

Participatory Educational Research (PER)
Vol.10(4), pp. 218-236, July 2023
Available online at <http://www.perjournal.com>
ISSN: 2148-6123
<http://dx.doi.org/10.17275/per.23.68.10.4>

Id: 1249886

The Levels of Historical Awareness and Treatment of Controversial Issues in Digital Environments: A Case Study of Future Spanish Secondary School Teachers

Delfín Ortega-Sánchez*

Department of Specific Didactics, Faculty of Education, University of Burgos, Burgos, Spain
ORCID: 0000-0002-0988-4821

César Barba-Alonso

Department of Specific Didactics, Faculty of Education, University of Burgos, Burgos, Spain
ORCID: 0000-0001-7993-6765

Bruno Pedro Carcedo de Andrés

Department of Specific Didactics, Faculty of Education, University of Burgos, Burgos, Spain
ORCID: 0000-0003-2422-9208

Article history

Received:

11.02.2023

Received in revised form:

15.04.2023

Accepted:

11.05.2023

Key words:

historical awareness;
teacher training;
controversial issues;
social narratives;
virtual environments

The aim of this research is to determine, on the one hand, the levels of historical awareness of future Spanish secondary school teachers ($n = 61$) in social networks and/or virtual environments. On the other hand, it aims to approach the representations of the past-present-future constructed by future teachers in these spaces, and to interpret the relationships between their levels of historical awareness and their interaction with controversial issues based on their own social narratives ($n = 169$). This study follows a qualitative-deductive approach to test the theoretical transferability of Rösen's levels of historical consciousness to the specific context of a Spanish university. The results obtained show mostly exemplary and critical levels of historical awareness, with little variation between the dimensions analysed (global pandemic by COVID-19 and public health; historical memory, national identities, migratory crises, and exclusionary identities; sex-gender identities and exclusionary identities). Consequently, it can be concluded that working on controversial issues generated in virtual environments in teacher training could mean a potential improvement in the acquisition of third-order concepts, such as historical awareness, allowing future teachers to successfully address issues and situations of social life in the classroom in a transversal and transversal way. interdisciplinary way.

Introduction

Historical consciousness: a category of analysis of social science education

Unlike historical memory, with an immediate link to the past and the present, which is related to the imagination and directed towards the past, historical consciousness maintains a

* Correspondency: dosanchez@ubu.es

mediated relationship with the present and the past, is related to cognition, and is oriented towards the future (Pagès, 2019; Plá, 2017; Rüsen, 2007). Its temporal variables (past, present, and future) are in permanent dialogue and open new gaps, questions, and lines of teaching action for social change. Indeed, the representations we of the past in the present determine possible imagined futures. In this way, historical memory allows us to approach the representations of the past; from them, historical consciousness connects them with the future. In this line, Clark and Grever (2018) define historical consciousness as

A temporary state of mind, related to the levels of temporality, reality, and historicity of a human being, is always involved in transforming (sometimes overlapping) mnemonic communities. Therefore, this state of mind changes over time due to aging (a phase in the life cycle), social events or processes, access to media and other public representations, and possible training in schools through historical thinking and reasoning (p. 193).

Following the criteria of historical thinking, Rüsen (2004, 2020) proposes four fundamental types of historical consciousness. Traditional perspectives perpetuate hegemonic and normative practices in a society perceived as immobile, transmitting values, rituals, and traditions uncritically. Exemplary perspectives provide insights into the current context and based on hegemonic cultural values, transmit a moral guide to the future. Critical perspectives analyse the present historically to construct counter-hegemonic narratives by setting ideological boundaries. Finally, genealogical perspectives apply critical frameworks in which the understanding of present and historical reality becomes essential to constructing and deconstructing narratives and contemplating possible futures. All four perspectives blend into people's cognition, are inherent to each person's cultural history, and construct the individual and collective memories in which they operate (Nordgren, 2019; Carrol & Littlejohn, 2021; Miguel-Revilla & Sánchez 2018a, 2018b; Plá, 2017).

Popa (2021) understands that historical awareness predisposes one to engage with history to make sense of human experience, making the historical past one's own. This predisposition manifests itself in three interrelated skills: a) sensitivity to the past, b) understanding the past, and c) presenting oneself in relation to history. Each skill is associated with a particular meaning-making process: experiencing historical temporality, interpreting historical materials, and orienting oneself in practical life through history.

The analysis of the temporal variables 'past', 'present' and 'future' of historical awareness has been increasing its presence in the scientific educational literature in recent decades and, in particular, in the specific field of social sciences didactics (Edling et al., 2021; Ortega-Sánchez & Rodríguez-Lestegás, 2017; Santisteban, 2017; Popa, 2020). A good deal of research has been concerned with the analysis of temporal relations and the didactic transposition of third-order concepts in the teaching of social sciences. This attention has focused on the educational impact of concepts such as historical awareness, literacy, thinking, understanding, culture, reasoning, and cognition (Clark & Grever, 2018; Körber, 2015; Matos, 2017; Nordgren, 2016; Seixas & Morton, 2013).

