

# Un análisis ético al fenómeno de la invisibilidad escolar de los adolescentes de escuelas secundarias

*An ethical analysis of school invisibility phenomenon in secondary schools adolescents*

**Ana Cecilia Valencia Aguirre**

Universidad de Guadalajara

[anaceciliava@yahoo.com.mx](mailto:anaceciliava@yahoo.com.mx)

**José María Nava Preciado**

Universidad de Guadalajara

[jnava\\_preciado@yahoo.com.mx](mailto:jnava_preciado@yahoo.com.mx)

“...Te advierto que, cuando yo empleo una palabra – dijo Humpty Dumpty en tono algo despectivo-, esa palabra significa exactamente lo que yo quiero que signifique. ¿Comprendes? La cuestión es –dijo Alicia- si puede usted hacer que las palabras signifiquen tantas cosas distintas. No te equivoques...la cuestión es saber quién es el maestro aquí. Alicia estaba demasiado perpleja para decir nada”

*Alicia a través del espejo*

Lewis Carroll

## Resumen

En este trabajo se muestra, desde la recuperación del habla cotidiana de un grupo de adolescentes, algunas evidencias de su invisibilidad en el contexto escolar, la carencia de un rostro, una voz peculiar y la estrategia de invisibilidad que muchos de ellos adoptan como alternativa de subsistencia ante un entorno escolar que valoran como hostil.

En parte, la imagen de directivos y docentes respecto a las adolescencias esta asociada a un discurso que los deniega como sujetos, al ligarlos a una visión negativa centrada en la rebeldía, la actitud negativa y desmesurada de este actor. Esto genera, en el imaginario de los docentes y directivos de escuelas secundarias, la puesta en práctica de dispositivos disciplinarios basados en el control, la vigilancia y el orden, que, lejos de conformar una plataforma de reconocimiento, deprecia la imagen adolescente y ante ello justifica formas veladas de control y violencia escolar impuesta desde sus

autoridades, de modo que los desdibujan y vuelven sujetos sin rostro ni particularidad, ante un discurso y una práctica que los deniega como sujetos sociales.

**Palabras Clave:** Analisis, invisibilidad, adolescentes, escuela secundaria.

### Abstract

This work shows, from the everyday speech of a group of teenagers, some evidence of their invisibility in the school context, the lack of a face, a peculiar voice and strategy of invisibility that many of them adopted as alternative of subsistence to a school environment that they assess as hostile.

In part, the image of principals and teachers with respect to teens is associated to a discourse that denies them as subjects, to bind them to a negative vision centered on the rebellion, the excessive and negative attitude of this actor. This creates, in the imagination of the teachers and principals of secondary schools, the implementation of disciplinary devices based on control, monitoring and the order, which, far from forming a platform for recognition, it depreciates the adolescent image and before it justifies veiled forms of control and school violence imposed from their authorities, so that they blur them and become faceless subjects or peculiarity, a speech and a practice that denied them as social subjects.

**Key words:** Analysis, invisibility, teens, high school.

**Fecha recepción:** Julio 2011

**Fecha aceptación:** Noviembre 2011

---

### Introduction

#### **LANGUAGES AND ACTIONS IN OUR DAILY LIFE SCHOOL**

As part of a methodological Introit we pointed out the importance of recovering the language from a pragmatic dimension, in the sense of constituting an action with meanings and implications in the social context. To recover the everyday language, in this case of adolescents, it is offered the possibility understand their school experiences as a scenario of otherness, a fundamental element to bring us closer to the subjectivity of the actor in relation to the others. It is in the other where you can find and make the satisfaction of material and spiritual needs, but is also the otherness, a space that allows the horizon that goes beyond the here and now. Languages of the everyday world are fundamental not only as an element of understanding of subjectivity, but also, to analyze the role

that play the actors involved and inserts on the horizon from world of teenagers from situational appraisals.

In this sense, we try to recover adolescents languages as the methodological way to understand subjectivity conformation from a polyphonic space that allows linking plural voices and understand the sense of otherness, where subjects weave their own warp in particular, bind their affections before lived and show its reflection and perspective.

