrative apparatus in education is thought and planned centrally and in urban terms, the rural education deals with this limitation, even when supposed to be flexible – protected by the legal freedom of schooling principle – in terms, for example, of curricular contents.

But even the supposed curriculum flexibility – as was shown in the previous curriculum policy chapter and the imposition of national assessments – fails in its practical implementation. The case of SNA is illustrative in this point. Before the implementation of the 98 curriculum, the management of SNA organization were accustomed to designing and teaching their own curriculum, as they have the resources to do so. But after the 98 curricular reform they argued to the Ministry of Education that the national curriculum was excessive: “it was not possible to move forward as we don’t have any freedom to adapt it to the [rural] localities”. As that discussion did not get a significant response from the policy makers, SNA decided that the curriculum was going to be updated internally, because it could not wait for the eventual official updates, which if they ever came, could already be outdated in terms of disciplinary contents. But then, though the SIMCE national test had been implemented since the late 1980s, only in 2008 this assessment became “an important tool in the measurement of our schools”; so, one effect of this was to insert a logic of competence in and between these schools. And alongside the SIMCE, the other national assessment test, the PSU had the effects expected by CurrPM-2, outlined in chapter 5. As one of the SNA managers says:



Because if I want students to go to higher education, those who want to and can; these knowledges [those evaluated in the PSU test] are actually valid. And yes, we are worried that they take a good PSU.

As was pointed out in the curriculum chapter, the SIMCE and PSU are aligned to the national curriculum contents, so SNA has to abandon its idea of adapting the curriculum to the rural particularities of its schools, and stick to the official curriculum. This experience can help explain rural education policy, where even the small margins of adaptation are absorbed by the pressure of the national tests. This case shows the overwhelming centrality of the education policy in Chile, the devastating power deployed by its assessment technologies, and how through this system the rural component in rural education is made irrelevant; there is a lack, ultimately, of a systematic or coordinated rural education policy.

Moving on to another argument in relation to the thesis of an absent rural educational policy, another political reason lies in the assumption sketched by SNA about rurality as less important territories or populations, and ultimately a less important electorate, places where “there are few votes [which therefore are] not relevant”. This assumption sees the rurality through the lens of its political functionality, in which terms the rural is irrelevant, and that fact has consequences in the whole rural policies corpus, which includes the education policy. This point is also raised by UNESCO (chapter 2), regarding the lack of political prioritization of rural zones in the agendas of governments. This can be related to the previous strand associated with economic reasons, which have led to the previously mentioned closures of rural primary schools. It highlights a type of treatment from the State towards rural populations and education. RuralAc-1 states that:

We are invisible (...). Nowadays [the idea] has been installed that it's better to buy a bus, take the children [out of] rural schools and take them to study in the city, and to close rural schools. Because it is more economical, children are going to learn more, they are going to be in the city (...). [H]ere what matters is the economic issue.

The political and economic invisibility of rural places and education is connected with the previous points regarding rural zones' definitions and the rural development mode. It is a discourse that puts certain priorities over others, and involves a peculiar lack of technologies in practice, in a permanent strategy; without acknowledging the process, it abandons and erases rural spaces as a matter of public consideration and policy planning.

RuralAc-1 also provides some history on this matter. At the beginning of the second half of the past century, the Chilean State established the teacher education in the so-called 'normal schools', which also offered training for rural education in particular. That system was stopped at the beginning of the dictatorship in the mid 1970s, and the teacher training was transferred to universities, which did not consider the urban/rural distinction in their programmes. This brought the oblivion of the rural education, and "between 74 and 97, nobody, nobody cared (...) about rural schools. And when we returned to democracy (...) the most unprotected schools, in the worst situation, with teachers with problems of alcoholism, teachers without certification, etc., were the (...) rural schools". The reference to 97 is in relation to the implementation of the mentioned rural initiatives towards education, MECE and microcentres, and the beginnings of tertiary educational programmes about rural education. As has been pointed out in this study, the dictatorship is a key period in defining the current rural status, the rural policies and rural education; and as RuralAc-1 claims, this process of oblivion has brought several consequences in the rural life, in teachers' and students' subjectivities, and in the whole educational process and institutions, in a system under highly precarious conditions. Under this view, discourses of oblivion and neglecting technologies are related to material and technical precariousness<sup>18</sup> and a particular production of subjectivity under these conditions.

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<sup>18</sup> Even 'precariousness' and its derivatives tend to be associated with problems of labour conditions; it is a term which relates to issues of social poverty and insecurity, and material vulnerability. In this research the word is used in relation to schools and education as a structural relation of poverty and precarious materiality.

Moreover, RuralAc-1 also refers to the division of the rural education in primary and secondary, but with different supports and administrative units between them, along with the presence of 'agricultural' schools. This intricate organization and terminology is related, again, to a disarticulated system and uncoordinated rural education policy, or even a confusion about what a rural school actually is. Besides, SNA also argues there is a lack of articulation between educational cycles, where there is little communication between primary and secondary rural/agricultural schools, and less between secondary and the options in tertiary education. This latter theme was also analysed in the previous TVET policy chapter. As a last point in relation to the disarticulation of the rural educational policy, RuralAc-2 points out that there is another strand in relation to rural education, which is intercultural education, a policy focused on indigenous populations. Without going further into the unique problems of this last policy – or asking, again, whether this initiative can be called a State 'policy' – the indigenous population in Chile is generally located in rural zones, but this intercultural strategy is disconnected from all the efforts regarding rural population. Explicitly, the rural programmes do not incorporate intercultural elements, and the intercultural programmes do not integrate rural components developed in rural programmes; so, both initiatives run in parallel inarticulately. Hence, again, the coordination feature argued to identify a rural education policy does not appear in this case, and the system operates under different logics, through isolated actions and different understandings of dissimilar strategies.

As was explained earlier, the agricultural subvention is the highest among TVET schools, schools that present many problems, as SNA argues: "What is an agricultural school? It is a group of houses, a couple of hectares, and hopefully a tractor. And that is what they call an 'agricultural school'". This issue is linked with the previous problem of precariousness and an incentive technology, based on an economic or market logic, with contradictory effects, in a context where education can be seen as a potential opportunity for business and profit.<sup>19</sup> So,

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<sup>19</sup> The current educational reform in process pursues the elimination of profit in education, but years of experience and evidence will be needed to analyse how effective this new measure has been.

schools managed by private bodies, and supervised at a distance by the State – supervision based on technologies of general accountability and the control of the class attendance voucher – are a system with very variable outcomes, and in rural cases those outcomes tend to be precarious. Instead of a technology of incentives, it becomes in many cases a technology of precarization.

Going back to the argument related to the absence of a rural education policy, related in turn to the (absent) rural model of development, this lack of rural policies is explained likewise by a centralist administration of the State, where the peripheral regions, and the rural zones among them, are mere receptors of the central-urban-national policies, which neglect the local-rural dynamics regarding this matter. RuralAc-2 explains this with his own words:

(...) not having a policy for rural education in our cases, in my opinion, implies not having a regional development policy (...). [I]f you ask me about the political and social influences, I think the important one is the centralism, this centralist vision of the country which has no capacity to understand the relation between culture and nature, and is not capable to understand the relation which the small peasant, the [local] producer has in relation to nature and the conditions of economic, social and cultural development of regions.

RuralAc-2's perspective has to do with his vision regarding rural development and the role of the small-local farm in those settings, in opposition to a model based on big-external producers and companies. This lack of support and vision towards the local development, a development understood from its local roots and population, derives from a lack of strategy in rural education. It is an educational model without rural perspective, a weak contextualization of curricular contents, often based on rural stereotypes far from the actual rural experience. This vision has some links with the analysis made by UNESCO/FAO in relation to the connections between education and development in rural areas (chapter 2). These links are mainly based in a perspective which associates the course of rural education with the path of rural development; but RuralAc-2's vision differs from

the discourse articulated by UNESCO, as the latter, although it connects education with the need of an active voice of the rural actors, is also ambivalent when assuming a discourse related to the strong connection between rural education and human capital, as a hegemonic path for inclusion in the main development course. The problematization of the relationship between education and development will be addressed in more detail in the next section.

One positive critique from RuralAc-1 is related to the microcentres programme, described as a space where teachers meet to share and debate their strategies and problems, building a pedagogical supportive network. The academic states that this strategy, despite being formalized by the Ministry of Education, is an initiative which has its roots in other international experience, such as the Colombian case, where “the small rural schools, in order to subsist, group themselves”. Its origins are therefore with teachers and rural communities; and in the Chilean experience “through the microcentres (...) teachers start to revalidate themselves, start to realize that they also can do it, they have the solutions for the problems that they have in schools”. The microcentres programme can be understood as a policy borrowed from other national contexts, but it has its impulse beyond the border of the State, even acts against the oblivion of teachers’ needs in the State context. It can be understood, in its original and foreign causes and purposes, as a strategy of resistance against their discursive irrelevance, which, once formalized as State policy, can provoke institutional dynamics that could be problematized as well. In the case of Chile, regardless of its *top-down* implementation, the policy has brought autonomy and an institutional self-support space to teachers, and has had fruitful times in the last two decades, although the recent closure of schools has brought a weakening of the microcentres along with it.

## **2.2. Rural transformation**

Sharing SNA’s diagnosis of Chilean rurality as characterized by its heterogeneity, where rural places include the isolated and dry north, the warm and fertile central

valley and the large south full of lakes and islands, different geographies can influence different local dynamics. This research will show in later analysis the particularities of different educational practices and subjectivities from different geographical settings throughout the country. In the meantime, our interviewees help to understand part of the current social dynamics in rural settings in a general perspective, as the rural space in which educational policies and rural schools are deployed, and the main critical issues regarding those zones.

Rural populations, especially the youngest generations, face the dilemma of continuing the rural–urban migratory process which marked the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Chile, as in many regions in the world even before the last century – looking for different alternatives of work and future, or to remain in the land where they grew up. SNA believe that Chile’s route towards development in the last decades has meant the country’s being “increasingly wealthy [in terms of] average GDP per capita”, a condition that makes “people lose interest in the rural world; they want to move towards the city”. Here appears a discourse where the rural emerges as obsolete, and the urban as the future with wider opportunities.

However, the figures show, according to internal estimations by SNA, that every year 3% of young people leave the rural areas, understood as people graduating from secondary schools between the ages of 18 and 25 on average; after that age individuals tend to remain where they are at that point. This percentage points out that, though there is still a slow process of migration towards urban areas, 97% of the youth stay in their rural homes. Similarly, the National Institute of Statistics of Chile projects a steady population size in rural areas in the current decade, around 12% to 13% of the whole population. This means that in Chile there is now a stable rural–urban migration. This assumption provides a demographic framework for later analysis of the students’ subjectivities, generating questions about students’ future perspectives, and what type of rural life are they are aspiring to have if they expect to remain in their zones.

But another tendency has to do with land tenancy and economic activity, as was indicated in chapter 4. The apparent freezing of the rural–urban migration has

not stopped the reduction of family-based small farming activity and the growth of agri-business production developed by big companies. So, settled rural populations, generally speaking, must now either work in these large estates, or find a job in nearby semi-urban surroundings. This phenomenon has brought a situation, in RuralAc-2's words, where:

(...) we have fewer people [working] in rural zones, fewer peasants, fewer small farmers, fewer agricultural workers, and that implies that the basic condition of regional development is compromised, and, I will say, in the most capitalistic way possible: the use of a human resource, of a natural resource for development (...). As long as people continue emptying the [small] farms, these are going to be occupied by bigger producers, which are going to apply a more extensive economy.

This can be understood as one practical facet of the so-called *rural transformation*, the *new rurality* or *rurban* experience (chapter 4), which has been reconfigured socially and economically by the free neoliberal markets, as the main strategy for rural development. As was analysed above, the Chilean rural development model has been based on the forces of the market under a neoliberal strategy, which replaces the local farming, and the family tenancy of the land, by the industrial farming and the transnational tenancy of the land. This is how the Chilean rural landscape is being transformed in a process that has been happening during the last three decades, and is still occurring at different velocities. This is the spatial transformation of rural society, and under this model rural education is being deployed, dealing with this changing economic situation and its social consequences. The migration process may be stabilizing, but the workplace, the land tenancy and the rural–urban relations are being deeply *transformed*.

But even in this scenario, RuralAc-2 perceives a connection between agricultural secondary schools and “an interest – I don't know if explicit or implicit – of the [rural] families for keeping the land”, where the agricultural schools play a role, because even children not have many educational choices. Thus, following an agricultural TVET path could be “a strategy of peasant resistance in order to

face the loss of their land in the mid-term". This resistance towards market forces and the big companies' acquisitive power can be connected with the idea that there are rural students who want to remain in their zones. But where RuralAc-2 sees a strategy of resistance, SNA perceive an identity linked with the places where students feel safer, in opposition to the unknown urban experience away from their roots and family. These assumptions will be contrasted with the students' perspectives in later analysis. Under the scope of a rural neoliberal transformation, schools – and the education policies in them – can be a medium between places and spaces, between rural localities and rural spatial transformations, for change in which converge different movements in relation to the economy, the rural–urban connections, the educational and labour possibilities, and the configuration of an uncertain future. The education policies here analysed present a discourse of the world and society, and constitute technologies that shape individual subjectivities, in an image of a life path to be followed through education and work. Recalling part of the foundations of this study, I am asking what world and society – with the rural–urban tensions in them – these policies illustrate, what type of subjectivity they outline or seek to produce, and what alternative future they offer to the students.

Furthermore, going back again to the relation between education and development in rural places, and also related to the mentioned rural school closures, RuralAc-2 analyses the link between schools and their geographical contexts, as places where people live and organize their social life. As I said before, the gravity of the school closures has to do mainly with the role that they have in rural communities as gathering places in zones where houses are remotely located. A school closure affects the communitarian life of rural people, and the new alternative, to take a bus to go to an urban school, is illustrative of a policy which does not consider rural life, and transfers it, violently, towards the city. Together with that demonstration of a lack of support – the impersonal central decision to just close the school – there is a lack of perspective about the role of rural education, in rural schools, for rural development. If it does not matter where the school is, there is no spatial connection between the educational process and the



rural life and its development. RuralAc-2 states that there is a connection between the place of the school and its spatial context, as “it must have a responsibility with respect to local and cultural development as a whole”; in that sense, “an educational policy is a factor in rural development”. In the Chilean rural education, both school closures and an uncoordinated policy based on isolated and unsystematic initiatives show a lack of perspective and planning in relation to the educational field and the development path of rural zones. As the development is driven by the markets, also schools are influenced by that social and economic environment, an environment marked by a stronger rural–urban connection as well, a fact that also challenges the schooling process in these settings. Even acknowledging that “rural education [should] be intimately related to its context”, today “the rural context has changed brutally (...). [W]e are passing towards an occupation of the rural scene which is (...) industrialized, with forestry companies in all the south of Chile (...)” (RuralAc-2). This industrial occupation in rural areas is happening with forestry and salmon companies in the south, large vineyards in the central valley, and enormous mines in the north, as examples of this contemporary development model. How do education policies and schools respond to this economic context? Along with the loss of land, families’ and students’ subjectivities are affected by surroundings marked by the presence of big industries, which because of their size, covering the largest parts of the rural economic landscape, limit the labour possibilities for the zone.

Regarding the previous issue about the responses of rural education policy under this development model, SNA’s testimony is, again, very illustrative. They were active witnesses of the changes imposed in education during the dictatorship in the 1970s and 1980s: during that time there was the assumption that the technical-vocational education was not being effective, because of its disconnection with industries, so the government decided to give part of the schools’ administration to business associations, which, as they were part of the industries, better knew their own needs. One of these business associations was SNA, as the business association representative of the agricultural industry. This transfer process, known as ‘delegated administration’, resulted in a transfer of 20

schools to SNA. The problem addressed was about “the low labour insertion of students in Chile”, under a diagnosis which assumed “that there was a poor relation between the industrial or business world and the educational world, so putting the business associations in [charge of] schools was the end of the problem”. The delegated administration constituted a policy which strongly linked the business entities with schools, a technology that links the industrial activity with the schooling process, as an initiative which was pursued to promote better employment rates among youth and in rural zones. This was a solution through “an intimate relationship between the business world and the educational world”. This issue around this *intimate relationship* between schools and industries is encompassed in this research as one of the key factors in the rural education in Chile; this is the dynamic that seems to be more present in these settings. This fact also resembles one of UNESCO’s perspectives regarding the recommendation of an *effective partnership* between TVET schools and industries in rural settings (UNESCO/INRULED, 2001). Beyond the delegated administration, this research inquires whether this intimacy is part of what is understood as rural (education) transformation, and how this neoliberal relation operates as it impregnates deeply the economic activity in the educational field, along with the market logic in it. As long as few big companies and industries populate rural areas and places, a strong dependency of schools on big companies may be probable, in a context where education policies and the rural development model are based on market logics and private investment. In the case of SNA, it developed its own model of technical-vocational education in its schools – as an absent TVET policy operates here again, an issue already addressed in the previous section. SNA’s model, nowadays, works through a technical curriculum designed in modules, from which the schools select those that are more pertinent to their economic environment. That design responds “not to what we believe students should learn. It is what the productive sector says to us in relation to the requirements of the profile of the student”. This curricular TVET guideline is set in accordance not with educational foundations, but economic ones, transforming the schools in a neoliberal *dispositif* (Bailey, 2013) which, more than educating, trains for specific workplaces demanded by the big companies. This modality is also a technology of

subjectivation, as the industry states the requirements of the profile of the student/worker; so, and anticipating the next section of this chapter, in the SNA case, the profile of the student to be educated is merged with the profile of the worker needed by the companies, in a deep economization of the educational process and the students' subjectivities promoted by the schools. But even though the SNA managers state that they offer more than what is available in the industry, they also state that these options are "too risky" for students, as they may not find a job later, and for schools, as they could fail in their employability goals. In a context where the schools compete for students' enrolment, the strategy is to expand towards those areas of the rural economy where there are options to undertake further business and entrepreneurships. So here it is possible to outline a profile of the worker and a profile of the entrepreneur, both subjectively produced through a complex dispositif in which come together educational strategies, economic needs, and development and educational models based on market logics.

### **2.3. The profile of the rural student from the rural education policy: the pre-figured worker-employee**

Continuing from the final point of the previous section, and following from the perspectives towards rural education policies and issues around rural transformation and development, I will now outline the profile of 'the student to be educated' as represented and constructed within the initiatives and programmes discussed. This topic responds to the characteristics of the (absent) rural educational policy and the current rural transformation, and it deals with the relations and tensions produced by this situation.

RuralAc-1 provides some historical background to this 'student to be educated' inasmuch that during the 20<sup>th</sup> century rural education was focused on the training of peons or large-estate workers; this underwent change during the period of the agrarian reform which promoted an educational perspective conceiving of the peasant as an active citizen. Further changes during the

dictatorship were focused on the small farmer as the object/subject of neoliberal policy. Now, during the period of democracy, MECE Rural and other initiatives have sought to increase quality in rural education, and educate a well-prepared student for the world of work or subsequent studies. Part of these political-economic profiles outlined by the State in rural areas was addressed in the previous rural development chapter (chapter 4), and these perspectives cross the idea of the student present in rural education.

RuralAc-2, from his side, has a very categorical view in relation to the type of student that rural education seeks to educate; a complex tension between explicit purposes and subtle strategies coexist in rural education, whereby the purpose of rural schools is:

(...) from a more capitalistic logic, fundamentally in the training of labour and productive skills in all their levels, [from a] basic level, [through] a more qualified level, until the expert level mainly oriented to the formation of a labour productivity, which in the discourse is associated with business [capacity], but in practice is the training of salaried employees.

This point is developed further by RuralAc-2, who states that rural students graduate from schools:

(...) with a, and I am going to say it harshly, proletariat mentality (...). [T]hey leave schools as [false] entrepreneurs (...). [M]any can use the words *innovator*, *entrepreneur*, and that sort of thing (...) [but they] should be replaced by *proletariat*. Period. Because ultimately they end up being that. Studies (...) showed that [students who learned the vocation of agricultural technician at secondary level] are not working as such, none of them has power over anyone, all of them were instructed by others; they didn't give any jobs to women because they (...) were too weak to carry weight, then, that kind of thing. I think that it is a falsehood.

This argument is very provocative, but it shows part of the intuitions of this research. The word *proletariat* evokes Marxist perspectives in relation to the working class during industrialization; that meaning and the one used by RuralAc-2 suggest lower – or even the lowest – hierarchical positions in labour organizations, as the destiny to be fulfilled by rural students after receiving education and training in rural schools – through education policies acting within them. This is not the isolated result of unjust labour structures, but of a common logic, a discourse materialized in a smooth path between the educational and labour fields in these settings. Using the terms of the previous section, the profile of the student matches with the profile of the worker, or employee as distinct from an independent entrepreneur – in the lowest positions of a labour hierarchy. While Foucault employs the term *entrepreneur of the self*, as the subject who continually works on himself under an entrepreneurial discourse; here, in contrast, it may be possible to outline a *pre-figured worker-employee*, making reference to the condition of salaried worker mentioned by RuralAc-2. This subjectivity is produced throughout the rural educational process, as a subject meant to work in certain workplaces, in an economic context narrowed and dominated by a few big companies and industries, so their education corresponds to the skills needed by those workplaces. RuralAc-2 also believes that even when the TVET options are focused towards other specialities beyond the agricultural activity, they maintain the logic mentioned above; even when they look to train students to work in industries away from rural areas, in urban settings, they still are prepared for certain workplaces under precarious labour conditions.

From his academic and research experience, and from his knowledge about rural life, RuralAc-2 believes that the above issue generates conflicts among rural students' subjectivities. This is related also to this tension between remaining in or leaving the rural places and lands of origin once graduated from school, a dilemma which deals with a discourse where more opportunities are out of their context, in urban places. RuralAc-2 perceives discourses concerning the rural work as an unmoving experience, in opposition to the urban imaginary (discourse) as a dynamic one. Even though there are students who “want to stay and [who] like the

countryside”, they will only work in similar tasks and under similar conditions to their parents; then they will ask: “I studied technical education. But, what were my studies for? To just go back to work like my dad?” This issue relates to the pertinence of the training offered by schools in relation to the needs of the large-estate production, which can provide a mismatch with rural students’ expectations, or with what people in rural places want to develop. Rural students, argues RuralAc-2, are not very different to urban ones; they are very technologically connected, and they are aware of the different scenarios forged in different contexts of their regions. This appears to leave behind certain stereotypes regarding rural life and individuals. These questions will be addressed in the analysis of rural students’ perspectives, asking how this tension can be plotted as a practice of resistance, if at all.

To conclude this section, I will present the different view given by SNA, which is interesting because it addresses the idea of freedom outlined in the theoretical postulates of this research. This organization answers the question regarding the profile of the student to be educated as follows:

(...) our view is that an 18-year-old young person, when he leaves school, has to have the freedom of choosing. He must be prepared. In other words, if I say that he is going to have the freedom of working it is because he is prepared to work with certain [comparative] advantages; the same if he continues studying, or becomes an entrepreneur.

This assumption is based in the Christian faith professed by the institution, which entails the principle of free will. This Christian humanism is translated into educational programmes in order to promote freedom of choosing: choosing what to work as, what to study or in what to undertake a business as an entrepreneur. This conception of freedom can be understood differently from that of Hayek (see chapter 1), as instead of freedom unrestricted by external regulations, it is freedom to decide what to do with your professional life. But paradoxically, this freedom is in tension with the TVET model at this organization, analysed above, *intimately*

*related* to the industry, which narrows the labour paths of its students. Even the academic path is constrained by the university selection test, limiting what SNA actually delivers in its educational processes. So, I would argue that here freedom is restricted by – or compliant with – the needs of the big rural enterprises, the scarce possibilities of a successful entrepreneurship, or the contents measured by national examinations. In other words it is a freedom restricted to the dominant neoliberal discourse, technologies and assemblages placed in rural areas in Chile.

### 3. Discussion points

#### **3.1. The absence of policy as a technology of invisibility**

The first discussion point of this chapter can be outlined through the collection of all those terms and references related to rural education policy as an absent policy, terms (as codes) related to *voicelessness*, *invisibility*, *disarticulation* and *centralism/urbanism*, among others. The issue raised in every section of this chapter about a disarticulated set of programmes and initiatives, which, under a broader understanding of the concept, can be likewise called *rural education policy*. The task of this research – which is not to verify the accuracy of this diagnosis – is to explore in those discourses articulated in texts and interviews whether the discourse of an absent policy is related to the rural education itself and the production of subjectivity in students in those contexts. Hence, from this discourse, it is possible to problematize its backgrounds and effects, in terms of the status which this *policy* gives to the voice of its individual beneficiaries, and the features of their places. In short, and translating more clearly the previous statement: the rural education policy in Chile is a disarticulated set of uncoordinated actions, each centrally designed, planned and implemented, which do not consider either the voice or the particularities of the rural population and their spaces; it is thus ultimately, an *absent policy*, not only because no established policy can be identified, but also because this absence seems not to matter, and is not named in the governmental public discourse or agenda – a fact also reflected

in the lack of research around this topic in the Chilean academic context. This discursive configuration, a discourse of neglect, constitutes a forgotten place, a lack of importance of settings without voice, where the imposition of centralist discourses and policies enacts a governmental strategy which in its national visibility (curriculum, assessment) and its local-rural invisibility operates at the mercy of the free market, leaving schools – and their actors within them – under an asymmetrical relation to the forces of those markets.

### **3.2. The *intimate relation* and the problem of development**

Secondly, one significant discourse seen in this section is the *intimate relation* between education and industries/companies/business in rural scenarios. This intimacy can be understood also as a dependency of the educational field on the economic one. This intimate dependency has effects on educational practice in rural settings, practice that reshapes the absent rural education policy under the frame of the *rural transformation*. Here the ambiguity of the concept of *absence* acquires more relevance in relation to the rural education policy, as its presumed absence opens the field of practice in schools, where this set of isolated actions are deployed without any clear strategy. In other words, exploring the consequences of an absent education policy in the Chilean neoliberal rural context, it is possible to find a particular modality of education, in which coexists an intimate relation between schools and business enterprises. The questions here problematize the consequences of this intimate relation in schools' practices in the implementation of national education policies, and how this situation resonates in students' subjectivities. In addition, discourses from UNESCO (chapter 2) and the interviewees, which link rural education into the broader field of rural development, become problematic while certain development models set the patterns regarding specific modes of development. In rural places, such as those in Chile, where the development strategy is mainly based on economic grounds, the role of schools in that strategy becomes eminently economic too, and allows a dynamic such as has been mentioned with respect to schools and big enterprises.



### **3.3. Rural education as an assemblage and schools as a dispositif which produce subjectivity: the *pre-figured worker-employee***

Moreover, the intimate relation between schools and corporations, in the context of an absent rural education policy, provokes a particular dynamic in schools, which generates a permanent tension and movement in relation to the needs of the market. So, from the point of view of this research, schools become a form of dispositif, an institutional place of the convergence of different discourses and technologies both from the government – national policies – and from the private sector – big business – which operate as an assemblage of prescriptions and negotiations that affect the daily practice in schools' management and their curricular implementation. While the rural education can be understood as a neoliberal assemblage, the neoliberal dispositif (schools) is the place of the production of subjectivities, and of a particular type of subjectivity, within which the profile of the 'student to be educated' by the schools – and their inner policies in practice – corresponds to the profile of skills and attitudes needed by specific workplaces and enterprises. From this perspective, the rural student can be understood as a *pre-figured worker-employee*, while schools provide a space where students work on themselves in order to become *successful* employees.

### Part III: Teachers and students

This final part is composed by the last two chapters, about rural teachers and students. These sections are the culmination of this research, as they leave the technical expertise and policy-making spheres of the previous chapters, and addresses the rural actors, their voices, practices and rationalities. In these chapters, I will explore into the specific translations of the educational policies analysed in rural settings, and their influences upon students' subjectivities. I will present how teachers and students experience the rural education. The teachers (chapter 8) present the forms in which of the educational policies are deployed in rural schools, the practices that reshape the education policies locally. From their experiences, I will talk about the local representations of the profile of the student to be educated in their schools, and the tensions between the national goals of the policies and their particular practices and perspectives. The students (chapter 9) talk about personal experiences and perspectives in relation to their educational histories and future expectations. This last chapter talks also about consequences in the students' subjectivities in relation to such education policies and practices. Besides, students express their testimonies of living in rural environments, and how these experiences have influenced their personal identities and future perspectives. After these chapters, I will outline a final section with the main conclusions of this thesis.

## Chapter 8: Rural teachers' perspectives

In this chapter I will present and analyse the perspectives of the teachers interviewed, one from each school – or two from each zone/region – which provide a perspective *from inside* the schools and teaching practice; thus, they also provide a testimony of the enactment of the educational policies, how the policies treated in this research are translated in particular practices in these rural settings. These versions, discourses and narratives act as a bridge between the previous education policies analysis (chapters 5, 6, 7) and the students' narratives (chapter 9), because they give insights about how the rural education actors actually operate, perceive and receive policies designed, assessed and controlled centrally. This (final) stage of the education policy cycle, the enactment and translation, is as crucial as others like the (pre)discussion and design stages (Ball, 1993). This stage of the policy translation or practice may in different nuances correspond to or differ from the prescriptions of the policy texts, showing the tensions and conflicts between the texts and the practice in schools. The education policies have been analysed in their texts and discursive features above; now this chapter turns to the practice, and how this practice shapes the views (discourses, narratives) of the teachers regarding those policies. The policies analysed have been the national curriculum, the TVET (especially in its secondary level) and the rural education policy. In this chapter I will present analyses related to the experiences and perspectives of those policies, in particular the curriculum and the TVET, as the rural programmes are mainly applied at the primary level – the secondary rural education constitutes a practice more regulated by general-national guidelines applied through the national curriculum and secondary TVET at a rural-local level. But there is also an issue regarding agricultural TVET schools, which in some points are acknowledged as a technical speciality tied to rural education, so part of the analysis will be focused there as well.

Of the seven interviewees, six are from the schools selected for this study, of whom two are from the scientific-humanistic (SH) regular path, linked to following university studies later, three from the TVET secondary path, and one a head

teacher, who as the director of the school manages both paths, although her background is in agricultural TVET. As the balance was inclined towards the TVET path, I decided to include a seventh interviewee, from the SH path, who belongs to another rural school in the same southern province as his colleagues. The nomenclature used to refer to these teachers is as follows:

*Table 13: Teachers' pseudonyms*

<b>School location</b>	<b>SC or TVET</b>	<b>TVET speciality (if present)</b>	<b>Referred to in this paper as</b>
Freirina (3rd Region)	TVET	Geology	Geo-Freirina
Huasco (3rd Region)	SH		SH-Huasco
Calle Larga (5th Region)	SH and TVET	Agricultural	Agric-CL
Catemu (5th Region)	SH		SH-Catemu
Los Muermos (10th Region)	TVET	Agricultural	Agric-Muermos
Fresia (10th Region)	TVET	Agricultural	Agric-Fresia
Llanquihue Province (10th Region)	SH		SH-LLP

All the schools are free of charge, and receive a majority of 'vulnerable students' who are defined as living in poverty under the index of poverty, a tool designed by the ministry to target those students from the poorest social backgrounds, giving them a higher-value voucher. Five of the six schools were public or municipal, and the school from the Calle Larga Commune was private-subsidised by the State, with the private owner being a foundation connected to the philanthropic activities of a renowned businessperson in the country.

The chapter is structured in themes which follow the topics, concepts and discussions touched throughout this research so far. I will start with a small section giving some general information about the communes addressed, complemented with some words from the interviewees regarding each zone, as a way of outlining each landscape. This section is positioned in this chapter as the first one dedicated to the words expressed by local actors. Then I will develop three sections related

to educational policies, in order to then move on to issues regarding the economic environment of the schools, and how they deploy specific practices influenced by those environments. Finally, I will analyse the profile of the rural student evoked by the teachers, with features that mix the influence of educational policies and the rural experience.

## 1. The places

### **The North, third region, Huasco-Freirina zone:**

The northern zone where the schools investigated are located is Huasco Province, one of the four provinces of the III Region of Chile. Huasco Province contains four communes, two of them, Huasco and Freirina, the specific areas selected for this study. As was shown in chapter 2 (see the maps, p. 63), both communes are contiguous, so they share a similar dry climate and ground type.

*Table 14: Northern zone*

<b>Commune</b>	<b>Inhabitants</b>	<b>Density (inhab./km<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>Economic activities</b>
Freirina	6,531	1.7	Agriculture (olives), small mining (copper)
Huasco	9,015	5.6	Industry (energy, iron treatment), small fishing and agriculture (olives)

Table made by the author, information extracted from different official sources.

While Freirina is less populated, it bases its economic activity in the olive cultivation and other small agriculture activities, and the small copper-mining activity, owned mainly by families in the zone. One important issue around Freirina is that it became widely known nationally in 2012 because of the serious conflict between the local inhabitants and the pig industry near the town – owned by a big national food business holding, with presence in the international field, called

Agrosuper – because of the bad smell generated by the activity of the plant. This conflict resulted in the closure of the plant, and along with that the exit of an important labour source for Freirina’s residents. Huasco, next to the sea, bases its economy in the industrial activities carried on by the Guacolda thermoelectric plant, owned by national and international groups, and the pellets plant owned by the multinational CAP Minería, which carries on the iron production and mining activities of the interior of the region. The commune population works mainly for these two companies. The small fishing and the agriculture in the commune are very diminished nowadays, mainly because of the large activity developed by the two transnational giants mentioned, which covers the whole economic scope of the zone. While Huasco has these two important industrial activities which dominate the economic landscape of the zone, Freirina, along with the agriculture and small mining, also looks towards other places and industries from nearby areas, such as Huasco, and the big mining activities of that region and the whole north of the country (primarily copper), where people from Freirina go to work under different contractual regimes which allow them to go and come back over variable periods of time.

From the perspectives of the teachers interviewed in the zone, there is a problem of lack of investment by companies and industries, and hence a shortage of jobs for the students when they graduate. This is different from the case of the neighbouring Huasco, where there are the two large industries mentioned above, “so, there is a very close bond and more cooperation [between the inhabitants and the companies]. And sometimes the companies, because of the social responsibility aspect, have to support schools where they are located, because of the socioenvironmental impact that has occurred” (Geo-Freirina). This teacher explains the labour dynamic of the town and its surroundings, stating that the main agricultural activity is the olive cultivation, along with other minor activities such as citrus and grapes. But the zone has only small estates or ranches: “this [agricultural activity] is, I would say, a minority. There are many more people who go to the mining zone, although we don’t have so many mines around here”. So,

the agriculture “supports the inhabitants when the mining is bad. But [when] the mining gets better everyone goes to the mining companies”.

**The Centre, fifth region, Calle Larga – Catemu zone:**

The central zone covered in this research covers the Aconcagua Valley and its edges, where part of the V Region population is concentrated in small villages and medium cities around the grapes and wine industry. The region, neighbouring Santiago, the capital, is the third most populated region of Chile. While the Calle Larga is one of the four communes of Los Andes Province – one of the eight provinces of the region, Catemu is one of the six communes of San Felipe Province.