Despite its potential difficulties (Alvén, 2021; Carrol & Littlejohn, 2021; Martins, 2019), the development of these concepts, presented as categories of analysis in history education, has demonstrated benefits for the understanding of first- and second-order concepts, value education, critical analysis of digital and physical social reality, and the curricular inclusion of controversial social issues.

From this perspective, relational analysis between the construction of collective memories and narratives constructed or interpreted on national identities (Angier, 2017; Barca, 2013; Carrol & Littlejohn, 2021; Cavalcante et al., 2021; Lévesque, 2017; Martins, 2019) proposes the concept of historical consciousness as a central category of analysis. The connection between the past and the present for the explanatory promotion of intercultural identities is proposed as one of the purposes of social science teaching. The construction of these identities is circumscribed in the field of democratic civic values and considers the relevant and conflicting roles of collective memories (family, ethnic, regional, national, and official).

Today, an increasing number of historians and history teachers recognize the importance of addressing issues of moral depth and historical awareness in education (Fronza, 2020). Curricula, as well as historical and counter-historical narratives, are loaded with ethical content. Therefore, moral judgements are present in the classroom, making teacher training indispensable.

Löfström et al. (2021) propose three spaces for ethical education through history teaching: 1) the performance of philosophical-moral reasoning to acquire the ability to reason critically about different interpretations of the past; 2) perspective-taking, through the ability to reconstruct historical contexts from the development of historical empathy; and 3) historical awareness, referring to "the ability to construct meaningful links between the past, the present, and the future" (p. 243).

There are clear overlaps between levels of historical consciousness and moral consciousness (Zanazanian, 2019). This idea also underlies Wilschut's (2019) research on the need to connect historical and democratic consciousness over time in social science education. In this study, he argues for a broad intercultural understanding of historical consciousness that overcomes Western/colonial dichotomous views and reaches out to the intelligibility of time for all people.

In the exploratory work of Sakki and Pirttila-Backman (2019) on the perception of History teachers of this subject in ten European countries, the relevance of the development of historical awareness is affirmed, mainly by French, Italian, and Finnish teachers. Along the same lines, Gonçalves and Urban (2021) highlight the scarce problematization of curricular content and the absence of levels higher than a traditional and exemplary type of historical awareness in future History teachers from Paraná.

Similarly, the research by Ortega-Sánchez and Pagès (2018) on the construction of gender identities in school history in the discourse of future Primary Education teachers shows that didactic positions continue to conform "to traditional and/or exemplary teacher narratives, and assume a general deterministic, stereotypical and reproductive character" (p. 93). These results are in line with those obtained by Miguel-Revilla and Sánchez-Agustí (2018b) regarding the levels of historical awareness of Spanish students in Secondary Education. They noted a lack of attention to the concept of historical awareness in teacher training. Pagès (2019) insists on the need to relate the dialogical temporality of the past-present-future with historical memory as a key category of analysis and on the prioritization of education in the values of critical citizenship and the power of history for social transformation.

However, in Australia, Carrol and Littlejohn (2021) concluded that teachers encourage the practice of critical historical awareness, considering active methodologies and critical work with sources to be essential, through the historical method or the inclusion of ethical and

moral considerations in the classroom, among others. They also highlight the ongoing training of teachers for the didactic improvement of historical awareness and demonstrate, based on these procedures, the possibility of generating spaces for deconstructing hegemonic memories and interpretations.

Teaching controversial issues and digital critical literacy

Teachers are confronted with relevant social issues or controversial topics constructed from socio-historical temporal connections in an unforeseen manner. In this temporal connection, characteristic of historical consciousness, social networks interact with the construction and representation of the past, shaping present realities and projecting future perspectives.

Löfström et al. (2021) argued that teaching controversial topics triggers emotional reactions in students and allows them to work on socially lively and moral issues linked to curricular content, even when they arise unexpectedly in the classroom (Cassar et al., 2021). In this sense, Santisteban (2019) recognizes a positive correlation between the inclusion of controversial topics in the teaching-learning process and the development of students' critical thinking, while Pagès (2019) highlights the relationship between the didactic treatment of controversial topics and the development of historical awareness.

The role of media and social networks in the process of shaping memories has been the subject of study in recent years (Birkner & Donk, 2020). Despite its particular interest in the field of social studies education, it has been little addressed, and both the implications and the socio-educational scope of the curricular inclusion of controversial topics or socially live issues from different digital social spaces in the history and social studies classroom are still unknown. However, despite the potential contributions of social networks to the development of democracies, their role in facilitating discursive polarization (Matakos et al., 2017) and the proliferation of hate speech (Ortega-Sánchez et al., 2021; Bauman et al., 2021; Castano-Pulgarin et al., 2021), and the controversial content of a particularly social and historical nature, has been demonstrated.