In this regard, languages give account of situations experienced by adolescents, who manage to reveal it, experience it, and socialize it during the recording of his speech. The experiences of subjects are addressed from the affections and emotions, raw material that accompanies the process of speech from a pragmatic perspective.

The everyday life of the actors in the game requires situating ourselves in the world of the subjective significance of the experience, what enable us to understand their senses, allowing you to place ourselves in the Western tradition of the *Erlebniz*, lived experience, starting point in the phenomenological process of Uncovering.

Moreover, we believe, following the beginning of the second Wittgenstein (1953), that the meaning of a term associated with the language of the speaker can not be considered a positive, atomistic or entity defined by itself; hence not rehearse separate analysis of the situational context, however, we assume that the use made of any term makes sense from the own field of action, its meaning is implied in the so-called language games, which are oriented according to the speaker's own contexts.

### **Students, school subjects invisible**

Not long ago, the earth was populated by two billion people, ie, half a million men and half a billion Indians. The first possessed the verb, the others borrowed.

Jean Paul Sartre. (Preface Fanon, 1961: 5.).

Historically, the phenomenon of invisibility has been linked to processes of social exclusion, so the reference to Sartre, in the preface to *The Wretched of the Earth*, denounced the phenomenon of exclusion in colonialism and imperialism.

Invisibility, can be linked to the context of racial segregation, gender or class issue. However, this becomes more complex social spaces to take shape the situation that the subject himself chooses, to opt-out of being visible and therefore lack a commitment involving him in such a scenario.

In the field of ethics, the invisibility of the face with Emmanuel Levinas, philosopher becomes problematic suggests that the "face of the neighbor means to me an irrefutable responsibility above all free, to any agreement at all with-treatment" (Levinas, 2007). So, the other appears as an otherness, as a possibility of the ethical constitution of the subject, called an externality that Levinas face. From this perspective, raise the invisibility is to deny the other as otherness, as proximity engages me in the intersubjective process to establish an ethical contract and responsibility in action.

In a social perspective invisibility is also expressed as a form of social positioning through the silence, understood as a communicative choice of any speaker, which is to be silent or remain silent. We stop saying things that could injure or compromise our interlocutor. There is then an active censorship -propia dialogue (the speaker, the listener and terms) - and is evident in denying the possibility of communicating.

In the area of communicative action, it is considered to silence through censorship or self-censorship as a form of communication that not only represents the world, also as a way of creating world. In this regard, according to Austin (1982), only in some cases they represent statements made, but at all times perform acts. In technical terms, speaking -Ask illocutionary acts we perform, advise, organize, ascertainable in our party have, as consequently, perlocutionary acts -alegrar, intrigue, infuriate, persuade, doubt-(Austin, 1982). Censorship therefore not only cares of the world is represented, but also the world that is created with the speech and both like that, it affects us (Portolés, 2009).

Since the three concepts mentioned in the previous paragraphs three connotations allude as they emerge:

1. The invisibility as ethics of the face, which is expressed in attitudes that deny the recognition of the other as different, yet equal to myself.
2. The invisibility and self-censorship: take the silence as a way of denying my commitment to others.
3. Invisibility, as a form of communication regarding the silence is also a way to communicate sentiments, emotions or indifference to others.

Based on the above we refer the phenomenon of invisibility student school situation from two directions:

- a) As a phenomenon that can be seen in daily relations with the moral implications (because it derives a number of consequences on the inter-relationships).
- b) As expressions of ethos, that is, the construction of meaning and identity against the daily activities and a particular way of assuming and assigning responsibilities among those involved in it.

We start by assuming that the forms of invisibility are not unique, but express modes of being and doing, that is, factual ways in public spaces where subjectivity is constituted from the other, which is recognized and granted the right the face and the floor.

The ways in which such invisibility is fenomeniza expressed in two ways:

1. As passive invisibility, when a foreign agent denies knowing the subject's face and therefore the word as a way of being in the social space. In this sense (Fierro, 1997), uses the notion of invisibility as a "student ECLIP-process-" according to other priorities; what is the attention being marginalized both their educational needs, as guaranteed to receive a respectful and equitable treatment in school

2. As an active invisibility when it is the subject himself who assumes the role of invisible as a form of active communication and, with this attitude, commitment to zero affairs and tasks of social nature that could implicate occurs.