*Table 15: Central zone*

<b>Commune</b>	<b>Inhabitants</b>	<b>Density (inhab./km<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>Economic activities</b>
Calle Larga	11,110	34.3	Agriculture (grapes and wine)
Catemu	13,902	33.5	Industry (copper refinery), agriculture (grapes and wine)

Table made by the author, information extracted from different official sources.

As can be seen from table 15, the population and population density are bigger in the central area than in the northern places characterized above. As in all the three zones researched in this investigation, both communes have similar climates and ground types, in this case temperate-dry weather and fertile lands. Because of this fertility, the zone bases its economic activity on agriculture, principally in vineyards and an internationally recognized wine industry.

The main difference between these two communes is the presence of the Chagres copper refinery, property of the transnational Angloamerican, at the entrance of the town of Catemu. Like the north of the country, but on a lesser scale, the mountains of the centre of the country are developing large mining

activity, where people from these places often go to work; this refinery works the materials brought from the interior of the central zone of Chile. This industry, despite offering a source of work to Catemu's inhabitants, has been denounced as polluting the air of the area, bringing health problems among the population, as claimed by the interviewee from this region (SH-Catemu).

In this teacher's view, the agricultural activity – mainly seasonal – is being slowly replaced by the Chagres refinery and the mines in the interior. Catemu's inhabitants work in the mines on similar contractual bases as mentioned in the case of the north, whereby they work for some weeks before returning to Catemu for some days to rest; people from outside Catemu have arrived to work in the refinery in a similar manner, but in this case they live during the work period in Catemu. This last situation, according to SH-Catemu, has had social consequences in the town, where more bars have been established and there has been an increase of prostitution.

### **The South, tenth region, Los Muermos-Fresia zone:**

The communes of Los Muermos and Fresia are two of the nine communes of Llanquihue Province, which is one of the four provinces of the green and rainy de los Lagos region.<sup>20</sup> The region is very touristic because of its beautiful lakes and the presence of Chiloé Island, another province. Chiloé Island and the south coast of Llanquihue Province have developed a large-scale aquiculture industry – mainly salmon – which exports its products worldwide. Despite this, the communes of Los Muermos and Fresia are not closely connected with this industry – nor with tourism – and their populations are established in other agricultural and farming activities. Here is some general information:

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<sup>20</sup> 'Of the lakes', in its translation from Spanish.



Table 16: Southern zone

Commune	Inhabitants	Density (inhab./km <sup>2</sup> )	Economic activities
Los Muermos	16,522	13.3	Large livestock industry (cows), agriculture (cereal and beet), small forest and wood activity
Fresia	12,454	9.7	Large livestock industry (cows), agriculture (cereal and beet), small forest and wood activity

\* Table made by the author, information extracted from different official sources.

The table shows a lower density than the previous, central areas, but higher than the northern area; this exemplifies a tendency of the country, where the centre has a very concentrated population, and the north has the sparsest population and is also the least populated zone – in the country. The economic activities are based on the large bovine industry – meat and milk – followed at a distance by the medium agriculture and small wood extraction industries, this last one more based on a local scale. These economic activities are joined by aquiculture and forestry, which provide labour alternatives for the rural inhabitants of the region; in the case of salmon extraction, for example, workers have a labour regime in which they go to work away from home for longer periods of time before returning.

According to Agric-Fresia the zone is dedicated mainly to the farming activity based on bovine production. The important nuances provided by this teacher are that this activity is developed mainly through private big farmers, who provide meat and milk to the big companies in the industry. So the economic scheme is moderately developed in these communes, and atomized among private owners; these big farmers provide important labour sources for the inhabitants of these localities. According to Agric-Fresia, students are less and less interested in following this labour path, so they are looking for other work possibilities.

## 2. General issues around the educational system

As an introduction to the educational policies analysed, I will present those aspects related to the Chilean educational system, those other policies which appeared in the interviews, and the relations between the schools and the ministry, which in some way give perspective to the Chilean education and the policy topics covered in this research.

One of the general characteristics and issues described in the introduction of this research is related to a *management by distance* strategy, as a neoliberal technology of governing which is based on targets used to control and measure the educational system and particularly the schools. The testing system is one of the technologies which provide key information for this management mode: the results work as inputs for the ministry to rank, give incentives to and take decisions regarding schools. Agric-CL gives his testimony in relation to the Agency for the Quality of Education (ACE in its Spanish initials), which is the body in charge of monitoring the development of schools, mainly in academic areas, and the Superintendence of Education, an inspection body which informs and controls the normative and the use of resources in schools – both institutions were created in 2012 under the new national quality assurance system. The teacher states that currently the agency only gets in touch through “telephone contact, via surveys in internet platforms [but] not yet as a face-to-face thing. It is still too virtual, because they have too many schools to see, but when they come they will spend maybe one week applying a bunch of instruments to evaluate us and classify us. Then, the Superintendence of Education is the one that sets the guillotine”. This illustrative testimony expresses the perspective of a rural school in relation to the educational policy in the last years and decades, where the whole system has been articulated as the evoked ‘management by distance’ technologies, central guidelines to be applied locally and monitored externally by the ministry agencies, receiving information to order the schools. In this ‘virtual relation’ with the ministry, where “sometimes I am the whole day in this nonsense of the [online] platforms” which ask for different information from schools in order to control their operation, the

teacher states: “sometimes it is so much what they ask, that you don’t have time to do your job in the school, your pedagogical role”. This ‘virtual relation’ is not synonymous with a flexible relation, or the freedom for the school to manage their educational enclosures; the schools are controlled from a distance by the ministry through a number of indicators and information requests. This insight speaks eloquently of an overwhelming strategy of assessment; the Superintendence of Education, as the body which ‘sets the guillotine’, has the power to decide based on indicators whether schools should continue or not, should be ranked in such and such a position, or should work in several areas under the pressure of improving low indicators in a certain period of time.

According to Geo-Freirina, besides the different partial assessments and controls of these governing agencies, the general and most important assessment and considerations of the Ministry of Education in relation to schools, particularly through the ACE, is based on “three parameters: the SIMCE, the PSU and the percentage of graduation in the case of the TVET schools”. While the first two testing technologies have been analysed thoroughly in chapter 5, the third indicator adds a new ingredient to this quality assurance policy led by this educational agency, which puts pressure on schools to guarantee the graduation of their TVET students. This, according to this last teacher, is related to an educational path in which students from lower social classes have problems finishing their secondary education, with proper certification.

In relation to the SIMCE, SH-Catemu thinks his school’s sense of competition in relation to the neighbouring schools of the zone has increased, because this national test “makes each (Consumers Union) institution compare itself with other schools with the same [socioeconomic] characteristics, [even when] it increases one point [in the SIMCE results] in relation to them”. So this assessment technology, as well as being a tool to monitor schools, more than promoting the improvement of the schools, promotes the competition between them. It is more important to the school to ‘beat’ the neighbouring schools, so it can be more attractive to the families of the zone, than to improve in relation to its own results from previous years. This can be analysed as a regime of enterprise, where schools

– like the homo economicus – compete among themselves under the compulsion of a national assessment system, like companies under financial motivations.

In addition, the voucher system pays the State subvention to schools according to students' daily attendance, so the number of students in the classrooms and schools is a crucial financial matter in these educational institutions. According to Agric-CL, this also generates too much competition between schools, affecting the educational system and students' opportunities. As an example, he comments that his school looks for new students in other areas and towns of the zone – because they need more students to increase their subventions. The mayor of the neighbouring commune does not allow his school to be 'offered' to the young people of the commune, because the municipal schools live under the same financial regime, so the mayor wants to prevent a possible 'leak' of students towards other schools. It is therefore "very difficult to get [new] students", especially for a rural school, where potential students "are relatively far away" (Agric-CL).

The PSU test – the entrance requirement for university education – has a particular difference to the SIMCE, namely that while both generate a competitive dynamic between schools intended to produce better results, the PSU puts a different pressure on students. The SIMCE test does not have a direct impact on students, as it is a technology acting on the schools rather than the students; so, for instance, a student's SIMCE result is not recorded in his official academic records. But the PSU has a direct impact on students, as it is a personal route to university, so the pressure for a good performance in this test is greater. This assessment technology positions the national curriculum contents measured in the PSU as the most relevant. Agric-CL believes that currently "everything is PSU, so the [male students] even lose the purpose of what they are studying, they lose the love for what they are studying". Everything is reduced to contents to be measured later in the crucial test, which in one way or another determines part of students' educational life – especially for those who hope to get into university, more associated with the scientific-humanistic path, and with the economic resources to pay the subsequent educational fees.

Finally, and touching a different problematic aspect related to the teaching practice, the workload of the teachers in the Chilean educational regime has been historically unbalanced. The official teachers' statute has forgotten the equilibrium of the pedagogical practice: under the historically precarious financial circumstances of schools, the workload of teachers has been based on teaching, excluding an appropriate time to design and prepare classes – so this should be done outside of school hours. SH-Catemu shares that he “has one hour [per week], actually 45 minutes, to prepare classes. I plan the classes at home! So you don't have time to sit and think about the type of children that you have to teach, who have particular characteristics, who come walking kilometres from the countryside (...)”. This excessive workload also has consequences in relation to a curricular application decontextualized from the rural students' experience, where the teaching practice lacks proper preparation time and support, and this makes difficult to a “teacher [to] prepare a contextualized and relevant class for these [rural] students. Despite this, [the workload] overwhelms the teacher (...). I am still having lunch, I am still having dinner; I am not a machine” (SH-Piedra Azul). This problem of the teachers' workload denotes a disconnection between the curricular and the teaching policy, because while the former is designed centrally it does not consider the teaching conditions in schools, especially in the poorest ones. Also the practice and the subjectivity of the teacher are strongly influenced by this labour situation.

### 3. National curriculum: technology designed from a distance

Starting with the first policy in question in this research, in this section I will present the teachers' most important analyses regarding the national curriculum. This section will cover mainly the relation between the problem of the relevance of inflexible contents designed centrally and applied in rural settings, and the issue regarding the need to adapt these contents to the situation of the rural students.

Going back to the effects of the SIMCE in schools, SH-Catemu believes that the assessment of curricular aspects is a manner of considering all schools, teachers and students in the same way, “but actually they are all completely different: regionally, provincially and communally”. This issue highlights again the problem of curricular and assessment policies which erase the spatial and cultural particularities in one group of contents – mainly focused in maths, language and science, leaving aside artistic or other subjects, as SH-Catemu also claims – under a principle of national cohesion and equality.

This issue is linked with the flexibility of the curriculum supposed by its designers and policy administrators, and its inflexibility from the side of its critics from the academic world (see chapter 4). The teachers highlight something related, but different at the same time. The issue around the flexibility of the curriculum is not related to the policy prescriptions; this is to say that although the official regulation states a principle of freedom of teaching, so schools ultimately decide whether or not they follow the curricular plan, that actually does not happen in practice because, beyond the already-mentioned decisive factor of the assessment policies which assess the curriculum contents, the curriculum contents are too many, so they do not leave space to add or withdraw anything through the teaching practice. If it is acknowledged, as CurrPM-2 expressed in chapter 5, that the assessment policies were implemented in order to put pressure on schools to teach the national curriculum, this issue is even more problematic when the teaching practice in rural settings struggles to cover the whole curricular frame. I will explain this in more depth in the next paragraphs.

The SIMCE and PSU tests, ultimately, do not allow a freedom for teachers to skip contents or choose some contents and not others, or to develop alternative contents, for example, applied to their local contexts. The curriculum, as described by SH-Catemu, “arrives with what should be taught in Santiago [the capital], [not] in the north of the country, or in a small commune like this one”. But Agric-CL and SH-LLP state that despite the compulsory character of the curriculum, it can be adapted, in what would give an ambiguous sense of flexibility and freedom, so it can be translated to the methods of teachers and contextualized to the needs of

specific groups of students. So from this view, the curriculum could be “versatile” (SH-LLP), if the teacher makes an extra effort to contextualize it. But the ambiguity that I mentioned is based on the sum of three factors: can a curriculum be adapted which (i) is assessed by national tests and (ii) contains more contents than those that can be taught in the teaching time, (iii) in an environment where teachers do not have time for preparing their classes (as pointed out in the section above)? Agric-CL adds in relation to the national curriculum structure:

There are compulsory minimum contents, but those ‘minimum contents’ are [actually the] maximum, because the truth is that one can’t do anything else.

These ‘maximum contents’ are considered by SH-Catemu as very high standards to be measured in the national assessments; so the contents are not only too much, but also too demanding in terms of academic complexity. Geofreirina agrees, saying that the contents “cover topics in too much depth, that in our context we don’t have the time to teach”. SH-Huasco claims that there is a tension between the need to teach all these minimum/maximum contents, and the need for those contents actually to be learnt by the students. This teacher explains that the assumption from the ministry is that if the SIMCE test shows low results it means that the students did not learn what was taught to them, or that only part of the contents was taught in the classroom. In both cases the teacher is evaluated negatively by the ministry, the schools administration and the families. But she argues that these actors do not consider that in the majority of the cases, students arrive to the secondary school from rural primary education with few learning skills and inadequate knowledge of curriculum contents, so she has to make extra efforts and use regular teaching hours to reinforce delayed contents. This issue is related to the situation of the rural student, and the difficulties to teach the national curriculum in rural schools.

An important issue, which will be covered in depth in the last section regarding this group of interviews, is related to the characteristics of the rural

students. In brief, the rural students from the settings investigated study in these groups of free public and private-subsidized schools, which receive students mainly from deprived social situations. This social factor is crucial in the teaching practice of teachers and the application of the national curriculum structure, because this type of student comes from a poor background, with a deep material scarcity, far from an academic and scholastic culture. SH-Catemu states:

Sometimes the working conditions at this level do not allow students to achieve the minimum. Beyond the personal commitment that I might have to the education, there is something related to the type of students one works with. The majority of the boys here have social problems, behavioural problems, problems with commitment [to the school], also their parents and families.

Hence, the curricular inadequacy, beyond the issues around its centrally-urban-designed contents which lack pertinence in rural settings, lies in its complexity as well, its too-high standards (measured externally too) for such a deprived student population. The whole curricular design seems not to be intended to be taught in this type of rural places. The rural student is not considered as a particular and local subject in the curricular design, as a sociological reference with a particular and local culture and a socioeconomic background; instead there is the image of a Chilean subject which matches with a kind of urban subject, capable of achieving high learning standards in a favourable social environment for the academic work, more visible in the middle or high classes. The rural teachers highlight the difficulties of teaching these demanding and complex curricular contents in the deprived rural areas where their schools are located.



## 4. Secondary TVET policy

### 4.1. To open a TVET school

It was mentioned in chapter 6 that to open a private or municipal TVET school the requirements are quite general and lax, and at the same time the economic incentives may encourage certain technical specialities – such as the agricultural one – in rural areas, as the State subvention is higher under those conditions. Regarding the opening of TVET schools or the establishing of specialities Geo-Freirina remembers:

When I arrived [to the school] the ministry was only promoting continued establishing of technical specialities without restrictions (...). Currently they are stricter; now they demand everything.

The opening of TVET schools or the establishing of specialities in current TVET schools is based on requirements which from being very slack have moved towards something more developed, from deregulation to control. This situation reflects the attitude of recent government administrations towards the TVET, where as I have argued an absence of policy contributed to a highly unregulated system, with hundreds of technical options in schools (see chapter 6). The new requirements from the local educational authority, according to Geo-Freirina, are much more demanding:

To include a new [technical] speciality [in schools] there must be a diagnosis about the [economic] sector, and mainly about the companies that I have. So the ministry tells me: 'So you are going to have this speciality; how many companies do you have?' [I respond:] 'I don't know, I have five'. [The ministry replies:] 'Those companies are going to absorb your workforce?' (...). [W]e had to present the TVET speciality of mining exploitation, so we had to go to the mines and ask them: 'Would

you give me a letter of support if I establish that speciality?' (...). What is the interest of the ministry? (...). [T]hat the boys graduate from the school and work in a company of the zone. At this moment the TVET is intimately linked with the economic sector.

This is the new technology which regulates the opening of TVET schools: the new control is linked not that much to curricular or infrastructure standards, or others associated with pedagogical elements, but to the proximity of the school to the enterprises of the zone, in what again appears as an *intimacy* between the school and the companies (see chapter 7). A successful TVET school from the perspective of the ministry is one which is strategically connected with the industries, in order to produce students to fill the jobs in the zone. That is the goal of a TVET school, more than other objectives (regarding a broader path for students, see chapter 6): to generate fast employment paths for (rural/poor) students/future workers. But while Geo-Freirina perceives that situation in his northern area, in the central zone, Agric-CL believes that in her locality there are agricultural schools with weak infrastructure and badly connected with the industry; so, despite the new, strict regulations, there are several old or new schools or TVET specialities which do not respond to those prescriptions, and operate in the old, unregulated way. This shows a policy in the process of implementation, with differences of application across the regions according to the local authority. To recap, this rhetoric from the teachers' perspective shows an old (but not that old) (de)regulation of opening schools, and a new one in the process of implementation, which seeks to intimately connect the schools with the business sector. This is why Agric-CL claims schools disconnected with the enterprises are a 'disappointment', as under the new logic these are seen as bad schools. Agric-CL is proud of the financial autonomy reached by his school, as its TVET activity allows it to:

export our fruit, so all that money allows us to have oil for our tractors, to teach the boys, to buy fertilizers, pesticides, to move the chickens every year, to pay the

technicians, the agronomist, to have all the infrastructure operating so our boys learn to self-finance.

In this particular case, the TVET practice in the school affects not only the pedagogical dimension of the institution, but also its management, as the school has started to work as a small enterprise which sells and exports what the agricultural activity of the TVET students produces during the year. This is a school that is not only proud to be strongly connected to companies, but also acts like one, affecting the school's pedagogy, management and operation. This is another effect of the rural school as a dispositif produced by a sum of practices and policies which constitute an assemblage that reshapes the rural education in the country (see chapter 7).

#### **4.2. Oblivion and delay**

(...) it is still the forgotten place of the [Chilean] education: the TVET education.  
(SH-LLP)

The teachers' views show a correspondence to what the academics believe in relation to an absence or oblivion of the TVET policy in the parts of government responsible (chapter 6). These particular perspectives are based in the perception that the last governments have put the focus on the university education, leaving aside the technical one. This situation seeks to reinforce the intention of students to follow a secondary scientific-humanistic path over the TVET one. Despite its practical ineffectiveness – almost half of the secondary students still follow the TVET path – the discourse around the possibility of entering university is one of the factors that explains the lack of concern of the public authority in the TVET provision:

(...) these views of the government, or all the other administrations [too], which haven't changed, where it's the university, the university, generate something like an illusion in the boys. They sell them the dream, because not many really have [the means to access university] (...). To go to an agricultural school is boring when the students compare themselves with their peers; [the latter say] 'No, there they don't prepare you for the PSU.' (Agric-CL)

This situation has provoked this private-subsidized school, owned by an important businessman in the country, to pursue the objective of vindicating the secondary TVET provision as a response to a "Ministry of Education that has abandoned the TVET area" (Agric-CL), which shocks this teacher:

Whom do they think TVET schools educate? The worker who has no idea? The peasant 'huaso'?<sup>21</sup> Those things bother us.

This oblivion produces the image of an ignorant worker, the student as a rural peasant destined to work in manual labour, while the scientific-humanistic students are seduced to pursue university studies, a route associated with a more successful and advanced life path. The forgotten TVET falls in a discourse where its students (in rural places) are visualized as low-skilled workers; the lack of importance of the policy reflects the notion of less important students for less important labour tasks – or the *pre-figured worker-employee* (chapter 7).

But from another perspective, SH-Catemu and Agric-Fresia believe that the TVET path is a good alternative for the young rural-poor population, because "at least, the boy will have a fast option to work, which is what he needs" (SH-Catemu), and because "you have to imagine that places like these where the majority of the people are from poor backgrounds, they are not going to go to university, and the problems in their homes are because of the same poor history of their parents" (Agric-Fresia). This illustrates a complex situation where the TVET path offers a

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<sup>21</sup> 'Huaso' is what the traditional Chilean peasant is commonly called.

practical solution to urgent material needs. This perspective matches with the critique of the academics in chapter 6, whereby the TVET provision has been historically conceived for training the poor students to have a quick entrance to manual work – despite the policy discourse which presents the TVET as a broader path of lifelong learning. More will be said on this later in the section on the profile of the rural student.

The perception of oblivion is portrayed also in relation to the TVET curriculum, where there is the assumption that the contents and skills have not been updated in years, which constitutes another sign of this oblivion in the government regarding the policy:

(...) if I'm not wrong, I've been working six years in this school, and since then I have been working with the same curricular plan. So it doesn't have any modification (...). [T]hey have abandoned us, I think. (Agric-Fresia)

The plans and programmes do not change. I have been there 10 years, and we are working with the same plans and programmes. (Geo-Freirina)

This curricular invariability is reinforced by contents which are “lagging behind what the industry or the enterprise is asking at the moment, in relation to the advances that are happening” (Geo-Freirina), a fact that tensions the mentioned intimate relation between school and companies. This suggests an ambivalence in the policy, where at the same time as seeking a close relation, the policy makers and administrators fail in providing contents updated to the needs of the market. This results in abandoned schools, which under the (absent) TVET policy's (lack of) prescriptions have to generate strategies to keep themselves updated to the needs of the market. This issue will be developed in more depth in the next section of this chapter.

Moreover, the mismatch between curricular contents and the rural economy is an issue also seen in the lack of pertinence to the economic activities of each

zone, considering the geographical realities. Geo-Freirina argues that the curricular design made centrally leaves aside the regional particularities, and Agric-Fresia agrees with this standpoint, as for instance agricultural skills and contents developed for northern regions – i.e. “horticulture”, “vegetal propagation” (Agric-Fresia) – have to be taught in his southern school, where, for reasons of climate and local business types, there are no such agricultural activities. The central-national policy design erases the regional-rural particularities, as discussed in chapter 5, where the curriculum, also here in the TVET path, has problems in identifying and recognizing the regional and rural diversity of each zone.

### **4.3. The CAE (Business Advisory Council)**

As a last point in relation to the TVET policy from the perspectives of the teachers, there is a recommendation/request (as it is not officially regulated) from the local representatives of the ministry to the TVET schools, to create a Business Advisory Council (CAE from its Spanish initials), composed of local business representatives, which has the goal to link the educational definitions to the needs of the business and industries. This council is supposed to meet monthly during the academic year, to provide strategic and updated information to the schools. There is no systematic review of this initiative, but from the perspectives of the interviewees experiences of it have been ambivalent. First, of the four TVET teachers interviewed in this research, only one, from Calle Larga, states that her school has institutionalized a CAE; the school from Freirina has one that meets intermittently, and in the case of Fresia, Agric-Fresia points out that they have tried for years to establish their CAE without success; the school in Los Muermos has made no meaningful attempts. The CAE is supposed to be part of the assemblage in which the rural education, and in particular the TVET path, is intimately related to the business actors. The CAE would be the only systematic initiative to coordinate such school–companies relations (generally enacted through informal meetings and alliances between specific schools and specific enterprises).

Addressing the school in Calle Larga and its successful experience with the CAE, Agric-CL states that in the meetings the council sheds “light on what is happening in the environment, because they [the companies] are the ones that are going to hire the boys”. The CAE generates a permanent feedback to the school, and influences its teaching practice in order to update it to the needs of the regional economy. This advice is not only a guidance, but also a pact where the enterprises, while advising, are influencing the school’s curricular definitions in order to receive properly skilled workers in the future. Geo-Freirina points out that the goal of the CAE is to discuss “the profile of the TVET student and improve it, hopefully to bring it closer to the business side. The business representatives give their opinions, how do they like the boys, what do they need (...)”. Again, this illustrative testimony offers some discursive nuances to this practice: the industries express how they ‘like’ the students in order to fulfil their expectations in relation to their workplace requirements, and the school tries to respond to those requests. The relation school–industry is not synergic, but an unbalanced dependency of the educational sphere on the business one, the latter guiding the course of the former. The CAE, as was said above, is another practice of the rural education as a neoliberal assemblage.

## 5. Relation to the economic environment: Schools chasing business sector’s needs

The previous section is a bridge to the current one: beyond the CAE there are other conversations and negotiations between the schools and the business sector. As the previous sections argued, the TVET path is the dimension of the rural schools most likely to interact with the industries’ representatives, as indicators are involved in order to show employability results in their students. This section will examine in more depth the discourses and meanings around the relation between schools and enterprises; the dependence expressed above is portrayed through different images, practices and forms of relations. I will analyse some of them.

First, I will concentrate for a moment on Geo-Freirina's testimony, which illustrates several points regarding this issue. This teacher states that the school "has to adapt to the companies' requirements to give to the student the [proper] training inside a school", because "(...) at this moment the productive sector is the one which asks you or demands you to open a new career [TVET speciality] (...) because they need students or workers that arrive to the enterprise with the skills that they require". Under this logic, "here in the zone I think that CAP [pellet industry] is the enterprise that most absorbs boys". This is a process which ultimately makes this educator "proud because the students had arrived well to the mining companies, which is what I am interested in". This account synthesizes some of the issues around the relation between schools and companies in rural schools in the country. Companies 'demand' TVET specialities in schools and then 'absorb' their 'students or workers' – a nomenclature which equalizes both subjects, the student and the worker. The role of the company appears preponderant and authoritative, and the school positioned in a diminished and obedient place, as a poor factory providing mouldable products to the only wealthy customer of the zone. The account concludes with a feeling of 'pride' on the part of the teacher, because the whole cycle school–enterprise closes successfully with the student working in the company. This last statement involves subjective emotions in the teacher, feelings provoked by a particular educational assemblage of policies, practices and institutions in a rural scenario. The next chapter will review what happens in the students' subjectivities under this assemblage.

Moreover, in practical terms, Geo-Freirina continues, the influence of the business sector in the curricular definitions operates in the overlap of the "profile of graduation that I have" and the "profile of the student that they [the industry] want". Then in the school they "create the teaching modules, which ones we withdraw or which ones we change, because this is the flexibility that the ministry gives". This system of practices clashes with the TVET curriculum, where the national prescriptions differ from the requirements of the companies, a situation which forces the schools to "adapt the [national curricular] plan and give the emphasis requested, so the student will arrive to the enterprise with what the



businessman asks” (Geo-Freirina). This issue is related to the topic of the profile of the student to be educated in rural education, showing some of the practices that influence this profile; more will be analysed in the next section.

A dissimilar situation arises in the case of the schools of Catemu, an exception in relation to the other schools of the sample, where there are connections with industries, but not with the local ones. In his response to why the TVET alternatives of the school (construction and electricity) are not based on the industries of the local area (such as agriculture or mining), SH-Catemu regrets that the head teacher believes that “the school is looking to take students out of this ‘cellar of degradation’, and offer opportunities far from here”. This speaks of a view regarding not only the rural youth, but also the rural environment and the perspectives that it offers to them. This specific school is not linked to the enterprises of the zone, but to industries far from that rural environment where the boys reach other labour alternatives. Although the logic of the relation between the school and the industries is similar, it lacks that local intimacy, a situation triggered by a negative perspective on the social environment of this rural locality. The TVET specialities of the school seek to match to the requirements of economic activities far from the zone, mainly based on urban necessities. In this case the rural educational assemblage is broken or transformed, crossing the frontiers of – and even neglecting – the rural. Where the other schools acknowledge a limited labour field and try to navigate in it, the school in Catemu just abandons this degraded situation and tries to influence its students to move away.

Continuing with the rest of the case-study schools, the close relation between schools and enterprises in rural settings adds another factor which increases instability, because if the schools put the core of their efforts in responding properly to the demands of the companies, they tie their fate to the situation of those companies and of the economy in general. This is why the school in Freirina is now so focused in the mining TVET specialities, in part because “the agricultural sector is slower because (...) of the [lack of] water. Now everyone is going to the mining sector. But we will see what happens in a few years; you know

that the mining industry is also falling into decay” (Geo-Freirina). The rural development model (chapter 3) based on the free market initiatives and movements creates a situation that also affects the dynamic of schools as they develop such close and dependent relationships with the business sector.

In the case of Agric-Fresia, he acknowledges that in general the business sectors complain that he and his colleagues, as a school, “[adopting the voice of the businessman]: ‘(...) are delivering very bad workers; that kind of worker is not useful, that profile of boy that you deliver is not, is not useful’. And I say: ‘We can change that, and I can offer you a student that is skilled in what you are demanding (...)’”. This consideration of students in terms of usefulness is complemented from the perspective of Geo-Freirina, who believes that “often the businessmen see the students as cheap workforce (...)”. So the student/worker is ‘useful’ as long as he brings the minimum skills needed by the enterprise, but at the same time is not estimated as a high-skilled worker (so he is ‘cheap workforce’). These statements suggest low professional esteem of students graduated from these rural schools in the eyes of the company, based on the suspicion (or evidence) that the education provided is of poor quality, and these young students are not properly prepared for the relevant tasks. The problem of the quality of the Chilean education has been mentioned above (see introduction and chapter 7), but this situation puts the responsibility on the schools, but also the students, assessed based on their disadvantaged socioeconomic background. This is linked with the request for ‘soft skills’ training from the companies, soft skills that, from the perspective of the enterprises, seem too scarce among poverty contexts:

At the moment what the companies ask most are soft skills; a student with (...) respect, responsibility (...) who arrives punctually, who knows how to follow orders (...). [T]his is what they say to us: ‘finish your poor training and we polish them here’.  
(Geo-Freirina)

To recap the last paragraph’s ideas, according to the teachers, the rural student educated by these rural schools is depicted by the companies as useless

and not trained technically in a proper manner, and at the same time, because of their poor background, as lacking suitable minimum soft skills to work on a formal basis; by consequence, at most they can be considered as 'cheap workforce'. In this context schools operate and relate to enterprises; this is the situation and prejudice that they work to revert, along with their compliance to the companies' needs and requests.

Some TVET teachers, as explains Geo-Freirina, also have the opportunity to undergo a type of internship in the enterprises with the goal of updating their knowledge in relation to what is happening in the workplaces and the new technologies, practices and industrial procedures. These internships allow them to "adapt the contents that arrive from the ministry", including those features found in the enterprises' practices. This is another practice which represents the relation between rural schools and companies, where the pedagogical practice is guided and influenced from inside the workplaces, fine-tuning with more precision the curricular contents to the needs of the enterprises.

To sum up, this section has presented and analysed the different ways in which the intimate relationship between the rural schools and the companies is deployed in such geographical settings. Different practices and discourses shape these ways of relating, in a form that seems to be generating an increasingly asymmetric relation where the company influences and sets the curricular and pedagogical features of the schooling process, principally those related to the TVET specialities. The rural education is assembled beyond the schools and the educational bureaucracy, being mainly influenced by the economic activity of the enterprises, constituting a particular assemblage of policies, interests, practices and power relations. In this situation, the rural school is positioned as a dispositif where different forces and objectives are enacted dynamically under the rhythms of the markets and industries. Rural schools are not only under pressure from the governmental assessment systems, but from the needs and changes of the enterprises of the zone.

## 6. The profile of the student: between the rural youth and the expected outcome from rural education

To start with, there are different nuances in relation to the profile of the student to be educated through the rural education, most of them overlapping with issues around the social situation and the characteristics of the rural youth. There are educational objectives that often are tensioned by the social environment and the subjective features which define a rural student. The interviews show in most of the cases, as was pointed out in the tensions with the national curriculum, views which link the rural student with all the problems of poverty; for example SH-Catemu states that their rural students are “people from the country, most of them from dysfunctional families; the records from the school show that the student lives with different parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts, etc.”. The students live in overcrowded homes, where the material conditions are precarious, constituting an environment far from suitable for an educational process. SH-Catemu claims that even the head teacher of the school “talks about the students as ‘the boys without future’”, as youth from very poor backgrounds; in the environment of the town of Catemu, there are no prospects for a future.

Despite this last perspective, Geo-Freirina believes that one of their issues in the northern area is that the young people do not want to leave their homes and rural areas to move to other places:

[The boys here] are very close to their families, they don't leave this place easily, they don't leave their homes easily. Here you will find families where the sons and daughters are more than 30 [years old] and they are still in the homes. So, it is hard to unstick the boys from here, that they go out to other places; there are just a few who do it. There are many, many students that try to study away and fail, and they come back here.

So, the efforts of the schools to connect the students to future workplaces, or in some cases to higher education, have to deal with this feature of the rural youth, where many of them remain in their original hometowns and want to continue their lives and labour in those settings. This fits with the data noted earlier (chapter 3), showing that migration rates have diminished during the last decades and the testimony of a school administrator is provided which states that only a small percentage of the students move to urban settings. I will analyse this theme in the next chapter from the students' perspectives.

Furthermore, the traditional agricultural activity, and its corresponding TVET option, has lost interest for the rural youth, and "more than one agricultural school has had to close" (Agric-CL). The agricultural is seen by the young rural students as something to relate to the labour activities of their parents, with a meaning of 'old-fashioned', so they want to look to other alternatives. But there still are another portion of the students that for different reasons follow the agricultural TVET path, a decision that contains specific nuances to be analysed. First, it is necessary to sort out this perception of agriculture in relation to their parents; there are students who "like the countryside, but you have to work with them, psychologically speaking, trying to change their mindset that they are not going to be the same as their parents, because that scares them (...). [T]hey believe that the student from this [TVET] speciality will harvest potatoes later" (Agric-Fresia). This teacher continues: "but something that is in their little heads has to change in relation to a difference. They have to see that they are going to be professionals. They are not going to be workers. So there is a little problem that needs to change". Students have experienced their parents working in the same precarious conditions over the years, doing the same hard tasks, with low incomes and some of them, especially the mothers, as seasonal workers without any formality. Against these experiences, the goal of the schools is to convince students that the secondary TVET will open other doors and will upgrade their future labour conditions in comparison to their parents. This is one of the important issues of this study, as the promise of these TVET paths, and the TVET policy in general, is associated with this image of a qualified worker, which will overcome the situation

of the students' parents. In chapter 7 it was argued that the outcomes of the rural education tend to reproduce the same labour patterns among generations. The image of the pre-figured employee raised in this research is consequent to this last perspective. But I will continue to address this issue in more depth later.

### **The entrepreneur (of the self) or the (pre-figured) employee?**

This section will contrast those discourses and purposes narrated by the teachers in relation to the profile of the student identified with the conceptual image of the entrepreneur or the employee. Before continuing, I will point out that the images related to an academic profile were scarce in the interviews, in terms of a profile connected to university higher education. Only a small number of students accessed university each year, as noted by Agric-CL and SH-LLP; another small group sought to go on to tertiary studies in a technical institute, and the remainder intended to move from TVET directly into work. So, in general terms the discourse of the profile was mainly associated with the figure of the entrepreneur or the employee, as paths to follow once the students leave the schools. This is another component of the rural educational assemblage, where the labour path, independent or dependent, is clearer in the future horizon of the students than the university/academic path.

So, exploring the perspectives of a profile of the rural student expected by the schools, there appears the image of the entrepreneur:

Our first objective is that the students insert themselves in the labour world, and also expecting that they can undertake to have an entrepreneurial spirit. (Geo-Freirina)

And what are the main characteristics of this entrepreneur?