Similarly, research interest in images disseminated on social networks has increased in recent years, with the aim of analyzing its educational consequences and understanding the social practices of users (Chen et al., 2021). Interest in media literacy and critical literacy in digital environments has also increased, and its use by educators has multiplied (Carpenter et al., 2020). Santos Meneses (2021) highlights the special relevance of citizen media literacy for the correct reception and critical interpretation of digital information on controversial issues.

Consequently, according to Santisteban et al. (2020), there is a need for teacher training capable of responding to this type of social content and including it in their teaching units. Thus, social science education should promote teacher training to work with controversial issues in the classroom and intentionally develop the concept of historical awareness to plan and respond to its manifestations in the classroom.

In this context, the aim of this research is determine, on the one hand, the levels of historical awareness of future Spanish secondary school teachers in social networks and virtual environments. On the other hand, it aims to approach the representations of the past-present-future constructed by future teachers in these spaces and to interpret the relationships between their levels of historical awareness and their interaction with controversial issues.

Method

Participants

A total of 61 teachers in initial teacher training (36 women, 59%; 23 men, 37.7%; and 2 non-binary, 3.3%), enrolled in the Master's Degree in Compulsory Secondary Education and Baccalaureate, Lifelong Learning and Language Teaching program at a university in northern Spain, agreed to participate in this study. For their selection, a non-probabilistic sampling was carried out, which responded to intentional selection criteria, according to their degree of suitability to the objectives of the study and the accessibility of the research team to the field of study (León & Montero, 1997).

Instrument

The data collection instrument consisted of a dossier designed *ad hoc*, based on the technique applied by Ortega-Sánchez and Pagès (2022) on controversial topics and socially acute questions in history education. Different digital publications with historical content in social networks were reviewed by applying the most common search guidelines (Chen et al., 2021). The selected publications from two of the most popular social networks today (Instagram and Twitter) did not conform to a specific format (videos, images, and/or texts). The search procedure and selection of the recording units were carried out manually using keywords (*hashtags*) in the European and Latin American regional contexts. In this area, priority was given to Spanish content, Spanish or English, and their public nature.

The dossier is divided into two parts. The first included sociodemographic variables, divided into gender, age, origin, and didactic speciality/area of knowledge of origin. The second part of the dossier presented three large dimensions, where students had to generate narratives around 12 digital publications: 10 from the social network Twitter, and 2 from Instagram (Annex. Social Networks). To this end, a limited space of 15 lines was provided for the open writing of texts.

The construction of the data collection instrument was based on independent inter-observer selections of 30 recording units, extracted from the total number of narratives published on two of the most frequently used social media networks at present: Twitter and Instagram. Each selection ($n = 90$) met the discursive inclusion and exclusion criteria listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Discursive inclusion and exclusion criteria

Discursive inclusion	Discursive exclusion
1. Presence of emotion as a basis for discursive construction.	1. Limitations of the explanatory capacity and analytical potential of textual, iconographic, and/or audio-visual discourse.
2. Temporal Delimitation (Present day).	2. Limitations in textual, visual, and/or audio-visual extensions.
3. Multidimensional reading of digital discourse.	
4. Identification of biases and/or value judgements in the articulation of digital discourse.	
5. Identification of social and historical conflicts.	

Once the 30 independent recording units were collected, thematic and dimensional inter-observer concurrences were identified. According to the results obtained, Agenda 2030, public health, gender identities, feminism and eco-feminism, and national and exclusionary identities received the highest frequencies of thematic concurrence (Table 2).

Table 2. Thematic and dimensional inter-observer concurrences

Thematic line	D.	f_a	f_b	f_c	f_i	N_a
Agenda 2030 and public health	D ₁	2	2	2	6	2
Colonialisms		1	1	0	2	1
Historical education		0	1	1	2	1
Epistemology of History		1	2	1	4	1
Forms of government		2	1	1	4	1
Gender identities, feminism and eco-feminism	D ₂	2	2	2	6	2
National identities and exclusionary identities	D ₃	3	3	4	10	3
Historical memory and migration crises	D ₃	2	2	2	6	2

Note: D. = dimensions; D₁. = public health and social responsibility; D₂ = gender diversity; D₃ = national identity, exclusionary identity, historical memory migration crises; f_a - f_c . = frequencies recorded by researchers 1, 2, and 3; f_i = concurrent inter-observer frequency; N_a = ordinal degree of concurrence: 1 (low [≤ 4]), 2 (medium [≥ 5]), and 3 (high [≥ 6]).

To obtain empirical evidence of selective, thematic, and dimensional validity, Fleiss' Kappa coefficient (Fleiss et al. 2003) was calculated from the frequencies returned independently by each researcher at medium and high levels (f_a - f_c). The results reported an adequate degree of selective agreement and inter-observer thematic coherence, with a moderate strength of agreement ($K \geq .59$, $p = .01$) (Landis & Koch, 1977) (Table 3).

Table 3. Fleiss Kappa Coefficient

K	ASE	Z	p	95% CI	
				LB	UB
.59	.226	2.590	.01	0.14	1.03

Note: K = Kappa value; ASE = asymptotic standard error; Z = standardized value. CI = confidence interval; LB = lower bound; UB = upper bound.

