Dismantling a culture of marketization? Alternatives to a student-as-consumer orientation in a context of the removal of tuition fees in a marketized society

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ABSTRACT

As market-oriented policies have impacted Higher Education (HE) systems around the world, extant scholarship has suggested that students are represented as instrumental and employment-focused consumers. However, how these reforms shape students' experiences in HE is still debatable.

This dissertation examines alternative orientations of the student by critically investigating the discourses surrounding the HE student in the neoliberal context of Chile, where HE has been the subject of a controversial policy reform involving the removal of tuition fees (termed Gratuidad in Spanish). The effects of this reform will be understood from the perspective of a market economy and a marketized HE system long disembedded from society.

Methodologically, data were collected from newspaper articles and in-depth interviews with students. Data were analysed deploying Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to investigate the functions and effects of media discourses linked to Gratuidad and to identify representations of students. Interviews with state-funded and self-funded students were undertaken to uncover their orientations to their HE experience.

The findings present Gratuidad being contextualized in three main ways: as a hasty, absurd policy; as an obstacle to the attainment of a more equal society; and as a revolution directed at the future of Chilean children. Media representations of students portray them as egocentric, as neglected by the state, and as marionettes of a political party. While the findings confirm a consumerist orientation to HE for some students, others take on alternative guises: as apolitical and poorly informed risk takers, as young people striving to be Someone, and as budding social reformers.

The findings reveal a neoliberal discourse that is still hegemonic both in the media and amongst the students themselves. The hegemony of the market in Chilean society evidences the disembeddedness of the market from society. It also validates the power of the neoliberal ideology rooted in Chile's broader social practices of the media and HE. Furthermore, the media, as a social system deeply colonized by a market ideology, keeps discursively promoting a culture of marketization in Chilean society. Nevertheless, notions of a change in this social order have emerged. These changes expose Gratuidad as a counter movement to the disembedded market forces and as an opportunity to potentially re-embed the market in society; and students' discursive practices contesting the neoliberal ideology, challenging the current social practice in HE.

This research contributes to current theories of marketization in HE and on alternative orientations of students, providing different theoretical explanations of their behaviour in HE. It also

contributes by exploring students' constructions in the Global South, an area of scant empirical work. Lastly, this research fosters a debate about the "return of the state" in the public funding of HE and its impact on students' understanding of the purpose of HE.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Marketization in HE, Media Discourses, Student Orientations.

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This work is dedicated to my mother, Margarita...

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GLOSSARY

The following terms, definitions and acronyms are explained here because they will likely help the reader to understand the issues explored in this dissertation. Moreover, they will also be helpful in understanding the HE system in the context in which this study has been conducted.

Capitalism
Economic system which emphasizes private ownership, free markets, choice, competition, and entrepreneurism.

Centro de Formacion Tecnica – CFT (*Centre for Technical Training* in English)
Further Education Institution (FEI) that provides two-year vocational courses leading to technical certificates only.

Clause
A set of words consisting of a subject and a predicate that expresses a proposition.
Halliday's (1961, 1978) Systemic Functional Linguistics considers the clause, rather than the sentence, as the basic unit of grammatical analysis.

Consejo de Rectores de Universidades Chilenas – CRUCh (*Chilean Universities Chancellors Council* in English)
Non for profit corporation that congregate all Vice Chancellors of all the public (state-owned) and traditional private universities.

Consorcio de Universidades del Estado de Chile– CUECH (*Chilean State Universities Consortium* in English)
Non for profit corporation that congregate all Vice Chancellors of state-owned public universities only.

Consejo de Universidades Privadas – CUP (*Chilean Private Universities Council* in English)
Association of all the Vice Chancellors of private universities only.

Coherence
Refers to the ways a text is made semantically meaningful (as opposed to Cohesion, which is concerned with grammar).

Cohesion
Refers to the way that a text makes sense syntactically.

Consumerism
A term with several meanings, but overall implying a moral doctrine, a political and economic ideology promoting the sovereignty of the consumer who is continuously accessing products and services from a marketplace (Gabriel, 2009).