(...) a student prepared to face a vertiginous world, competent against any situation they have to tackle in life (...). [T]he minimum tools are related to resolving conflicts, developing activities, taking decisions, leading, and at the same time, perfecting oneself, the constant self-motivation (SH-LLP)

Reflective beings which assume the consequences of our actions (...). [It is a] boy who has powerful personal tools, or the resilience, a boy that has the capacity of personal improvement, personal discipline, that is the most powerful. (Agric-CL)

Agric-CL remembers and links this entrepreneurial profile with the policies implemented at the beginning of the 2000s, where the minister “started an educational policy to develop the *laissez faire* approach and empower the student”, in a policy discourse in which students should be educated to choose freely in life – their secondary path, SH or TVET; their labour path, entrepreneurship or employment – and develop such skills and mentality in order to choose responsibly their own options and plan their lives. This set of attributes are closer to the features of the *neoliberal subject*, as the *entrepreneur of the self*, one who is encouraged to perfect and motivate himself, to invest in himself and follow a lifelong learning path, and who is *autonomous for choosing* rationally, to be responsible for himself in a scenario free of all external regulation.

On the other hand, several features of the rural schooling process speak of the education of a future employee. I will now try to outline what type of employee and the tensions around this issue. The tensions are between the curricular purposes and those of the companies of the zone, and between the school’s expectations and those of the students.

In reference to the relation between the profile of the student and the profile of the worker from the enterprises, in the previous section it was pointed out that part of the intimate relation between schools and companies was based in the influence of the companies in defining the profile of the graduated student from rural schools, or in other words, the request to match the profile of the worker with the profile of the student, so after the schooling process the student/worker

can fit properly in his next stage (or destiny) – the workplace. Addressing this issue, Geo-Freirina states that:

I see the teaching modules purely as an economic matter. If you look to the profile of the student to be educated, the student is trained to work in an enterprise, and to have the skills to perform as a worker in an enterprise. I miss that (...) more rural-communitarian side.

Even the entrepreneurial features are subordinated to ‘skills’ of employment, such as the soft skills of “labour responsibility, (Party) punctuality” (Geo-Freirina). This northern teacher adds that at the time of “evaluating the implementation of a [new TVET] speciality (...) the first thing to do is to see the profile of the student [from the curriculum] and to analyse the professional profile required by the enterprises of the locality (...). [So] the students’ profiles must seek to match with the worker profiles delivered by the enterprises”. After this analysis and curricular adaptation process, in the case of the agricultural path, “the profile of the student is perfect for the zone where you have agricultural enterprises, large states”. But analysing the northern economic situation, “there are no big agricultural enterprises (...). [H]ere we have small agriculturalists, and they are not going to hire students to administrate their lands (...). [T]hey hire them to receive help in the regular work”. The case of the mining industry is different, as it is much bigger in the north of the country, where according to Geo-Freirina the school expects to offer a more consistent track between the training provided and the future workplace. So, part of the rural educational assemblage mainly shaped by the intimate relation school–companies, is developed through the redefinition of the profile of the student into the profile of the worker in rural TVET schools. This point leads on to the next tension, between the expectations of the school and the labour expectations of the students.

Despite the rural schools’ efforts in relation to the profile and future labour opportunities of the rural students, trying to show to them that they are not going to experience the same labour conditions as their parents, these clash with the



social backgrounds and existing subjectivities of the students. Geo-Freirina points out that their school has between 94% and 96% of students living in poverty under the index of poverty. These are “vulnerable students, which many of whom only want to graduate from secondary school and go to work immediately. Why? Because their families cannot pay for their [tertiary] studies, so they want to have their little technical title and start to work. So I think that the school delivers the minimum knowledge and skills in order to subsist in the labour field”. These minimum levels of knowledge and skills seem to be considered as such from the perspective of the students, who do not recognize the more advanced knowledge and skills that the school actually teaches. Geo-Freirina adds:

Our focus (...) is to remove from the student this vision that he has about the agriculture as the man with a shovel that is there watering, and who is poor as a rat. So our idea is also to (...) put them in the companies where they can be successful, so they can see a reality where it is possible to live in the agriculture

Thus, the schools try to educate “leaders” (Agric-CL), “professionals in charge of a group of workers” (Agric-Fresia), because they “are not educating seasonal workers. I don’t have anything against the seasonal workers, but in such cases they should drop their education now and go to work to the countryside” (Agric-CL). But unfortunately from the perspective of Agric-Fresia, these efforts most of the time cannot change the students’ minds, because “they feel that they are not prepared (...). [T]hey don’t feel capable and they end up doing the jobs that they should be managing. They are the ones that harvest potatoes, the ones earning the minimum income”. As they do not feel properly prepared “the majority of the students work in anything, even harvesting” (Agric-Fresia). This situation is also triggered by the rural environment where the students of the school in Fresia live, a zone poor in industrial development. So this teacher states that she tells the students that they should search “where the labour sources are [and go there] (...). [T]here they are going to be great people, they will be able to do their work as agricultural technicians. If I don’t teach them that, they are going to dream that they will find

a job [here] and be great people, and it turns out that this doesn't happen. Then comes the demotivation, the failure, and the other negative consequences".

To recap this last issue, there are tensions and counterpoints between the high expectations of the schools, which expect a high-skilled profile of student in order to fit in better workplaces in the companies of the zone, and the subjectivities of the students, who despite being afraid of repeating their parents' labour paths, end up doing the same kind of jobs under precarious conditions. This fact is accompanied by a feeling of lack of preparation, which contributes to this subsequent labour itinerary. This issue around the lack of preparation generates a contradiction between a discourse whereby schools educate high-level skills, and students who do not acknowledge education in that way, along with the issue analysed in the section above where the enterprises of the zone claim that the students are not properly prepared for the tasks of their workplaces. One way or another, there is a tension between the profile expected by the school – and the enterprise – and the actual subjectivity of the student, a tension which in its outcome produces a worker under precarious conditions. The pre-figured employee in these cases falls into precarious labour conditions – the 'cheap workforce' – through contradictory discourses. Questions arise as to whether the rural educational assemblage actually produces pre-figured employees/workers for precarious workplaces in the economic activities and industries of the rural zones, and whether the students cannot avoid following a (socially predestined) precarious labour path despite the efforts of the schools. This issue is connected to Massey's argument concerning the spatial inequalities structured by the industrial labour chains (chapter 3), where the rural settings are places for less valued tasks in the overall industrial process; this assumption can match with the precarious labour conditions that seem to be the destiny of rural students.

## 7. Discussion points

### **7.1. The distance between the educational policies and practice, and the rural student**

The national curriculum and the teaching practice are experienced in tension with the social situation and subjectivities of the rural students. In the case of the curriculum, the problems of the lack of consideration of the social and geographical diversity of the country, analysed in chapter 5, are experienced by the teachers mainly in relation to the serious needs and deficits of the students and contents which are distant from the students' experiences and backgrounds, resulting in a permanent mismatch between curricular goals and contents, and the students' actual learning and future prospects. Also, the curriculum/assessment dispositif (also chapter 5) operates as an inflexible and unadaptable technology of control, as the contents struggle to be adapted to the rural students' experience and situation, as they are assessed by a compulsory national testing system. The teaching practice clashes with the same problem, as teachers' efforts to widen students' perspectives and overcome their fears fail when they just continue the same precarious patterns of their parents, in a path consequent to the labour possibilities of each zone. The discourse of better prospects in large economic enterprises crashes against the discourse of the students as 'cheap workforce' with poor skills and knowledge, and who also lack of minimum soft skills to adapt properly to such workplace responsibilities.

### **7.2. A zoom to the rural educational assemblage and the school dispositif**

This chapter showed part of the dynamics that constitute the critique made in chapters 5 and 6 in relation to TVET and rural education, a system governed by economic and market forces under a neoliberal rural development model. This system of practices is analysed in this research as a neoliberal rural educational

assemblage, which goes beyond the official (lack of) policy prescriptions, and represents the ways in which the schools operate under the unregulated situation that they work in. How does a (forgotten) school operate under (absent) educational policies? Mainly as a policy dispositif through which is realised an intimate relationship with the companies of the zone, that is a dependent relation where the companies, through their requirements and complaints, in effect set the curricular and pedagogical forms of the schools. This educational/economic assemblage influences the schools such that they transform their operation into a dispositif which combines managerial and educational strategies and practices. Here the educational purposes of the schools seem to be subordinated to the economic goals of the local enterprises.

### **7.3. The matching profiles of the worker and the student: the configuration of the pre-figured employee**

Despite features related to an entrepreneur of the self, the rural educational assemblage – and its school dispositifs – appears as a strategy to train future workers for industries. In the analysis of the profile of the student, it appears overshadowed by the profile of the worker, who acquires the specific characteristics and skills of a particular workplace inside an enterprise. This dynamic, in which the educational profile is transformed into an economic one, is part of what can be considered the configuration of the pre-figured employee (chapter 7). The assumptions of the previous chapter are materialized in practical terms in the testimonies and discourses of the rural teachers. The student passes from being immersed in an educational process to a training-focused one – education reduced to training – where they are trained to fill certain labour market positions to the benefit of the needs and interests of specific companies, which at the same time are subject to the ups and downs of an economy – and development model – based on global market forces, ups and downs that in turn affect schooling practices and curricular definitions of the rural schools and the life chances of students.

## Chapter 9: Students' subjectivities

This chapter presents students' subjectivities through their narratives about their lives, their school experience, their relations with the rural environments and their perspectives about the future. These narratives involve intertwined issues around the rural life and the schooling experience, and the linked expectations of future studies or work. The intersection between space/place and the educational–labour perspective is visible in their testimonies, which reveal the tensions between the certainty and uncertainty of a future which is based either on rural or urban settings, and a technical-professional work path by which students seek to continue or diverge from the paths taken by their parents. In these narratives it is possible to find trajectories whereby students seek to leave the countryside and follow a promise of a better life in urban settings, as well as other students who follow the traditions of their families and their current rural life, which in some cases involves a recalibration in the level of jobs expected. These interviews are analysed as narratives, so the tone differs in part from that in the previous chapters, but I will highlight certain features related to the issues and discussion points raised above, as a way of connecting the main arguments presented in this thesis. A more critical approach will be presented in the discussion points at the end of this section, where I will discuss the links between the findings and theoretical assumptions of this study with the narratives of the rural students.

The interviewees numbered 19, three for each of the six schools, with the exception of Freirina where four students were interviewed. All the students were in their last year of secondary school; five of them were scientific-humanistic (SH) students and the rest were following the technical vocational education and training (TVET) path. This imbalance towards the TVET path is because three of the schools were agricultural, so only offered the agricultural TVET path. The remaining three offered both paths – TVET and SH; in two of those schools I interviewed more SH students, and in one, in Freirina, I chose to interview two TVET students as they studied an interesting combination of mining and agricultural specialities. Regarding the gender, eight students were female and 11 male; I tried to equalize

the sample in gender terms, but the final decision regarding whom to interview rested with the teachers at each school. The nomenclature is as follows:

*Table 17: Students' pseudonyms*

<b>School location</b>	<b>SH or TVET</b>	<b>TVET speciality (if applicable)</b>	<b>Nomenclature in this research</b>
Freirina (III Region)	TVET	Geology	Geo-Deb-Freirina
Freirina (III Region)	TVET	Geology	Geo-Jor-Freirina
Freirina (III Region)	TVET	Agricultural	Agric-Mai-Freirina
Freirina (III Region)	TVET	Agricultural	Agric-Rod-Freirina
Huasco (III Region)	SH		SH-Fel-Huasco
Huasco (III Region)	SH		SH-Sof-Huasco
Huasco (III Region)	SH		SH-Yar-Huasco
Calle Larga (V Region)	TVET	Agricultural	Agric-Fel-CL
Calle Larga (V Region)	TVET	Agricultural	Agric-Jua-CL
Calle Larga (V Region)	TVET	Agricultural	Agric-Jua2-CL
Catemu (V Region)	TVET	Construction	Cons-Cla-Catemu
Catemu (V Region)	SH		SH-Cat-Catemu
Catemu (V Region)	SH		SH-Nic-Catemu
Los Muermos (X Region)	TVET	Agricultural	Agric-Fer-Muermos
Los Muermos (X Region)	TVET	Agricultural	Agric-Mig-Muermos
Los Muermos (X Region)	TVET	Agricultural	Agric-Pat-Muermos
Fresia (X Region)	TVET	Agricultural	Agric-Ant-Fresia
Fresia (X Region)	TVET	Agricultural	Agric-Jos-Fresia
Fresia (X Region)	TVET	Agricultural	Agric-Vic-Fresia

The nicknames were chosen in order to identify two features of each student: at the beginning is the student's TVET speciality – 'agric' is agricultural, 'geo' is geology, 'cons' is construction. 'SH' identifies students on the scientific-humanistic path. In the middle are some characters linked to the students' names,

and at the end the respective locality. This codification expects to clarify to the reader the education and provenance of each student to help them follow the analysis in this chapter.

The chapter is divided in a way which touches both a temporal and a thematic perspective. The temporal aspect seeks to encompass those stages of the lives of the students which allow observation of their perceptions related to the past, the present and the future of their biographies. The thematic perspective will address those topics relevant to this research, mainly focused on educational and labour issues. Both perspectives expect to shed light on the students' subjectivities and how they are related to the educational policies, discourses and practices noted in this research.

## 1. Childhood

The rural students interviewed had tranquil infancies, passing them between the streets, the countryside, their house and their schools. During the weekends Cons-Cla-Catemu and her family used to "ride horses (...). [Y]es, we used to camp and arrange everything, all of us rode horses"; or, in another case, "sometimes we went to fish, because there was always a river around" (Agric-Vic-Fresia). It was sometimes difficult to see friends and acquaintances, as they lived "too far away; you have to walk too many kilometres" (Agric-Pat-Muelmos). Contact with neighbours was often "scarce; they lived too far away" (Agric-Fer-Muermos); in these cases the students stayed mainly with their direct relatives. At home one student stated they would "wash clothes, do homework, help my mum and then just watch TV" (Agric-Fer-Muermos), because "I don't like going out and leaving the house; I am too close to my mum" (SH-Yar-Huasco). Others liked to play with friends in the streets: "I was a street boy; I arrived home from school, and instead of working in my notebooks, I went onto the streets" (Agric-Fel-CL); "I spent my infancy just [playing with] the ball; back there on the farms we played football; at my grandmother's house we used to make a pitch, a small field where we drew

the lines, and we always kicked the ball down the ravine. It was only football” (Agric-Rod-Freirina). Sometimes the local churches – Catholic and Lutheran – had some role in the students’ lives: they had children’s football teams, where Agric-Fel-CL for example used to play, or offered other activities, such as the church choir frequented by Agric-Jos-Fresia.

On the weekends, but mainly in the summers, Agric-Jos-Fresia used to do paid work during the harvest season; SH-Yar-Huasco also worked, collecting olives with her parents, with the objective of gaining her own money at the zone’s seasonal fairs. Agric-Jua2-CL worked every summer since he was 14 years old in a fruit packing business in his area; he added:

If my old man [his father] worked all his life, why shouldn’t I? If he lends a hand [to me] I have to take advantage of that and work; thank God I’ve never gone bad (...) and maybe if it wasn’t because of that hand, I wouldn’t have arrived here; I’d be like other young people, maybe involved in drugs.

Two issues can be inferred from this last quote. The first is the work-focused life of this student’s parent, a topic which will recur during this chapter; the second is the notion of working as staying out of trouble – in the form for example of drug consumption, which illustrates part of the risks existing in these poor settings. Even when drugs traffic is more related to urban zones in the country, the urban-rural relation can also provoke harmful influences such as the mentioned drugs.

Apart from daily life and early work experiences, some of the students undertook their primary education in multi-grade schools (see chapter 7), common rural schools based in a common classroom for students of different ages and levels, a system which responds to the educational needs of the small number of students in such rural areas. The students remember that “there was one teacher for all the grades [laughs]. I couldn’t concentrate that much when there were little children from first grade; as they were so young they screamed (...)” (Agric-Ant-Fresia); “It was nice, yes (...) because sometimes you shared with all your fellow



students; sometimes we played and we shared everything” (Agric-Fer-Muermos). However, in contrast to the last quote Agric-Vic-Fresia does not have a good memory of that educational stage in terms of students’ relations inside the classroom, stating that it was a very disrupted teaching process, and he only had friendships with the students of his age. Also, SH-Fel-Huasco believes that “in relation to study methods, it wasn’t very useful. In (...) the last year I realized that school wasn’t useful in terms of learning. Nowadays I am learning more (...)”. From the testimonies, the students did not have a meaningful experience of the multi-grade school from the educational perspective; there is a memory of a social experience with other students, but not much in terms of learning or education. Many of the students believe that in the current secondary stage they are learning more, something more ‘useful’ for their lives and future work.

## 2. The rural life

This section will address the perspectives of the students regarding their daily rural lives. One of the first features mentioned was the tranquillity of the places and surroundings. The adjective ‘tranquil’ appeared particularly clearly in the testimonies of the northern representatives of the sample, in some cases as a positive feature: yes, it is a very tranquil place, and everybody knows each other” (SH-Sof-Huasco); “[it] is very tranquil, nothing ever happens; that’s why I like to live here” (SH-Yar-Huasco). Because places are tranquil, they are also safe: “you can be out until very late in the night and nothing ever happens” (SH-Fel-Huasco). This tranquillity makes a counterpoint to the urban settings that the students have visited or lived in during periods of their lives. Agric-Mai-Freirina shares that he knows almost everybody in his zone because his mother is president of the neighbourhood committee, through which he has experienced good social relations, unlike in a northern city where he lived for some years, where “for instance, in the street where I lived, on the corner many people stopped to smoke marihuana, coca paste; two houses beyond mine they used to sell cocaine, [which]

is why my mum decided to come to live here". From the south, Agric-Jos-Fresia also considers his rural homeland as "tranquil" in opposition to "a city where you have to be at home at 9 p.m. because the streets are dangerous (...). [H]ere everybody knows each other; it is not like in the city where you walk and nobody says hello". Here are the first traces of a rural experience defined in relation, or opposition, to the urban, a spatial conception of the rural life (chapter 3).

But this sense of tranquillity does not always provoke the same feeling. Geo-Deb-Freirina feels that:

here you feel alone. You go out and don't find anything striking, any places to share with the family, or where you can have fun. Sometimes we go out to the square and there is nothing else; the only thing that remains is to stay at home or just go outside to talk to someone.

Agric-Pat-Muelmos has a similar feeling in relation to his southern zone: "yes, this little town is boring, I find this little town boring (...). [I]t doesn't have anything interesting; in the evenings when you go out there is nobody there, your friends just disappear". Agric-Ant-Fresia would like to live in an urban place, where "there are malls, they have restaurants, they have more striking things". So, the tranquillity of the rural in opposition to the urban provokes ambivalent feelings in the students interviewed: tranquillity is associated with a calm life and a boring life; urban images are of violence and danger, but also of fun and variety of activities and places. These perspectives are part of the background of later questions regarding the students' future options, their inclinations and how they configure their current education in relation to their future life and work.

Further relevant views on this topic are given by a pair of students from the central zone. SH-Nic-Catemu and Agric-Fel-CL both like their lives in the countryside, but there are specific nuances which mark out their perspectives. While the first student likes his rural setting as a place to live and continue living, he perceives two problems: one is related to the pollution created by the mining

factory of the zone (see chapter 8), which from his point of view decreases the quality of life; and the second is linked to the labour conditions of the countryside:

My grandfather has a small parcel of land, some hectares. I'm not saying that I don't like the countryside; I would love to live there, but, but I don't like to work... It is a job – how can I say it? I find it very boring, too heavy; my grandparents have worked all their lives in this, and what they least want me to do is continue doing it (...). My grandfather has worked since he was 13 years old; he started in the early morning, at dawn, and he was cleaning, tidying up. They say that they had a terrible experience; they never had an infancy, they say, and they don't want us to follow the same path of working in the countryside. That is why they want to give me a [higher] education, to study engineering, because as an engineer, for example, I could stay in the countryside, but wouldn't be working with the shovel or stuff, living what they lived (...)

This account shows a key factor in understanding the students' subjectivities and prospects: the labour history of their families, generally settled in the countryside, constitutes an important background in their lives, and helps guide their educational options and future labour projections. Their lives in the rural environment and their prospects in it are marked by the labour experiences of the parents and grandparents – who in more than one case fulfilled the parents' role.

A different nuance is given by Agric-Fel-CL, who also likes the countryside life, but at the same time enjoys the urban facilities and attractions; in his terms he outlines a *rurban* perspective. Near the commune of Calle Larga is the capital of the province, the city of Los Andes, which in Agric-Fel-CL's view "is the perfect city, because besides being small enough, you can get everywhere in 20 minutes [by public transport]". It is also accessible from his home in the countryside, so he can live 'here and there', with access to Los Andes' amenities while at the same time living in his rural locality, where he likes to live and has his closest relationships with family and friends. In his experience, the urban does not appear far away, but

is accessible, and it is possible to share the rural and urban life in a balanced lifestyle.

### 3. Parents' and relatives' trades

Going deeper into the families' labour history, the interviews inquired about the labour experiences of the students' parents to gain insights into their influences on students' educational and labour perspectives, and to observe how the economic life in these rural settings helps shape the labour experiences of future generations. In the cases of the students' parents and relatives, there is a clear inclination towards mining and agricultural labour, along with those activities which derive from, serve or are related to these economic spheres. There are both similarities and differences between the cases, which I will highlight in the following paragraphs.

The students from the northern and central zones, in most cases, had parents or relatives that worked for the mines in the north and central mountains of the Andes. In all of those cases the fathers were the ones who worked in such activities, and the mothers worked in various other activities. In the case of the fathers, some of them worked or are still working directly for the mining companies in the mines, and others in the contracting companies which serve the mines, as part of a common outsourcing strategy. This situation has provoked important labour conflicts, as in some cases workers of the contracting companies have the same function and workload as those of the mining companies, but under worse contractual conditions; during 2010, there was an important conflict involving a massive strike among contractor workers (Leiva & Campos, 2013), a struggle which made visible this unequal situation in the public and political sphere, with subsequent responses from the government. This is the work context of Agric-Fel-CL's father, who:

First started working in the contracting companies up there [in a copper mine] (...). [H]e was an operator, yes, he was an operator. And then he was in many contracting companies, but there was a time where because of the strikes, because the people fought for their rights, all those who went on strike were cut, they were fired, and there my father was (...). [After that] in Los Andes they were constructing a place for commercial stores, and there he found a job, like for three months, under the minimum wage (...)

At the time of the interview, Agric-Fel-CL's father had returned to the mining industry, now as a worker contracted by the mine (owned by CODELCO, the State mining company), a situation that according to the student "changed our lives", as the contractual and economic conditions are significantly better. Agric-Fel-CL he goes on to relate that his older brother is currently working for a contracting company, in transport services for the mines, after a youth marked by different problems:

my brother took drugs, he used to come to home drunk (...). At my age he had already been in prison. My brother was at risk of being taken by the SENAME [National Service for Minors, State entity in charge of abandoned minors or young criminal offenders]. But the heavy hand of my mum made him change his mind, and now he has finished his secondary education following a technical-professional path in mining.

The story of the family of Agric-Fel-CL reveals different issues regarding his life. The account of his brother and father speaks of poverty and social risk, and a labour field led by the mining industry and the contracting companies which serve the mining process, with the contractual differences in each case producing dissimilar labour conditions. Again from the central valley of the country, the fathers of Cons-Cla-Catemu and SH-Cat-Catemu also relate that their fathers work at a mine. The latter's father works as a welder and has always lived away from home during long periods because of his job. However, he has recently had some

health problems: “his back and all that effort, what is in the mining is damaging him”.

Heading north, in the province of Huasco, besides the mining activity, the pellet factory and the thermoelectric plant of the zone (see chapter 8) dominate the labour landscape of the students’ relatives. While part of the families of Agric-Mai-Freirina, Agric-Rod-Freirina and SH-Sof-Huasco work in the pellets industry located in Huasco, the two brothers of SH-Yar-Huasco work in the thermoelectric plant. The father of Geo-Deb-Freirina and the father and brother of Agric-Mai-Freirina work in the mines in a regime which involves some days a week away and some days at home. In the case of the father of Geo-Jor-Freirina, he worked in the mines “but now he has left, because the price of the copper decreased too much, so now he is in construction”. This statement implies that oscillations of the copper prices and markets directly affect the mining activity and its employment conditions. All these parents are workers in specific tasks, so in the hierarchical structure of their companies, they are at the lowest level. An exception is Agric-Rod-Freirina’s father, who “is like a supervisor, he commands everyone. He is doing well; he has worked himself to death for us, all his life”. The positions inside certain labour fields or companies are an important matter raised by the students, and I will come back to it later when I present their perspectives on their labour future. In general terms, the northern students perceive that their fathers working directly or indirectly for big companies in the industries pointed out above provide a decent – humble but dignified – life to their families, despite their low hierarchical positions.

This group of northern students also relate some features of the labour situation of their mothers. There is one clear trend: the majority are housewives and some have had or are doing sporadic work in service activities, such as cleaning and childminding. A secondary tendency is related to agricultural work: the mothers of SH-Yar-Huasco and SH-Fel-Huasco work in informal and seasonal agricultural tasks. The mother of the former works harvesting seasonal vegetables or fruits – e.g. melons, watermelons and cucumbers – on different small estates, and then she sells them “opening up my house as a shop”; the mother of SH-Fel-

Huasco is a seasonal worker for a large estate based on olive harvesting. Both these cases contribute a small but meaningful income to the respective families, complementing the main income provided by the fathers. The role of the woman in the labour sphere in these rural environments is limited, and the generation of the students interviewed in this research is one of the first where women have access to studies and labour paths commonly reserved for men. It will be discussed below how female students project their careers in their particular cultural, economic and geographical situation.

Moving onto the south of the country, the agricultural activity is the most mentioned labour path of the students' parents. The fathers of Agric-Ant-Fresia and Agric-Pat-Muermos work as agricultural labourers on large estates, thus working 'for a boss'<sup>22</sup>, the owners of the land or the different estates. Agric-Pat-Muermos relates:

My dad is, he milks cows; milking [and] everything on the farm is his only work nowadays – he drives the tractor, does the mechanics, does everything (...). [W]e are rural tenants (...). [M]y dad was bored of the dairy business, 19 years working in a dairy business.

It is common to work in these zones as a rural tenant; thus, the worker has a house for him and his family – sometimes the woman also works as a housemaid for the owner of the estate – and together they live there, paying no rent and receiving an income. This way of life is very modest, but also tends to be stable over time, as the relationships between the owners and the workers who live nearby on the same land, go beyond the labour sphere. In the last quote Agric-Pat-Muermos also reveals that her father used to work for a big dairy company (an important industry in the zone – see chapter 8). In contrast, the father of Agric-Fer-Muermos works as a small farmer on his own land, and her mother is a

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<sup>22</sup> From the Chilean term 'apatronao', from the word 'patrón' ('boss'), which indicates a form of work under the command of a boss, in this case the owner of the land. These workers are different from those who work independently – they are the boss of themselves.

housewife. The father lives by selling animals, mainly cows, in the street market at Puerto Montt – the capital city of the region. The father of Agric-Vic-Fresia works as a seasonal worker, harvesting different vegetables and fruits. This mode of work is without any contract, and is carried out for different land owners and businesses, depending on the opportunities each year. Finally, the father of Agric-Jos-Fresia has worked in recent years for a big forestry company (also a big industry in the south of Chile), “just as a common worker”; the mother works as a housemaid, and an older brother as a seasonal worker in agriculture.

In this rural zone, while the economic activities differ from those found in the north, there are similarities as well, especially in relation to contractual agreements in the dominant enterprises or business of the zones; the positions of the jobs inside each enterprise or estate – usually the lowest hierarchically, resulting in familiar conditions of poverty or minimum subsistence; the presence of seasonal work as a (precarious) source of employment; and the role of the woman generally as housewife or in informal jobs. Below I will review the perspectives of the students regarding these labour experiences of their parents and relatives, also in relation to their own present and future.

I will finish this section by sharing a last testimony from Agric-Rod-Freirina, which, more than showing nuances about the economic activities in this rural zone, says something about the conditions of poverty in which some of these students live, which also adds perspective to their biographies and subjectivities. This student shares part of the history of his family:

[My grandparents] were poor, very poor (...). [M]y grandfather, that is to say my great aunt, the sister of my grandpa, she raised them [my father and his siblings], she raised all of them (...). [My dad's mother] worked in a nightclub I think, a brothel, I don't know (...). [S]he liked to go out, she didn't care about her children, so it was the sister of my grandfather who took command. She raised all of them, she helped them without many things. I remember that she used to tell us [her great nephews], she scolded us, she used to tell us: don't put too much on the bread, just a little, a little butter, and save for tomorrow (...). [A]nd in one room, everybody used to sleep



in one living room, they put some beds and mattresses, some blankets down, and everybody slept. My grandpa worked from when he was very young; he told me that from when he was eight years old he used to sell things – his sister cooked cakes, and he sold them. Thanks to them we have been maintained, kept optimistic, and now we are [doing] better.

#### 4. The relation to the schools and the secondary academic or technical path choice

After their primary education, the students had to search and evaluate their school options in order to continue their secondary education, considering also the decision of pursuing the scientific humanistic path or the technical-professional one - and which of the specific technical courses. In this section I will examine more fully the students' rationalities which configure the educational options. However, first I will present some thoughts in relation to the school choices made, which will say more about the relation between the rural places and the education system than about common choice factors in a market-based educational system such as the Chilean one – such factors could include educational quality, school performance or other indicators. Some words will also be said in relation to the change of school, and the transition from primary to secondary education, as a topic which speaks of the relations between the students and their educational process.

The main factors which explain the school choices of these rural students are the location of the school and the TVET options offered. Of these factors, the first is the most mentioned – in almost all the cases, and the second appeared in five cases. The location is crucial; in some cases it makes one particular school the only accessible option. Different factors play a role here, both geographical (“I had to stay at this boarding school, because I lived so far away that I didn't have another option” [Agric-Juan1-CL], or “I came to this school because I was tired of the long trips; I had to take two buses” [SH-Cat-Catemu]) and economic (relating to the cost of the transport: “no, there wasn't another choice. I was supposed to study in Rio

Negro [a nearby locality], but it was too expensive [to travel daily]" [Agric-Ant-Fresia], or "yes, it is because is close, and also to save money because in the other school I had to pay too much for the bus ticket" [SH-Yar-Huasco]). To reiterate, the most common response was in relation to the closeness of the school: based on practical, economic and geographical factors. Location sometimes radically reduced the number of school options available to the rural students: only a few schools, and sometimes only one, were accessible. Hence, paradoxically in a market-driven educational system based on school-choice modalities, the rural zones lack actual alternatives, and practical reasons are the most relevant in choosing a school. This issue speaks of a national policy where part of its core functionality does not work in rural environments; this is related to the rural education policy as a 'technology of invisibility' (chapter 7), as practical accessibility is rarely mentioned in policy discourse.

Usually in combination with the location factor, students' choices were based on the TVET specialism offered in the school: "I was interested in this school because I always looked for something agricultural (...) and this is a better school, so I decided to come here" (Agric-Jua-CL). Agric-Jua-CL accessed his first-choice TVET option, but other students also following their educational interests, but in a context with fewer schools – and so also fewer TVET alternatives – had to follow their second or third preference. The availability and nature of the technical-educational path were of particular importance for some of the TVET students when continuing to secondary education.

In short, the school choices were based mainly on geography, and even when there were other factors, these were always restricted by the spatial situation of the students, so in many cases they could only access what was available in their locality

In relation to the transition from primary to secondary school, although the primary schools were generally multi-grade, there were some differences and adaptations among the students. SH-Fel-Huasco says that "I started out too relaxed in relation to the marks, because I didn't know that my future depended on them" – this is in relation to a university system where the marks in secondary

education have a 20% weight in the entrance application for many higher-education institutions, with the remaining 80% relating to the results in the PSU. This case speaks about the difficulty of the transition between primary and secondary rural education, but also of some lack of awareness of how the educational system works, for instance what the requirements are to continue to higher education. This last student was not the only one with important information gaps regarding the functioning of the educational process and institutions, an issue which shows a distance between the capitals and dispositions of the students, in Bourdieu's terms, and the educational-institutional processes – and the life-paths that are therefore possible. This issue is also important because in some cases, as will be presented later, the future expectations of students can differ from the actual possibilities of access into universities or labour sectors, and the demands and requirements of those institutional spaces. Returning to the passage from primary to secondary education, Agric-Ant-Fresia also had academic difficulties when she started her secondary education; in particular, “the first year wasn't good, as I arrived from a rural [multi-grade] school and what they teach here is very different; it changed the routine too much, I would say. It was extremely difficult for me; I almost repeated the class, but finally I passed (...). [T]here were things that had not been taught at the rural primary school (...). I asked other girls [and] they helped me”. This shows part of the issues around the rural education, the problems in the primary multi-grade schools, is the lack of articulation between cycles and the differences in pedagogical and institutional terms. From the standpoint of this research, this also speaks of an unregulated system and an educational field under an *absent policy* (chapter 7); the effects of such isolation and lack of support impact the whole educational process.

### **Scientific-Humanistic or TVET?**

Going deeper into the students' educational and vocational decisions, as has been pointed out above, the secondary educational system in Chile is based on two paths: the scientific-humanistic (SH) and the technical-vocational (TVET). While the

first is related to the common core of the national curriculum (see chapter 5) and the continuation to university studies, the second comprises technical studies (see chapter 6) which provide an applied education as preparation for a labour field or technical tertiary studies at some point of the students' lives. For the rural students, this decision is influenced by their social and geographical situation. As I indicated above, remoteness and the consequential lack of options and information affect their educational aspirations, so do what they know and believe regarding continuing studies, and the actual labour options of each educational field. In terms of their 'social situation', the labour and educational histories of the students' families also influence their views and decision about these matters. The students' decisions are mainly linked to vocational considerations, the tertiary educational aspirations and the employment opportunities; these factors interplay with others such as family experiences and practical issues, and the main restriction is simply which educational path is most available in their immediate context.

So, why follow the SH path? Mainly because of the aspiration to continue onto university studies, a perspective which incorporates an underestimation of the TVET path as the alternative option. SH-Nic-Catemu states: "I didn't think about following any technical career. I wanted to aim high at an engineering career, or a higher-rank job (...). [I]f I arrived here and entered a technical [path] nothing would change (...)" – he means change in terms of his future labour prospects, i.e. that secondary TVET studies would mean continuing with the same life, without any upgrade. SH-Yar-Huasco believes that some of the TVET students at her school "want to do their secondary education and just that, to leave, and they believe that with that study they are ready". She disagrees with this, so she is preparing to take the PSU in order to apply to a university. SH-Fel-Huasco also thinks that the TVET students "are more relaxed than us"; while they are studying just "to work", what SH-Fel-Huasco wants is to study at a university. Hence, there is a belief among these SH students that they are studying a more prestigious educational path, one that will take them to university, a route that will offer better life perspectives, a more privileged professional career and better labour

options in future. This belief is part of their arguments when they explain their SH choice – it is made not only for vocational reasons, but also because they do not want to be a technical student, which they associate with continuing on a low-status life path, echoing the lives that they and their parents and families have been living up to the present.