Design and procedure

The present research is ascribed to the qualitative-deductive approach studies (Kuckartz, 2014). With this approach, the aim was to test the theoretical transferability of Rösen's (2004, 2017) levels of historical consciousness in the specific context of a Spanish university (case study).

The completion of the dossier by future teachers was limited to a maximum of 15 minutes. The activity was carried out in the classroom under the supervision of the head teacher and one of the researchers during the second semester of the 2021/2022 academic year in different subjects of the master's Degree in Compulsory Secondary Education and Baccalaureate, Lifelong Learning and Language Teaching. To access the dossier, students were asked to use a QR code, with only an indication of its individual nature and time limitations.

The students were informed of the objectives of the research, guaranteeing anonymity in both the collection and processing of the answers provided. Informed consent was obtained, and



the study objectives were explained in detail, in accordance with the ethical protocols defined by the Declaration of Helsinki. Thus, the confidentiality and anonymity of all participating parties were guaranteed (Creswell, 2014).

Data analysis

Once the data were collected, they were coded and categorized deductively using ATLAS.ti software, based on the different levels of historical awareness proposed by Rösen (2004, 2017) and the interpretative contributions of Miguel-Revilla and Sánchez (2018a) and Plá (2017) (Table 4).

Table 4. Types of historical consciousness

	Traditional	Exemplary	Critique	Genetics
1	Repetition of a compulsory way of life	They represent general rules of conduct or value systems.	Problematization of current ways of life and value system	Changes in alienated ways of life
2	Permanence of a compulsory way of life in time change	Eternal rules of social life, eternal validity of values	Breaking down historical patterns of meaning to deny its validity	Perceiving developments in which life forms change in order to maintain its permanence
3	Affirmation of the social order given by consensus on valid ways of life	Relating peculiar situations to regularities of what had happened and should happen	Delimitation of one's own views vis-à-vis pre-established obligations	Acceptance of different views within a comprehensive perspective of common social development
4	Internalisation of previously given ways of life by limitation/adoption of roles	Relating self-concepts to general rules and principles/legitimation of roles by generalisation	Delineation of one's own views of obligations from outside/role-creation	Changes and transformations in self-perception are necessary conditions for permanence and a self-sufficiency/role balance.
4	Morality is dictated by the established social order; moral validity as unquestioned stability by tradition	Morality is the generality of the obligation in values and value systems.	Rupture of moral power of values to deny its validity	The temporalization of morality and the possibilities of further development become a condition of morality.
6	The reason for these values lies in their prior effectiveness, which allows consent on moral issues.	Argumentation by generalisation, referring to truisms and principles	Establish value critiques and ideological critiques as important moral discourse strategies.	Temporal change is a decisive argument in the validity of moral values.

Note: 1. Experience of time. 2. Patterns of historical significance. 3. Orientation of outer life. 4. Orientation of inner life. 5. Relationship to moral values. 6. Relationships with moral reasoning. The table shows the four levels of historical consciousness in relation to the different determining factors. Source: Author's elaboration based on Rösen (2004, 2017).

In order to identify each textual response, the recording units were coded using the following alphanumeric code: 1[student number]_UBu[University of Burgos]_1[group number]_ca[questionnaire and letter corresponding to the question in question: a, b, c, d, etc.] (Ortega-Sánchez et al., 2020).

The recording units were transcribed faithfully, as they were uttered. However, in order to



make it easier to read the results of this study, its grammar and linguistic correctness have been revised, maintaining its original content and meaning at all times.

Results

This section presents an analysis of the information provided by 61 students who agreed to participate in the research. Table 5 describes the results according to the different levels of historical awareness.

Table 5. Levels of historical awareness

	Textual frequencies (<i>n</i> = 169)	
	<i>f</i>	%
Traditional level	18	10,65
Exemplary level	70	41,42
Critical level	47	27,81
Genealogical level	34	20,12

We observed that the level of traditional historical awareness in the trainee teachers' narratives represented 10.65 % of the total. Narratives with exemplary levels are dominant (above 40 %). Discourses with critical and genealogical levels were close, with critical (27.81 %) being slightly higher than genealogical (20.12 %). There are few differences between the three dimensions, although in the pandemic dimension of COVID-19, we find more traditional perspectives than in the other two dimensions.

In general, no coherent connections were found between different digital publications presented in the same dimensions. The trainee teachers mainly commented individually on the publications or focused on one of them. Brief, partial, and descriptive discourses prevail, with a critical attitude towards disinformation, post-truth, and hate speech disseminated through social networks:

The voxians are angry because we are open-minded and sensible people are more and better (34_UBu_5_ch).

I am missing news or tweets about the other side here, are I n't? Or any of those ridiculous things that escape Pablo Echenique, Carmen Calvo, Broncano or Jorge Javier Vázquez every time they open their mouths (20_UBu_4_ch).

This guy is a clown who only talks about nonsense. He spoke of ignorance, contempt, and superiority. I find it funny that he talks about having it easy when he has never done anything in his life (19_UBu_4_cf).