However, the situation is important is to show that in the school spaces the phenomenon of invisibility is taken consciously by its actors so, students who have found in this form of identity a convenient way to get ahead, shelter forms symbolic violence and assume their invisibility to the risk of engaging openly and publicly in the school social settings.

In turn, it is assumed that the invisible processes tend to excel when subjects are able to build an inclusive order, in which predominates the idea of 'we' 'with inter condition. The reference to "we" is generally used to refer to adolescent peer group. For their part, teachers, school in many everyday situations, appear as belonging to "others" along with authorities, officers and other law school context. In these situations we will refer below, recovering the everyday speech of secondary school students.

#### Part One: Narratives of adolescents senses and implicaciones1

"You have to let go of emotions": A form of invisibility.

In a group of high school a teacher said the following situation:

I do not care what you think or feel: come with me or whining to ask me to raise your score them ... that is going to reprove another turn (Secondary Master group).

While it is not possible to attribute to the expression of judgments teacher, we try to analyze the implications of such messages to the student. When a speech arises in the classroom to be put aside emotions, gene-erally, teachers, students or authorities; They argue that we must return the affections invisible or what Pascal called the reasons of the heart. However, it is undeniable that in the learning process interactions where the element Aphek-tive is a basic principle, then, we can say that affective processes but are not decisive, at least influence somehow in cognitive processes occur. In the recovery of educational experiences another direction is evident in the inter-

relationship, as the emotional motivations of the students seem to be invisible to others.

In this sense, invisibility to the emotions, indifference to the suffering and pain that anyone could experience when questioned, suspended, expelled or intimidated, could be considered a consensual objectionable aspect, as in school, has a moral commitment to the formation of habits and attitudes in students, given the pro-sleeves moral implications of each context. Therefore, it is difficult to recognize that some degree of violence is the invisible emotions in the classroom, however, we can identify how violence is becoming more intense, since it generates among the closest players in space daily coexistence, linked to emotional or kinship ties, that is, between subjects living in specific scenarios (Codau, 1995).

---

1 It notes that these stories are taken from various scenarios, recorded informally and through field recording made-do spot such scenarios. Put aside the first emotions; It was recorded in the speech of a teacher of a group of high school. An us against the other occurred during a school informal meeting, I belong to a group: Do not mess with me was taken from a talk in the corridors, the last, Swimming of dead man is a textual expression of a student manifested in the classroom to their companions, without the presence of teachers or authorities. All narratives were recorded during the 2010 school year in three schools of the metropolitan area of Guadalajara, as the purpose of the investigation is not to make comparisons, not mentioned particularly the three contexts.

This allows us to understand that the courtly stage, often turns out to be the space where the subjects live different styles of violence, power, authoritarianism and forms of invisibility, both the student and the teacher experienced in other social spaces, which we It leads to conceive the school as a place of reproduction of the social world, transferred by subjects of private or intimate space as a public school space. In response, reflective practices, linked to the ability to evoke the experience from critical and analytical plans, allow us to question and make visible acts of indifference that happen to us and affect us.

### **An us against the other**

"To us they do not understand us; and the principal and teachers have their reasons (...) but have never asked us whether we agree with their rules. I do not like it, and my colleagues, we impose uniform and prohibit us to bring our personal things like a necklace or a bracelet, we have returned so "(A student of ninth grade).

In this passage we see a speech that separates the attitude between student-teacher in the dilemma: "solidarity with the teacher or with my peers, students". This division between being a teacher and being a student, puts the subject in different circumstances, historically has been a hiatus in which it is stated that these are two groups of subjects in unequal conditions. Students subject under construction or training, demanding respect for the right to build their own identity and be respected by teachers. Teachers are agents responsible professional obligation and formal education to identify what a certain moral world, hence the requirements and prohibitions.

The position of pupils is subject to pressure authorities exercise directives regarding their condition. The value acquired in each situation will depend not on an assessment of the intrinsic importance of what is at stake, but to impose the logic of the school and disciplining device. So you can see how the student is collapsing demand, an imperative discipline, with the priority of school control, since subjecting students to take school rules involves educational attainment for school.