Moreover, SH-Nic-Catemu adds that his educational choice and his desire to study engineering are based on vocational motives that are far removed from the outdated stereotype of a rurality where technology has not arrived yet:

When I was a child my parents bought me a computer, one of those square box ones. I loved to play with it, and when I was older I loved everything that has to do with technology. I'm not that good at working in the countryside, and always liked to work with computers, so [I considered] which careers are related to that and came up with IT, programming and all that, where I can create programs, games and all that stuff.

Thus, SH-Nic-Catemu expresses a *rurban* experience where the urban influences the rural and the rural the urban, so the rural space is far from an isolated and disconnected experience. This student sounds more like an urban student stereotype that crosses the urban borders (see chapter 3).

Addressing the TVET choice, here the students reveal no motives related to a comparison with the possibility of following an SH path; they only mention reasons related to their own technical-professional fields. Among the agricultural TVET students, explanations are related to vocation, to a life and personal experience linked to the countryside and to nature. Agric-Jua2-CL, who is studying to work in a vineyard, a vocation he is interested in pursuing in the future, states:

Because I like to be linked to nature, to be in touch with the plants, the gardens. It must be because I live in the countryside and because I like what is green (...). [W]hen I was a child I saw my dad working in agriculture (...). Because (...) they know

the wine, how they make it, how it feels (...) It may sound too poetic [but] if you squeeze the grape with love, maybe the wine will come out pure. So, that's how this caught my attention, the feeling that they put into the wine.

This student speaks from his life experience and from the knowledge it has given him, but also from what he has learnt at school, so this refers in part to a TVET curriculum. Agric-Jua2-CL comes from the Chilean central valley, where the wine industry has an important presence, and this seems to be represented in the agricultural educational curriculum, which offers relevant skills and contents, through the teaching and adaptations of the school. These skills and contents, while linked specifically to this agricultural activity and industry, are full of meaning to this rural student, connecting his rural life experience and his labour prospects. But to this match between subjective elements and objective curricular features is added a subsequent match with an economic industry, its activities and workplaces: Agric-Jua2-CL is being properly prepared to work in the zone's vineyards.

In the south of the country there is also a link between the students' life experiences and the agricultural TVET path. Agric-Ant-Fresia says that "I like the countryside; I come from there, so it has been easier for me"; Agric-Fer-Muermos adds that "Yes, I like the little animals (...). [I]t has been great because one learns new things in countryside [practice] and things that are useful". Agric-Pat-Muermos is more emphatic, stating that "I like what the countryside is, everything, everything the countryside is. I am a fanatic for the countryside, driving all the tractors (...). [When I was 14] I was already working (...). [Y]es, with my dad I started to work". The rural and countryside experience marks their vocational decisions, and satisfied with their biographies – and, as pointed out in the last quote, with their early labour experience too – they expect to continue what their parents did, and to do it in the same environment where they have been raised.

Aside from vocational motives, one group of students chose their TVET studies because of the labour prospects offered by such specialities in the contexts of their specific localities and regions. This is very clear in the north because of the

massive and lucrative mining industry: Geo-Jor-Freirina and Geo-Deb-Freirina for example decided to study geology, a secondary TVET pathway connected to the mining activity. The first student explains that his father is a miner and he chose this option “because of the situation: the copper was good then and the miners were doing well, so mostly because of that”. The past tense, again, relates to the fluctuating cycles of the mineral in the stock markets: when the price is high there is very high employment in the industry, but when it is low, there are massive redundancies. The student therefore implies that at the time of choosing his TVET option the mining industry was doing well, but at the time of the interview there were signs that the employment opportunities were reduced. Agric-Mai-Freirina, despite living in this northern locality, chose the agricultural TVET path applying a strategic rationality, because he believes that it is “a good opportunity to work, as everyone is going to the mining [industry], and only a few to agriculture, so it is a good opportunity to me”. Agric-Rod-Freirina also chose agricultural TVET, but in his case this was just by default, as he first thought about quitting his secondary studies: “I told my mum that I didn’t want to study anymore, because I wasn’t good at it”; if he could have chosen a preference it would have been geology, “everyone talked about geology, mining, and everyone wanted to go there, [but] it was a very demanding career and I didn’t know that (...); by default let’s try agriculture”. After one year of study he realised that he liked driving tractors on the farms, which motivated him.

Cons-Cla-Catemu chose the construction TVET path, despite living in the central valley which is primarily an agricultural area, but which also has a big mining refinery, because construction provides a more transferable set of skills – as an economic activity present in different parts of the country, it has “a larger labour field”. She can also apply these skills at home, “helping my mum, building her something”, because her family’s economic situation means they cannot afford to contract external construction services. This TVET option also represents her future prospects in relation to her locality, as will be shown later: she does not want to stay in Catemu and its surroundings, and wants to move elsewhere. This is congruent with the educational strategy of this school: as mentioned in the

previous chapter, the school offers TVET alternatives to the local youth in order to help them to leave this 'cellar of degradation'.

Finally, continuing to tertiary studies is also a goal for some of the TVET students interviewed, and they show interesting nuances on this issue. One such student is Geo-Deb-Freirina, who chose geology because she had previously wanted to study mining engineering at university: "the closest option for me in this (Department for Children Schools and Families) was to study geology [secondary] TVET". She decided to follow these studies because she has some knowledge from her father's experience working in the mines, and because she is clear that, economically speaking, the mining industry "is the one that gives more in the zone (...), not agriculture". For her, the secondary TVET studies are basically a step towards her main goal, which is to study at university. Moving onto the south, despite desiring to continue to tertiary studies Agric-Jos-Fresia is aware of the possible difficulties of this process. Previously he wanted to study for the PSU to go to university, and was clear he wanted to study a scientific-humanistic path: "it was the only option in my mind". However, "later I saw that my older brother also studied SH and he couldn't study in higher education, so I said well, any title can be useful anyway, so I entered the agricultural TVET path". Now he believes that he made a good choice, because even though he still expects to try to undertake tertiary study for a technical career in agriculture, in case that does not work out, he thinks that "here this zone is agricultural, it is more a countryside zone, so in terms of labour I can go to the farms and work because they are close to where I live; it's easier than going to a city to look for a job". He is glad he did not end up choosing SH studies because in that case "if you are a good student you could do well [afterwards], but if you are a bad one you can still end up working as a labourer, but you can't achieve as much (...)". This student shares interesting issues around the study paths and their prospects. First he sees that the SH path is not a sure path of tertiary studies, as in his experience expectations can be frustrated by the actual possibilities in the social context – you can even end up in a worse situation than a TVET student, working as a very low-level labourer. His agricultural



choice is also connected with the perspective of continuing living in his rural zone, which is a place where labour options are available.

This section has explored the perspectives, beliefs and rationalities articulated by this group of students at the time of choosing their secondary education type, SH or TVET, in a context where few schools and TVET alternatives are available. This last feature is important because the one or two options these students do have are framed by the schools' curricular specialisms, which, as discussed in the previous chapter, are intimately related to the needs of the companies of the area. The students' rationalities represent two lines of thinking, one in relation to the status associated with one or the other alternative, and another which shows more strategic thinking, where vocational, but mainly employment perspectives are decisive. The former, seen especially in the SH students, is based on the belief that their educational option constitutes a higher-status path, which leads to university and better employment and social position later on; it is a rationality which compares the two educational paths in terms of success, i.e. university and better labour position, or failure, i.e. staying in their localities following the same lifestyles as their parents and families. And the latter shows a more strategic way of thinking in relation to the labour fields of the zones and their job opportunities. This last feature could represent some characteristics of the rational-neoliberal subject, which chooses rationally as a proper consumer. But I would say that although the students are pushed to be strategic and rational in choosing their educational path in an economic environment dominated by a few industries, their rationalities are highly influenced by a personal and family – and rural – experience which they want to avoid or to continue, and which shapes their images of educational paths and personal future. This issue will be discussed in more depth in the next sections, which will address the students' future perspectives.

## 5. Future academic plan

While the educational policies analysed – the national curriculum (represented mainly in the SH path) and TVET – seek to present a path for students to follow, here I will explore whether those paths are those the students actually aspired to and followed strategically. While the common national curriculum is the regular path towards the PSU and later university studies, the TVET path, as well as offering a fast track into a labour field, also offers an alternative in the form of tertiary studies in technical education (see chapter 6). In this section the analysis will be focused on the academic field, particularly in relation to the continuation of study after secondary school. The next section will be about the employment perspectives. This section discusses the strategic rationality of the students in more depth, in relation to their aspirations of continuing into tertiary education; the goal here is to inquire into the plausibility of their aspirations, the information managed and their current academic situation in relation to the future objectives outlined.

To start with, I will present the cases of the SH students, those who are training to take the PSU test, which assesses the contents of the curriculum. Here there is partial clarity regarding the following steps to take and the requirements to enter university. SH-Cat-Catemu, for example, is between two options: she has a plan to study in the national navy in Valparaíso (in the same region as Catemu but on the coast) but is also thinking of studying veterinary medicine, for which she has analysed her options carefully and decided to try to go to a State university in Valdivia, in the south of the country. At the time of the interview she was training for the PSU and was achieving scores close to what was required. A similar case is that of her classmate SH-Nic-Catemu, who wants to study computer engineering and is clear about the best options in Valparaíso or Santiago (the capital); despite the high PSU score needed, he also thinks that he is on the right track, as his PSU trials are going well.

The plans of the northern SH students interviewed seem less clear-cut, and they are beset with doubts, restrictions and information gaps. SH-Sof-Huasco only knows that she is inclined towards something scientific, but she is not clear what she specifically wants to study. What she is clear about is that she wants to study

in La Serena, one of the main cities in the north of Chile, and in a public university rather than a private one, because “they are expensive and I don’t want to get into debt; I find that the public ones are better”. Her classmate, SH-Yar-Huasco, thinks that she wants to study social work– a technical tertiary-level course, not a university one – but “I really haven’t found out that much (...). I don’t know anything about the PSU score required”. Similarly, another fellow student, SH-Fel-Huasco, despite aspiring to study physiotherapy at university, believes that according to his family financial situation it is more possible to undertake tertiary technical study as a physical trainer, something related to his first preference. He too has not had the possibility to prepare properly for the PSU test. If he studies, he also wants to go to La Serena, where both study alternatives are available in a private university. In relation to funding, he thinks that he will end up “working for some time to save some money, I don’t know in which field; maybe I should speak with some relatives and ask for help”; he says he could even work in the pellet industry of the zone, where “it seems that they are going to need workers”. In these cases other issues appear, related to the place of study and the financial restrictions and possibilities. These factors add complexities to the students’ academic scenarios, and their rationalities in considering tertiary studies are forced to incorporate different variables – vocation, funding, distance, timing.

Among the TVET students, their future academic situation is more diffuse and variable. There are two exceptions, Geo-Deb-Freirina and Agric-Jua-CL, who appear to have a clearer plan in respect to university studies. The former, as was already mentioned, is clear that she wants to continue in the mining field through studies in mining engineering, and comparing the three main alternatives that she has considered, two in the north and a third on the central coast, she is inclined to choose the third option, “because here [in Freirina] I don’t feel that comfortable”, and in the central coastal area she has family to live with as well. In financial terms, the mining enterprise where her father works has a funding programme with the purpose of helping the sons and daughters of its workers in their tertiary studies. She is studying something related to mining, expects to continue in this field, and will probably be funded by the company.

The case of Agric-Jua-CL has different nuances, because he wants to study veterinary medicine, but with the financial support of a scholarship<sup>23</sup> from his school, which looks “not for the best students in terms of academic performance, but those who show leadership and commitment to the school, themselves, their values”. He has “always tried to establish a good image for the teachers” in order to be one of the two beneficiaries of this award. He wants to study veterinary science even though his first preference is regular medicine, because he has to choose something fundable by the scholarship and it must be something related to the agricultural field. He is aware of the PSU scores needed for the best universities in Santiago, and despite being far from those marks, he believes that he can do it. And if he is not awarded the scholarship, he will work in the agricultural field in the zone for a couple of years, and save up to fund his studies afterwards.

The rest of the TVET students also have aspirations to continue onto tertiary studies, but with less clarity in terms of what and where they will study and how they will fund their careers. I will present a brief overview of this situation. Agric-Mai-Freirina says that he does not know what to study yet: “I am thinking, but it must be something agricultural, maybe a technical degree in agriculture. I know that there is a career but I don’t remember the name, but there is something that I am interested in”. One of his classmates, Agric-Rod-Freirina, when asked whether he expected to take his interest in mechanics further in technical or university studies, answered that he wanted to follow “university [studies]... Is there too much difference between them?”. This shows an important gap of information regarding something fundamental as the difference between technical or academic studies in higher education. In the south, the original expectations of Agric-Ant-Fresia of studying “something related to agriculture” were truncated because of her mother’s death: “I have a little sister and as I am the oldest one, I am responsible for her (...). [S]o, my way will be to work, to look for a job with my secondary TVET title”. Later in the interview she explained more about maybe

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<sup>23</sup> This scholarship is a support given by the philanthropic foundation which administrates this school.

returning to higher education at some point in her life, for instance when her sister was older, but she had heard that you can only study in higher education one year after you finish your secondary schooling, information for which she could not confirm the source – and which actually is not correct. In a nearby zone, Agric-Fer-Muermos declares an inclination to study veterinary medicine, but she only knows that it is offered in Puerto Montt – the capital of the region; regarding the requirements or specificities she has not “studied the topic in depth”. Still in the south of the country, Agric-Jos-Fresia wants to “study for an engineering degree, or maybe there is a forest technician [degree]; there are a lot of careers in that field here (...). [I]t will depend on the scholarships available” – here the financial issues appear again. These are mentioned also by Agric-Mig-Muermos, who wants to study for a technical degree in IT – despite his current agricultural studies, and although he is not very clear about what the available options are. He prefers this technical course “because it is easy to finish, it is less time [studying] (...). I don’t know if it is possible because of money, I don’t know; maybe first I will start working in something that I find”. Agric-Vic-Fresia also mentions financial issues – he is clear about his preference for studying agricultural engineering, but he is aware “that it is very complicated, because we don’t, we don’t have a great economic situation [in his family]. But it will be whatever God wants (...)”.

To recap, both SH and TVET students show the desire and intention to continue their studies in higher education. The former express a clearer determination than their technical fellows, but there are cases in both educational paths that communicate diffuse understandings among the students of the paths they want to follow, where different factors are influencing their perspectives, especially in relation to gaps of information about the tertiary educational offer, the geographical influence on their options, the difficulties to fund their possible studies, and the timing, where it is not clear whether they should postpone their studies and work a while in order to save money, or whether they should apply for a competitive scholarship to fund their studies and start the next year. The clearer ambition of studying in university shown by the SH students is consistent with their chosen secondary educational path, where they are supposed to prepare for the

PSU and go to university; but this ambition clashes with the same doubts and barriers as are encountered by the TVET students, and their future plans mix educational and labour prospects. The students' narratives about their futures combine aspirations, doubts and different complexities, which make their plans unclear or uncertain, and they are dealing with these difficulties, navigating between their desires, their own experience and the historical experiences of their relatives, which do not involve an academic experience. So, at some point they are trying to break away from their family trajectories, to upgrade their educational paths to become the first generation to study in higher education. This ambition, as I said before, involves juggling with different variables that must be clarified and resolved. Their rationalities must take account of different factors and obstacles; some students are clearer about their complex options, but for others the diffuseness of their responses may reflect that their aspirations may fall into a labour path not far from that followed by their relatives.

This pressure to define one's future in a complex and ambiguous situation, again, does not correspond with the idea of rational choice exercised by the neoliberal subject, which supposes transparent information available to an informed consumer in a situation where the market alternatives are clear and available. In these cases, despite the existence of a market-driven higher education system, choices are neither clear nor available to the students' rationalities and perspectives. The obstacles to students' achieving their aspirations reflect a difficult socioeconomic situation and a deprived life experience; their rationalities and efforts are concentrated in calculating the feasibility of their options, rather than, as consumers, choosing freely with different resources available. In relation to the curriculum and the TVET policy, both fail to offer a straightforward path towards higher education in these rural contexts, but the latter policy does not fail in the ways academics have previously criticized (chapter 6) – the TVET secondary education may be successful in presenting a fast path into a labour field.

## 6. Future labour prospects

This section encompasses questions about the future perspectives of the students in relation to the labour field and the labour activities that they see themselves engaged in in the future. As in the section above, the students' academic aspirations are in many cases not clear, and their labour perspectives appear in relation to their study ambitions; for instance, working in the short term can be an option in order to save for further study in the future. This section analyses labour perspectives in parallel to the issues presented above. There is no clear trajectory of studies and subsequent work. Sometimes the labour prospects appear in a diffuse landscape, as an alternative (but probable) immediate plan in case the study aspirations cannot be accomplished. They therefore appear in an uncertain situation: they could relate to the near future (the next year) or to the period after higher education, or labour could also be intermittent, in between interrupted studies. Thus, sometimes the labour perspectives do not match exactly with the study plans, i.e. students may not expect to work exactly in the field that they expect to study in. This uncertainty of their academic paths changes students' perspectives in relation to their labour aspirations. Thus, in the interviews, answers relating to future activity tended to run in parallel to the students' perspectives; the future would happen sooner or later, depending on different variables – such as those analysed in the previous section. This section analyses the students' narratives about their future labour prospects, what they expect to do, and different features regarding this decision or perspective.

As was presented previously, experiential and vocational motives play a role in the students' labour perspectives. For instance, SH-Yar-Huasco wants to work in a primary school as an educator, because she “love[s] little children, I love them (...). [M]y sister had a baby like three years ago and I practically raised her, because my sister was working so she left her to me. I loved taking care of her, I did everything”. While her experience has influenced her vocational perspectives and future labour role, SH-Nic-Catemu, who previously stated his passion for computers, says he would like to work “in a company like Microsoft, one of those

big companies where you can climb up [the ranks], and you can learn a lot there, there is a lot of experience. As long as they gave me the opportunity to do programming, I would start in any position, I wouldn't care". This ambition, which is also influenced by his life experience with computers, also shows an ambivalence in the expectation of working in a prestigious company but no matter in which position, i.e. the expectation that you can have different possibilities once you are inside such an enterprise. The students motives mix personal ambitions with family experience, as in the case of Agric-Fel-CL, who states:

Everything that the people do in the countryside, those who work with a spiked stick and a shovel, we also do it here – but learning, we learn why we do it. They [the common peasants] do it for money, we do it for learning. And here we will leave as bosses, we are going to command that kind of person. That is why we learn how to be supervisors (...)

This is an important link between the secondary schooling and the future labour perspectives: the SH students present arguments of better prospects in comparison to those of the TVET students, and this agricultural student shows a similar perspective in relation to the 'people', meaning peasants such as his father and relatives. A similar case is that of Geo-Deb-Freirina, who wants to work in the mining industry, "but at a higher level (...) because my dad is the kind of man who shows off that he earns a lot of money when he has not even completed his secondary studies, so my objective is to do better than him and succeed more". These students expressed ideas and comments that suggested the future opened up to them by the schooling process can constitute an upgrade in relation to the labour and educational paths of the average peasant or worker of the zone, including their relatives. The professional and labour aspirations are combined with social aspirations, where their current economic situation, and that of their parents, is presented as poor, and they have the opportunity to do something different.



The future labour plans are also associated with the industries of the zone. TVET students mention companies as part of their labour aspirations. For example, Agric-Ant-Fresia expects to move to a nearby rural town and then to:

look for a job in Codepa, which is like a big enterprise which sells things related to agriculture. It is not a foresting company. They sell tractors, and things like that. Food for animals, and things like that. This is where I want to work. I want to do my internship, at least two months, and then see if I can stay there working (...)

One of her classmates, Agric-Jos-Fresia, also wants to stay in the local area, specifically “in the foresting companies, where you can submit your CV”; up in the north, Geo-Jor-Freirina expects “to work in the pellets plant” – despite having some knowledge and information from experiences of relatives in the agricultural field, he would prefer to work in the mining industry because the agriculture “is too much of a sacrifice; having animals, goats, doesn’t leave time for anything”. Away from the big industries, Agric-Pat-Muelmos wants to work with the same boss as his father on a large rural estate, because “I have worked there this year; I know him well, and I think that I want to work there”. Although this is not work in a big, transnational industry, he wants to continue with his personal and family labour experience, and to work in what constitutes a traditional labour field in the Chilean south, on a large estate with a single owner, who probably works the land to sell his agricultural harvest and animals, applying industrial techniques in order to increase the estate productivity and the business profit. So, in the big industries, or on large estates, TVET students expect to work in the main economic activities of the zone, where they find better opportunities and a known place of work, so they do not have to deal with the uncertainty of moving to urban areas. The secondary TVET speciality is perceived by them as providing proper tools to work in subsequent economic activities, but the mentioned perspective of an ‘upgrade’ in relation to their relatives and the ‘common people’ of their zones does not appear to materialize in consistent future labour scenarios. Instead, the labour prospects are closer to the paths followed by their parents, which have been

mainly based on manual tasks in low-skilled workplaces. From the critical perspective of this research, these students are studying as an attempt to fit properly in future economic activities or industries, but without translating this into a labour situation that is different from that of their parents and relatives. From the TVET policy perspective, even incorporating the human capital approach which supports the tenets of the policy (see chapter 6), this secondary education is not adding 'added value' to the students in order to open or improve their future perspectives. The rural industrial economy may still be growing, but at the expense of some of these rural students, who expect to continue serving these industries in lower-level tasks.

SH-Sof-Huasco, despite aspiring to study in higher education towards an unspecified career, is aware that in case that plan does not work, she should think about a second option. Unlike Geo-Jor-Freirina above, she does not want to work in the pellet industry of the zone, because "I know that they pollute too much, so if I work there I would be helping the pollution and actually I wouldn't like that", so if she does not study she thinks that she may work in local small agriculture. Agric-Rod-Freirina, who is pursuing agricultural TVET studies, sees himself as a tractor driver: "I like the tractor; I even asked one of my professors, and he told me that it is possible to earn good money, so then I kept liking it (...). [M]aybe I can have my own estate later". This last case reveals a perspective of being an independent worker, a tractor driver who works for different agricultural estates, an independence which is closer to a flexible and unstable mode of labour than to a possible entrepreneurial activity. Agric-Jua2-CL is not completely clear, but he thinks that he may continue on the labour paths of his father and grandfather, and have or administrate a small agricultural estate. From their experiences he knows the social environment of the zone: "I have contacts (...) so I see myself in a future like that". Visualizing the long term, he adds: "it would be beautiful, it would be like enjoying my old age, because when I have that [the estate] I will be old, so it would be nice to enjoy that". Again, despite the notion of an upgraded labour situation or a better future under the aspiration of tertiary studies, he ends up projecting a similar old age as experienced by his father or grandfather. The first

plan of continuing studies clashes with the alternative – and more plausible – plan of working directly after secondary schooling, which is represented as continuing a family cycle in this rural setting and economic activity.

A more entrepreneurial nuance appears in the testimonies of Agric-Jua-CL and Agric-Mai-Freirina. The former, who wants to undertake studies in veterinary medicine, expects to “establish clinics as entrepreneur, so then I can build a sort of network of clinics, I can work and manage other clinics, and for instance get a higher income, with the goal of always earning more and more (...)”. This student shows an interest in creating a new idea, as there are no such clinics or networks in the zone where he lives and studies, so without any local background he wants to create his own profitable entrepreneurship, an ambitious project in which he aspires to succeed. Agric-Mai-Freirina, in parallel, and in part disconnected from the agricultural projections stated above, thinks that working in the tourism industry can be an opportunity, “as the tourists don’t know, they are looking for new things, so I can offer a product that they haven’t seen before, or that they like, and if it goes well, then they can buy it. For instance, food – they ask for local food and here there is a market to sell it”. Less ambitious than the previous case, this northern student sees an opportunity in thinking about new things, products to offer to an emerging market and its consumers, the tourists. In both cases, unlike independent projects mentioned above more associated with seasonal or service work, the students aspire to create their own small or larger enterprise. Where Agric-Jua-CL, motivated by his current TVET education and the expectation of continuing studies, imagines an ambitious project, Agric-Mai-Freirina, aware of the increasing presence of tourists in the north of the country, detects a need for ‘more local’ products, as in the case of food. Both show, in different levels, hints of a business mentality, where innovation, entrepreneurship and profits appear as coordinates of future labour projects. Are these nuances of the neoliberal entrepreneur subjectivity? In part they are, but there are also contradictions, in particular related to the feasibility of these aspirations. For example, Agric-Jua-CL’s aspirations are mediated by a series of factors – tertiary studies, funding, partners, experience, family background, etc. – which add complexity to his project. In these

poor social settings, and in these rural lives, the neoliberal entrepreneur seems closer to an ideal than to a feasible project; but this does not remove the presence of a neoliberal discourse in preliminary stages, as a discourse which clashes with the material and social conditions of these students.

## 7. The future: rural or urban?

In the last stage of this chapter, acknowledging the different labour and study paths the students glimpsed in their futures, and although some of them had already offered answers, in part, on this, I asked them where they thought they would live, or would want to live, in the future. With this question I sought to deepen my understanding of the extent of their identification with their rural homes and their subjective and spatial relations with the urban. This question connects labour and spatial issues, and the students' answers indicate their perceptions of their homelands and the rural life.

Three types of students can be outlined among those interviewed – although given the limited numbers in my sample I do not make strong claims for the veracity of this typology: those who see themselves still living in their zones in the future; others who expect to move, mainly to urban places, and leave behind their rural lives; and a third group who also aspire to work abroad, but with particularities that I will analyse below.

The first group expresses a desire to continue living where they are now, maybe not exactly in their specific rural towns, but avoiding moving far from these towns; they want to stay in the local surroundings, close to their relatives and the places they grew up. In the north, SH-Yar-Huasco wants to stay in her small village near Huasco, because it “is tranquil, pure family (...). [S]o everybody knows each other. It is small, but there are people enough, and there are new people arriving”. Also in the north, Geo-Jor-Freirina has his doubts, because while acknowledging that the best opportunities in his technical field, mining, are far from his home (though still in the north), he would like to stay close to his family: “I don’t know,

it depends where they hire more people, but I would like to be near my house". In the south, Agric-Fer-Muermos does not see herself living in a city, and rather prefers to stay in the zone. Agric-Ant-Fresia expects to move to Los Muermos, the neighbouring town, because although they are quite similar in terms of population, size and characteristics (see chapter 8), she believes that:

Los Muermos is a proper town, a larger one than Fresia. It seems to me that it has more things. Here in Fresia there is no Codepa [the big agricultural company], there is nothing, but it is there [in Los Muermos]. I don't want to leave; Puerto Montt, Puerto Varas, I don't want to live that far away. Los Muermos is closer to my home (...). I like the countryside, but where there are big companies, which are related to the farms (...). I like an office.

These students are very close to their families, and that is the main reason for seeing themselves staying in the zone in the future. Geo-Jor-Freirina presented the tension of choosing between his family – and his rural homeland – and the labour and economic opportunities which would require him to leave. Agric-Ant-Fresia expresses interesting nuances in her spatial perception, where the nearby urban cities Puerto Montt and Puerto Varas are experienced as far away, while moving to Los Muermos to allow her to stay in the zone is interpreted as moving to a more urban experience, where there are 'more things', and there is a proper large company which allows her to see her labour life in an 'office' – which can be seen as a more urban type of workplace. Her future prospects are outlined in rural settings but with particular urban traces.

The second and largest group express a desire to leave their rural homelands to try something different, livelier, with more opportunities in different ambits. One significant case comes from Catemu, 'the cellar of degradation' in the words of the head teacher of the school (chapter 8), a perspective which is corroborated by SH-Cat-Catemu, who states:

I don't want to stay here. I think that if someone stays here it is like a hole, and then you can't get out. There is not much labour (...). I also don't like the countryside; there are opportunities, but I think there are more outside.

Once she finishes her secondary education, she would like to move to the big cities of Concepción, in the centre-south of the country, or Viña del Mar, in the coastal area of her region. Her schoolmate, SH-Nic-Catemu, also wants to move to the south, but to live a more natural rural experience: "I would like a place in the south, something more natural, a house near the woods; I always liked tranquil atmospheres". He perceives that Catemu is a "small world" that limits your possibilities of "expanding" beyond, towards "other places". So he experiences Catemu as a locality which restricts your possibilities; it is not completely clear what it means 'to expand', but this opinion expresses a sense that his homeland, despite being eminently rural, is not 'natural' enough – maybe because of the big mining refinery at the entrance to the town. Both students express a specific experience of the rural life, strongly influenced by their particular local conditions. There is not a problem with the rural life in general, because one wants to move to a city but the other to a 'real' natural environment, so it is mainly an issue of leaving Catemu – the 'cellar of degradation' – where the industrialization of certain economic activities has impacted the rural experiences of its inhabitants.

In the north, students expect to leave their current homes, and have a different spatial and social experience, also following the main labour sources. SH-Fel-Huasco and SH-Sof-Huasco, classmates, are looking to leave their zones in the short term, specifically to La Serena, a city further south, but still an important city of the centre-north of the country. The second student projects that she will stay there after studying in higher education, and not come back to Huasco:

I would like to stay in La Serena. I don't know; I like the city, it is a very beautiful place (...). It has more places to go; here everything is so small, so that is why I like those places (...). I am leaving with my mom, she also wants to leave. It is also like starting a new [life], because we have spent too much time here, so we are bored

of the place (...). [In La Serena] there are more distractions, more things to do. I don't know, here everything is so small.

Agric-Rod-Freirina has a similar perspective, as he expects to move to “a more populated zone, a city, like the ones that you see on TV. I've never gone anywhere”. These students perceive their northern rural homelands and towns as isolated and distant from the urban places where things are happening, in contrast to their boring villages. The urban appears as a place where more entertaining and varied activities can be developed. Here, the rural continuum is interrupted by a perspective where the rural and the urban constitute two different poles, one being more attractive than the other. Geo-Deb-Freirina is also thinking about leaving her town to move to “more developed cities (...), I don't know, like Santiago, which is the best known”. She is the only one of this group of students who wants to leave her home to move to Santiago. It is interesting that in general, these students think of other urban cities before mentioning the capital, by far the biggest city of the country. Their aspirations of migrating are related to other medium cities, cities which are not extremely urbanized; they prefer cities next to the sea – like La Serena or Viña del Mar – or places ‘in the woods’.

In addition, Geo-Deb-Freirina expands her alternatives to the northern city of Antofagasta – known as the mining centre of the country, also next to the coast – based on labour perspectives: “there are more [work opportunities] there, [and] I can live better”. This strategic thinking, conditioning her geographical future in relation to the labour sources available, rather than choosing in terms of a subjective preference or lifestyle, is also deployed by Agric-Mai-Freirina, balancing his entrepreneurial intentions and his agricultural TVET studies in his thoughts about moving to the south of the country – this is where the largest agricultural industry is based, so he may try to work in one of the biggest dairy enterprises of that zone. Thus, the student rationales are influenced by the labour opportunities, and also influenced by the TVET path he has studied so far, oriented in relation to the needs of the industries, and the places these industries are based. The economic needs which provoke students to search for the places ‘where the

money is' imply also a poor material life, so the subjective decisions are marked by the needs and aspirations to achieve (and earn) something better than they have experienced.

Likewise in the south, rural students seek to migrate, but without leaving their regions; they may desire to move away from their homelands, but not to experience very different conditions. This is the case with Agric-Pat-Muermos and Agric-Vic-Fresia: the first for instance wants “to change zone (...), to stay in a city, but work in the countryside” – so, he still wants to keep a connection with the rural environment, a perspective also influenced by his TVET schooling, which suggests that agricultural work is more available in rural areas. But ultimately, he concludes that he “likes the city more than the countryside (...). I don’t know, the life here is boring” – this shows a similar perspective to that of Agric-Rod-Freirina above. Agric-Vic-Fresia says that he wants to migrate as well, to what he considers a place distant from his birth town, Puerto Varas (which is actually less than 100 km from Fresia). He specifies that he wants to live not exactly “in the city, but on a small land parcel (...) on my own estate, and work there, being independent”, a rural life in which he still perceives differences from his current town, where “honestly (...) there aren’t many opportunities to have success; I would say that I don’t find it a possibility [to stay]”. This shows a similar perspective on rural life: the student seeks to move away (but not that far) from his homeland, but to a small urban place, a (rurban) location which balances the rural and urban experiences and life perspectives.

Finally, the third group has specific characteristics. Three of these students come from the same school, the one situated in central Calle Larga and owned by an important businessman. As described above, one of its students aspires to be awarded a scholarship from the school – this school has significant funding sources and different connections which give wider access opportunities to the institution and its members, in part including the students – such as through the mentioned scholarship, or internships in agricultural enterprises of the zone. This scope is also materialized in a set of meanings, a discourse which despite the poor and vulnerable backgrounds of the students, generates corresponding ambitions and



aspirations. One of these ambitions is to live and work overseas, at least temporarily. For instance, Agric-Jua-CL, who expects to be awarded the school scholarship and later to open his own chain of veterinary clinics, also wishes to:

undertake an entrepreneurship abroad (...). [I]f I had the chance, I would leave because here there aren't the same possibilities as in other countries. It is always better (...) to go to the United States or Europe, because a developed country will always offer more opportunities (...). I think that this is a question that emerges from the environment (...) because the people always say: 'the foreign countries are always better' (...), for instance my teachers, my mum. You can see that type of opinion daily (...). [B]ut I also have thought it by myself (...). I have seen the TV shows, documentaries, people that have gone abroad, and actually they are doing better than the people that stay here.

Before undertaking further analysis, I will consider the view of Agric-Fel-CL, part of the same generation at this agricultural school, who expects to go to the northern hemisphere too: "it is my dream to know the United States (...). People always talk about it [in this] underdeveloped country, 'the United States here, United States there'. There is more work (...) because there are various TV shows [about the USA] (...)". These narratives which mix dreams, imagination and desires express views about development, and a personal perspective of underdevelopment in the country, where the United States and Europe appear as an imagined location for more and better opportunities – a discourse transmitted by teachers, relatives and TV shows. These cases show not only a perspective on the rural life, but also on life in Chile – as noted above, these are narratives which mix discourses and imagined images. There is a perception of a subjective and social experience, influenced by the school and relatives through a local and rural discourse in which the students live in a place that lacks opportunities and development, in contrast to the northern hemisphere. This imagine is constructed by spatial relations between the south and the north, the underdevelopment and

the development, a space which constitutes the features of the undermined place where these students live.

In the next section I will move on to the main discussion points of this chapter, including some issues related to these last paragraphs, where the students' perspectives regarding their geographical identifications are marked by different views, imagined images and affections.

## 8. Discussion points

### 8.1. The rural student rationality and the neoliberal subject

Here I address one of the key focuses of the analysis of this study, the search for traces of the neoliberal subject in the rural students' subjectivities. What is clear is that there are no definitive stereotypes of subjectivity here, neither a purely competitive neoliberal subject, nor the romantic rural peasant of other epochs and places. The hybrid character of the current rural landscape, the representations of the new rurality or the rural transformation, and the experience of the rurban involve influences of neoliberalism in a rural development model that is opening connections to the global markets (chapter 3).