The narratives focus almost exclusively on the present and past, with little importance given to future variables. Similarly, expressions of empathy and respect for differences and diversity of opinions and ideas are common, although an equidistant perspective is common in narratives through the presentation of deterministic discourses. Likewise, narrative criticisms of social networks are frequent, based on a majority awareness of the harmful effects that virtual environments can generate.

These tweets, news items, and images generate rejection because of the manipulated and partisan use of fear. The situations of alarm and terror, in which the media and social networks play a fundamental role, take advantage of different media focuses to take



advantage of particular or partisan interests. Critical thinking is not favoured, but rather the generation of feelings. In this case, the feelings of hatred and xenophobia (10_UBu_2_cf).

Gender is an evolving issue, and social media can help supplement information to users. However, it can also be a dangerous weapon and can create support among people who defend a specific opinion, contrary to the reality of evolution and learning on the subject. There are people who sell sensationalism and opinions, who base their opinions on their own experiences without showing a minimum of empathy for people who have had to go through other situations (50_UBu_6_ch).

From another perspective, there are few gender differences in the levels of historical awareness. Men handle more traditional and critical levels than women do, who use more accounts with exemplary levels. The levels of genealogical historical awareness, are equivalent in both genders, while the non-binary gender, although represented in the sample, is not very representative.

In relation to the academic field from which future teachers come and the age ranges, the differences in the levels of historical awareness are small, which may be attributable to the sample size. In this sense, it can be observed that teachers from the humanities field are more familiar with some concepts, recurrent in their field of knowledge, such as sex-gender, identities (national, gender, etc.) and memories, among others. In the more than 12,000 words collected, few references to keywords such as gender (7), identity (4), migration (0), nationalism (0), historical awareness (0), historical memory (1), public health (0), past (17), future (4), and present (3) have been identified. The future teacher seems to assume the idea that politics is a determined entity alien to his/her life, where there is no room for contingency:

Life is cyclical, and if we do not learn from past mistakes, everything repeats (6_UBu_1_cg).

As long as education remains closely linked to politics, it will unfortunately remain (9_UBu_2_cg).

In the face of determinism, some narratives acquire a critical and genealogical level, pointing to the rise of the extreme right in the West, to the radicalization and ideological polarization of messages, to political tension, or to the media manipulation to which the civilian population is subjected. Despite their low numerical significance, they also return genealogical narratives that do not reproduce this determinism in the face of the myth of progress:

Knowing the past and present does not condition our thoughts; it shapes us [to] develop opinions with our own judgement (54_UBu_8_cg).

The results obtained report inconsistencies in the narratives, contradictory discourses, different levels of historical awareness in the determinants that make up historical awareness, and several levels of historical awareness in each of the narratives, and even in the same narrative, generated by the same student, at the dimensional level (Figure 1).

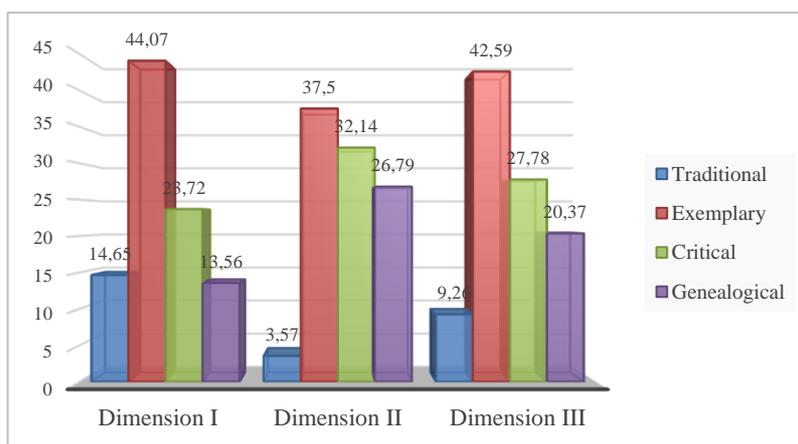


Figure 1. Dimensional levels of historical consciousness.

Dimension I. Global COVID-19 pandemic and public health.

The first dimension presented the controversial issue of the global COVID-19 pandemic and public health. In this dimension, it is worth noting the reproduction of myths, such as that of equidistance and "business as usual" (56_UBu_7_cf), and the perpetuation of the dominant anti-political discourse. In this way, it partly evades political and social responsibilities. An exemplary historical consciousness prevails, experiencing a continuous present alien to and determined by other social agents. These narratives are critical of politicians and, above all, of the use of the pandemic as a political weapon. It is remarkable that, given the proximity of the event, there are more traditional and critical views in the categories of temporal experience and historical significance than in the analytical categories referring to moral burden, with a tendency towards exemplarity.

Dimension II. Historical memory, national identities, migratory crises, and exclusionary identities.

