

**The development of the concept of labour.
A psychogenetic study with children and
adolescents from different social positions**

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This research project is framed within the critical approach of the Piagetian constructivist research programme (Castorina, 2005). This approach implies a revision of the traditional conceptions of the classical Piagetian research programme in order to investigate the construction of knowledge in the social domain (Turiel, 1983, 2008). In this sense, Castorina (2008) postulates that the specificity of these knowledges makes necessary the abandonment of an epistemic subject abstracted from its social identity and from the socio-historic frame in which he is situated. The constructive individual activity of the subject does not necessarily mean accepting the passivity of the individual subject against the culture or the society or implies a cognitive development understood as a universal sequence of decontextualized ideas. The critical approach proposes the compatibility with other psychological theories that consider the dialectical relationship between individual and society, such as Vygotsky's Cultural-Historical psychology or Moscovici's Social Psychology (Castorina, 2012), and other social sciences, such as some trends within the Marxist Social Theory (Robles-López, 2014). These approaches help in the conceptualization of the social restrictions of the individual thought. The restrictions are the social conditions that enable and limit the individual conceptualization of the reality, for example the institutional practices that frame individual activity and the collective beliefs of the individual's group of belonging (Castorina et. al, 2010).

The development of specific domain knowledge has been researched within the Piagetian genetic psychology and different economic concepts where investigated (Webley, 2005). Nevertheless, there are few investigations regarding the concept of labour (Berti & Bombi, 1988; Delval, Díaz Barriga, Hinojosa & Daza, 2006) despite its importance in the understanding of the economic social reality. There are different interpretations about the path of development of the economic conceptions of the individuals. On one side, there is an interpretation of the development in which the subject goes through different general stages and its final stage is the adult understanding of the economy (Delval & Kohen, 2012). In this approach, the general logical aspects of knowledge are considered more relevant than other aspects. This is the *classical* view of the Piagetian research programme which considers as a subsidiary element the identification of the differences in the conceptions of

the children that depend on the social and cultural environment (Castorina, 2005). On the other side, the *critical* genetic psychology considers the importance of different social factors in the development of these conceptions, such as the participation in economic interactions and relationships (with peers or adults), the indirect sources of economic information (formal or informal instruction) and the collective beliefs (Faigenbaum, 2005a, 2005b). In this approach the cultural differences are also considered in the content of the explanations constructed by the children, given the different parts of the society (social classes) where the children belong.

The aim of this project is to answer the following questions: Which are the children's and adolescent's conceptions about labour? Is it possible to identify a psychogenetic path of development in the ideas of the children and the adolescents? Which are their central characteristics? Which are the cognitive processes involved in the construction of knowledge? How do the collective beliefs shared by their immediate environment (family) impacts in this development? Does this development vary depending on the social class and the educational situation of the subject?

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