In this context, the future possibilities perceived by the students are more open, the urban life is one aspect of their decision making, and is related to their hope for a better future, and shaped by their educational trajectory. But those aspirations involve important variables to consider, difficult obstacles which students have to overcome in order to achieve their ambitions. Vulnerable students with a family background of relative poverty are trying to break the cycle of precariousness, and endeavouring to –be the first in generations to 'upgrade' in comparison to their relatives; this is an educational and labour upgrade, which expects to bring a better economic and social situation. This project, in turn, forces them to face the real possibility of achieving this; that is, the financial, academic, geographical and practical issues stand between them and their aspirations of

continuing study in higher education, as part of a definitive step towards a better life. In other words, the aspirational rural subjectivity is forced to be a strategic rural rationality, which has to deal with important and difficult factors in order for ambitions to be realised. The success of this depends on several factors: Agric-Jua-CL needs to be awarded the scholarship by his school; SH-Fel-Huasco has to save enough money to fund his studies by working some years in the pellet industry (he also has to decide whether he wants to study a university or technical degree); Agric-Mai-Freirina needs to remember the name of the agricultural career that he is interested in; Agric-Rod-Freirina needs to clarify the difference between studying in a university or in a technical institution; SH-Sof-Huasco needs to define which scientific career she wants to follow; SH-Yar-Huasco needs to find out the academic requirements of her tertiary studies preference.

Thus, the obstacles that these students have to deal with are considerable; nothing is sure or completely clear, and the possibilities for success depend on factors that in most cases they cannot control or fully understand. The educational and labour landscape places extreme demands on their rationalities in terms of effort, calculation and information processing in order to deal with the different obstacles. This is not a neoliberal rationality, representing an autonomy of choice, but the rationality of the vulnerable facing a neoliberal educational and labour landscape. It is not purely neoliberal, but can be understood as a consequence of the neoliberal economy and development, and market-based educational system. Despite all the enthusiasm, the possibilities of higher education studies are complex.

In terms of entrepreneurial mentality, there are two lines of analysis. First, as entrepreneurs of the self, the students show traces of the need to invest in themselves while aspiring for something better; they are aware that the possibility of an actual change in their historical trajectories depends to a great extent on studying in higher education, and in some cases on their moving away from their rural origins. They have to be responsible for themselves, to study, to get the necessary funding, to find information and analyse their academic options, to find a city to move to in the near future – and all this from a very precarious position.

The second line of analysis relates to the few cases showing an entrepreneurial mentality, especially Agric-Jua-CL and his veterinary clinics plan, or his ambition of being an entrepreneur abroad. His plan, which is consistent in his narrative, implies an even more difficult set of obstacles to achieving his dreams. In contrast, the other students interviewed show a clearer tendency to visualize themselves working as employees in local industries or for large rural estates. This last issue will be addressed in the following section.

## **8.2. Added value? Educational paths and failing policies**

Following on from the previous section, here I will provide an analysis from the perspective of the educational policies and how they relate to the students' aspirations outlined above. As analysed in chapters 4 and 5, it is among the goals of the national curriculum and the TVET policy to offer integral educational paths. In the case of the former, this path is based on democratic and academic principles, and in the case of the latter on wider capacities and skills. Both expect to offer a path for students to find their vocations and later labour opportunities, especially the TVET policy, which seeks to overcome the old perceptions of the technical education as a fast track into work in particular sectors, an education provided to the poorest segments of the population. Both policies are based on human capital principles, as educational schemes that strengthen the set of knowledge and skills that the current open economy demands in individuals for the sake of its continuous growth.

Are these rural students responding to the goals and principles of these policies? In part they are, at least in their aspirations. Effectively the students are thinking about possibilities not available to the previous rural generation, their parents, and are trying to gain better educational and economic projections. The academic track is a possibility on the horizon, and they perceive that their current studies, particularly among the TVET students, are preparing them to have better labour prospects in the near future. As Koo (2016) states in relation to the Chinese case:

(...) [TVET] school students (...) have strong desires for upward social mobility through educational credentials and do not intend to take up low-end service jobs after graduation. The dreams shared by the students match the neoliberal discourse that jobs and rewards flow to individuals who upgrade their skills to meet the requirements of the modern knowledge economy (p. 53).

But these 'dreams' involve overcoming several difficulties, as analysed in the previous discussion point, which raises serious doubts over the students' actual possibilities. The national curriculum, along with the curriculum-assessment dispositif, of which the PSU (test) is a crucial part (see chapter 5), fails in its attempt to present an accessible path into higher education, as the students struggle in different dimensions to achieve their purposes. The TVET policy and its wider set of updated skills is not generating actual improvements in labour paths, as students stated there are feasible options of continuing what their parents or relatives or the 'common workers' historically have worked. Cho and Apple (1998) argue:

Mandating more emphasis on career education was seen as the most appropriate way to keep people from continuing their 'irrational educational enthusiasm' and would lead more of them to their 'proper place' as 'unskilled' industrial [worker] (p. 270).

In this process, SH students share the assumption that choosing a scientific-humanistic secondary path will yield better prospects than choosing a TVET one, which in turn is represented as a path which perpetuates the same poor rural life that they and their families have had so far. On the other hand, Agric-Jos-Freirina mentioned his brother's experience of studying the scientific-humanistic path, without generating any actual possibility of continuing to university studies, so he decided, strategically and based on this family experience, that it is better to follow

a TVET path. In both perspectives, the students perceive that the alternative path will not accomplish its promises of better educational or labour prospects.

The human capital approach applied in these educational policies is failing to provide 'added value' to these rural students; as Cho and Apple pointed out, the original 'irrational enthusiasm' of the students, aligned to the curriculum and TVET policies, ends up leading them towards their 'proper place' as 'unskilled industrial worker'. This also relates to what was discussed in chapter 7: these policies are enacted through a rural educational assemblage, which deployed in the schooling dispositif produces the *pre-figured worker*. The promise of better labour prospects clashes with the need to fill unskilled industrial workplaces; students are responding to the educational profile under which they are being trained, which matches the profile of the worker in the companies of the zone (chapter 8).

### **8.3. Resistance to what? Escaping from the precariousness**

At this point I will address the possibilities of resistance among the students, as an issue related to their subjectivities, and to the theoretical framework of this research. The question is whether these students are submitting themselves to a dominant neoliberal discourse as articulated in these educational policies, or whether they present alternatives or resistances in understanding and projecting their future lives. As I have noted elsewhere in this thesis, the narratives and discourses of the different interviewees show an inclination of the rural education policies towards an industrial, pre-neoliberal set of features, which for instance are represented in the figure of the *pre-figured worker*, differentiated from the flexible and entrepreneurial educational type found in the neoliberal discourse and technologies such as discourses of lifelong learning or the learning society. Later, in the conclusion, more will be said about this particular contradiction; however, it can be stated that the analysis of pre-neoliberal traces will not reveal alternatives or resistance to neoliberalism, but rather a construct which is functional to neoliberalism itself.

Continuing with this discussion point, the students are expecting better prospects, are 'dreaming' about continuing to study and accessing better labour opportunities. In the terms of this study, they show ambitions to acquire features of a *homo economicus*; they are trying to be competitive in a competitive labour market, and to be more productive in order to gain access to better employment, and thus better lifestyles. In these terms they seem not to be resisting; but I will use Binkley's (2011) ideas to outline an argument which claims, on the contrary, that they may be resisting, but in a restricted way.

The students' perceptions of their parents' labour trajectories, as the generation from which they try to distinguish themselves by aspiring to upgrade their professional paths and future job opportunities – and further material and life conditions – reveal a form of attempt, at least in their narratives, to leave behind their historically precarious life conditions. Their parents represent, in part, the destiny that they are trying to avoid. This is particularly evident among the female students. Although they do not emphasize the topic of gender relations in relation to the (almost absent) labour trajectories of their mothers, it can still be concluded that for these young women, the rupture with their mothers' lives is implied, and even more radical than for their male fellows.

What Binkley proposes is a resistance understood as a process of subjectivation, which involves a process of de-subjectivation, of refusing what you do not want to be in order to achieve what you want to become. He states:

One way to grasp this encounter between a governmental rationality and an intransigent object of self-rule is to consider the manner in which a process of subjectification affected by the *dispositif* inevitably operates alongside its opposite, with a parallel process of de-subjectification. De-subjectification here entails a disavowal, an interrogation and a repudiation of some historically antecedent formation of selfhood, one that must be negated, suppressed, or removed through a concerted act of self-work. (Binkley, 2011, p. 87)

In the case of some of these students, they are trying to de-subjectivize themselves, that is distance themselves and make sense of who they are or who they might be, as different from the labour trajectories of their parents, which led to precarious material life conditions. They want to be 'bosses', to achieve more than their parents did, and they are seeking to articulate their own narratives about what they want to be. They make themselves up over and against what they do not want to be, as a particular 'act of self-work'. Connecting with the previous discussion point, the future 'dreams' of these students can also be read from this conceptual perspective. In the words of Cho and Apple:

Some of them wanted social success as a means of resistance; and at the very same moment they combined this with a partial sense of resignation (...). This tension between fantasy and insecurity and partial resignation was very clear (...). [I]ndividual and collective dreaming, while seemingly perhaps narcissistic on first examination, also need to be understood as partly a positive moment of contestation, not as merely a failure to 'adjust' or as an escape from reality (...). [F]antasy and desire represent one of the many spaces where ideological contestation occurs, where it is worked through in all its contradictions (...) (Cho & Apple, 1998, pp. 279-280).

Aspirations, dreams and fantasies, articulated in narratives of the future, despite the many and strong doubts about the concretion of these projections, themselves constitute an act of resistance, maybe not to a neoliberal discourse, but against the precarious conditions of their lives which come as a result of the same neoliberal development model which frames their settings. They imagine themselves differently. They want to be successful workers, even entrepreneurs, skilled professionals; but they do not want to continue being part of the lowest segments of the neoliberal urban-rural chains of production, which distribute unevenly the hierarchies and resources through spaces and places (chapter 3).

Of course this is not the case where students project similar labour paths to those followed by their parents. The students' aspirations and dreams show a



tension between the desire and its feasibility, which at times they are aware of, so they mix ambitious plans with others more related to the trajectories of the 'common workers' of their zone. Binkley interprets:

This encounter between an older and a newer self occurs at unique historical junctures, and at the interfaces of emergent and moribund technologies and dispositifs of subjectification. (Binkley, 2011, p. 88)

The rural educational assemblage influences the tension between the paths followed by previous generations and the new ones that these students want to create and live. In their narratives the old and the new are portrayed in contradictory and tensioned ways, where they project themselves in different, parallel and ambivalent scenarios. That ambivalence is a result of this encounter of discourses, technologies and assemblages shaped by the dominant neoliberal discourse, which frame a rural educational experience which generates expectations and dreams, but also constitutes the reproduction of the same cycle of precariousness among generations.

#### **8.4. Geographical identifications and imaginary landscapes**

Finally, these rural students present important nuances in relation to their identifications and projections regarding their rural homelands. As was pointed out in sections of this chapter, a majority of students want to move to urban zones, while others declare a preference to stay. The rural–urban migration is based mainly on the attractiveness of the city, a place where more opportunities are available along with more and livelier activities, in opposition to the rural, which is represented as a backward place, boring and stagnant, where the labour activities often involve too much sacrifice, are too manual, and are without any significant reward. Similar features are found by Koo in the narratives of rural students in China:

According to them [the students], 'days in farmland are too harsh' and 'the earnings are too little'; in contrast, urban areas 'are full of opportunities'. Having grown up in the reform era, they are heavily influenced by the ideologies of modernization in which peasants are labelled as backward and non-farming occupations are considered as advanced and modern (Koo, 2016, p. 52).

This research has also revealed narrative relations which identify the city as a modern place, and the rural town and zone as old and outdated. Acknowledging that traces of a *rurban* perspective appeared in the analysis of the students' interviews, in vocations which integrate rural and urban features, this identification with the urban and the desire to leave the rural differs to an extent from rurban assumptions (chapter 3). The subjectivities of these students are still separating, and positioning at almost opposite poles, the rural and the urban life.

While those students who want to remain in their rural homelands appeal also to images which show the urban life in negative ways, their identification is very much affective; they feel close to their rural places, to their families, and they enjoy living and working there. An interesting counterpoint in relation to the previous group is that these students, in their answers to the interview questions, do not express a strategic rationality but a more affective one; they are not moved by economic reasons, but affective ones. The first group display the opposite criteria: disaffected from their rural homelands, they plan to migrate for better opportunities, seeking an upgrade in their material conditions of life and a livelier, more fulfilling lifestyle.

## Conclusions

Given these pressing concerns, it is timely to pause and offer a more ‘troubling’ and ‘disruptive’ account of the common sense assumptions underpinning human capital approaches to education and the impact [they are] having on the life trajectories of the most marginalized and vulnerable young people in our society. (Down, 2009, p. 54)

This research has explored the relation between education policies and rural students’ subjectivities through a critical analysis which interrogates the influences of neoliberal discourse in this context. The results show institutional influences and relations, that are deployed in particular ways in the rural educational sphere through specific practices. From a post-structuralist perspective these practices can be understood as discourses deployed through specific technologies and embodied in institutional dispositifs and educational assemblages. This educational-economic arrangement is manifested in the intimate relationship between schools and companies, and in the ways this asymmetric relationship affects schools’ practices, curriculum adjustments and institutional goals, in order for them to produce students competent to meet companies’ needs.

But one of the primary contributions from this thesis has been to give a voice to the voiceless, particularly rural teachers and students, in an overlooked and invisible rural educational context. There is a double oblivion here, rural education as a forgotten matter in policy and academic debate, and rural teachers and students as actors neglected in the educational discussion – the relegated position of marginalized places and voices in policymaking processes (chapter 4). Their testimonies are not only valuable as accounts of personal experience, but they also make explicit and allow me to analyse the socio-economic dynamics of a marginalised and neglected field of education. In other words, what these interviewees presented here is, in part, what is happening in education in the absence of public regulation, with a State which monitors and to some extent directs from distance the fate of rural education, and in particular, the TVET policy

in rural secondary schools. And what is happening is a very close and asymmetric relationship between educational and economic spheres, between schools and local businesses. Education here is also another piece in the Chilean neoliberal-privatized rural development model (chapter 4). The fate of rural TVET schools seems to be more related to the needs and interests of these enterprises— an extended governance network - than to educational policy goals and the abstract statements of government agencies and international organisations. In these contexts, students' biographies, affects, hopes, fears and future projections are influenced by a situation where in part their educational and labour destinies are tied to industrial needs, and their aspirations are hindered and formed by academic and financial factors.

Guided by the four objectives projected at the beginning of this research (chapter 3), I have attempted to provide a response that delivers original insights and a critical and challenging analysis. From those goals, I endeavoured to illustrate the complex aspects of the intricate relation between discourses, educational policies and subjectivities, problematized by the rural and spatial variable and context examined in this research. Therefore, this conclusions chapter is presented in six sections, starting with a final account about the theoretical and methodological path followed by the thesis, and finishing with some final comments regarding the challenges and possibilities of future research based on the conclusions presented. Between these two sections, and following the reiteration of my research objectives, I establish the main conclusions in the remaining four sections.

Although in these sections there are wide range of issues arising from the initial four objectives of the study, it is still possible to mention some specific connections between objectives and conclusions. Considering the four main conclusions sections mentioned above, in the first one of these I address the last research goal, that concerned with the relations of the rural space in educational policy and students' subjectivities. In the second set of conclusions I offer some final thoughts regarding the three educational policies analysed (first research objective); and following that, in the third point of these conclusions, I explore the

complex relations between education policies and the practices and discourses in rural schools and students; issues that are also connected with this first study goal. Subsequently, all these concluding sections can be related to the third study objective about the relations between policies and subjectivities, but the fourth section addresses these issues directly. This section also alludes directly to the second research goal about the characterization of students' subjectivities.

### The conceptual frame applied

The theoretical perspective applied in this research orientated the perspectives and the tone of the analysis. The post-structural concepts used operated as a lens to understand the power relations between discourses, policies, practices and subjectivities. I did not try to present a linear analysis of different social and educational aspects, but rather to show how these conceptual levels, educational technologies and subjects interact in particular ways, influencing each other, being deployed and represented in specific manners. Thus, the theoretical notions presented regarding neoliberalism are not straightforwardly enacted in the empirical cases analysed. Rather, the Chilean rural education system, and in particular the sample here analysed, shows distinct facets of neoliberalism, particular ways of practising and enacting neoliberalism, and unique forms with which students must deal and to an extent, take for granted but also they sometimes reject elements of the neoliberal rationality in their lives and decisions. This recalls the small 'n' (chapter 1), where neoliberalism is enacted with particularities and nuances at a local level inside the global scope. This perspective is also coherent with the qualitative perspective applied in this study.

While the educational policies analysed were examined in terms of how the neoliberal discourse and governmentality are represented in particular technologies, the rural educational practices were understood as dispositifs and assemblages which offer a particular way of understanding the complexities and nuances of a dynamic interaction between different technologies, institutional

actors and spatial influences. The students' testimonies, then, were understood in relation to these discourses, technologies and practices, an analytical debriefing of how these potential relations reveal traces of the neoliberal subject. I would like to focus briefly on this last point.

There are two issues relating to the students' testimonies: one is whether the students' narratives about their lives present points of contact with aspects of neoliberal subjectivity, and the other is whether the education policies analysed are shaped by and express features of this neoliberal subject. In both lines of analysis, this research yields some conclusions. In relation to the first, as I discussed in chapters 6 and 8, the *pre-figured worker* appears as a pre-neoliberal subject, close to the worker in a fixed workplace and far from the flexible entrepreneur; but he is still a representative of homo economicus in terms of the need to produce efficiently, according to the strategic goals and interests of the companies. In addition, the pre-figured worker does not live in a parallel, outdated world, but rather in an unequal spatial configuration of economic relations (the core-periphery structure of economic production), relations which are functional to a neoliberal development model based almost exclusively on the free market, and which contribute to a capitalist mode of production. The relations between the educational policies analysed and the neoliberal subject are mainly found in the principals of human-capital and conceptions of economic necessity that structure the national curriculum and the secondary TVET policy. Both policies also reveal ambiguous features of an autonomous and self-responsible subject.

Finally, regarding the research design and methods applied, the academic and policy-maker interviewees were key informants, especially in relation to the educational policies analysed. They provided a critical complement to the policy documents and sources. The role of the teachers went beyond what I originally planned, which was that their practice and experience would provide an insight into the educational policies. Besides providing this insight, the teachers also added crucial testimonies regarding the schools' practices in relation to their economic environment, and how such practices enacted the policies in particular and local ways. Policy makers, government bodies and even academic experts all

fail to acknowledge the representations, practices and strategies produced in these rural settings by the design and management of these policies. These educational arrangements – assemblages and dispositifs – are ways of responding to *absent policies*. The account of students' subjectivities in these rural settings suggested a permanent tension between their desires ('dreams' and 'fantasies') and the real possibilities for the future. Students' perceptions of their futures are influenced by their educational and family experiences, but the concrete steps needed to achieve their aspirations are often missing. The future, then, was one of the key analytical coordinates in exploring the students' subjectivities in relation to the educational policies analysed and their rural homelands.

### Space/Place, Development and Education

In many respects the self as enterprise does not have a gender, or an ethnic background, or a particular age, or a specific geographic location. Though this may not be entirely accurate (...) having no place in effect means that cosmopolitan, post-industrial urban geography is what makes enterprise understandable, thinkable, possible. (Kelly, 2016, p. 15)

In the rural space, as the margins of the urban environment, it is possible to visualize traces of neoliberalism in the students' subjectivities, in various, contrasting ways. In the rural students' testimonies, the urban is always on the horizon, as an imagined image of life as exciting and full of opportunities, in contrast to the boring and limited rural routines – these students share a perspective on the rural as a lagged space (chapter 4). For other students, the urban is what they want to avoid, and appears as dangerous, in contrast to their natural and secure lives. The affirmation or rejection of a rural identity is based on a contrast to the urban imaginary. Despite this contrast, both groups of students – the majority who want to leave and the others who want to stay – aspire to a better life. The first group aspire to a more prosperous life in the city; the second hopes

to gain access to better labour conditions through their secondary TVET studies. Both groups base their aspirations on a contrast to the same experience that they want to leave behind or overcome: the lives of their parents and older relatives. The spatial experience of the students is highly influenced by their family and their educational experience: the first as the experience that they do not want to live, the second as the vehicle to aspire to something different.

The analysis of space and place reveals a tension with the model of development and the education policies deployed in the Chilean rurality; subjectivities appear as the site of struggle where this tension is manifested. The future working life of the students is always in tension with uneven chains of production and spatial inequalities (see chapter 4). This can be discerned in the students' image of the urban as a place where better labour alternatives are available, and the aspiration of other students who want to work in rural settings but in better conditions. Both perspectives show the tension between aspirations and possibilities conditioned by financial, academic and labour issues and barriers. Acknowledging that rural labour, particularly as experienced by their parents and relatives, has historically offered a life under precarious economic conditions, the students do not accept this situation as their personal fate, and they aspire to something more.

In relation to policies, from chapter 3 onwards it is shown that policy frameworks consider the rural scenario as a situation of disadvantage. Thus, the rural is defined as a residual category (chapter 4), as everything that is not urban; the rural development model is absent, or at least based almost exclusively on market forces and private investment. This is also seen in the 'forgotten' rural dimension in the national curriculum (chapter 5) – and, again, the relegated place of marginalized spaces in the policymaking process (chapter 4) – or in the functioning of rural education policy as a technology of invisibility rendering rural actors voiceless (chapter 7). One of the key educational policies in rural settings, the secondary TVET, can also be understood as 'absent' (chapter 7). Therefore, the rural policy frame – territorial, economic and educational – forgets, neglects or obscures rural places, institutions and subjects. It is interesting that, despite Chile's



economy is being founded mainly in rural activities (agriculture, mining, foresting, aquaculture), the rural policy frame appears as weak and disarticulated, lacking all public priority. Is there any relation between this political oblivion of the rural situation and the production of subjectivity through the pre-figured industrial worker? Is the erasure of rurality an indirect disciplinary technology which produces workers for precarious industrial workplaces? These questions go beyond the scope of this research, but open study fields for the future.

Moreover, the so-called 'new rurality' and 'rural transformation' are understood in terms of changes to the rural organization and dynamic as a response to the ongoing global neoliberal transformation. This is a response which tries to include the rural sector in the development of the urban zones worldwide. But this transformation basically promotes the bringing together of the educational frames and economic needs of rural zones and whole countries. Rural education has to assume a strategic role in the economic development of these zones, a proposition very close to a human capital perspective. This perspective on the role of education in the rural transformation is coherent with the Chilean educational policies analysed, especially TVET.

### The educational policies analysed

As pointed out in chapter 5, the national curriculum appears as a policy in tension between democratic and human-capitalist principles. This ambiguity is resolved through the curriculum/assessment dispositif constituted by the close relation between the national curriculum and the SIMCE test. The SIMCE test mainly assesses disciplinary curricular contents and skills, while the democratic purposes of the national curriculum are left aside. One of the consequences of the SIMCE test model is that schools, instead of teaching the range and totality of contents of the national curriculum (chapter 5), focus mainly what is going to be examined in the SIMCE, and in several cases whole classes are based on training for it (Wenstein, Muñoz, & Marfán, 2012).

Regarding the invisibility of the rural education policy, an important cause is the curriculum/assessment dispositif that defines the practice of rural teaching, and erases all the weak and disarticulated rural programmes and efforts of the Ministry and teachers. If the national curriculum lacks the contextual contents and nuances to adapt to rural settings, the curriculum/assessment dispositif restricts the possibility of contextualization even further. The result is that rural education becomes a forgotten policy, a technology of invisibility which does not consider the voice of the rural educational actors (schools, teachers, students); under this absence of policy, the Ministry of Education is indifferent to the educational dynamic. This dynamic is understood in this study as the rural educational assemblage based on the intimate and subordinated relation between schools and companies, which ends up in the adaption of the profile of the student to be educated by the school (and by the national curriculum) to fit the profile of the worker required. The forgotten rural schools, then, are dispositifs where all the relations and influences of the rural educational assemblage, the national curriculum (and the SIMCE and PSU), the TVET frame, and the disconnected supports of rural educational programmes are immersed in a complex and voiceless schooling practice.

Overall the research suggests the secondary TVET policy applied in these rural contexts may be the policy with most influence in the rural educational assemblage. While the national curriculum lacks geographical contextualization and the PSU offers only a conditional opportunity for some students to enter university, and the rural educational programmes are weak at secondary level, the secondary TVET policy offers an alternative path to rural youth. Moreover, the agricultural TVET path appears accessible; it is an educational option which is very commonly offered in rural areas, and it attracts a higher voucher value from the central public administration. However, it is not only agricultural activity takes place in rural settings; for instance, as the paths of several TVET students showed, the mining industry has an important influence in the TVET policy in the northern region. The secondary TVET policy is strongly based on a human capital approach: it basically provides skills for the needs for the economy. But in the Chilean case –

and in other underdeveloped and poor regions of the world – the TVET path can be understood as a *social* policy, seeking to address the goal of reducing poverty by providing a fast route into the labour market; in other words, it is education for the poor. From this perspective, the rural secondary TVET is an educational alternative for poor young rural students. The critical point here is that the TVET educational path provides technical training to prepare students to fit specific workplaces, which, as has been analysed, are defined by the needs of the local companies in these rural places. The rural TVET produces workers for specific forms of (manual) labour in the industries, productive representatives of homo economicus – not flexible entrepreneurs.

### The rural educational assemblage and the school as dispositif

I have said something about this already, but I want to add some last reflections about these analyses. The particular rural educational dynamic is interpreted in this research as an assemblage of technologies, practices, relations and influences, which enlarge the frontiers of the educational ambit towards the economic and business spheres. In other words, the economic and business spheres have colonised the educational ambit, introducing their priorities and influences into the educational agenda. The schools are institutional places where the outcomes of these relations and influences are deployed and enacted. The rural secondary school is the key dispositif within the rural educational assemblage. But the school is in a subordinate position in relation to the company, and the TVET curriculum is adapted to the requirements and suggestions (and complaints) of business and industry.

Regarding the hybridization of the educational and the economic spheres, Down (2009), in relation to the Australian case, relates how the Australian government created a new 'super ministry' called the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (p. 52), integrating at a State-institutional level the educational and labour ambits of public policy management. This

increasing influence of the economy over education poses risks, as the author argues:

“My argument is that these broader sets of economic, social and political forces are bearing down on schools and those who inhabit them in profound and damaging ways” (Down, 2009, p. 53)

My research shows that the intimate relations between the rural school and the local companies – the central feature that defines the rural educational assemblage – is having significant effects on the educational functioning of schools. Besides having to respond to the obligations imposed by the Ministry (the ‘guillotine’ – see chapter 8), and to advertise their results to the community in a market-based organization of the whole educational system, they have to respond to the needs of enterprises.

Rural schools try to integrate students into the market-based development path of rural zones through the production of subjectivities that match with the profile of an industrial worker. But at the same time, schools and educational policies reproduce in rural students’ lives the same precarious social and economic patterns experienced by previous generations, contradicting the rhetoric of a better future, pertinent skills for better workplaces, or advanced knowledge for university studies. Students, then, ‘dream’ of better possibilities, but often follow a similar path to the brother of Agric-Jos-Fresia, who decided to follow the SH secondary educational path, dreaming of university studies, and is now a seasonal worker helping with the harvest. The educational promises of a better future are in serious risk of ending in frustration.

## The pre-figured employee's subjectivity and resistance

Like the previous section, this topic has already been addressed already in this chapter, but I want to say some last words about this important aspect of the research. Instead of the neoliberal entrepreneur, this thesis concludes that the proper conceptual image to describe the students' subjectivities is that of the 'pre-figured worker or employee'. These notions are not in opposition to each other, but they have their differences. The small 'n' in this case represents a pre-neoliberal state, where students are trained to fill industrial workplaces, to be employees or precarious workers, and the flexibility and entrepreneurialism of the neoliberal subject have less space in the design and implementation of educational policies. Students are trained to be productive and disciplined (through specific soft skills) more than autonomous and competitive. The main feature of neoliberalism is the preponderance of the human capital approach, and the pre-figured employee is produced on the basis of generating human capital for the growth of the economy, in this case through their pertinence to the needs of the local companies. This pre-neoliberal situation is not in opposition to neoliberalism itself, but, as I noted at the beginning of this concluding section, it is functional to the unequal spatial division of labour in capitalism, which enacts and reinforces the neoliberal order and discourse. While being educated to work in precarious industrial workplaces, the students contribute at the base of the neoliberal economic order of the country, reproducing its path of development and economic growth.

One of the key points in relation to the rural schooling dispositif in the production of the pre-figured employee is the strategic match between the educational profile of the student to be educated by the school, and the profile of the required worker defined by the local company. This is the main symptom of the aggressive intromission of the economic and business spheres into the educational one. The rural school is not defining the features of the students they are educating by their institutional purposes, nor on the basis of curricular

orientations, but in order to respond to the needs (and commands) of the enterprises.

The students' subjectivities and the production of the pre-figured worker are also linked to the tension between the objective of preparing students to work in the companies of the zone and the probability of that work being precarious. This fits with their aspirations (dreams and fantasies) of either leaving their homelands or remaining there with access to better employment opportunities; the ambiguity is in the possibility they will reproduce the same patterns experienced by their parents and previous generations. The promises of these policies are also ambiguous: there is the double discourse of an education pertinent for university studies or better employment on the one hand, and on the other, especially in the TVET case, of an education for the poor, or (from the teachers' analysis – chapter 8), for producing ignorant manual workers. Within these tensions, the students aspire to something more, and with some knowledge about the requirements and obstacles for each dream or path, they are trying to escape from their historical socio-economic condition.

This attempt at escape is connected with the concept of a de-subjectivation of students in relation to their rural and family backgrounds (chapter 9). This can be seen in terms of a subjective resistance. Are these rural students resisting neoliberalism? The answer is ambivalent. From a macro perspective, in being educated as pre-figured employees and aspiring to follow a successful labour path in industry, the students are being pulled into the neoliberal development model and discourse. But on a micro level (see chapter 1), the students are resisting not the neoliberal promise of economic success, but its counterpoint: the precariousness experienced by many under the unequal and insecure neoliberal order. Their aspirations are a resistance to their historically precarious life conditions, produced by a certain social and economic order framed by the dominant neoliberal discourse. Thus, the rural students open the post-structuralist analysis to different scopes of ambiguous subjective resistance, generating ambivalent interpretations on a macro and a micro level.

## Further discussion

As some final thoughts, I want to outline briefly the three main possibilities for further research that this thesis may have opened. First, in terms of policy analysis, this style of research could contribute to educational policy design, implementation and evaluation. This research indicates the need for further research and a policy focus on the particular modes in which educational policies are enacted and implemented in rural settings. Many of the issues around these educational policies are not considered in traditional policy design or evaluation. This is shown in the schools' functioning in relation to the economic actors, or the ways in which the rural programmes are erased by the curriculum/SIMCE dispositif. However, it is important to note that any contribution of this study in this line of analysis is related to political and ethical issues and positions. As a neoliberal discourse deployed through particular technologies, policies and practices, the rural educational assemblage is analysed critically in this research, but this critical perspective cannot be assumed as the necessary standpoint of a government in office, or from other international institutions working these themes. Neoliberalism, as the dominant discourse, is accepted and propagated by most of the relevant influential institutions, organizations and individuals. The evidence here found, may should be translated into other policy debate languages and modes of analysis, in order to generate a constructive discussion about educational policy development.

This issue is related to the analysis of an alternative model or discourse. This study addresses part of the UNESCO perspective regarding the human development approach, mainly based on Amartya Sen's concepts and theories. The UNESCO approach is an important contribution to discussions in development, academia and policy making. It constitutes a particular perspective on how countries and societies should guide their development, an ambitious task which can be interpreted as an effort to install an alternative discourse in the global development agenda. While acknowledging the important influence gained over the last decades by the human development approach, practical contributions to

educational policies are still dominated by the human capital approach (Unterhalter, 2009). And as discussed previously while UNESCO's policy recommendations highlight the human development perspective, at the same time they do not leave behind an inclination towards human capital features. I think that this ambit of study is still open to further research, not only about the current status of the human development model in the educational policy discussion and policy-making process, but in terms of the investigation of other alternative discursive models or sources, which can seek to propose other ways of understanding development and education.

Lastly, further research regarding the actual working conditions of young people graduating from the secondary school in rural settings would be an interesting complement to this study, helping to understand how static or flexible the current status of the worker in these areas is. This could provide a critical insight into the educational process, helping to visualize whether students are navigating a changing, insecure labour market or accessing companies which will provide a long-term career – and, in the latter case, how dynamic that career actually is.



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## Annexes.

### i. Topic guide used in interviews

#### a. *To the Policy-makers (semi-structured).*

1. What do you know about the history of the policy-making process of the policy?
2. Can you describe generally the contents and structure of the policy or its main characteristics?
3. Which political and ideological trends do you think that led the design of the policy?
4. Which influences do you observe in the policy? Are there other policies that are guiding the goals or structure of the policy?
5. Can you define the profile of the student to be educated in the policy?
6. How is the policy implemented nowadays?
7. What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of the policy?
8. How do you think the policy deals with the social diversity of the country?
9. How do you see the future of the policy? Towards which direction is its design and implementation going?
10. To end, what is your impression about the policy?

#### b. *To the academics (semi-structured).*

1. What do you know about the history of the policy-making process of the policy?
2. Can you describe generally the contents and structure of the policy or its main characteristics?
3. Which political and ideological trends do you think that led the design of the policy?
4. Which influences do you observe in the policy? Are there other policies that are guiding the goals or structure of the policy?
5. Can you define the profile of the student to be educated in the policy?
6. From your studies and experience, what do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of the policy?
7. How do you think the policy deals with the social diversity of the country?
8. How do you see the future of the policy? Towards which direction is its design and implementation going?

9. To end, what is your opinion about the policy?

c. *To the teachers (semi-structured).*

1. Can you describe generally the contents and structure of the policy or its main characteristics?
2. Which political and ideological trends do you think that led the design of the policy?
3. Have you seen changes in the last years in the content and structure of the policy?
4. Which influences do you observe in the policy? Are there other policies that are guiding the goals or structure of the policy?
5. Can you define the profile of the student to be educated in the policy?
6. How is the policy implemented in the classroom nowadays?
7. What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of the policy?
8. How do you think the policy deals with the social particularities of your particular school?
9. Do you think that this policy responds properly to the needs and characteristics of the students of your school?
10. How do you deal with the problems that you find in the policy? If you were in charge of the design of the policy, which changes would you introduce?
11. To end, what is your impression about the policy?

d. *To the students (non-structured, topics to be talked).*

1. The infancy: the personal relations with the family, community, big proximate cities, the schools and other institutions (local institutions, church, experiences of working).
2. The present time: the experience of the school, the institutional links, the relation with the rural environment, with the community and towns, the agricultural activity.
3. The perspective of the future: the linkage between their current studies and their aspirations for the future, the value of the rural life, their local perspectives (countryside - cities), their plans for the future (studies, work; family, community), the opportunities that they actually see to their lives and contexts.
4. To end: what is the thing that you like most of your biography? Of your community/town? Is there something that you would like to change in this narrative?

ii. Data – Hours of interviews.