The second dimension refers to historical memories, national identities, migratory crises, and exclusionary identities. Many discourses focus on the classic "no to war", a traditional and/or exemplary view of this phenomenon. However, taking a stand against war does not preclude contradictory arguments in defending belligerent positions. They do not present reasoned arguments through critical historical thinking to analyse the causes, development, and consequences of conflicts; although multiple perspectives have been raised on many occasions, they do not seem to have the tools to identify such perspectives.

Despite showing mostly exemplary and critical levels of historical awareness, few narratives focused on a traditional Spanish nationalist past, many of which defended decolonial, anti-imperialist, or nationalist-critical positions:

In these links, I think we see the importance of teaching history and, above all, of teaching history from all points of view. Not always from one country, culture, etc. I think it shows us the importance of seeing the reality of a whole process, from the beginning to the end, in order to understand with a critical spirit any history and, above all, the present day (21_UBu_4_cg).

To study history, we should consider all territories; it does not matter more a war that is closer than another one that is further away, nor by continents, race, colour, etc. Victors always tell history. In wars, people pay, and they start by creating hatred and radicalization (55_UBu_8_cg).

Dimension III. Sex-gender identities and exclusionary identities.

The third dimension focuses on sex-gender identities and exclusionary identities. A great deal of moral and ethical reasoning was identified in this dimension. For the most part, the will to break down hegemonic gender stereotypes and attributes is expressed. However, this work is once again oriented towards individualism, observing exemplary levels of temporal consciousness, common in liberal thought and individualistic hypertextual narratives:

We have to respect each person as they are or how they feel, and this has to be taught in schools to the little people we are forming. I also think that we live in a world where meddling in others' lives is people's favourite pastime; we should let people be the way they are and focus more on ourselves. (12_UBu_3_ch).

Discussion

Although the results are in line with those obtained by Ortega-Sánchez and Pagès (2018), where traditional and exemplary views also predominated in the narratives of trainee teachers in Spain, the majority levels of exemplary and critical historical awareness in this study contrast with their levels of traditional and exemplary historical awareness as well as those offered by Gonçalves and Urban (2021) in Brazil on a population of in-service teachers. This contrast is confirmed in the research of Carrol and Littlejohn (2021), who found that teachers actively promoted critical historical awareness (87%) in classrooms during the pandemic in Australia, "discarding traditional, nationalist and hegemonic meta-narratives" (p. 11). However, a proportion of students continued to reproduce traditional historical consciousness.

Likewise, in their study, Miguel-Revilla and Sánchez (2018b) showed that students in the fourth year of Compulsory Secondary Education in Spain have hardly any genealogical historical awareness. Consequently, we believe it is necessary to implement teacher training programs in historical awareness, to face unplanned situations on controversial issues from critical positions, and to understand their purpose in order to achieve a commitment to the political dimension of education (Cassar et al., 2021; Santisteban, 2019). This need can be seen in the majority of future teachers' linguistic recourse to the first person singular, to the detriment of the third person singular, and to refer to the construction of one of the temporal realities. This implies that they do not consider themselves to be participants in their construction.

It is true that social networks have opened up spaces for freedom of expression and democratization, but, on other occasions, this freedom has been confused with a supposed 'freedom to hate', turning virtual spaces into yet another trench of the postmodern neoliberal worldview. Another space opens up, therefore, where the public and private are confused, infringing on privacy and human rights at various levels (Castano-Pulgarin et al., 2021; Morozov, 2018; Ortega-Sánchez & Pagès, 2018; Santisteban et al., 2020; Srnicek, 2018). This reality is visible in some of the discourses analysed, which are mediated by simplistic, ideologically biased, and hateful views.

Social networks and virtual environments interact with memories and representations of the past, present and future, perpetuating the idea of living in an eternal present (Birkner & Donk, 2020; Lovink, 2019; Venegas, 2020). In these environments, there is a differential construction of content on networks, some of which are of particular quality depending on



who produces it and their intentions and interests (Carpenter et al., 2020). Viralised messages depend on the algorithmic relationship of users, although these messages may be decontextualised/distorted by the effect of "echo chambers" (Matakos et al., 2017). Despite the fact that the future teachers participating in this research do not literally cite media literacy education and critical literacy in virtual environments, there are, in a non-dominant way, accounts where awareness of part of the problem is demonstrated.

However, there are constant allusions to the political and public use of history and education, demonstrating an awareness of its relevance. In some narratives, argumentation focuses on the "neutrality", "objectivity" and "politicization" of history and education. These narratives avoid teachers' responsibility to intervene in conflicts and show shortcomings in classroom decision-making. Along these lines, the results of this research argue that teachers should be neutral and objective (Santisteban, 2019).

In this case, one can see how history is politicized. I think it is important to know the past but from a purely objective point of view. History is very different, depending on who is telling it (9_UBu_2_cg).

Third-order concepts make it possible to generate narratives with a level of genealogical historical awareness and, therefore, to understand the need to take a position in conflicts without denying students the possibility of generating their own opinions and positioning themselves. To educate active, critical and participatory citizenship, it is necessary to work on the concept of historical empathy, multiple perspectives, or moral reasoning; teachers must practice this in order to encourage it among their students using dialogical learning (Ortega-Sánchez & Pagès, 2022).