Corpus
A body of language representative of a variety of language or genre which is collected and stored for further analysis. Corpora is the plural of corpus.

***C*ritical *D*iscourse *A*nalysis (CDA)**
Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a qualitative analytical approach for critically describing, interpreting, and explaining the ways in which discourses construct, maintain and legitimize social inequalities (van Dijk, 2003). CDA, like discourse analysis (DA), examines the ways in which language produces and moderates social and psychological phenomena; however, CDA emphasizes the role of language as a power resource (Wodak & Meyer, 2008). CDA deals with discourses of power abuse, injustice and inequality and attempts to uncover implicit or concealed power relations (van Dijk, 2003; Wodak & Meyer, 2008).

Dialectical
The art or practice of arriving at the truth by the exchange of logical arguments.

Dialogical
Of, relating to, or written in dialogue.

Discourse
A practice of representing the world and signifying the world. As defined by Fairclough (1992), discourse is language as a form of social practice. It implies a mode of action and a mode of representation. It also implies a dialectical relationship between discourse and social structures, in which structures are an effect of a social practice.

Discursive event
An "instance of language use, analysed as text, discursive practice, social practice" (Fairclough, 1993, p. 138). These three dimensions of language are three complementary ways of understanding a social event: a spoken or written dimension (textual level), a production and interpretation dimension (discursive practice level) and as the context of a situation, also known as the social dimension (social practice level).

Discursive practice
The production (creation), distribution and consumption (receipt and interpretation) of text are viewed as an important form of social practice, which contribute to the constitution of the social world, including social identities and social relations. It is partly through discursive practices in everyday life (processes of text production and consumption) that social and cultural reproduction and change take place (Fairclough, 1992).

Discursive strategy
Accurate and intentional plans of practices adopted to achieve a particular social, psychological or linguistic aim. They are realized via systematic uses of language.

Disembedded

A concept directly related to the *Theory of Embeddedness* proposed by Polanyi (1944, 2001). In the relation between the market and society, markets can be *disembedded* or liberated from extra-economic controls and governed by the forces of supply and the demand. A "self-regulating market", according to Polanyi (1944, 1957) is risky and threatens the foundations of human society. He asserts that markets should never be fully disembedded from the larger society. It is claimed that the attempt to make markets fully disembedded will inevitably cause them to fail, and even when they seem to be successful in the short term, in the long term this will trigger social crisis (Fraser, 2010; Sandbrook, 2011).

Fairclough (2003) has also coined the concept of disembeddedness, but from the perspective of his analytical framework, in particular when analysing text and genres and linking them to social research. In his definition, disembeddedness refers to a "socio-historical process in which elements developed in one area of social life become detached from that particular context and become available to flow into other areas" (p. 215). In the analysis, a genre can be disembedded from particular networks of social practices and become available or transcend to other practices (e.g. an interview that is then reframed in a media article).

Effects of discourse

Outcomes created through the function or intended purpose of the discourse. The parties to a discourse are usually in an unequal relationship in any given context, for example Chilean media discourses sustaining the neoliberal ideology and markets in HE by rejecting the change in policy and by representing the removal of fees as an absurd reform and as an injury to society (see Chapter 5).
Three effects of discourse correspond to the three functions of language and dimensions of meaning which coexist and interact in all discourses: firstly, the construction of "social identities and social subjects"– identity function; secondly, discourse helps construct "social relationships between people" – relational function; and thirdly, discourse contributes to the construction of "systems of knowledge and belief" – ideational function.

Embedded

One of the central concepts proposed by Polanyi (1944, 2001) in his *Theory of Embeddedness*. Polanyi (1944, 2001) refers to the relation between markets and society, whereby, in an ideal world, a market economy has to be under the regulation of social institutions. In other words, markets can be "embedded", involved in non-economic institutions and subject to non-economic norms, such as "the just price" and "the fair wage". Throughout most of history, markets have been subject to non-economic controls, which limit what can be bought and sold, by whom, and on what terms (Fraser, 2010; Sandbrook, 2011).