### **I belong to a group: Do not mess with me**

The constitution of social networking teens, understood as a form of ownership to a visible group gives a certain identity, access to forms of exchange and management of codes in crisis situations can be defensive, offensive or obtain the support, according to the case. The last consideration support as reference in situations of conflict, will be an expression of the appropriation to the level of a moral community sense. However many of these forms of affiliation deny its members when they are subordinated to the rules of the game undergo a membership where the action and expression is an anonymous after the receipt of a visible organization matter, but that becomes invisible the student to deny it.

### **I prefer to be a student X**

This dimension comes from shrewd reason, to the avoidance of forms of control and panoptic grid, then this is a strategy to become invisible to the forms of violence implicit in power. "I learned to swim in muertito you spend better, because nobody bothers you," "I'd rather be a student X", "it is better to sit back maes-centers where you do not see" (Students from ninth grade). In the logic of the pupil it implies that others do not disturb or interfere in an area considered proprietary or at least



where they earn the status of subjects with some autonomy and are free from coercive questioning look of school authority. The synonym of being invisible, lack of face, unnoticed, no noise and its many forms, is recovered expressions in everyday speech of adolescents who are witness to this type of resource not to feel violated and dodge the Panopticon, but in turn, it is the metaphor that best describes the invisibility of the subject, which is chosen in the absence of commitment, safeguarding against another that violates or threatens individuality accountable to an authority. That's one way of self assumed invisible as subject, which implies the reification of the subject itself in the institutional life.

nero, Human Rights and Development 11

## **Part Two: The look of the phenomenon from ethics**

The ethical reason, an appeal to the principle of reason

Once analyzed these narratives consider the importance of appealing to the ethical principle of reason, because the re-understanding of 'the other' involves them as ends in themselves, that is, as human beings, with which you can reach agreements and dialogue, the reason is therefore dialogic and constructive as open source because "the reason (logos), as we know, is also order and word foundation of communication and community" (Gonzalez, 2000).

The reason can help address the behaviors of indifference that sometimes we take when we take into account the individual interests of some more than others. It forces us to escape our individualism allowing recognize the other as a source of decisions in the public space.

Recourse to ethics in the education space is important because it is required to build a gifted subjects of 'meaning' in terms of cultural and spiritual values that help build the moral responsibility that society demands of the subject educates space; to leave the immediacy of the superfluous and selfishness to enter an inter-subjective world, the commitment to others. What is decisive is that the values that the school offers any student to submit mismo "I, authenticity and ability to be for the 'other' or 'other'. In a school environment where domination and violence of the subject is excluded from any possibility of ethics education; This arises when we give way to genuine communication, reciprocity, the horizontal link to invalidate all, dialogue and that "education understood as

dialogue, dialogic interaction, and does not take the student as passive, but active, as an interlocutor. There is an interaction, something that both participate "(Beuchot, 2000).

### **Towards an ethics of us-other**

The ethical attitude would establish new inter-relationships, break the circle of indifference and invisibility that manifests itself in various ways, both symbolic and concrete, open or veiled. Appealing to the value in social spaces equivalent to think about an internal change in the subject, to consider their moral self must be transformed; to set aside individual, selfish and narcissistic posture to enter a dimension where recognition is given other, to practice full convergence between aspiration and self-employed, to set aside the exclusion of the other in the learning process .

This means that actors become active and moral agents when they realize they have a self that responds to their actions, so it is responsible for what happens there as "genuine morality is given, in effect in so far as the realm of intention, of will, of the deep motivations of action "(Gonzalez, 2000) it is performed. This is when the subject finds it convenient, morally speaking; when conscious deliberate on their professional skills which are based on a set of values and conceptions of what is good.

I think, from this, that if we reflect and we see the subject from the ethical dimension, is because they also have a task, be recognized. In this sense, the subject must take account of three moral questions: what should I do with others what I can do for others and what am I allowed to do on the edge of social space.