Temporal awareness is an essential axis for overcoming closed historical narratives and building open societies when full democracy is marginal (4.5%). These data are consistent with the data collected in this study (Wilschut, 2019). Angier (2017) and Barca (2013) conclude that the analyzed populations construct contemporary national narratives that are descriptive and linear deterministic. This evidence indicates that students construct their narratives independently of what they learn in the classroom. Contrary to the findings of these authors and Cavalcante et al. (2021), Lévesque (2017), and Martins (2019) have argued in relation to the construction of national narratives, the existence of a diversity of representations in the present study has been proven. Depending on their gender, class, ethnicity, or identity, future teachers will have different levels of historical awareness and construct narratives from different perspectives. In our research, we observed that students mainly reproduced the myth of progress, regardless of their level of historical awareness.

Nordgren (2016) considers that the systematization of historical consciousness should be understood as a set of liquid categories of how people understand and relate to temporal categories. In this sense,

From the perspective of the use of history, any clear demarcation between history and memory is artificial. Historical consciousness is neither reflective nor emotional but is capable of being both at the same time. This is the basic form of cognitive psychology. Humans perceive only a small part of what is registered by the senses, which are processed with different degrees of awareness, and can be both analytical and general, educated and prejudiced, and combine facts with myths (p. 483).

In addition to the myth of progress, presentism and accelerationism are also present in trainee teachers' collective memory. These meta-narratives are imposed contradictorily in a liquid virtual world, where hypertext reigns with individualized narratives (Martins, 2019).

Conclusions

Sakki and Pirttila-Backman, (2019) concluded that teachers in ten European countries believe it is a priority to educate and enhance critical thinking and historical awareness. In contrast to the artificial intelligence solutions proposed by Matakos et al. (2017), we believe that the humanistic solutions advocated by Fronza (2020), Matos (2017), Santos Meneses (2021) and Zanazanian (2019) are more effective. Despite the didactic limits of historical consciousness already pointed out by Körber (2015), or the epistemological debates on historical consciousness and third-order concepts (Alvén, 2021; Clark & Grever, 2018; Grever & Adriaansen, 2019; Miguel-Revilla & Sánchez-Agustí, 2018a; Nordgren, 2019; Rösen, 2004), we believe it is appropriate to point out the reasons for using history proposed by Nordgren (2016) and Ortega-Sánchez and Pagès (2020): to understand the world, to construct diverse identities, and to intervene/transform the world.

Third-order historical concepts (historical consciousness, historical culture and the use of history according to Alvén, 2021), especially historical consciousness, allow us to understand the historicity of the world and the construction of identities to problematize them and deconstruct existing realities. Connecting with the idea of dialogical learning in critical pedagogy, we can intervene in the present and participate in the construction of possible futures. As research by Carrol and Littlejohn (2021), Santos Meneses (2021), Miguel-Revilla and Sánchez (2018b), Pagès, 2019, and Seixas and Morton, (2013) demonstrates, there are innovative perspectives that allow us to work on historical consciousness in education. However, political will is needed to adapt the curriculum and teacher training with a different approach to teach how to learn third-order concepts, in addition to placing value on education in ethical and moral issues, both of which seem necessary in the Spanish educational context in view of the results of this research.

To apprehend a historical culture (Nordgren, 2016) and, in this case, to work on controversial issues in social networks, the theoretical principles of critical thinking presented by Santos Meneses (2021) and its controlled didactic treatment should be considered (Ortega-Sánchez & Pagès, 2022; Santisteban, 2017, 2019). This allows the use of third-order historical concepts as interpretative filters (Alvén, 2021; Zanazanian, 2019) to acquire historical thinking skills (Seixas & Morton, 2013). The curricular inclusion of this type of content would favour work on levels of historical awareness to analyse, evaluate, and confront controversial issues in the classroom and in social networks (Ortega-Sánchez and Barba, 2021). In this way, the importance of training teachers in all subject areas, and in particular, Social Sciences teachers, to deal with these problems is corroborated. In this training process, third-order concepts constitute the cornerstone of the project (Körber, 2015; Nordgren, 2019; Sakki & Pirttila-Backman, 2019), enabling perspective and awareness to understand the historicity of social reality in virtual environments, apprehend its behaviour, and to empathize with its users (Bauman et al., 2021). Connecting the cognitive with the emotional aspects of historical awareness would allow education in holistic historical thinking, attending to basic epistemological approaches and ethical and moral principles oriented towards education in the future (Fronza, 2020, Löfström et al., 2021; Ortega-Sánchez & Pagès, 2018).

In the narratives analysed, teachers showed a critical attitude and a certain ability to deal with



controversial issues in the classroom. Working on historical awareness in virtual environments could allow educators to focus on historical thinking and multiple perspectives when incorporating social controversies into the classroom. However, there is little research on how virtual environments influence historical awareness and other categories of social analysis in social science education (Miguel-Revilla, 2019).