Fairclough

Professor Emeritus of Linguistics at Lancaster University in the UK. He has written extensively on CDA and is considered one of the founders of CDA as applied to sociolinguistics. Fairclough constructed a social theory of discourse and provided a methodological design for CDA in practice. Particularly relevant to this study, his approach to CDA is a textually oriented discourse analysis – TODA.

Functions of discourse
The function of a word or sentence is what it does or is intended to do – it is its action. This concept has been developed within discourse analysis to describe the three constructive effects of discourse. These are: identity, relational and ideational. "Identity function relates to the ways in which social identities are set up in a discourse; relational function to how social relationships between participants are enacted or negotiated; and ideational function to ways in which texts signify the world" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 64).

Further Education Institution – FEI
Post-secondary higher education institution that offers two- or four-year courses, either a Centro de Formacion Tecnica (CFT) or an Instituto Profesional (IP), which confer technical or professional degrees, respectively. FEIs do not confer academic degrees.

Genre
Use of language associated with a particular social activity, such as informal chat, a television interview, or a political speech.

Global North – Global South
A very contested concept among scholars. For the purpose of this thesis, the Global North includes those countries that control global resources (the USA, Canada, the UK, some countries in Europe, Australia, and China) and enjoy political and economic stability. The Global South usually includes emerging countries with fragile economies, some political instability and a high degree of inequality and poverty. Also, most countries in the Global South were colonized by European countries for centuries, processes that included the imposition of political, religious, language and cultural frames (Thondhlana et al., 2020).

Gratuidad (*free tuition Policy in HE* in English)
Following international conventions, Gratuidad refers to the Chilean Government Voucher Programme for a free tuition system at some eligible Chilean HEIs. This is part of the Chilean Higher Education Policy reform under the 2016 Education Act. It was partially approved by socialist President Mrs Michelle Bachelet in 2016. It has been fully applied HEIs since 2019. The 2016 Education Act had a profound and widespread impact, but for the purpose of this thesis Gratuidad refers only to Title VIII, concerning public financing of HE, which requires, by law, all HEIs that are part of the public programme of Gratuidad to offer free HE to students (see Chapter 2).

Group of 9 (G9)
Association of Vice Chancellors of traditional private universities. It is the counterpart of CUECH but for the nine publicly funded private universities.

Hegemony
A way of conceptualising power which, among other things, emphasizes how power depends upon achieving consent or at least acceptance rather than just having the resources to use the force and the importance of ideology in sustaining relations of power (Fairclough, 1992, p. 45).

Higher Education Institution – HEI
Post-secondary education institution offering four- and five-year courses. These are universities, which are the only institutions allowed by law to confer academic degrees i.e. Bachelor, Masters, PhD. In this thesis the terms "university" and "HEI" are used interchangeably.

Ideology
System of beliefs, ideas, doctrines, values, and ideals. Representations of aspects of the world which contribute to establishing and maintaining relations of power, domination, and exploitation. In the work of Foucault (1980) ideologies are described as "regimes of truth", which reside "within a culture, a discourse, or a body of knowledge itself" as defined in Gabriel (2008, p. 138).

Instituto Profesional – IP (*Professional Institute* in English)
Post-secondary further education institution (FEI) for four-year vocational courses leading to professional degrees only. These institutions cannot confer academic degrees.

Interdiscursivity (constitutive intertextuality)
Interdiscursivity refers to the mixing of diverse genres, discourses or styles associated with institutional and social meanings in a single text. This linguistic phenomenon permeates through language use, especially in contemporary institutional settings. It is a matter of how a discourse type is constituted through a combination of elements of "orders of discourse" (Fairclough, 1993a, 2003).

Intertextuality (manifest)
Intertextuality refers to the explicit presence within a given text of other texts. Sequential intertextuality describes where different texts or discourse types alternate within a text.

Lexical analysis
Word choices found in texts and their significations, such as a lexical field that denotes optimism or possibility.