### **The ethical implications of invisibility**

Exercise invisibility either from an active or passive way, it involves refuse or deny others a recognized dimension-ing and yet ethical commitment in the social space. So that we can say that whatever the reasons that subjects argue to justify it are morally unacceptable, since you can not give training in the decision of my lack of commitment, or cancellation of the other's face, dismissing his chances own. In the ethical order the end justifies the means, you can not claim that in trying to prioritize efficiency and effectiveness, we see the student as a means and therefore we valgamos anything to do. On the other hand we can say, the phenomenon of invisibility transcends

mere individual behavior and becomes an interpersonal process, because it affects at least two protagonists who exercise and those who suffer.

The virtues are not taught, shown from the inside out, from me to the other teacher to the student. What is clear is derived, subjects must find a way to regain their role in the school as a moral agent, build a decent space where students solve their conflicts as rights, they are promoted as capable of giving an opinion and that the classroom is a place for responsible action, beliefs and viewpoints, where it has the support of the teacher to be corrected in a timely and respectful manner.

Hence, the academic work is moved from an ethical point of view, in two dimensions, one involving his relationship-ject himself and the other says his relationship with the other subjects. This ethical relationship must be assumed as a subject in training concern, a concern that must be considered as a commitment to try to change things in the institution, as this is the benefit of such attitudes to assume its actors.

### **¿Tolerance for invisible? O invisibility as a result of intolerance**

Tolerance is an ethical imperative that transcends individuality, it is in and of itself and it is indeed, for ethical reasons, regardless of the beliefs or cultural, political and religious practices that professes anyone. It recognizes the other as similarity, all based on ethical principle. Refers to the difference in the distance "and knowing the difference and otherness, while the radical likeness and equality, founded [is] tolerance as an ethical virtue" (González, 2000).

As we can see tolerance is a concept of life, a style guide practices, ideas and attitudes that have to do with the respect that you keep others when manifest different lifestyles to their own. By moving it to the classroom, the concept takes on a new dimension because the people we have to be tolerant are subject, often with some family and personal conflicts. This brings a double moral commitment to the subject: first requires us to be tolerant of students identified as individuals, beginning of any community, and second, recognize them more difficult to make decisions, which implies a greater commitment.

The teaching practice can be moved in tolerance or in its opposite, in both cases is an active reaction. In one they understood, and different learning moments, needs, feelings and behaviors showed by students as a result of their individual differences and historical are accepted against inequalities tolerance comes to constitute a positive attitude. Otherwise, they assume postures, such as rejection and intransigence and hostility to their different ways of acting; when inequality is sometimes presented it responds with intolerant attitudes as discrimination, stereotypes and prejudices "the common feature of intolerant attitudes is that feelings that characterize are distrust, insecurity and fear of the threat representing imaginary human groups toward that [] experience these attitudes; to overcome those negative feelings, the person experiencing them usually react defensively with other self-assertive feelings, ranging from contempt for those people about the situation of weakness, inferiority, discrimination or exploitation suffered, to the aggressive hostility" (Luque, 2000).

This point is used to declare that intolerance is a moral issue that requires understanding rather than explanation, as a way of attacking. To this we must refer to our professional status, what makes us teachers as claiming us as moral people, acknowledging that intolerant attitudes deny the other, and in doing deep deny our own self. The moral commitment appeals to our conscience demands based on the acceptance and responsibility for our actions compromise.

In tolerance student it is accepted as is; acceptance is stronger than the rejection does not mean that we have to bear or endure something that affects us about it. The back is another invisible result of an act of intolerance, but when the subject is denied by a lack of social commitment and comfort that gives being not seen, is also a form of in-tolerance. For the tolerant, tolerance; And what for the intolerant? One answer is offered by Norberto Bobbio, "tolerance should be extended to all except those who deny the principle of tolerance, or more briefly, [with] all should be tolerant with the intolerant except" (Bobbio, in González, 2000 ).

We believe that the commitment to education requires us to exercise permanent reflection, so we have to explore our inner dialogues autobiography to recognize and to build new moral values in the classroom. In this dialogue will have to resort to the appeal of a reason that leads us to the moral and ethical autonomy, but not de-of the categorical imperative, but from the daily construction of an

ethic of recognition. Boff believes that the ethos of humanity is configured based care, that is, an attitude of occupation, concern, responsibility and affective commitment with the other (Boff: 2001). Or as Levinas (2007), raised an ethic of responsibility in the face of another legitimate, involving first, as Ricoeur says, care of yourself (1995).