The expression of different levels of historical awareness by subject matter suggests the need for continuous teacher training on controversial issues. To do this, first, the subjects should be adapted to the context in order to address and problematize collective, official, and excluded memories, as moral issues require historical empathy; and second, to handle cross-cutting controversial issues that affect and challenge all of humanity, such as the climate crisis, wars, globalization, the use of technology, and human rights, among others. Working with moral and ethical issues close to home, appealing to empathy for their imagined community, and participating in their immediate historical culture could allow structural or global considerations to be addressed from this perspective.

Finally, in relation to the limitations of the present research, first, it must be considered that Rösen's analytical categories are not dichotomous and exclusive but rather maintain fluid relations between them. Indeed, the levels of consciousness are superimposed on one another, presenting diverse features in some of the returned narratives. Its analysis allows for a fixed snapshot, at a specific time and place, of specific themes, which limits the incorporation of all controversial and socially live issues. On the other hand, there are important differences and contradictions between the traditions that study historical consciousness, which is why the results must be assessed with caution.

Second, following authors such as Lovink (2019), Morozov (2018), and Srnicek (2018), social networks respond to the commercial interests of the multinationals to which they belong, a circumstance that hinders the valuation of critical literacy and media literacy in their operations.

Third, the non-probabilistic purposive sampling applied resulted in selective judgement and accessibility of the researchers to the group participating in this study. In this sense, it would be convenient to apply the instrument for data collection and analysis in other higher education contexts, both national and international.

Acknowledgement

This article has been funded by the project 'Education for the future and hope in democracy. Rethinking social science education in times of change (EpF+ED)' (PID2019-107383RB-100) [Ministry of Science and Innovation, Government of Spain].

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Annex. Social Networking

- Álex Zapico [ZapicoAlex] (2022, 20 January). *Today I remember the war, the fear, the impotence. Living under the bombs shakes and shrinks the heart. Seeing the victims, almost always civilians and children, breaks your soul. Always no to war.* [Tweet]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/ZapicoAlex/status/1484284641423024133>

- Authentic Facha Hours [@facha_hours] (2021, 21 December). *Attention, I've been disappointed by the @Suchard_ES chocolate nougat advert. From this year on, I won't eat this kind of nougat again and, moreover, I'll give them bad publicity. They are portraying a stereotype of feminazi lesbians. Manipulation 0. #NoCompresTurrónSuchard.* [Tweet]. Twitter. https://twitter.com/facha_hours/status/1473250370537373702
- Authentic Facha Hours [@facha_hours] (2022, 13 January). *The Jewish Holocaust will be studied in 3rd and 4th ESO History. / Perfect. Now we only need to include the Russian and Chinese genocide, and all the ETA murders. That way we would have well-educated children.* [Tweet]. Twitter. https://twitter.com/facha_hours/status/1481736043871326210
- Authentic Facha Hours [@facha_hours] (2022, 7 January). *If Djokovic had entered Australia via dinghy, he would have had it easier and some help would have fallen in / If he had done it by dinghy, he would have been arrested and sent back to his country, an Australian colleague informs me (...)* [Tweet]. Twitter. https://twitter.com/facha_hours/status/1479521014472192001
- Authentic Facha Hours [@facha_hours] (2022, 9 January). *Vox wants to ban 'vegan meatballs': "It is necessary to call everything by its name". / You'll see when they find out that hot dogs don't have dogs in them / You'll see when you find out that in "gay marriage" there is no mother.* [Tweet]. Twitter. https://twitter.com/facha_hours/status/1480130213732405248
- Gerardo tecé [@gerardotc] (2021, 8 November). *When the history books talk about the pandemic that left more than 5 million dead, the Spanish right is going to look beautiful* [Tweet]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/gerardotc/status/1457842380246327300>
- Guerra en la Universidad [@GuerraenlaUni] (2022, 30 January). *As is well known, Romanisation was key to the history of America, China, Japan, sub-Saharan Africa and Australia. When you go to choose the most important events in history, remember that humanity includes a little more than the Mediterranean.* [Tweet]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/GuerraenlaUni/status/1487792287077834756>
- Javier Durán [@tortondo] (2022, 27 January). *Let us take note. When we see Auschwitz, we see the end of the process. The Holocaust did not begin in the gas chambers. It developed gradually with words, stereotypes, prejudice, exclusion, dehumanisation and escalating violence.* [Tweet]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/tortondo/status/1486632434959585283>
- Literland [@literlandweb1] (2021, 23 November). *Pandemic, according to Edward Hopper* [Tweet]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/literlandweb1/status/1462928593248468999>
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- Roygalan [@roygalan] (2021, 12 October). *Catalina carried it in her apron pocket a month after Franco's coup d'état (...)* [Photograph]. Instagram. https://www.instagram.com/p/CU8UIa2tlgD/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
- Roygalan [@roygalan] (2021, 3 November). *When I was six I said at school that I had asked the Three Wise Men for Super Hair Barbie (...)* [Photograph]. Instagram. https://www.instagram.com/p/CV0xgLstM7M/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link