Here the detail of the hours of interview carried out in the research, per of group of interviewees and zones:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Hours of interviews</b>
Polymakers and Academics	09:54:30
Teachers	05:26:18
Students	07:09:12
Total	22:30:00

<b>Zones (students and teachers)</b>	<b>Hours of Interviews</b>
North	05:08:49
Centre	03:57:58
South	03:25:41

iii. Codes applied in data analysis.

<b>Students</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Policy specialists</b>
Affects	Economic characterization of the zone	History of the policy
The rural town	The rural	Definition and structure of the policy
Institutions of the childhood	National curriculum	Ideological and political influences in the policy
Multigrade school	TVET policy	Other policies influencing the policy in question
The labour of the parents	Relation with the Ministry and the educational system	Profile of the student to be educated through the policy
The current school	Pedagogical practice	Education policy and social diversity of the country
Scientific-humanistic or TVET	Profile of the student	The future of the policy
Labour future	Relation with the economic environment	
Place of the future work		
Young from the countryside or from the city		

iv. Ethical review document.

(Copied below)



All research activity conducted under the auspices of the Institute by staff, students or visitors, where the research involves human participants or the use of data collected from human participants are required to gain ethical approval before starting. *This includes preliminary and pilot studies.* Please answer all relevant questions responses in terms that can be understood by a lay person and note your form may be returned if incomplete.

For further support and guidance please see accompanying guidelines and the Ethics Review Procedures for Student Research <http://www.ioe.ac.uk/studentethics/> or contact your supervisor or [researchethics@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:researchethics@ioe.ac.uk).

**Section 1 Project details**

a. Project title Neoliberalism and Subjectivity in the National Curriculum in Chile: a Study in Rural Contexts.

b. Student name and ID number (e.g. ABC12345678) Juan de Dios Oyarzun – OYA13117149

c. Supervisor/Personal Tutor Stephen J. Ball

d. Department Humanities and Social Sciences

PhD/MPhil  EdD

MRes DEdPsy

MTeach MA/MSc

e. Course category (Tick one)

ITE

Diploma (state which)

Other (state which)

f. Course/module title MPhil/PhD in Education

g. If applicable, state who the funder is and if funding has been confirmed. Becas Chile – Conicyt (Government of Chile)

h. Intended research start date 31/03/2015

i. Intended research end date 30/04/2015

j. Country fieldwork will be conducted in Chile

k. Has this project been considered by another (external) Research Ethics Committee?

Yes External Committee Name:

No  ⇒ go to Section 2 Date of Approval:

**If yes:**

- Submit a copy of the approval letter with this application.
- Proceed to Section 10 Attachments.

**Note:** Ensure that you check the guidelines carefully as research with some participants will require ethical approval from a different ethics committee such as the National Research Ethics Service (NRES) or Social Care Research Ethics Committee (SCREC). In addition, if your research is based in another institution then you may be required to apply to their research ethics committee.

## Section 2 Project summary

### Research methods (tick all that apply)

*Please attach questionnaires, visual methods and schedules for interviews (even in draft form).*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interviews        | Controlled trial/other intervention study  |
| Focus groups  | Use of personal records  |
| Questionnaires  | Systematic review ⇒ <i>if only method used go to Section 5.</i>                                |
| Action research                                       | Secondary data analysis ⇒ <i>if secondary analysis used go to Section 6.</i>                   |
| Observation   | Advisory/consultation/collaborative groups   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Literature review | <b>X Other, give details: Policy Analysis, through the analysis of the policies documents.</b> |

**Please provide an overview of your research.** This should include some or all of the following: purpose of the research, aims, main research questions, research design, participants, sampling, your method of data collection (e.g., observations, interviews, questionnaires, etc.) and kind of questions that will be asked, reporting and dissemination (typically 300-500 words):

“The research focuses on the Chilean national curriculum as a public policy that contains the main and most explicit subjects, values and goals of the State educational project, the type of educated citizen subject that the system seeks to provide society with. The curriculum seeks to deliver updated values, tools and knowledge to students in order to insert them in to society terms of responsibility, sociability, labour projection, among others functions.

The curriculum is a cluster of contents and objectives, but it is also an embodied technology which expresses a model of the subject deployed pedagogical practice. The technology of this policy and its discourses and narratives, as well as its implementation in schools are the subject of this investigation. I am mainly interested in secondary education policies, which are more connected to the labour market and the formal responsibilities of citizenship.

In this study, I will analyse the application of the national curriculum in rural contexts, in the subjectivities of the students of rural schools. Hence, I am interested in two main topics: the education policy of the national curriculum, and the subjectivities of the secondary students in rural schools in Chile, their responses, biographies and narratives. From those realities, from the policies and from the subjects, I will analyse the relation between them, their similarities and differences, which I expect will allow me to generate a critical review of the policy from the perspective of the students.

### Research questions.

- i. What are the main rationalities, contents and values that characterize and define the profile of the student to be educated in the national curriculum in Chile?
- ii. What are the main values and meanings articulated by rural students regarding their lives, their education and society?

- iii. To what extent does the student profile of the national curriculum act on and 'make up' the subjectivities of rural students?

**Research objectives.**

**Main objective:**

- To analyse the subjective relation of the curriculum policies on the rural students in Chile.

**Specific objectives:**

- To identify critically and analytically from policy texts and their main related voices the profile of the student to be educated by the Chilean national curriculum.
- To collect the subjective narratives of rural students and to identify the main values and meanings through which they speak about their lives, their education and society.
- To set these individual narratives over and against the policy subject projected within policy documents and consider their commonalities and differences.
- From these analyses - To propose a concrete contribution to the Chilean curriculum and rural education policies.

**The sample is constituted by:**

- 3 policy makers (of the curriculum and rural education policies)
- 4 academics (experts in curriculum and rural education)
- 6 secondary teachers (as experts in the implementation of the curriculum in rural schools)
- 18 students

**Research Techniques and Methods:**

Source	Technique	Method of Analysis
Policies (Texts)	-	Critical Discourse Analysis
Policy-makers	Semi-structured interviews	Critical Discourse Analysis
Academics	Semi-structured interviews	Critical Discourse Analysis
Teachers	Semi-structured interviews	Critical Discourse Analysis
Students	Unstructured interviews	Narrative

**Section 3 Participants**

Please answer the following questions giving full details where necessary. Text boxes will expand for your responses.

- a. Will your research involve human participants?      Yes       No  ⇒ go to Section 4

- b. Who are the participants (i.e. what sorts of people will be involved)? Tick all that apply.

Early years/pre-school

Ages 5-11

Ages 12-16

Young people aged 17-18

Unknown – specify below

Adults: *Policy makers, academics, teachers*

Other – specify below

**NB:** Ensure that you check the **guidelines** (Section 1) carefully as research with some participants will require ethical approval from a different ethics committee such as the National Research Ethics Service (NRES).

- c. If participants are under the responsibility of others (such as parents, teachers or medical staff) how do you intend to obtain permission to approach the participants to take part in the study?

I will interview 18 students in their last year of secondary school, they usually are between 17 and 18 years old. All of them will be under the responsibility of their teachers or the authorities of the schools. For the teachers and students I will give a letter that will explain all the considerations of the study, and the conditions and rights for their participation. The letter is attached to this form.

- d. How will participants be recruited (identified and approached)?

In the case of the students, I made contact with academics and a teacher from the settings of my fieldwork, specifically in rural areas of Chile. Regarding the teacher, she is working in one of the schools, and will get me the contacts of the students and colleagues. In the case of the academics, they are working in current or past research projects, from which they will get me the contacts with schools principals and teachers, who will give me the access and permissions to interview the students, along with the consent of each student to participate in the study.

In relation with the policy makers and academics, I identified the most important voices of each field of my study, and I will contact them directly to appoint the respective interviews.

- e. Describe the process you will use to inform participants about what you are doing.

In the case of the adults I will send them information by e-mail about my research and ask them about their interest in participating in this project being interviewed. With their consent, I will send them the letter that describes the main considerations of the study, and will give them a paper copy when the interview will be conducted.

In the case of the students, I will give the letter to the principal of the school and the head teacher of the class of each student, asking for their permission. With their consent, I will give the letter to each student to be interviewed. In the case of the students, the letter will contain the spaces to sign it by them and their teachers in charge, as a document of consent.

- f. How will you obtain the consent of participants? Will this be written? How will it be made clear to participants that they may withdraw consent to participate at any time?

I plan first to obtain consent of the individuals in charge of the schools and the class, principals and head teachers, and the students then. The letter that I will give to the students must be signed by the head teacher or principal and the student involved to allow me to interview him/her. The possibility of withdrawing consent will be explicit in the letter, along with the main considerations of the research. In case that it is necessary, I will offer to the schools authorities and students the possibility to extend the letter to their parents, in order to get their authorization as well.

A similar letter will be given to the adults to be interviewed. I will ask their signature too, in case of consent.

- g. **Studies involving questionnaires:** Will participants be given the option of omitting questions they do not wish to answer? (NOT APPLICABLE)

Yes  No

If **NO** please explain why below and ensure that you cover any ethical issues arising from this in section 8.

- h. **Studies involving observation:** Confirm whether participants will be asked for their informed consent to be observed.

Yes  No

If **NO** read the guidelines (Ethical Issues section) and explain why below and ensure that you cover any ethical issues arising from this in section 8.

- i. **Might participants experience anxiety, discomfort or embarrassment as a result of your study?**

Yes  No

If **yes** what steps will you take to explain and minimise this?

If **not**, explain how you can be sure that no discomfort or embarrassment will arise?

The interviews will be made in a place established by all the interviewees. In relation with the students, the place will be established by them in consent with the adult responsible, teacher or principal.

In the case of the adults, the contents of the interviews will be related particularly about technical and political issues related with each policy to be studied. In the case of the students, the topics of the non-structured interviews will be general and related with their own lives, thoughts and expectations about their lives. In the letter of consent, they will be clearly informed that they are free to answer just what they want and think to be pertinent.

- j. **Will your project involve deliberately misleading participants (deception) in any way?**

Yes  No

If **YES** please provide further details below and ensure that you cover any ethical issues arising from this in section 8.

- k. **Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation (i.e. give them a brief explanation of the study)?**

Yes  No

If **NO** please explain why below and ensure that you cover any ethical issues arising from this in section 8.

- l. **Will participants be given information about the findings of your study? (This could be a brief summary of your findings in general; it is not the same as an individual debriefing.)**

Yes  No

If **no**, why not?

#### Section 4 Security-sensitive material

Only complete if applicable (NOT APPLICABLE)

Security sensitive research includes: commissioned by the military; commissioned under an EU security call; involves the acquisition of security clearances; concerns terrorist or extreme groups.



- a. Will your project consider or encounter security-sensitive material? Yes \* No
- b. Will you be visiting websites associated with extreme or terrorist organisations? Yes \* No
- c. Will you be storing or transmitting any materials that could be interpreted as promoting or endorsing terrorist acts? Yes \* No

*\* Give further details in Section 8 Ethical Issues*

### Section 5 Systematic review of research

Only complete if applicable (NOT APPLICABLE)

- a. Will you be collecting any new data from participants? Yes  \* No
- b. Will you be analysing any secondary data? Yes  \* No

*\* Give further details in Section 8 Ethical Issues*

*If your methods do not involve engagement with participants (e.g. systematic review, literature review) and if you have answered No to both questions, please go to Section 10 Attachments.*

### Section 6 Secondary data analysis Complete for all secondary analysis (NOT APPLICABLE)

- a. Name of dataset/s
- b. Owner of dataset/s
- c. Are the data in the public domain? Yes  No   
*If no, do you have the owner's permission/license?*  
 Yes  No\*
- d. Are the data anonymised? Yes  No   
*Do you plan to anonymise the data?* Yes  No\*   
*Do you plan to use individual level data?* Yes\*  No   
*Will you be linking data to individuals?* Yes\*  No
- e. Are the data sensitive (DPA 1998 definition)? Yes\*  No
- f. Will you be conducting analysis within the remit it was originally collected for? Yes  No\*
- g. If no, was consent gained from participants for subsequent/future analysis? Yes  No\*
- h. If no, was data collected prior to ethics approval process? Yes  No\*

*\* Give further details in Section 8 Ethical Issues*

*If secondary analysis is only method used and no answers with asterisks are ticked, go to Section 9 Attachments.*

### Section 7 Data Storage and Security

*Please ensure that you include all hard and electronic data when completing this section.*

- a. Confirm that all personal data will be stored and processed in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA 1998). (See the Guidelines and the Institute's Data Protection & Records Management Policy for more detail.) Yes  X
- b. Will personal data be processed or be sent outside the European Economic Area? Yes  \* No  X

\* If yes, please confirm that there are adequate levels of protections in compliance with the DPA 1998 and state what these arrangements are below.

Who will have access to the data and personal information, including advisory/consultation groups and during transcription?

- c. I plan to transcript and process the data in UK and by myself, and I do not plan to give access to another person beyond my supervisor, in cases which it is necessary to advance in the normal process of my research. The data will be used to inform my doctoral thesis.

#### During the research

- d. Where will the data be stored?

Yes.

Will mobile devices such as USB storage and laptops be used? Yes  X \* No

\* If yes, state what mobile devices: My personal laptop, external drives and cloud storages.

- e. \* If yes, will they be encrypted?: Yes.

#### After the research

- f. Where will the data be stored?

In external encrypted cloud storages.

How long will the data and records be kept for and in what format?

- g. I plan to keep the data in the time successive the thesis final assessment and approval, only in case that the research entails future publications or subsequent investigations. The format of whole data will be electronic.

- h. Will data be archived for use by other researchers? Yes  \* No  X

\* If yes, please provide details.

### Section 8 Ethical issues

Are there particular features of the proposed work which may raise ethical concerns or add to the complexity of ethical decision making? If so, please outline how you will deal with these.

It is important that you demonstrate your awareness of potential risks or harm that may arise as a result of your research. You should then demonstrate that you have considered ways to minimise the likelihood and impact of each potential harm that you have identified. Please be as specific as possible in describing the ethical issues you will have to address. Please consider / address ALL issues that may apply.

*Ethical concerns may include, but not be limited to, the following areas:*

- Methods
- Sampling
- International research
- Risks to participants and/or researchers
- Confidentiality/Anonymity

- Recruitment
- Gatekeepers
- Informed consent
- Potentially vulnerable participants
- Safeguarding/child protection
- Sensitive topics
- Disclosures/limits to confidentiality
- Data storage and security both during and after the research (including transfer, sharing, encryption, protection)
- Reporting
- Dissemination and use of findings

During the research I am aware about certain ethical issues that may arise. I can identify four of them.

First, about the access and the reliability of the sample of students. It is possible that I can select the schools that I want to work with, considering official information given by the Ministry of Education, but it will not be possible to select the students to be interviewed, because that decision will be taken by the authorities and teachers of each school. It will be my responsibility to state clearly my previous request to the schools principals and teachers, regarding the diversity and characteristics of the sample that I need for my research. Likewise, it will be useful to this purpose to have a previous contact, the teacher and the academics for the areas of the schools to be investigated, as they can help me to make the contact previous my own attempt and subsequent meeting.

The second issue is related with the privacy and anonymity of the students, as they are the only ones in the sample, according to the type of interview to be designed, that will provide personal information about their own biographies. I am aware of this concern, and I will be careful to the questions that I formulate, and the instrument will be flexible looking for adapting to the reality and sensibility of the interviewee. After the transcription of each interview, I will share it to every interviewee in order to check their consent about its consent, and allowing them to modify or omit any information that they think convenient.

The third concern is about my cultural distance from the places that I want to research, in particular the rural places. I come from Santiago, the capital and biggest urban area of the country, so I am aware that my own subjectivity could be partial and assume stereotypes related with rural prejudices that could intervene the design of my study and the analysis of its results. I have studied in depth, and expect to continue doing it, the particularities of the rural areas in Chile and Latin America, including qualitative studies related with youth and education, in order to increase my knowledge about the culture and different feature of each area. I also think that working my own reflexivity is a key aspect due to this issue and the whole research, and I have attended to the reflexivity workshop at the university, and worked this aspect of my subjectivity in the last months, with my colleagues and supervisor.

Finally, as long as Chile is considered a safe country by the FCO, and it is my country of birth where I have lived my whole life, there are still some precautions that I will have to take in order to guarantee my personal safety. As my research is based mainly in rural areas, I am aware that even I have been there before, it is not my most familiar environment, and I have to travel safely to each place related to the research, part of them very far from urban areas. I plan to use always the official transports to each zone, avoiding informal ways of travelling. Also, I will ask to my previous contacts, the teacher and the academics, that join me in at least my first two visits to each schools, in order to familiarise myself in each environment, and to introduce me properly to every rural school community.

### Section 9 Further information

Outline any other information you feel relevant to this submission, using a separate sheet or attachments if necessary.

### Section 10 Attachments Please attach the following items to this form, or explain if not attached

Information sheets and other materials to be used to inform potential participants about the research, including approach letters      Yes      No

Consent form      Yes       No

*If applicable: (NOT APPLICABLE)*

The proposal for the project      Yes       No

Approval letter from external Research Ethics Committee      Yes       No

Full risk assessment      Yes       No

### Section 11 Declaration

I have read, understood and will abide by the following set of guidelines.      Yes.

BPS      BERA       BSA      Other (please state)

I have discussed the ethical issues relating to my research with my supervisor.      Yes.

I have attended the appropriate ethics training provided by my course.      Yes.

**I confirm that to the best of my knowledge:**

The above information is correct and that this is a full description of the ethics issues that may arise in the course of this project.

Name      Juan de Dios Oyarzun

Date      16/03/2015

**Please submit your completed ethics forms to your supervisor.**

### Notes and references

### **Professional code of ethics**

You should read and understand relevant ethics guidelines, for example:

British Psychological Society (2009) *Code of Ethics and Conduct*, and (2014) *Code of Human Research Ethics*

or

British Educational Research Association (2011) *Ethical Guidelines*

or

British Sociological Association (2002) *Statement of Ethical Practice*

Please see the respective websites for these or later versions; direct links to the latest versions are available on the Institute of Education <http://www.ioe.ac.uk/ethics/>.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service checks**

If you are planning to carry out research in regulated Education environments such as Schools, or if your research will bring you into contact with children and young people (under the age of 18), you will need to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) CHECK, before you start. The DBS was previously known as the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)). If you do not already hold a current DBS check, and have not registered with the DBS update service, you will need to obtain one through at IOE. Further information can be found at

[http://www.ioe.ac.uk/studentInformation/documents/DBS\\_Guidance\\_1415.pdf](http://www.ioe.ac.uk/studentInformation/documents/DBS_Guidance_1415.pdf)

Ensure that you apply for the DBS check in plenty of time as will take around 4 weeks, though can take longer depending on the circumstances.

### **Further references**

The [www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk](http://www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk) website is very useful for assisting you to think through the ethical issues arising from your project.

Robson, Colin (2011). *Real world research: a resource for social scientists and practitioner researchers* (3rd edition). Oxford: Blackwell.

This text has a helpful section on ethical considerations.

Alderson, P. and Morrow, V. (2011) *The Ethics of Research with Children and Young People: A Practical Handbook*. London: Sage.

This text has useful suggestions if you are conducting research with children and young people.

Wiles, R. (2013) *What are Qualitative Research Ethics?* Bloomsbury.

A useful and short text covering areas including informed consent, approaches to research ethics including examples of ethical dilemmas.

### **Departmental use**

If a project raises particularly challenging ethics issues, or a more detailed review would be appropriate, you must refer the application to the Research Ethics and Governance Coordinator (via [researchethics@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:researchethics@ioe.ac.uk)) so that it can be submitted to the Research Ethics Committee for consideration. A Research Ethics Committee Chair, ethics department representative and the Research Ethics and Governance Coordinator can advise you, either to support your review process, or help decide whether an application should be referred to the REC.

Also see 'when to pass a student ethics review up to the Research Ethics Committee':

<http://www.ioe.ac.uk/about/policiesProcedures/42253.html>

Student name

Student department

Course

Project title

**Reviewer 1**

Supervisor/first reviewer name

Do you foresee any ethical difficulties with this research?

NO

Supervisor/first reviewer signature

Date

19/3/15

**Reviewer 2**

Second reviewer name

Do you foresee any ethical difficulties with this research?

NO

Supervisor/second reviewer signature

Date 19.3.15

**Decision on behalf of reviews**

Decision

Approved

Approved subject to the following additional measures

Not approved for the reasons given below

Referred to REC for review

Points to be noted by other reviewers and in report to REC

Comments from reviewers for the applicant

**Recording – supervisors/reviewers should submit all approved ethics forms to the relevant course administrator**

Recorded in the student information system

**If the proposal is not authorised the applicant should seek a meeting with their supervisor or ethics reviewer.**

v. Letters sent to participants in the research.

The letter informing about the research also included information related to the purpose of the study and the interview, the right and freedom of the interviewee to leave the interview whenever they consider doing it, and the confidentiality of the data of the research. I copy below the samples of the two types of letters, one for the students and the adult responsible, and the other to the adult participants (policy-makers, academics and teachers).

LETTER INFORMING ABOUT DOCTORAL RESEARCH PROJECT (Translation)

Dear Student

The reason for this letter is to inform and invite you to participate in the study "Education policies and subjectivities in Chile: a study in rural contexts" as part of the doctoral thesis (PhD) of the principal investigator.

The main objective of the research is "analysing the relationship between education policies and subjectivities in rural contexts in Chile", through a critical analysis of the national curriculum of education, the vocational education and the rural education model, and then show the relationship between training proposals from these policies with individual biographies and narratives of young students from vocational-technical high schools in rural areas of the country.

Specifically, your participation in this study involves an unstructured interview, which aims to investigate in your personal biography; those aspects of your life that you consider most important, your relationship with your school and what you seek to develop in the future. You will always have the freedom to answer the contents that you prefer to share, including to not answer questions which you do not know or do not want to respond.

It is important to emphasize that your decision to participate must be absolutely free and voluntary. All data collected will be anonymous and will only be used for the purposes contained in this research. Also, if you consider it necessary, you may have access to the records of the investigation (recordings, transcripts or reports) that are directly related to your person. It is intention of the researcher to convey the findings related to your contribution to this research, to the extent you express an interest in receiving them.

The principal investigator agrees to take all measures necessary to ensure your welfare, health, and physical and psychological integrity of all the study participants, according to the rules of the Code of the British Education Research Association (BERA). If you have questions about the participation in the project, you can ask questions at any time during its execution, through the email contact noted below or in person when we meet. Likewise, you can withdraw your participation at any time, without that represent harm or have need for any excuse.

I hope positively you consider this request. Thank you very much for your willingness and time.

Sincerely.

Juan de Dios Oyarzun  
Principal Investigator

UCL Institute of Education  
joyarzun@ioe.ac.uk

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Responsible: \_\_\_\_\_

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#### LETTER INFORMING ABOUT DOCTORAL RESEARCH PROJECT (Translation)

Dear Participant

The reason for this letter is to inform and invite you to participate in the study "Education policies and subjectivities in Chile: a study in rural contexts" as part of the doctoral thesis (PhD) of the principal investigator.

The main objective of the research is "analysing the relationship between education policies and subjectivities in rural contexts in Chile", through a critical analysis of the national curriculum of education, the vocational education and the rural education model, and then show the relationship between training proposals from these policies with individual biographies and narratives of young students from vocational-technical high schools in rural areas of the country.

Specifically, your participation in this study involves a semi-structured interview, which its main objective is to investigate your vision and knowledge about educational policies in Chile, and how their design and implementation acts upon students. The educational policy that we will talk, will be directly related to your field of study or expertise.

It is important to emphasize that your decision to participate must be absolutely free and voluntary. All data collected will be anonymous and will only be used for the purposes contained in this research. Also, if you consider it necessary, you may have access to the records of the investigation (recordings, transcripts or reports) that are directly related to your person. It is intention of the researcher to convey the findings related to your contribution to this research, to the extent you express an interest in receiving them.

The principal investigator agrees to take all measures necessary to ensure your welfare, health, and physical and psychological integrity of all the study participants, according to the rules of the Code of the British Education Research Association (BERA). If you have questions about the participation in the project, you can ask questions at any time during its execution, through the email contact noted below or in person when we meet. Likewise, you can withdraw your participation at any time, without that represent harm or have need for any excuse.

I hope positively you consider this request. Thank you very much for your willingness and time.

Sincerely,

Juan de Dios Oyarzun  
Principal Investigator  
UCL Institute of Education  
[joyarzun@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:joyarzun@ioe.ac.uk)



Participant signature: \_\_\_\_\_

vi. Sample of interviews.

a. Policy-maker or academic.

RuralAc-1

00:00:01

Interviewer: So first, well, about the rural education policy, if we could define it, does it exist, what does it consist of?

Interviewee: If you want to give me about two or three because I am of very long answers, then maybe there are some that interest you in order of priority.

Interviewer: Ok. The first one would be that, what does the rural education policy consist of? The second is what are the political, social, ideological influences that have influenced this, in the development of this specific policy? and the third, if there are any other policies that are influencing the development of this policy. For example, the policy of evaluation or the curricular policy, or the financing system, etc.

Interviewee: Ah, education policies.

Interviewer: Of course. Or, if there is another external one that you think is important, such as economic development policy, or something like that, it would be good too.

Interviewee: Of course.

Interviewer: You, you see. I left three questions there.

Interviewee: Already. Look, about the first one...

Interviewer: Ok.

Interviewee: Look, I think the question you ask me if there is a policy, I feel that there is no policy here. Oh...

Interviewer: Ok.

Interviewee: What exists let's say, in general terms it is a policy of education, period. I think there was policy that was in the years '90. When working under the principle let's say, about what were the visions of that time from the World Bank, the visions of international organizations, in which they discussed, discussed and planned and implemented targeted projects for specific populations. And there was a program organised that had to do with that, the MECE Rural, that we have talked about. Uh... I would say that was like a kind but not an education rural education policy, but it was a programme within the framework of the Quality and Equity of Education Improvement policy. But after I believe that that's over. Not that they would have removed it: it is finished. But, a particular policy for this sector has not followed, but I would say in Chile in a traditional form, in a historical form throughout life, has existed this notion of the unique school in the background. Of a unified school... I don't want to use the unified word, so it doesn't look like the Unified School of the Popular Unit of the 1970s, but it's actually a unified school. The idea is that in Chile there is only one school. Oh...

Interviewer: Ok.

Interviewee: To which all children have the right to education. And if there is any modification, that school has to see these changes, it has to do fundamentally and substantially with certain curricular adjustments. Uh, second and therefore, I think that is an ideology that is up to now, I feel that today in the reform, it speaks of the subject of intercultural bilingual education itself, which... somehow it makes it difficult to think of a unified school, a national school, uh, I think it is, the policies that are being implemented are mainly policies... Fundamentally oriented to one, to a principle of fairness and equality of all schools. Without further distinction. In the end the question, it is all that defined study well, bad, I like it, I don't like it, whatever it is, but there's a study program and this program must be followed by all children from Arica to Punta Arenas, from mountain to sea, urban and rural, indigenous and non-indigenous, all. Therefore, I believe that there is no policy in rural education. Uh... for these two reasons that I give you. One, for a political reason eh, of policy of priority of, forgiveness, of the policy of educational planning.

Interviewer: Aha.

Interviewee: There was a process before. Because, how do I plan is also a decision. That's why I say it's political, right?

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: In one way or another I can use a technology or a thought or a condition of planning. In the '90s, the planning had to do fundamentally with the targeted school. With targeting. From 2000, 2000 to here, the subject is  
00:05:00 that the targeting will not end. Already in national policies. And second is to recover I would say a notion of what came up to the '80s, the change of the educational model in which there is a notion of a unique school, national school. Uh, the idea of, during the dictatorship of the 1980s, let's say so far practically until this reform, except for this period of targeted programmes, I believe is this notion of the freedom of teaching of different projects, but there was still a basic common framework. But there was a vision more differentiated from the school. There was no rural education policy either. What had been school differentiation. Then we did have the targeting thing on transition and now we go back to the notion of - In my opinion, historical in Chile, the most classical- that had to do with the national school.

Interviewer: Perfect.

Interviewee: That in general terms on the subject of the school. Do you understand or not?

Interviewer: yes, yes, yes.

Interviewee: That. Hence, there's a State, somehow we went from this issue of moving from an economy of a market model, a model more regulated by the State, I won't say State economy, but more regulated by the State, has to do with the recovery of this notion of a national school. This brings us a little to the second question. I don't know if there's anything else you want or if it's enough.

Interviewer: Uh... No. It is ok. Let's go with the second question. If I have something left, then I'll tell you.

Interviewee: Ok. In the second, I believe that there is the subject of political ideological [and] social influences of the policy. But there's no policy! Then, If there is no policy, how I answer the question?

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: What I could tell you is that in the model and how little you can see of some notion of policy... not policy, educational programs, it has to do with something else. It has to do with a certain curricular and pedagogical notion of contextualizing, of adaptability, but no more than that. I feel that there is a view... what I do believe is that there is a view, a perspective, a theoretical

political approach that does not recognise the territorial diversity of the country.

Interviewer: Ok.

Interviewee: The view, I see it in the moment that we're in... yesterday we started, this weekend I had meetings with people from the teachers' association, rural teachers, we had conversations about what is the seventh and eighth, the complete [primary] schools, the...how you say? The, the Basement... Uh, the loss of people let's say in rural communities because the perspective that exists from Santiago, where the programmes, policies, projects are identified, it is not understood that in rural schools although they are small, they play a key role in the territorial development of regions.

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: In the sense in which, this small school, to the extent that there is a school with four or five students, ten, twenty or thirty or the complete [primary] ones with hundred, are keeping people in the territories. As the school closes, they start to leave, people start to leave, and there are several investigations in that direction. We have observed this here in *Chalampunte*, in the communities where I work. It is being emptied of youth and families. What does it mean for us here in the region? It means that we have fewer people in the rural areas, fewer peasants, fewer smallholder producers, fewer agricultural workers and that also implies that it starts to put into play a basic condition of the development of the regions, which is, I will say in the most capitalistic way possible, the use of a human resource, of a natural resource for development. Looked at from a point of view... There is a subject, yes, there is a topic that is this unifying view of the curriculum, this national view at the school, this lack of policy which expresses a fair view without a doubt, of social justice, that all schools are national and are equal, eventually generates problems like this that I tell you. It goes without a General Education Law where seventh and eighth are going to, they're going to be secondary school now, that's not knowing whether or not they're going to move out of schools, or if they're going to keep them, I do not know if it's clear. They close the small schools, and that is somehow killing what is the possibility of long-term development, more democratic one,

00:10:00 more participatory, richer in diversity, but also the natural production, agricultural and small farmers, or the protection of the environment or the protection of nature, which for our region is key. Without nature we are not

going to have sightseeing. And without tourism we have no regional development. Without vegetables, without healthy vegetable producers in the fields, we [only] can in the future compete in the markets with healthy vegetables. There's not that much chemistry here. Since people begin to empty the fields, they will be occupied by the other bigger producers, they will use a more extensive economy, and in that sense, we will begin to have transgenic products, and so on, and the factors of competitiveness are going to be reduced on one side. Reduced not from the point of view of the large entrepreneurs who can accumulate a set of products, but small farmers. Then, the impact of not having, calling like this, forgive me the expression, not having a policy for rural education in our cases, in my opinion, implies a policy, in terms of not having a regional development policy, it affects the regional development policies. I don't know if you understand...

Interviewer: yes, right.

Interviewee: I want to say: here in the region we have a 97% of the companies which are micro small business. In that 97% a high, a high quantity are small farmers smallholder, medium farmers. As long as you close the schools, to the extent that you don't have a policy of encouraging rural education, but rather in the secondary schools, in the cities, [and] in the villages, you put buses to the people, all that, you start to deplete the cultural content in the youth [in relation to] the rural world and you start to empty physically the rural world. And that should affect development in our regions. That I think is a subject, if you ask me a little bit of political and social influences, I think an important one is this *centralism*. This central vision of the country that does not have the capacity to understand the relationship between culture and nature, and is not able to understand the relationship that the small peasant, the producer in relation to nature and the condition of economic, social and cultural development of the regions. I think that's to give you a different approach let's say, at least as I see it. Maybe they've told you this everywhere. But that's what I see as a risk, as I do not have to tell you the political influence and so... was it understood more or less or not?

Interviewer: Yes... No. Very, very eloquent, it was very clear.

Interviewee: Already.

Interviewer: Ehm...

Interviewee: Let me finish here. And the last question you asked me had to do with other education policies that influence.

Interviewer: Or, or any kind of policy ah...

Interviewee: How?

Interviewer: of education or other too, in a broad way, ok?

Interviewee: yes, yes, yes. Already in some way. Thank you. One of the first influences that I think, in, influencing policy, if there is no policy, would also have to give the same answer. Basically, the answer I'm going to give you is why there's no policy, but I don't really know the answer. What I want to say is this. If there is no policy, I have no answer to this question.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: But, but that's what I, I think why there is no policy also from other perspectives. One first, is that I believe that development, and I return to the topic of the policy of the more global development, the great educational policy is fundamentally focused on, and I will speak of it as from a more capitalist logic, fundamentally in the formation of labour capacities, productive, of knowledge at all levels, basic level, more qualified levels, up to the expert level fundamentally oriented to what is the formation of a labour productivity that in the discourse is associated with the businesses, but in practice it is the training of employees.

Interviewer: yes, yes.

Interviewee: Ok. Then I believe that the educational model that is installed from the productive point of view, from the work one, to train salaried, high level, manager of multinational companies let's say... Ok?

00:15:00 Or the worker who is employed in a private house, in a bar, in a café. Uh... and there is no policy from an educational point of view that is oriented to what is a development of a more associative economy. That can have many names: cooperative economy, associative, social economy, popular economy, plurality, I do not know... there are thousands of theories. But it basically should set a view about the development of an education that leads to a training that can drive both a good wage worker, as a good entrepreneur, I will say, an associative one. With a sense in both cases of cooperation and a sense of basic social justice. I believe that these elements are part of the problems that are installed in the policies that influence this. Because in the end the education that reaches the rural areas is an education that has a very

strong urban character. Not only because even if you are say that you learn with pebbles of the field, look at the birds or gather leaves, or sing songs of local folklore. All that is fine, I'm not saying that it isn't. But the logic behind it, the system is a model of training of employees. And what is needed in the countryside is, in fact, if we want to support regional development, if we want to support rural development, we need salaried workers, but we also need associativism. The thousands of small producers from our country and the populations, and the Mapuche producers in our region do not see another long-term solution than cooperation. There is no other. There is not going to be another. We will be with indigenous conflicts, social conflicts, with... I do not know if poverty, because the State can put money through subsidies, aids, and such things. But, with social problems, the drug is already installed, lots of other issues in the countryside, not totally yet, but there is, it is generating a series of other difficulties that impede development, a healthy development, a sustainable development, where people are happy. I think that's a factor. A second element that in some way should or might influence, but that is not yet influencing is the indigenous policy. Partly significant of what rural schools are in those communities. There is an article of mine in the magazine *Aquí Rural*, in which I think that I put a bit the question of who owns the schools. So, in what field rural schools are installed here in the area. And an important part are indigenous communities. And that shows that in some ways indigenous policy also affects what rural education is. I'd say that's another factor in my judgment. Then one has to do with the economic model for which Chilean education is thought. That is not thought in relation to the cooperation that is so important in our regions, but in the training of employees, which is a classification and whatever you want, it isn't true, good productive capacity but not as producers capable of working with others in more associative companies. Secondly, I believe that indigenous policy, we in the network discussed this issue last time, the situation of dissociation between rural education and intercultural education. I'd say those are two of my most relevant, most relevant judgement influencing a bit. Now, there are many things. You could think of environmental education policies, the policy of sustainable development in rural areas...