Marketization of higher education (HE)
Policies that are "aimed at strengthening student choice and liberalising markets in order to increase quality and variety of services offered by the providers of higher education" (Jongbloed, 2003, p. 113). Hemsley-Brown (2011) defines it as the adoption of free market practices in running universities. These include the business practices of cutting production costs, abandoning courses and programmes not in demand, offering more popular programmes and facilities and advertising to increase brand image, sales, and the profit margin (p. 118).

Metaphor
A way of representing something in terms of something else. The identification and analysis of metaphors are often used in the description stage of CDA as a way of revealing ideologies or discourses surrounding a subject (Baker & Ellece, 2011).

Ministerio de Education – MINEDUC (*Ministry of Education* in English)
Governmental division headed by the Minister of Education, a political minister who leads all the political activities regarding education and educational institutions (at all levels) in Chile.

Modality
Ways of expressing possibility (epistemic modality) or necessity (deontic modality). Modality can be expressed via a set of verbs known as modal verbs, modal adverbs, or semi-modal verbs. Of particular importance in CDA, modality can highlight power, ideologies, and expressions of authority. It is the relationship between the author of the text and representations (Baker & Ellece, 2011; Fairclough, 2003).

Neoliberalism
Political and socio-economic theory where social goods/services are maximized by unregulated market behaviours (self-regulated markets), free from government intervention, left to the forces of supply and demand. It is used to describe market choice on the part of the consumer, who, acting in relatively unrestricted ways and in their own self-interest, can eventually make better decisions for themselves (Friedman, 1962).

Orders of discourse (or interdiscursivity; or constitutive intertextuality)
Originally proposed by Foucault (1971), this refers to the different discursive formations in terms of genres and types of discourses found in texts (Fairclough, 2003; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2012). It refers to the dialectical relation of structure/event – reproducing and transforming discourses.

Pinochet, Augusto
Leader of the military coup that overthrew the socialist government of President Salvador Allende on 11 September 1973. Pinochet was then the head of Chile's military dictatorship for 17 years (1974–90). During his government, most public services were privatized, and neoliberal polices were implemented, all under the leadership of Milton Friedman and the so-called "Chicago Boys" (ministers who had studied at the University of Chicago under the supervision of Friedman).

Private university
Not-for-profit private corporation without direct public funding. In Chile, all private universities were created after the 1980 Education Act. They are all members of the Private Universities Corporation (CUP).

Privatisation
Introduction of private capital and ownership into previously public domains.

Prueba de Seleccion Universitaria – PSU (*University National Admission Test* in English)
The national admission test for secondary school graduates to access/apply to university. This test has to be passed, among other requirements, to access a university. As autonomous and independent legal entities, universities need not be part of this admission system. However, all universities under CRUCh have decided to require the test for their applicants.

Public university
Public corporation created by law and owned by the state. In Chile, all public universities are members of the Chilean State Universities Consortium (CUECH) and by default members of the Chilean Universities Chancellors Council (CRUCh).

Return of the state
An expansion in the state's role as a regulator of the economy and social welfare provider. It has intensified under leftist governments, particularly in Latin America, in an effort to resist neoliberalism and market oriented policies in public domains such as education, health care, pension among others.

Social practice
Discourse is a form of social practice which both constitutes the social world and is constituted by other social practices (Fairclough, 1992).

Text
Written or spoken language produced in a discursive event. According to Fairclough (1992, p. 75) there are seven elements to analyse in texts: vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and text structure constitute the form dimension of text. Force, coherence, and intertextuality constitute the meaning dimension of text.

TODA – Textually Oriented Critical Discourse Analysis
Analytical framework for CDA proposed by Fairclough (1992, 1993). The framework follows a textual analysis of vocabulary and grammar. This comprises of the "form" dimension of the text. This descriptive analysis in the framework centres on words, meanings, and metaphors. The grammatical level centres on elements of modality and transitivity. Then, a discursive practice level in which the focus is at a "meaning" dimension of the text and includes the analysis of force of utterances, coherence of the text and intertextuality. Particularly, the concept of intertextuality is of the greatest interest in the TODA framework: manifest intertextuality and constitutive intertextuality. At the discursive practice level, the analysis focuses mainly on the production (intertextuality and interdiscursivity), the distribution (chains) and the consumption of texts (coherence). Lastly, the social practice analysis reflects the explanation of the effects of the discursive practices in shaping and changing the social order. The focus is upon ideological and hegemonic effects in transforming or reproducing systems of beliefs, social relations, and social identities.