In the field of schools this involves the quest to build equal and we can add, equity, while the right to learn and grow from their own differences and condition. This ethic of responsibility to the agents are not imposed as a categorical imperative of universal order, but is built into the human encounter each day, making visible the "other", while becomes part of a "we". It is there as a possibility: care practices in the private sector are offered as a source capable of providing wealth and dynamism to practice in educational institutions sometimes experienced as dry and wear.

If the school offered, from concrete actions, stages of a more tolerant and harmonious world, in a society where violence for-more become daily actions, then we could consider the possibility of a change in human society.

## **CONCLUSION**

Throughout this work, we have shown aspects of speech of the subjects in school and courtly contexts. Everyday speech is essential in the face to face of the actors involved in the educational environment of the schools interaction is an implication to the other of a feeling that collectivized or socialized in communication processes, it represents a horizon for exploration and understanding of subjects in situation.

At work we can see active and passive forms of invisibility; eg teachers and administrators to students, who denied from a speech that devalues placing them in the context of the subject lacking (teenager: equals in transition, lacking maturity) therefore justified that should be monitored and subject dis-to-disciplinary devices to ensure proper training; but also the students to their peers and authorities: the relationship we still not part of classroom discourse. Another form of invisibility is given when the student himself who is assumed as a not visible to the school environment, to guarantee to preserve an individuality harassed by the norms and rules of life in schools.

The voices of adolescents in secondary schools emerge with repeated complaints of "let me be" and that disciplinary practices reach them uniform, to prohibit the expression of emotions in school, to bring them to areas where they and controls, students They are never heard, subjects lacking voice and face to their school authorities. Hence the subjective constitution and its pristine adolescent perceptions of citizen space that are not defined by a true experience of the recognition of ethical subject within the school. Authoritarianism students within their classrooms and schools live, the way they are harassed and monitored by superiors and denouncing the invisibility of its authorities, where the interaction is zero, and presented only when they have committed a serious offense it deserves an equally serious sanction or the imminent expulsion from school, they are a permanent trend in the voices of adolescents. The experience of situations both active and passive invisibility, produced by the attitude of indifference and / or authoritarianism in school practices where they are voiceless and particular face look like a daily bread in the school world. Before it we only have recourse to appeal to the change from the practice mediated recognition of others as subjects with rights and responsibilities. However this change we have to build it from the immediate area that will transcend to other spaces and dimensions of human coexistence. The ability to accept our ethical imperative leads to recognition of the student as an individual and non-transferable different, but as a subject of universal rights, social responsibilities and target values, to paraphrase Ricoeur, while otherness and sameness.

## Bibliography

AUSTIN, J. L. (1962-1982), *Cómo hacer cosas con palabras*, Barcelona: Paidós.

BAJTÍN, M. (1982). *Estética de la Creación Verbal*. México: S. XXI.

BEUCHOT M. et al. (2000) *Virtudes, valores y educación moral*. México, D.F: Ed. UPN,

BOFF, L. (2001). *Cuidar la Tierra*. México: Dabar.

CARROLL, L. (1990) *Alicia a través del espejo*. Madrid: RIALP.S.A.

CODDOU, F. (1995), *Violencia en sus distintos ámbitos de expresión*. Santiago de Chile: Ed. Dolmen.

GONZÁLEZ, J. (2000). *El poder de eros. Fundamentos y valores de ética y bioética*. México, D.F: Ed. UNAM.

LEVINAS, E. (2007). *Ética e infinito*. España: Editorial Visor

LUQUE A. (2000), et al. *Educación y tolerancia*. Sevilla, España: Ed. Díada.

PORTOLÉS L. J. (2009) *Censura y pragmática lingüística*, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid consultado en <http://www.ucm.es/info/circulo>. Consultado el 30 de enero de 2013.

RICOEUR, P. (1995) *Tiempo y Narración (Vol. I y II)*. México: Ed. Siglo XXI.

SARTRE, J. P. (1961). Prefacio. En Frantz, F. (1961-1971), *Los condenados de la tierra*. México: FCE.

WITTGENSTEIN, L. (1953), *Investigaciones filosóficas*. México: Alianza IIF-UNAM.