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: That, that's what I'd tell you. That's what I'd tell you, right? There are issues where one might wonder about higher education policies in teacher training, training of agronomists, training of forest engineers, training of veterinarians,

of people who do accounting and business, how many are meant to be attractive [for] the countryside as a possibility of personal development.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: The system prepares you for something else. He prepares you to go to the city to work as a salaried employee. And with an expectation that hopefully you can become, as it was *Golborne*, who was born in a corner of the world and became a candidate for the presidency. And not like the *Gabriela Mistral* who was born in another corner of the world and came to Nobel Prize in literature. I mean, they're like two models in my opinion of this famous...

00:20:06

Interviewer: The others... I go for another three questions.

Interviewee: Oh! Already.

Interviewer: First is, if what you say about rural education we understand for example, this department of Javier San Miguel that has to do with this thing up to eighth basic mainly, right? Or even up to sixth basic depending on the point of view of current reforms, etcetera. This also, this view of the absence of a rural policy would also apply to the rural secondary schools, for example, which have agricultural technical professional education for example, or some others more connected with the productive sectors of the area? That's a question.

The second, about this rural education, if we connect it as well with this reality of secondary school, what would be the profile of the graduate student that the State expects to form through these specific policies in rural areas?

And the third, if this profile, how does it relate to the reality of the young rural [students] today, let's say?

Interviewee: Graduated from what?

Interviewer: How? Sorry...

Interviewee: The graduate's profile of what?

Interviewer: Secondary school, hopefully... the formal cycle let's say. TVET or scientist-humanistic, basically what is offered, because there are also polyvalent schools, right?

Interviewee: Yes.



Interviewer: There is a more generic thing, but if we want to focus on the subject TVET I think it's fine. Not a problem.

Interviewee: I see the following. I believe that the presence, at least what one can see today, independent of the wills of Javier, Montesinos, Pedraza, the ministry, I think there are two rationalities that I say they... I think that Javier, Montesinos, Iván Pedraza, operate a bit under the logic of differentiating the diversity of education not from the individual diversities, but from the territorial diversities, right? And when we talk about territorial diversity we are also talking about cultural, linguistic and social diversity. And consequently educational [diversity], i.e. the department, not the department, I don't know what it is. The Ministry's rural Education program, basically what it has is a focus on a set of multi-grade schools, mainly, independent of... the name and everything, fundamentally multi-grade, that people understand that they are not the same as others for one condition: they are multi-grade.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: If they didn't have a multi-grade mode, they'd be all the same. So that's like the main condition of differentiation. In that sense, I am one of those who think that this programme is a programme that has a great political weakness. I say again, it is not for the people, but for the effective capacity to be able to face an egalitarian vision of education. When I say egalitarian, I do not say it in the sense of social justice, I say in the sense, isn't true? which I pointed to you before, this notion of [a] unique school in Chile. Which does not mean that if it is a unique school, if there is not a unique school there is nothing else.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: But it means that if there are diversity of models, there is diversity of model of the unique school. And not a unique school. I don't know if you understand.

Interviewer: Yes, yes, yes, I do understand.

Interviewee: I can say, 2, 3, 4 types of unique school, ok?

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: A general framework and some particular differentiations in relation to the territories. I think that is an unresolved issue in the ministry, I think it is a subject that is not, is not resolved. Let me be clear, it is not resolved in the

discussion, but it is solved from the political point of view. That has been given so far. So, I think there's not much weight. If there were a large weight it would be articulated rather [as] a notion of education and development of the territories. Ok? Where I incorporated the multi-grade schools, the complete schools, the rural secondary schools that have to do with the development of the territories, in this case of the rural territories, that one could think. Because if one works the notion of the United Nations of territory, apologies, of rurality, the villages, the villages, as *Los Muermos*, doesn't it? one could also incorporate them into a logic of rural development.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: Isn't it?

Interviewer: yes, yes.

Interviewee: Not only, not only by the fact of having TVET, I do not know if you interviewed, the municipal school or the particular in *Los Muermos*.

Interviewer: The municipal.

Interviewee: But... Mmm?

Interviewer: The municipal.

Interviewee: Here's two. In Los Muermos for example.

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: There is one, there is one municipal and one private.

Interviewer: It was the municipal one.

Interviewee: Ok. That high school, we present[ed] a project once, that is an agricultural secondary school, has a lot of machinery, its articulation with the territory has nothing to do with the town. Isn't it? It has to do with all the owners of large estates, small farmers, the training of technical to the countryside, to agricultural production

00:25:00 that's in there. And it's in the middle of Los Muermos. So, the question is: the city of Los Muermos, the small town, is it urban or rural? For me it's a rural town.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: So, you must think maybe in a unit, that unit if it had weight it would have to have much greater weight than it actually has. Which incorporated the whole notion of development of the territory. Do you understand me? The profile

of the graduate I do not know, because there are many varieties, there are many issues, a lot of diversity between technical-professional schools, agricultural, which are linked that we could say, the agricultural, [linked to] forestry, fishing, miners, those who have to do with gastronomy, many of them that collect part of their work from the countryside, those that have to do with hotel management, with tourism, etc. There are a number of TVET high schools that are in different circumstances and in different specialties. What I do believe is what I just pointed out to you. Here, when I was a regional authority, we did the first seminar on education, education and cooperative development. In the 90s, 'the 99'. And we put together the directors of technical-professional schools, municipal directors with a number of... Yes, to start discussing the topic of associativism. About how we articulate education. Because my thesis is that with the amount of... thousands of hectares are being delivered to the peasants here. To the Mapuches. Mapuche farmers. But those producers are good now. But their children? In 20 more years, 10 more years we're going to have a crazy small agricultural estate here. Then, I think you have to start the same as the small producers, who are not selling the land, they are dividing them up to put places inside, orchards, more cabins, tourism, there is going to be a plague of tourism in a few years. It's not going to be competitive anymore. So, how I establish a training relationship? It would have to have a second floor of cooperative enterprises of the children of the current producers, who could provide services to direct producers. Their own children. And that is not an issue that will be installed from companies of limited social responsibility order, or *EDL*, or from other order, but they can belong to cooperatives in where a group of young people from several communities, part of them at least, instead of aspiring to the land, they buy agricultural machinery, they arm a cooperative type of agricultural machinery company that serves their community. That another group with two, three or four agronomists, right? They organise cooperatives, which hire agricultural technicians from the agricultural school, and provide services to one, two or three communities. At least that a number of young people who are forming do not aspire to return directly to the land, since that one is occupied by their parents and other siblings, but to provide services for them. These services require a modality, a conception, an ideology, and a number of particular competencies to work in a cooperative way that systems do not have. The school systems in the schools of all of these that I mentioned to you, do not have it.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: Then we aspire again to these capitalist logics that, independent [of] if it is capitalist or whatever, of individual production, right? which have no future. They have no future. Here have been delivered look... if I told you, there is a thesis that we are finishing in the master's degree. I don't know how many billions to small entrepreneurs, right? And the little entrepreneur is a lady who makes jam. And then they deliver a million pesos to 100,000 ladies who make jam. *Pucha*, happy old ladies, all goats make jam, of course. But at the end of those, two end up with luck, if two end up putting together a small venture. What about the rest? Well, maybe it helps them in some way to buy better kitchens, better kitchen props, probably give better food to the children, has other positive effects. But from a productive point of view, it's minimal.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: So, that way there's a, there's a huge loss of State resources that might be associated, benefiting certain groups, maybe not as  
00:30:00 extensively, not so many people, maybe less, but with longer-term projections and more consolidation. Then I think one of the big problems of the schools in relation to your question of the profile is that the boys come out with mentality, and I will say it well very tough, proletarianized. And with a falsehood, and come out with a discourse of lying entrepreneurs.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: It's unviable. Then there is a falsehood in the offer that is made to him. I have not seen the profiles, but I can assure you, I do not want to assure, but I can assume that many, in fact, should use the word innovative, enterprising, and that sort of thing. Right? And... I think that for the clear majority of the boys is, it should be replaced by a proletarian. Period. Because in the end it ends up being that. The studies we did years ago, yes, with the *Carmen* showed that of all agricultural technicians there was none working as a technician, none of them commanded anyone, all were commanded by others, the women did not give them the jobs because they had, they were very weak to be able to carry, so, that sort of thing, I think it's a fake. I therefore think that these policies need to be reoriented. And so, a little of what you tell me, the profiles, I do not believe too much in the profiles, I think because they mobilize, because maybe not, no... who am I to make a judgement on the work of people who know? But I have that doubt at least and I raise it as a

doubt at least. So, that profile of the graduate, that's what I'm most worried about. That is like the focus towards a wage earner and therefore to maintain the current structures, that I believe that in the medium term they will be generating or loss of land by some producers, and to maintain social conflicts with the indigenous people in the region. My impression. This also brings us to the issue of the relationship with rural youth. Is it clear to you the second one or not?

Interviewer: yes, yes. It's clear to Me.

Interviewee: Thirdly, on the issue of the relationship with youth. I think there are two or three dimensions here. Many of the schools, I will speak a bit of the secondary schools, ok? Because you use the word young, understanding for young people who are in secondary school that is your focus, not until age 25.

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: Ok?

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: Eh, there's two or three dimensions. I would say that there is a first dimension that is this that I already pointed out about training, I think that, the boys, many of the boys enter to hundreds of these high schools, especially agricultural and forestry, not so much by their personal will but because the parents put them there. There is an important role of the parents, and that, in short, they express their families, they express an interest - I do not know if explicit or implicit - of the families to maintain the land. Because there is a son who is trained to keep the land. I dare to say that this compulsion of the boys to go to school is, to the agricultural schools against the will of the boys, often, or of the girls, it is a strategy of peasant resistance to be able to face in a medium term the loss of the land. Uh... And in that sense, with all the drama that can mean for students, for young people, I don't see it just as an expression that dads don't know what to do with children, they don't know they can do other things, they don't know what... or they're authoritarian. No. I see it as a strategy of resistance, let's say uh... premeditated and visualized before the time of the defence in the protection of their lands. In relation to the peasant class ah...

Interviewer: Aha.

Interviewee: In relation to the peasant class, to peasant class indigenous or non-indigenous. I mean, because some dad might have different, individually

different view. But as a class, to call it like that. Now everyone talks about class here in Chile.

The second thing is that the second dimension of this has to do with the productive aspects of the young people and their expectations. I think the young people who do want and like the countryside, but don't like the working part of the countryside. They don't want to be like in the hard issue of the work. There are some who like the production, but they hesitate if they see that there is innovation, that there are changes, that they earn some money more than what their parents earn, and that they make a lot of effort working and do not earn anything, but they can... and that's why I think the issue of changing the focus let's say, towards a more modernized type of social entrepreneurship, with technological innovation, with this experience can be very rich for the boys in terms of their ability to stay in the countryside. Because in the end the guys are going to say, "well, I studied technical professional. And why did I study? To go back to work like my dad?

00:35:00

To stay as salaried in a farm carrying sacks?" Well, that's it. And the third thing, in that sense I believe that the change of focus to a more associative notion seems to be important. In all fields, in all fields. And the third uh, I would say that... Sorry, the second in this sense an extension, that will take you a bit to the step from a training of direct producers, direct producers to a combination of direct producers with service providers. Right? Which is a different function than the direct producer one. How do we combine direct production with service provision?

Third, it has to do with another factor. Many of these high schools, not all, but a part that is not small, I think, I don't have the data so far, they have boarding.

Interviewer:

Yes.

Interviewee:

The boarding schools place a third dimension that is the development of the boys, their psycho-biological development, their affective development, their emotional development, their physical changes. I always say well, how many little girls have had their first menstruation? Or the Boys, their first like, not experience in the personal sense, but rather individual, not in the sense as a couple, and sexual there in a boarding school? Uh... so different from urban girls, that maybe they have their family close, their mother, have an older brother to ask, how they have faced that topic. To give you an example, as well as radical from the point of view of the training and the experience of the boys at the boarding school. How many of their first love in life have not

been given to the boarding school? How much suffering have the boys had in the boarding school? Uh, I don't know, I have no idea, I don't know, because I don't know. But my intuition of dad, my adult intuition, of old man that I have travelled, of conversing with the people who have been in these schools, I think that there is also a topic. As indeed the secondary schools, these schools are articulated to what is the experience of the young. To their psychosocial development, to their personal development, to their affective development. I would say that this is a third issue in relation to your question of relationship with the rural youth. And finally, I think you must wonder who the rural youth are today, when you go to a meeting with youth, all are integrated into the networks, we did a study between... in a rural school, the colleague who was a girl, a Portuguese who was doing her master's in France, determined that the boys discovered more than 20 ways, 20 technological instruments to which the boys have access. You think there's no access, but they have computers, have the fixed ones, the tower ones in the school, some have the small computers, netbook, notebook, eh, tablets, mobile phones with internet, phones with SMS, which we have in my case as older, those who have radio, have TVs, have ah... mp4, mp3, I do not know the difference of all these things, but according to her there was a lot, a lot of technology available. Then, when the teachers go to one, I think I told you the other time, go there and they said, I do not know if it was with you because I talk with many people, when teachers go and they say "look, how I contextualize the curriculum when no one works the land, for me today contextualizing the curriculum is to associate with social networks with young people. That's it". The thing is that the boy knows of orchards, of pebbles, of potatoes, of weeds, of... whatever, it is not like that anymore. So, the rural teacher said to me, "look, to contextualize means I have to get into social networks". Aha. Then there is also a change, there is a change, I do not know if it will be like that, but that is what the teacher told me, but I think it can be a trend, and there is a substantive change in what children are, the young people and their relationship with the school. That's it.

Interviewer: All right eh, to finish...

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: We have two minutes left.

Interviewee: Ok.

Interviewer: How would you like it to be, especially in this issue of the diversity of both youth and territories, the rurality? If you, could dream or imagine or give you the authority, let's say we can do something about generating something because there is nothing? What would this rural education policy be like?

Interviewee: How?

Interviewer: How this policy of rural education should be, from your point of view, taking care of the diversities of rural youth, territories, etc., if you could dream freely? What would be your wish?

00:40:00 your recommendation?

Interviewee: Look, I am, I once did a design of a project that didn't work out, but anyway. I think, I do not know if I told you or if you know, I have a master's, a master's in human development, local and regional. One of the principles that we have there in the master's program is that I have learned that I repeat as a pastor in a corner, is that *a territory that learns is a territory that develops*. I am absolutely convinced that a policy of education is a factor in rural development, apologies, of the territories in a really meaningful way. It is a condition -not the only one- but an absolutely necessary condition. I would say that first, that more than talking about rurality, I would talk about territory, I would change a bit this issue of territory. Integrating nowadays the notion...

Interviewer: There it is.

Interviewee: Yes, then I would tell you, that I am lying here...

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: I would say... I have a chair there, I would tell you the following... a first topic is how to consider the issue of the territory, right?

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: In that I was guiding this, even if it is an agricultural and forestry school, nowadays the urban and rural is very connected. So, I think, I think a little that first, this notion that a good secondary school, a good school mobilize[s] the education of the territory. Because, so the children, the young people, their dads, their grandparents, the sisters, they're all going to be participating.

Interviewer: Ok.

Interviewee: Already. That's it. I think that's a first notion, huh? That is a little the classic idea of the education of the rural school, the school as engine of the



development of the territory. I would only recover that not under rural development, but under territorial development, in such a way that if it does not matter if the school is installed in the countryside or is installed in the middle of a village, but that it has to have a responsibility for the whole of the local development, the cultural development. A second element, and then you would see it like this. A second element is to try to identify the macro in the micro. What does this mean? A little of this, of this notion, I'm not like this either, *a little bit that in the small is the universe, the small is beautiful, small is nice*. No. But even in the small, in the space of small territory they face, if you see it as territory, not as a rural area, but as territory, it faces all the issues of the world. The technologies are there, innovations, transgenics, policies, cultures, the development of the diversity of social subjects, man, woman, indigenous, large, boys, fat, disability, without disability, are all involved in that territory that one might consider larger. So, I think that the approach cannot be in, understanding a local approach, it must to, from the local to be able to discover the set of relationships that today move society globally, I do not know if you understand.

Interviewer: yes, yes, yes.

Interviewee: I do not need... I have to try to discover in that small territory how globalization is being given. As the market economy is given. How is the construction of a different constitution now defined? How do I see political problems? How do I analyse the issues of labour relations, male-female relationships, non-indigenous - indigenous relations? The contribution that the territory can make to development. I think that is a second important element and here the third. I would say is the articulation of all educational systems. I think now when these new elements come, these new local education systems that I have no idea how they're going to be, but I guess if there is not a view too pedagogical, but it is indeed that education is a component of a larger development process, and is not a component, the central component of development, you would have to articulate the entire educational system in some way. What articulates it? A shared thought, a certain

00:45:00 basic sharing. An agreement, a social, local, or macro-zonal pact, in short... with respect to a development project of that territory. I think it is necessary to get to that development. You ask me that question then immediately one says, yes, but if the child of *Melipeuco* wants to change to Puerto Montt, and here is studying agriculture and there is in fishing. Well, if we have taught him

that the world works in this way, he has learned skills to develop in another way, he would have to adjust the contents of what he does.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: But if he has learned to make decisions, he has learned to mobilize, to investigate, to have an attitude of observing nature, to have a positive attitude towards innovation and also of critique towards innovation. If you have a personal posture that has developed in the face of life, of the sacred, of the nature, in the face others, that will be useful anywhere. If you learn cooperation management techniques, it will [be] useful when he is working in a salmon factory, or if he is a service provider in an urban cooperative, or if he will be producing in a direct production cooperative.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: The third thing, I would say as a result of this view, that has a more territorial view, has to do with the notion of curriculum and pedagogy with which we work. I believe that here we must collect elements of indigenous pedagogy, in the sense of the value of the old people, the value of observation, calmly, the value of modelling, the value of conversation, the value of experimentation with a physical observation, not only instrumental, also physical. I believe that there are many elements of indigenous pedagogy that can help a good formation of all, I'm not talking about the indigenous, I'm talking about everybody. The second thing is that in that logic, it seems to me that we must move towards a type of curriculum based on projects, towards a type of curriculum based on problems. Or a more holistic type of curriculum. More ecological, more... I'm giving you names because you have thousands of names. More integrated. My basic notion, what I work in relation to the first two points I was telling you, has to do, basically with this development issue, has to do with the notion of territory, of intercultural learning. I see that in school, in the schools, everything has to be integrated into this notion of territory, of intercultural learning. A notion of territorial intercultural learning assumes a notion of curriculum and a notion of pedagogy and it must be consistent with this, and those are these calls that one calls you, I say again, integrated curriculum, globalized curriculum, holistic curriculum, ecologic curriculum. They're like a *totalizing curriculum*, which is expressed in a pedagogy based on project, in a pedagogy based on problem. That is, instead of facing separate contents, which I still can learn, there is no problem that I can learn language alone, but it must have moments of synthesis. Moments

of synthesis around problems that are of interest of the students, or interest of the community or interest of the local society.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: I think that the research is very important, is associated with this notion of comprehensive and integrated curriculum. I think the notion of research is key, I feel that in the modern world people should learn to investigate with [a] more or less scientific method, but when I say investigate I'm saying: ask good questions, find good methods to find good answers, and from there, know what I do, know what decision I take.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: So, I think that is a logic that is a little bit rational, because in some way the peasants, in general the popular sectors have an indigenous view, peasant or popular, a little more integrated, a not so rational view, to ask you a question, find a method and an answer. But I believe that we must find a way in which also without breaking the holistic view of thought, the production of knowledge that has allowed the survival of the people in general, also allows [one] to give an instrument that here among all that, I select some issues that are priorities, these issues I structure in a good question and look for an investigation-response, and act accordingly. I would say that this is a second element, apologies, a third element which I think is also important to consider. And from there, a grounding to the curriculum, and everything that has to do with the training of teachers, a policy for teacher training, and so on. That's it.

Interviewer: Well, very clear. Um... thank you, Interviewee: Me too.

Interviewer: Uh, not really very interesting, and well, I ask you to keep in touch...

Interviewee: Oh, no, yes.

Interviewer: New questions can suddenly arise by mail, or some skype conversation later, as I say I'm finishing my fieldwork. So, many questions are going to emerge, I have enough material to pick up.

00:50:06

Interviewee: Ok.

Interviewer: Well, that was really, but thank you very much and I will keep in touch with you.

Interviewee: No, happy, no problem, delighted, delighted. Are you staying in Santiago?

Interviewer: I'm leaving tomorrow.

Interviewee: Yes, yes.

Interviewer: So yes. With you I am close to finishing this field work.

Interviewee: Yes, okay. No, delighted then, happy. Whatever it is, wherever you are, if I can collaborate, and now the best way is that you agree with Alicia, who agrees on the time, and for me it is as if it had been a more scheduled meeting

Interviewer: Yes, it was very clear to me.

Interviewee: It's an easier way for us to connect, maybe you write me, because she consults me, but you see the agenda with her.

Interviewer: Well done, thank you very much.

Interviewee: We ok then.

Interviewer: It's okay.

Interviewee: A hug, and good luck.

Interviewer: Bye!

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00:51:08

END

## **b. Teacher.**

### **Agric-Fresia**

00:00:01

Interviewer: If you could tell me about your career as a teacher, as professional...

Interviewee: I graduated the year 2001 from the Carlos Ibáñez del Campo school, where I am working today, in those years from the old reform. During secondary school I specialised in agriculture for 6 months. In 2001 I graduated Secondary Agricultural Technician. I graduated in 2004 when I ended up with all my paperwork. I first worked in a hydroponic company, unique in this area, which is dedicated to the cultivation of algae. I was head of production. After a year I decided to go back to Fresia, to be closer to my baby son. It wasn't because work was going badly, I was too far away from my son. There were projects available to work with crops under plastic. The project went

well very well but only lasted a year after which I was unemployed again. A couple of years after that I received a call because a professional was needed in a rural agricultural school in Huempeleo. I met the position requirements because they knew me as a resident of Fresia, and as an agricultural technician graduate from the Carlos Ibáñez del Campo school. I worked at the Huempeleo Agricultural School for 4 years. After that the same employer moved transferred me under the same contract to Carlos Ibáñez del Campo school. When I arrived, I sensed that the reality was going to be different, the requirements were going to be more, and so I motivated myself to complete further study. I began to study agricultural engineering at the Matthei<sup>24</sup> institute in Osorno. While studying, I continued working with my students in the field and supervising classes as I have always done. Since receiving my engineer qualification I continue this role however I have been given more hours and responsibilities.

Interviewer: Ok. One point, one thing you said that caught my eye, you mentioned when you said, “Well, I had to go back”, for your son, “for my son, you said”, right? Uh, not because you went badly at work, you said, right?

Interviewee: Exactly.

Interviewer: Why would you associate with going back to going badly at work? For instance?

Interviewee: Because sometimes it is assumed that some people leave suddenly because they do not do well in a job and the boss says “Goodbye” or “*Oh, I don't like you; you're fired*”. That was not the case for me. I liked the company very much and my boss liked me, treated me well and taught me a lot. He was an agronomist and I felt very comfortable with him as my boss and with the company as a whole. I liked his wife very much also but then I had to choose between them and practically losing my son because he was in Puerto Montt and I was here in Fresia. I'd leave at 6:00 in the morning and return at 8 or 9 in the evening when he was asleep.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: I felt as mother I was losing my son.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: So I decided to return for him.

Interviewer: No, it's perfectly understood. Do you want to have a drink?

Interviewee: No, no, not yet, thank you.

Interviewer: Ok, let's continue. If I were a person... let's do this interview assuming I don't know anything. Try to explain to me like I'm some kind of alien, so I come to Earth to understand new things. If I asked you how it works, obviously from your specific experience with agriculture. But if someone asked you how the structure of technical professional education is in Chile, from your experience, how would you characterize its structure, how does it work?

Interviewee: How does it work? Let's see, how could I answer this? From my point of view?

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: How do I think it is?

Interviewer: Like the organic perspective, so... in content, in functions, in objectives, in

00:05:00 how time is structured.

Interviewee: Look, the curriculum, for example, which is what we have, goes from third to fourth grade of secondary schooling. The students choose in the second grade, and the third and fourth grade is very short. Nowadays it is different to before, they are required to perform a very short internship, which is 400 and something hours of practice. If the student has qualifications up to grade 6, that can reduce the hours. What could I tell you about the specialty, the technical area? In several schools this speciality has been implemented, but I would not know how to define it as well... in more words, I could not...

Interviewer: Oh, yes, no. All right, all right. Whatever you know and want, it's ok. Do you think that, from your perspective... Like what things do you, not that you like, but you think are positive, from what comes from the ministry with regards to becoming a professional technician, that you teach and some things that maybe you don't like that much?

Interviewee: Of the technical-professional area? From what the government delivers?

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: What do I find positive? Positive for young people today, or especially for me?

Interviewer: In general.

Interviewee: Look, for young people I find that is a very good option. Imagine places like these where most people have few resources. Their children will not be able to go to college and there are problems in the house from an early age due to the lack of education of their parents. It is a great possibility that is given to these young people, because to graduate from the 4<sup>th</sup> degree nowadays, is the most they can achieve. If they study in

the scientific humanistic (SH), they would not likely make it to university, they would not. Creating opportunities for professional technicians, I find, is a very good opportunity given to young people, in the sense that they will have the possibility of having a degree or a technical degree. Nowadays also, from the schools and government, new partnerships and strategies are being created. The boy who studies a technical degree has the possibility to enter a partner university. For example, here in the agricultural area, last year we signed an agreement with an institute and we are seeing the partnership possibilities with a university in Puerto Montt. A partnership for our students that have graduated from the agricultural specialisation. In a veterinary technical degree, in engineering, this validates the things that we do here. So, seeing it from that point of view, I find that it is a very good thing. Very good, that they are in these places, in this area, that the young people are learning from this, from that age, perhaps some topic they will need to know in the future. Because, for example, it happens to me that there are guys who come to third grade, and I say: "Why did you choose the professional technical career, in this case in the agricultural area?" They tell me: "Because I want to be a veterinarian one day". Yes, great, so it has something to do with it. They want to associate with a theme that is going to be related with their study after the fourth grade. That is, they are clear to continue studying at university, with opportunities that are given them from the State with these technical professional careers. They are becoming accustomed ahead of time, to what will come in the future. I think that's how young people see this. And I find it good from that point of view. And if we can give them some tools to make them even better professionals, great.

Interviewer: And more negative aspects? If there was something you'd like to improve, that could be done differently.

Interviewee: There isn't sufficient time. If I go to the farm where maybe the student will not be able to study in college, because of economic issues or because he feels that is not able, that he doesn't have cognitive ability to get to college he will say "no, I will not do it". It's a shame because if he had more time his response might be different. Third and fourth grade are two years that they must study a lot. The curriculum requires a lot, that the student must study this and many other subjects in two years only including farming internships as well. Today professional practices after the fourth grade are two months, three months, they do not require theses, do not require a report.

00:10:01 They don't demand enough today in that professional internship. If you compare this to the past, when the student decided to study something, he decided in the first grade of secondary school. I had four years to study. After, having a practice of 6 months, 6

months! Practicing what I had studied obviously, executing it, and then I had to make a thesis, so it was a serious thing. I took seriousness to the matter and came out more prepared, where I had several times analysed the situation. I analysed the situation of the year 2000 backwards, and students who were studying a technical professional degree with the former method of first to fourth grade of secondary school, all of them are now working today.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: Exercising his qualification of agricultural technician. But if you see from 2006 onwards, or 2001, which began the new method, most of them have been going down, going down. The students do not work in their specialty because they say they do not feel ready. There I find a very strong criticism.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: You must do to that program, with very little time and the professional comes out with almost nothing prepared.

Interviewer: What do you do if you don't? like, if they would not be dedicated in what...

Interviewee: How?

Interviewer: You said that they do not dedicate, for example, to the specialty they learned, but they do other things. What are those other things for example?

Interviewee: Most young people today, for example we have done an analysis, are working on anything, or even just as a worker. Workmen here, all the available jobs that are here are just as workers.

Interviewer: Construction?

Interviewee: Construction, no, but here in our area there is the theme of the potato, the potato harvest, they take out potatoes, they harvest...

Interviewer: and the agricultural technician do that too, don't they?

Interviewee: They should, but from another point of view, handling the subject, guiding the subject.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: They should be the professionals who are in charge of a group of workers. That is the purpose for which we prepare the professionals. That is, an agricultural technician should go to a farm to work and help the boss to take all the management decisions of the farm, and at the same time, obviously working, but he will be the one who will guide, will see the work here, the needs there, as an administrator.



Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: That's the job, with much better pay, 400,000 pesos or above, the agricultural technician earns a lot, reaching up to 600,000 pesos per month, to be technical, a career that's achieved in third and fourth grade is not bad.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: If you can approach it from that point of view, but nowadays young people do not feel capable.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: They do not feel capable and end up doing the job that they should be commanding. They are the ones who are harvesting the potatoes, they are the ones that have minimum wage, that is what is happening with the young people of today. That is why the director said that we are in a job now to recover tuition, because we have been losing at the same time the interest of young people. Although we have told them that this is a farming zone, that everything we eat has to do with the agricultural area, they should see the value from that side. This is our area, wherever you are they will find work, wherever they stop, but it still has been difficult for us. And I think it is because they feel that it is so little time available to them, that they will be unable to prepare well, and in the end that effort will be in vain.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: Then.

Interviewer: No, it's clear.

Interviewee: The student comes with a fear in believing, "Can I accomplish this? Will I fulfil the goal or not?... will I reach the goal?"

Interviewer: Ok. And the design of the curriculum that you get, that well, comes with the lines from the ministry and I imagine with a few minimums to be fulfilled. What is your opinion regarding that specific curricular structure that comes to you? Do you find it pertinent, not pertinent? Is it well done, is it wrong?

Interviewee: Yes. I find that it is not that good. It's not very well made. It's not very well made because for example, if you go to the agricultural area, where we launched the agricultural technician specialty, and in the curriculum, for example, in third grade of the agricultural path, there is one of the required modules, which is a plant production system. In that module, you have to show the whole part of the plant to the student, the whole story. That's valuable, okay. They must learn it. But then, there is another course that requires 6, 7 hours a week where it speaks only about vegetables.

Vegetable, vegetable, vegetable, horticultural, horticultural, horticultural, and there I find that we are wrong. Because if we do a study of our area,

00:15:00 we don't have horticultural companies. I mean, I don't have a working field for my students.

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: I am going to dedicate myself because that is what the curriculum demands of me and the ministry too, to teach them horticulture. I'm going to teach you fruit growing. But working in the field...where are they going to execute that knowledge?

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: I think maybe that curriculum would be useful for the North. There, for the fruit areas, for the areas where there is horticulture. I tell you, Santiago is the pick of horticulture, where we receive all the horticultural products from. In the fourth region, there in those agricultural schools they must continue executing, continue doing that. But here in the 10<sup>th</sup> region we should have a different curriculum. From the Araucanía to here we should have a different curriculum. In dedicating more hours to the subject of livestock, dairy, those are the areas that the boys need. We have to do a lot of oversight and say: "We change this now and talk about more relevant things in this hour". That way we can really prepare the professionals, if not, we would spend the whole week talking about vegetables, but about prairies, nothing. I have for example *SPV*, that is a vegetable production system, where I have to talk about vegetables, horticulture, and analyse the horticultural area nationwide, what type of vegetables, how to work them, we study them one by one. We have time to study them one by one, because I have about six hours a week. That's what the curriculum demands. And about prairies I only have 3 hours. What do you do with 3 hours of prairies a week when that's what you need more?

Interviewer: Ok.

Interviewee: Because, here what exists? Livestock. I should devote more hours a week to talk to them about meadows because that is what the student will need when he comes out. That's what farmers demand.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: That's why the farmers say: "We are trying to change too, we are trying to see how to improve our situation", and that influences the student to say: "I prefer not to study this specialty", or "I didn't find a job after I graduated". Because he comes to a farm offering himself and says: "I'm an agricultural technician. Can you hire me?", "OK,

well, I'll hire you" says the farmer, "look I need you to devote yourself to the work of mechanical milking in the cow stable and oversee all the handling, see how to professionalize the workers, oversee everything that important there and improve me the quality of milk", and then the kid's going to say: "I didn't learn that".

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: Because the curriculum doesn't have it.

Interviewer: Where do you think that, what are the influences that led to that curriculum when it was designed at the central level? I guess you don't know the detail, but if you had to bet, why was it designed without pertinence to each area?

Interviewee: Because they did not take into account the professionals, that maybe they are actually in the field or of each zone. I participated years ago in a meeting and could not tell you the name, I was taken to Puerto Montt where they were analysing the curriculum. And they took ideas and invited everyone who worked in the agricultural area. I remember that, more than once: [they said] "You know? that I found that no, that is not well said, is not well, should not be like that", but they just recompiled ideas, but nothing more...

Interviewer: Never was it put down on paper...

Interviewee: I don't think they've put all the ideas to paper.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: It my understanding they were the ones, because this was in Puerto Montt, a couple of professionals they hired, I believe a veterinarian and an engineer, and asked them to design the curriculum.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: But I do not know if they took into account that they had to adapt to this zone, because it was problematic what happened there. They are damaging the teachers, the students, and they are undermining the topic of study.

Interviewer: Look, for example, there are some other measures or policies of the educational system that somehow influence the design of the development of other policies, for example, the education curriculum is quite influenced by the SIMCE, for example, or the scientific-humanistic path is influenced by PSU.

Interviewee: Exactly.

Interviewer: It is understood that there are policies influencing other policies... it is a dynamic that usually occurs.

00:20:00 Do you see any influence of any, or external policy, or factor that is influencing the development of the design of the technical-professional policy? I understand, for example, that the productive sector should be something that influences, because in the background if the field is dairy, that should be influencing, permeating the curricular structure. You told me that happens not that often, depending on the case. But, do you see some other factor, measure, something of the system that is influencing the development and design of the technical-professional curriculum?

Interviewee: AH, I find that they have them very isolated. Because if I could see the issue of drought, which affects farmers today. The government should say: "You know what, let's try to solve this issue by preparing professionals who will know how to solve this problem when it happens again".

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: But I feel that not even that. That curriculum that guides us, I think it has gone on for years and years, and has never been modified. I have been working in the school for six years if I am not mistaken. And of the six years that I am here, it is the same curriculum. It's unchanged.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: They have abandoned us, I think. But I don't know how the subject is administrated.

Interviewer: No, of course.

Interviewee: That's from another area.

Interviewer: From your point of view?

Interviewee: But in the agricultural technical professional area, no, nothing. And we have had many things, they could modify several things, but they haven't.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: Those old curriculums are there, the same as always, left unchanged.

Interviewer: And like you, well, what, there you gave me an example of mediation of this curriculum, that you get, that you adapt it in some way.

Interviewee: Exactly.

Interviewer: Like, for example, suddenly disregarding some obligatory things like the topic of vegetables you told me, and of course, to put a little more of your own initiative. Can you give other examples about adjustments that you have to make within the classroom, regarding what you get, and what you have to put it into practice, on the blackboard, or in the dynamics of the classroom?

Interviewee: The vast majority, because for example, the tools that they give you are, are very few. For example, in the agricultural area, what example could I give you? There is a subject called "vegetable propagation" and here in our region there is no company that is dedicated to propagate plants and work with grafts. Then, we have to try to find all the possible tools for the student to learn that, and be able to fulfil the curriculum. These are some things that we do: I take my students to Osorno for example, I know a company that works with this and I teach them this there in the field. "This was what I was talking about on the blackboard guys, this is what I told you", and I make presentations, I do a few things myself in the classroom but most of the time I take them out. But I'm concerned, because that stays there.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: Because they have no place to practice around here. Only sometimes I have prairies, which at least is easy, because the guys are there; but the plant production system is difficult because it speaks almost only of vegetables. Plant propagation speaks about the grafts, and here nothing happens with that, so there we must see, we handle this taking them to the field and showing them. From there I have forced crops, that can be worked better. Seeing it from the point of view that I prepare the students to teach the people of the same commune. Little projects, for example, that the people the *FOSIS* gives greenhouses to, to the people of *Chile Solidario*, *Puente*, and they are always in need of professionals who can teach or train them to be comfortable in greenhouse work. And from there I prepare, I adapt that module, I adapt it to that, so they learn the full management of a greenhouse. To be able to give them a chance, or see that they have a chance to run, or to be able to teach people to run a greenhouse.

Interviewer: Ok.

Interviewee: Over there. We don't...

Interviewer: Oh, no. Very good. If you had to define the profile of the student graduated of the agricultural technical professional education, from the curricular point of view mainly, what would be the main characteristics of that graduated student?

00:25:00

Interviewee: What does the curriculum require of him?

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: Ah, he'd be a professional, I don't know, in the half way. Now, as is required by them, the pupil would be trained in, in horticultural knowledge, handling fruit trees. He is also a student who would manage projects, because there are some modules that

teach projects; very basically in the subject of livestock, very basic. But in the half way, the half.

Interviewer: And if there were a student profile that the school wants to train. How would he be? if there's any difference with the official curricular, let's say?

Interviewee: Well the school... we here, for example, we want students to graduate with the maximum knowledge. To bring extra tools that lead to work. That we, beside the basic knowledge that is required from the curriculum, that we add more to it. For example, that he handles in the use of certified pesticide, certified. That the student today knows and has a certified artificial insemination course in bovine, which is not required by the curriculum, but I'm adding it because it is an action that we believe is important. There are many areas where we want the graduated student profile to differ.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: But it's because it's a job we're also doing ourselves, for example, we are meeting a lot with the farmers in the zone.

Interviewer: This is the *Business Advisory Council*, something like that. Do you have an instance like that?

Interviewee: We don't have that, we want to create it.

Interviewer: Ok.

Interviewee: We're on it. We're trying to get to it. For now, all we have done is communicate with them, ask them for an interview, to meet us and do the same thing, maybe to ask them what they think about us, how they see us. And their opinion is blunt. I mean, I show confidence and say, "tell me", if in the end I understand that there are things that we do wrong, and you also have to understand that many times the curriculum requires this, so maybe we are doing something wrong. "We don't realize", I tell them. Then, they tell me on the basis of that trust that I give them, they truly say "*We don't hire your students because they don't know anything*". I say "yes, but what would you like the kids to know?", "*I do not know, more competitions, who knows how to manage the milk, livestock, pasting, because that's what we need and is what we do, we do not work any of that horticultural graft and things, greenhouses even less*". That greenhouse is in a low scale, people who own the house, only parcel systems. Then they tell me: "*You are delivering professionals very badly, they do not serve us, the professional you have, that profile of kid that you give us is not useful*". I say: "but if we manage to change this", and "I offer today a student to handle what you are demanding, as well as bringing extra knowledge. For example, that the student has a certificate of an approved insemination course, what do you think?"; they say right

there: *“Great, great”*, they like the theme right there. If I prepare the student, I do not know, in another training course of GPS for example, to work in your field, to bring an approved course of tractor, they say: *“That’s great. It would be ideal there, not a problem, I would welcome him right there”* they tell me, *“it’s what I need”*. Then we, based on those interviews and that collection of information from here and there from farmers, there we are shaping our profile. And until this year, for example. But it is an issue that we tackle as a school, I do not think other schools do it, I have experience working with friends in other agricultural schools, and are also trying to do something similar. Based on that, this year we want to make a meeting to have

00:30:00 a signed agreement with the farmers. Generate support networks. If we manage to do that, to bring these farmers here, we can perhaps form a document, to ask the ministry to transform the curriculum...

Interviewer: Or you do it.

Interviewee: Or they authorize us to transform it...

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: And then we’re going to be able to deliver what our farmers really need here.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: The demand that exists.

Interviewer: I tell you that experience I have had in other interviews, and many tell me that the employer at least in other areas, perhaps this is a different area, is less interested in technical skills than soft ones.

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: I mean, they say: *“look, I do not care so much if he knows or do not know specifically a knowledge, what I am interested in is that he is responsible, that he arrives on time... Is this the same speech that you have heard in interviews with business men?”*

Interviewee: Mostly yes, and in fact I still tell that to my students, to motivate them. Even there was a study, once it came out in the newspaper, that companies today, most of them were in the sixth place or seventh place on the subject of [curricular] knowledge that they demanded from the young students...

Interviewer: Ok.

Interviewee: Or the employee who came to work. First there was this, responsibility, proactiveness, and all that.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: I even printed some things for the kids, to motivate them. And don't be frightened about that, "*Oh auntie, I don't understand*", I try to motivate them in one way or another. Yes, I think it may be, but still...

Interviewer: They demand things like that.

Interviewee: They still demand, anyway. Because one sees this in practice, I tell you, with a farmer or when I take my pupil to a company to work, and immediately they ask him "do you know this? do you know that?" and the boy says "no", and right there they feel bad. I think it goes together. Because it would be perfect for them, a perfect guy for them I think would be the guy with knowledge and who is motivated to learn more.

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: Or at least the student says "Look, yes, I know something basic but, but I'd like to learn more. I would like to practice that because I learned that", or that at least they say, "you know, yes, I learned that, one day it was taught in class, I do not remember much, but yes, I learnt that", at least that answer. But to say "No, I don't know" no, I don't believe that. Actually they do know, in fact, the practical experience says the opposite, when you introduce students to companies.

Interviewer: It is clear to me about from what we have spoken about, it is clear to me that there is an issue of adaptation, a problem of adaptation between the technical curriculum and the reality of the zone, especially at the productive level, yes? If we talk, we talk about the students, like without thinking about the productive sector, the group of students that you work with, do you think that the curriculum that is imparted to them corresponds to them, with their social, family, personal characteristics? Do you have any troubles there too? Do you think that is something that fits well to their reality, is understandable, understandable to them? Do they project themselves from there?

Interviewee: Some do, for others, I have to work with them. There are many students, our vast majority of student enrolment that we have, are students of rural sectors, therefore they know the countryside, they like the countryside, but you have to work with them, psychologically speaking, in trying to change the *chip on their shoulder* that they are going to be like their parents, because this frightens them. In fact, they criticize themselves in school "We're going to go to the *fourth potato*, or the *third potato*", they say. They believe that the student who comes to that specialty is going to end up harvesting potatoes later. Then they end up with a bad impression of the subject. Then, we must work with them, to take them out of that mindset, to show them the reality, we bring in people from outside; last week I even went to visit a farmer and he showed them another reality and which they could reach if they get their technical



title. It takes a little bit to work through, there's something wrong there that needs to be changed. Although the student gets there, it matches with his reality. They worked in the countryside, their dads work the land, they grew up there, they're from this area, they like the topic, but there's

00:35:00 a need to change a little something that's there in the mindset, that they have to see a different perspective. They have to see that they are going to be professionals. They're not going to be workers. That is the challenge that needs to be addressed.

Interviewer: Yes. That is, in some way like the curriculum is about expectations, let's say what students sometimes actually expect from themselves.

Interviewee: Exactly. We have to work on that. In fact, I work with an organization, about motivational lectures, and I have the experience of my management colleagues that they also practice a lot motivational speaking. Because young people today feel discouraged by everything, there's no way to motivate them.

Interviewer: Sure.

Interviewee: You have to work on that, about having faith, very carefully motivate them, to change their mindset. You have to change the mindset that they have to get out of here and begin a career. That's what I tell them, if they had the opportunity to work right here, in their zones, cool. But I always make them study. To find out, study, see the statistics, see those stats that say where the labour source is, they have to go there.

Interviewer: Sure.

Interviewee: That is where they have to go, there they will be great people, there they will be able to do good work as an agricultural technician. Because if I don't teach them that, they're going to dream that here they're going to get their jobs and they're going to be great people and it turns out that they don't. And there comes the demotivation, the failure.

Interviewer: You have given me many ideas about things you think that the technical curriculum could improve or implement. Anything else? That is, if you were in charge, let's say, of the technical-professional area of the Ministry and they tell you well you can go ahead, or hire they you to advise about certain changes, what changes would be the main ones? Well, to adapt it to every area I imagine, I think you've said.

Interviewee: I think so, to adapt it to each area, ah... maybe it will also look difficult, but to go to each area and see the realities of the students that arrive to that high school. Because maybe, I don't know, I'm not very clear, I don't have knowledge about that, perhaps in other communes there are not as many vulnerable students perhaps, or maybe

students with family problems, because here for example, our school is characterized by having students too vulnerable and with many family problems.

Interviewer: Of course.

Interviewee: Such as the violent parent, then first of all, with them you have to do psychological work. And sometimes we, the professionals, it isn't unusual for someone who is tired exhausted and performs this role poorly. If you make a change by area as we have, as I say, it might be a great idea, I think, but if they do not do this other part, of seeing and knowing the student who arrives, I think the same change will be in vain. Because everything starts about, ok, I show this to the kids, everything is changed, it is great, you are going to achieve this. But if the boy comes with problems from the house, with relatives, ah, problems that he was beaten when he was very young, self-esteem, traumas of personality, if you have all those obstacles, you will not be able to get there. There are also professionals who cannot either, who get angry and say "*Ah, I do my job, I just teach them and I don't care*". I think you also have to do an evaluation, a professional help to teachers who work with the child, to adapt, to learn to manage these kinds of students, because I also find that it is a big problem that is happening, I see it daily. I don't know if they receive adequate counselling, I am an engineer. And I studied a degree, a specialty, I studied something there in the agricultural area. But I'm not a formal teacher.

Interviewer: Ok.

Interviewee: I didn't study teaching, I didn't study pedagogy. I don't know if pedagogy at some point teaches them, that they have to adapt themselves to certain students, that they have to create strategies for those students. Sometimes, I don't think so.

00:40:00 And I think that happens too and it's a problem. If we want to improve that today, I do not know, I think here I always criticize my colleagues and myself, I criticize many times because, suddenly one arrives from the house angry, with problems, problems with their own children, and you get to your classroom and you have to teach the content, and you start to work and there is always the student who is not working, who is with headphones or is messing around, and you say "Hey, stop the show, what happened?" and the kid... who also comes with problems from his house, he attacks you and gets defensive and generates the fight between the teacher and student.

Interviewer: Of course. Of course.

Interviewee: Sometimes that's wrong. Because I say that the teacher should be able to expect a level of quality from the students who come. The kid that had problems, that the

mother beats him, the girl who wanted to kill herself, so many problems that there has been today with the youth.

Interviewer: Of course. Hey, last question that has like two parts, but it is already a little more generic. You have spoken to me a little about how the productive sector of the area is. Could you describe a little more how the productive sector is? the economic sector mainly, the labour sources that exist in the reference sector and surroundings? And the second question is whether you have anything else to contribute about Fresia as a place, what do you think of Fresia, socially speaking, from the perspective of its culture and its people. But first the productive economic issue.

Interviewee: Look, we at the regional level, the tenth region of Los Lagos is dedicated I would say 80% to livestock, that brings fattening of animals, a large percentage in conjunction also with dairy, farmers that we have are large farmers, who devote enough hectares to this. That's a clear productive theme. Horticultural level for example, if we talk about vegetables statistically, we only have it at home level. Only at the level of the lady who has in her house a little gardening, the lady having a greenhouse, only that. Only that level. We have no companies in Fresia or around us that are dedicated to supply our area in the winter times, for example. We supply ourselves only from the central zone, from the north zone, from there comes the product. We have soil conditions. We have some climatic conditions that we could adapt to crop. And work it. But people are not good in that, not yet, no, they don't take risks. I think there must be one or two companies, at most, around here in the area that is devoted to that. But the vast majority: livestock, dairy and that. That's our specialty.

Interviewer: On the subject of Fresia, tell me about Fresia, your people, your culture.

Interviewee: Fresia... look, the commune of Fresia has many surroundings I say, the people, most have always been characterized by being very hardworking, very striving. I think the people of Fresia are very mature, people who have, I think that larger percentage are more adults than young people, the young people are migrating away, because of the sources of work. There are no labour sources. It is still a quiet village, unlike others, very quiet, regarding crime issues and all that, it's still quiet. But the labour sources are few, they are very few, they are very seasonal, for short periods. Hence, in the end we are having older adults, 40 years old people are staying here, 50 years, and the young are emigrating. They're all going out. It's about, I think, about emerging, but what you see is only the public area, all that has to do with the government. Yes, a nice municipal building, a nice

00:45:00 hospital building, but there are no companies. There are no companies, we have no labour force, nowhere, or producers, I do not know, entrepreneurs who come here

and make a company, no. Then, there are very few sources of work, what is where you can count them on two hands, the placements that are ready to work. So, you have to take care of your job.

Interviewer: (laughs).

Interviewee: We have to take care of it, they fight for it.

Interviewer: Very good that.

Interviewee: Yes?

Interviewer: Thanks a lot.

Interviewee: Ok.

Interviewer: No, very interesting.

Interviewee: I hope this was useful.

Interviewer: It helped me a lot...

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00:45:37

End

### **c. Student.**

## **Agric-Rod-Freirina**

00:00:01

*Interviewer:* First, if someone asked you who and how Interviewee is. How would you describe him?

*Interviewee:* Me? me, me as a person?

*Interviewer:* Your person.

*Interviewee:* Well, I am a nice boy, cheerful, I like to help the people around him, especially the family, but if a friend is in trouble, I am supportive and I like to help others, as well as other are well, I'm going to feel better because my self-esteem is going to be high. And what else can I say, I am a child of solidarity, studious, hardworking, not from a good economic situation, but still I do endeavour. Me, ok, then when I get out of the school, the truth is that this career was not the favourite, I came to this one by discard you could say, because I didn't get good grades and then, later, I would like, I told my dad, I would like

to go to college and study mechanics, everything that is related to mechanics, in general. Because I want to be a tractor driver, but I was told I could take a course, I also took that into account, but I didn't want. Well, because I saw it as more advanced, more to do with high knowledge of the subject, and to be someone else. But that's basically, I also really like to play football, and I could tell you many anecdotes about playing with the ball. But when I was a kid, I was 3 years, all the time with the ball and I got to be in *Colo Colo* [professional football team], I could tell. Then I lacked money, I did not reach, I came back here to Freirina and now I worry more about what I want to do on the basis of studies, based on work and my family. That dream of being a football player may perhaps remain, but we lack a lot of opportunities, as gentlemen who come here to see people playing, I could say, the dream could be fulfilled, yes. I still can do it and I would like to do it, but it is the time of my life. Well, my family we are five, my dad, my stepfather, I tell him dad, my mom, my little sister and my brother. I'm older and obviously I have to set an example. That's pretty much it.

*Interviewer:* Let's continue. Where were you born?

*Interviewee:* In Vallenar, as here there is no hospital, in Vallenar

*Interviewer:* Ok, but has your family always been from here, from Freirina?

*Interviewee:* My grandfather did not, my grandfather before were from Potrerillos, but like in that town after the plant contaminated the smoke, and they lived very close. They all left from there, everything was evacuated, and it was emptied there only with the houses, and everyone took other directions, towards here, towards other places, and my family stayed here. A part that we had the...

*Interviewer:* Freirina, right?

*Interviewee:* Yes, he had a sister, my grandfather, who was an old woman up there, and they wanted to come here to be closer to them. And we have moved forward, my mom and my dad have worked a lot, and now we are independent, we are about to have our house, our things, and our life and now I'm living here.

*Interviewer:* What was in Potrerillos?

*Interviewee:* I don't remember its name.

*Interviewer:* But what did they do there, what kind of plant, what material?

*Interviewee:* of copper it seems, of copper and had... have you seen *The Simpsons*? When there are those plants that caused smoke... they caused a lot and the town was there, closer, it polluted a lot, so they all went.

*Interviewer:* Where's that town?

*Interviewee:* Over there, by El Salvador.

*Interviewer:* Ah, to the north.

*Interviewee:* Beyond.

*Interviewer:* And from there they came, they looked for other horizons, your parents and they came here.

*Interviewee:* My grandpa.

*Interviewer:* Your grandpa, to Freirina and there they had your mom or your stepfather?

*Interviewee:* My mom, and then we lived there for a while, and now they're living in Vicuña. I also studied in Vallenar, there I was doing well, I was very studious I could say, had good grades up to eighth. I went to Vallenar and there all messed up, uh, the bad influences, what do I know? I liked to play billiard, I liked to disturb in the classroom, I even escaped, so to avoid things I. I'm very influenceable, they say one thing and I am already there, and that's why I came here and now I'm doing better, so you see that I chose this high school.

00:05:00

*Interviewer:* And then, but you, tell me about it. You, you lived here, I mean, you were born in Vallenar, but you always lived here and when it came time to get into school, where did you go?

*Interviewee:* primary school?

*Interviewer:* Yes.

*Interviewee:* In the [...] A school that's out there in, down our town.

*Interviewer:* Here at Freirina?

*Interviewee:* It's called The Miner...

*Interviewer:* Until what grade were you there?

*Interviewee:* Until eighth grade, the second grade I did it in Vallenar.

*Interviewer:* You were going every day from here to there?

*Interviewee:* Yes, in the morning.

*Interviewer:* Who used to go with you?

*Interviewee:* By bus, buses used to pass here early, every half hour.

*Interviewer:* Your mom took you?

*Interviewee:* No, in buses.

*Interviewer:* School ones.

*Interviewee:* No, those who pass normally, there are buses that pass from here from Huasco to Vallenar, on those buses, and then walk twelve blocks up to the school.

*Interviewer:* And why didn't they put you directly to a high school here in Freirina, why did they send you to Vallenar?

*Interviewee:* Because I liked the secondary career of electricity, and I still like it, and well, it just couldn't be, and here is this other career, it was an option that I gave to choose to my parents, I chose.

*Interviewer:* In first year of primary school you were already clear on what you wanted to study?

*Interviewee:* Yes, electricity, because my uncle also studied that and works on it, and earns well, I see that has a good life, so I took him as an example.

*Interviewer:* An uncle of yours.

*Interviewee:* Yes, and my grandfather just said the same thing, study, study and then your uncle can teach you many things, he can take you to other sides, you have a lot of opportunities

*Interviewer:* And your uncle lives here too?

*Interviewee:* Yes, he lives in Vallenar, or in Freirina, here in Freirina are all of them.

*Interviewer:* Ah, and you were always, from third to eighth grade you were in the school of Freirina.

*Interviewee:* In the school.

*Interviewer:* And did you do well?

*Interviewee:* Yes, I had, in seventh grade, isn't it? they gave a notebook, I earned it and in eighth grade I had 6.5, only good grades, teachers all speak well of me, excellent pupil, what do I know? "A gentleman, polite", and threw me only compliments, until I went to Vallenar and there all messed up, I started to mess up more.

*Interviewer:* primary school, are we talking?

*Interviewee:* First grade of secondary school.

*Interviewer:* Ah, then you left, sorry, secondary school, now. All the primary school were here?

*Interviewee:* Yes.

*Interviewer:* When it came first grade of secondary school you went to...

*Interviewee:* To Vallenar.

*Interviewer:* Perfect, because there was electricity.

*Interviewee:* Yes, until second grade.

*Interviewer:* And then what happened?

*Interviewee:* There, well I didn't get the marks to apply to the career. Is that, you have to get good grades and you can apply for the career you want, as the best students, and those who get bad grades almost choose in the last places and had few places in that career. And, well, it was already full the whole course, and I just didn't get there. And I did not want to apply for another career because I did not see myself, I had no knowledge of anything, I wanted only electricity, tires and that, I was dedicated to that, but I did not have good marks enough, because of my mistakes.

*Interviewer:* What are the other careers you had there and you didn't like?

*Interviewee:* They had many, now I consider that I did not know them, and I looked only at electricity. There was construction, cars mechanical, industrial, metal structure, something about chemistry, there had enough but I stayed there more because of electricity.

*Interviewer:* Tell me, and before we start talking about this school. Why did you get messy there, any explanation?

*Interviewee:* Well, because I do not know, curiosity, I wanted to try other things, because I used to be quiet, quiet, was a quiet child, did nothing, didn't drink, didn't smoke. And there I remember I had curiosity about this issue, to try other things and there I was bad influencing, letting myself to be carried away because of the curiosity I had, and I was very damaged, the consequences were not very pleasant. More than anything because of that, my fault.

*Interviewer:* Hey, and a little further back, your childhood was part of the school. What were you doing here in Freirina, how was your childhood? if you could describe it.

*Interviewee:* My childhood? My childhood was football, pure ball, I liked the pure ball Since I was 7 years old. My grandfather the same, my grandfather, and I remember that he said: "son take the ball, you're going to be like me". He just lived the same as me, he was in *Colo* and couldn't make it because of the economic issue. And I, everyone was playing football, it was pure ball, I had breakfast and I'd go out and play football. Afterwards  
00:10:00 at night we play. It was only ball in my childhood, back in the paddocks we played football, in my grandmother's house had some paddocks and we made a court, a small court of pure dirt court, and we scratched it, and always fell the ball to the ravine and I was going to look for it. It was pure football.

*Interviewer:* And who were you playing with, friends from the neighbourhood, school or family?



*Interviewee:* Friends of the neighbourhood, [family] too, with everyone, with everyone I shared the ball, with my family, friends, sometimes invited me, sometimes there were no children that I knew, or I barely knew, and they invited me to play football with them, and, yes, as they saw that maybe I was good, and then we were making friends. And this is how I made friendship when I was a boy, in my childhood, just playing football.

*Interviewer:* And you belonged to a club or something?

*Interviewee:* Now yes, an amateur club in *José Santos Ossa*, from here in the town of Freirina, but I hardly go, because I do not know, for laziness maybe, I do not know, I think that no longer, like... I do not know, I could not describe that, but it is more about family topics, that my uncle put too much pressure on me, he presses me a lot, that I must to go to play, that I must to go to play, even pressing me as if it were an obligation, and I do not see it like that. For me it is an enjoyment, a fun, a passion, not an obligation and he presses me that way: "you have to go, you have to go, or if you don't I threaten you, you lose everything with me", that... Well, I'd better stop continuing in the club. But I'm still there. The other day we went to play, I didn't care about my uncle, yes, but I'm more interested in playing.

*Interviewer:* Tell me, and before, in childhood, did you belong to another institution, some church, some club, neighbours association, something?

*Interviewee:* No.

*Interviewer:* Just football and school.

*Interviewee:* As something as a music band, you say?

*Interviewer:* For example, music.

*Interviewee:* No.

*Interviewer:* You did not have any belonging to another group. What did your parents do?

*Interviewee:* My parents? My mom was a housewife, just that; my dad was the one who died working hard. Because he works now in Potrerillos, he has always worked there, like twelve years or so ago.

*Interviewer:* On the plant?

*Interviewee:* Yes, at the plant, he works there, it's foreman, commands people. He gives them orders, something as a supervisor you may say, the one who commands everyone. He is doing well you could say, and he works himself to death, for us, and has always done, all life working on that. And now my mom, now my mom like six months ago got to work, as southerners came here to Freirina, to the... there is a pension out there in the town and

they need someone to clean, and she makes the beds, washes, sweeps and she gets good pay too, she does it more to help my dad, to help us. That's what she does.

*Interviewer:* Hey, is your dad always there? or is he there one day, and then he comes back, what's the thing?

*Interviewee:* The shift is ten and five, ten days there and five he rests. Sometimes it's relevant, and they change it but it's very, very rare. Before it was seven and seven shifts. That was good, but now it's ten and five.

*Interviewer:* When you told me it was people from the south, where did these people from the south come from?

*Interviewee:* They come from Rancagua, because there is one, is the plant here, in Tacuara seems to be, they need enough people and I think that by the South maybe they are very scarce work, the southerners came here and will work there in Tacuara. There are many places and pensions of southerners, here in Freirina are many, in Huasco is also full of southerners, full of southern people.

*Interviewer:* And where do they work? at the Huasco plant?

*Interviewee:* At the Huasco plant, in Tacuara it seems that it is, if I am not mistaken.

*Interviewer:* What type of plant is it?

*Interviewee:* I don't know, I don't know well about there. I just follow what I have been told, that they work in Tacuara, but I do not know.

*Interviewer:* At first you told me you didn't have much money, it wasn't, that you were a little poor, I think it was the word.

*Interviewee:* No, not poor but lacked, they demanded money, demanded...

00:15:00 every month for the team, for the clothing, for everything money, and I had to go to Copiapó, to Copiapó once a week.

*Interviewer:* But you also told me that "I have a family that is fine but sometimes we lack the money", you told me.

*Interviewee:* Oh! That was before, when my grandparents came here, they were poor-poor because my grandfather, that is, my aunt Helia, my grandfather's sister, she raised them, raised them all, and so on, from her comes the family because the mom... The mother worked in a Cabaret I think, brothel, and the father passed away at an early age I think, and he was, he also liked to go out, he wasn't interested in the children and it happened that she who took command, my grandfather's sister, she raised them all and they overcome their situation, with few things. I remember telling me, he said, he challenged us, he

said: "Do not put too much to the bread, take just a little bit, a little butter and on one side, and that's all, and save for tomorrow". Because that's how they did it with them. And in one bedroom, all slept in the living room, they put some beds, some mattresses, some blankets and there everyone slept. And so, he managed with that, and my grandfather worked since he was a tiny boy, he always told me, since the eight years selling things, his sister made cakes, threads, and he went out to sell all that, and since he was small boy always striving, going forward. And thanks to him, thanks to them we've been doing good ourselves, being optimistic, and now it's not so like that.

*Interviewer:* Your dad now earns better and your mom too, things have changed. And your Grandparents, your grandpa and your great-aunt are alive?

*Interviewee:* My grandfather does, my grandfather is 66.

*Interviewer:* He's young anyway.

*Interviewee:* And my... his sister is like 85, she lives alone, or with the son, but the son goes to work.

*Interviewer:* And they live here at Freirina.

*Interviewee:* Yes, they live in his house.

*Interviewer:* And they have a whole family there, all of you use to meet often?

*Interviewee:* Yes, before I saw almost always, as I said I liked to go out, I did not like school, for that reason I have left aside the school, fooling around and so on. But now I'm a little more mature, I take care a little more of my family, go visit them, see how they are, the good news. Where my uncle lives, it was the same, sometimes where my uncle lives, he treats me well, sometimes invites me to go out, to drink some beers, but sharing between us, is the confidence that we always have.

*Interviewer:* Ok, going back to the current school, you didn't work in Vallenar. Why did you decide to go to this school and why this specialty?

*Interviewee:* Because... Well, there I was not in anything and I knew that maybe if I stayed there, maybe things would be worse, because in first grade my grades went down, 5.1 was my average mark. And in second grade I barely passed, I went until December 31, the last days of the year going to classes to give a test, and with that mark I passed. And well, I came here because I thought I was going to get worse the other year, I was going to keep falling, and thus making things worse. And it was mainly because of that, so more because of an issue of my conscience, because I know, as I said, I am as easier, I was influenceable, so I came here, I wanted to study geology, everyone spoke about geology, the issue of the mines and everyone wanted to get there, that career had a lot of demand, and I did not know that, I think it was for several things and did not know. And

I didn't get in geology, anyway, I came to give an interview, the professor said he was going to call me, never called me, and well, as he did not call me, I had to choose another specialty. And at the beginning of the year, last year, I said to my mom, I do not want to study more, as I was very naive, I didn't want to study more and so I did not go to scientific-humanistic neither. And by discard, let's try how it is and here I am trying hard, trying hard in the agriculture, and I have learned enough things that I did not know, striving people who come from other sides. Here in this sector had had enough people from parcels, from *Majadas* that I did not know and tell me their lives as well,  
00:20:00 and that's why I came here. Already one is reflecting on what life is like, working alone, with your animals, your plants and I'm liking the career. Therefore, I told the teacher I wanted to be a tractor driver, I take the tractor and nobody removes me from it, I am the owner of the tractor, they must ask permission to me to handle it, I have the keys.

*Interviewer:* Ok, have you worked before?

*Interviewee:* Worked? Only once, once I worked in the Olive, I received as 15 *lucas* [thousands, Chilean currency] I think, out there in the day but I didn't work anymore.

*Interviewer:* You didn't like it?

*Interviewee:* No, it was very hard, like sacrificed, imagine I had no lunch or anything, we went in the early morning, all day working, came the time of lunch, I was not coming for anything, just there resting, just taking air, and then in the afternoon continue working, and I only worked in that.

*Interviewer:* And, to me as from outside, you live in a context where there is a lot of countryside, and everything, and don't have much knowledge of that life in the countryside, why? explain that, like the agricultural issue...

*Interviewee:* I do not know it, I had almost no idea about the issue of agriculture, I did not know what it was, I remember that my grandfather told me, the theme of plants, animals, but I did not know it was like what I see now.

*Interviewer:* Did you like it?

*Interviewee:* Yes, as I say I liked it a lot, the subject is interesting, aside we go out a lot to the fieldwork, the boys, the kids are nice, we have a teacher very cool, we also have confidence with them, we do the work, working on the farm, helping, field working, making visits to people who teach us, they give us knowledge, we work harder, as happens in *Nicolasa*...

*Interviewer:* *Nicolasa*, what is it, a school?

*Interviewee:* *Nicolasa* is before reaching *The Miner*, there are small antennas when you go down, there are some houses there.

*Interviewer:* Towards the side of Vallenar or towards the side of Huasco?

*Interviewee:* Towards the side of Vallenar, but before reaching the [...] It's close and you get off, you go down the east, then you go up and there are the houses. And for the left there is a road and says: *Hacienda Nicolasa*, but everything that is there is Nicolasa's. But there is the farm, there you are received by the gentleman Gabriel Gonzales, he has the... his hectares, four hectares of tomatoes, we work there, we work taking tomatoes and he teaches us things, he teaches us a lot of things.

*Interviewer:* And about the future. What do you expect for the future?

*Interviewee:* In these years I have thought, I have thought, as well as I still think, very undecided, but as I said, is true, I want to be a tractor driver, I like the tractor, I like to drive it, even asked a professor, *Pancho*, Teacher Francisco, he said he was earning good money as tractor driver, a million, million and half, but a good tractor driver and I liked that. Besides, I can have my estate later.

*Interviewer:* So, if we imagine the next year. What would you be doing?

*Interviewee:* Next year? Maybe I go to college, I was told about courses, first, but very, very basic courses and in college is more advanced, more knowledge of everything, and to have that, I would go to college.

*Interviewer:* What would you study in college?

*Interviewee:* Mechanics, mechanics I would study.

*Interviewer:* Because of the tractors. And you know where they offer mechanics, or have you seen an alternative?

*Interviewee:* Not really.

*Interviewer:* Do you think in something more technical or university? Have you thought about whether you want a career at a technical institute or a university?

*Interviewee:* University.

*Interviewer:* You prefer a college.

*Interviewee:* Is there a lot of difference in that or not?

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*Interviewer:* Of course, the technical are shorter careers, usually 2 years and the university is longer 4, 5. And the technical is more applied to the work itself, to the labour, the other is a little broader, subjects of different skills, they are technical, but also more professional.

*Interviewee:* Ah, then I think would be better an institute, a technical one.

*Interviewer:* And if you, imagine that you manage to study and then definitely work as a tractor driver, that is what I understand is your desire. Where would you like to do that? In what area of Chile, right here, would you like to go somewhere else? What have you thought?

*Interviewee:* I think, well not much the issue of where I could do that or put that in practice, but I'm thinking of become it first, I'm not thinking where to do it, I think the opportunities are going to appear slowly and will come, I do not know, invitations, but I'm thinking first what I want to be, and that is a tractor driver.

*Interviewer:* It is an alternative that start doing that next year, to be a tractor driver, or you would definitely like to study?

*Interviewee:* Study that topic.

*Interviewer:* Wouldn't you like to go and put it in practice right away, but you'd like to study it first?

*Interviewee:* Yes, in the farm we are practicing, in the farm that we have in the school, in *Atacama*, down there in *Nicolasa* we have a farm, is very ugly, it is with many stones, the terrain very stony, and we are removing the stones, we are cleaning first, and with the tractor we are ploughing, taking the stones out. And there we are practicing slowly, and the teacher explained how it works, the tractor system, the plough, and there I am learning slowly.

*Interviewer:* Do you like it here? Here *Freirina*, the area?

*Interviewee:* Yes, it is quiet here, it is very quiet, suddenly there is a naughty guy, out there the *Mamani*, the *Mamani* is that blonde naughty guy, but they are cool. Here everyone is quiet, everything is joy.

*Interviewer:* Do you see yourself living here in the future?

*Interviewee:* Future? I think maybe I would go elsewhere, I would not know, more, more because of curiosity, I'm curious, to an area... I do not know, more populated, a city, as you see on TV, I've never gone anywhere, as far as I have gone is *Caldera*, from *Caldera* to *La Serena*, beyond to the north, further south neither. Once I went to *Pucón*, I went to *Pucón* when I played in under 13 years old level, the under 13 football team from *Freirina*, we were representing the region in a national championship in *Pucón*. We were in last position, but it was beautiful, and it is the unique and most extreme trip to the south that I have had.

*Interviewer:* Ok, we're finishing, penultimate question. Once you told me about the electric, and the electric you already left behind. Now you're going closer to the mechanics, to the tractor topic. Did you like it? Do you want to stay there?

*Interviewee:* Yes, I want to stay there.

*Interviewer:* And here's how we are going to last question. We have looked at your childhood, who you are, your present, what you expect from the future. Is there something you might like to have done differently? Imagine that this that you just told me was like a story, like a novel; would you like that this novel had a different chapter, add something, remove something?

*Interviewee:* To what had happened?

*Interviewer:* Yes.

*Interviewee:* I do not know, I think that things happen for a reason, but maybe I think I would have to remove something, is to be so careless, that would take a lot, and to be strong, do what I want to do but from the beginning, and maybe I would not be here, maybe I'd be in Vallenar studying, what do I know? To be taking advantage of electricity and we wouldn't be in this interview. Maybe that is what I would take away, I think I would have done better, knowing other things, not bad.

*Interviewer:* Well, thanks Interviewee, I don't know if you wanted to add anything else, about yourself, about your life.

*Interviewee:* No, nothing.

*Interviewer:* Ready?

*Interviewee:* Yes

*Interviewer:* I'm going to stop this here.

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