Topos or topoi (plural)
As a tool in rhetoric or rhetorical analysis, this term refers to a collection of words, sentences, cause and effect phrases, all used as a method to develop an argument. Topos (or topic) comes from the Greek word for "*place*", and so topoi refers to "*places*" where a writer may "*locate*" arguments that are appropriate to a given subject. Topos is commonly studied and technically applied in literary and linguistic studies (Hunter, 1991).

Traditional private university
Post-secondary non-for-profit private corporation, with direct public funding. All were founded before the 1980 Education Act. They are all members of the CRUCH. Six belong to the Catholic Church and three belong to private secular corporations.

Transitivity

Transitive is how meaning is represented in the clause. It shows how speakers encode in language their mental picture of reality and how they account for their experience of the world around them (Halliday, 1961, 1978). Of particular importance in CDA, it refers to the aspects of the grammar of a sentence that relates to the way it represents reality, or its ideational meaning (Fairclough, 1992). In TODA's transitivity helps in observing, among other features of the text, what participants are favoured in the text, what voice is chosen (active or passive), the presence of nominalisation, etc.

UG

Acronym for undergraduate students. It refers to students attending a university on a four- or five-year course in pursuit a bachelor's degree.

DISCLAIMER – PERSONAL STATEMENT

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"As the author of this dissertation, I would like to start with a personal statement about my initial interest in conducting this research. By 2006 I had already joined a public university as an assistant professor when the first woman president of Chile was elected. Michelle Bachelet was the 4th democratically elected president after the end of the Pinochet´s dictatorship (1990) and the 2nd socialist in the 16 years since the return of democracy. During these years Chile had been considered an example of economic progress and political stability. An emerging middle class was progressing in a neoliberal society (imposed under the dictatorship), hand by hand with access to credit, cars, shopping malls, international holidays, etc. Access to HE, although exceedingly expensive, was in some way part of this success. I personally grew up in this Chile that was progressing, in a middle-class family that always believed in HE as an opportunity to grow intellectually, but also to become a better human being.

It was during 2006, when many Chileans like me experienced the "Penguin Revolution" (so called because of school students' blue and white uniform colours in Chile). Astonished, the news and streets were taken over by secondary school students in one of the biggest protests since the days of fear and military oppression. I could assert, without doubt, that none from my generation would have had the courage to walk in the streets to mobilize in the way these students did. But this was a new generation, born in democracy and fearless of fighting for their demands.

In the very short term, students were demanding for free travel passes. A long-term demand was to abolish the municipalization of schools, a change that was part of the big transformation towards a highly privatized and marketized education system implemented under Pinochet's regime.

Later In 2011, with Chile now under the first right-wing government since 1990, the secondary students shook the government once again. What researchers later conceptualized as "the Chilean Winter" was the beginning of what was about to change in of one of the most marketized HE systems in the world.

By 2011 I had an executive role at the university, and I personally had to manage with mobilized students and students' striking, students hanging banner to expose their demands, students protesting outside lecture theatres, students taking over the buildings of the campus I was in charge of, and much more. As head of this campus in Santiago (Chile´s largest city and capital), I had to talk with students on strike, to discuss their needs and ambitions; I had to meet with parents, upset about the cancellation of activities; I had to present internal solutions and lead conversations at higher executive levels at our university. Talks were difficult. I was never really sure what students were

aiming at. I was always left with the feeling that they were asking for more, more changes, beyond HE.

Many times I was criticized for not agreeing to their internal demands, but also because they considered me part of a privileged elite.

Through this hard process I realized that not only students were experiencing a dramatic challenge, but society as whole was in demand of a radical change. The political discourse of students was about equality and a fairer society. On the one hand, the media, the ownership of which was intensely concentrated in a few Chilean powerful families, were strongly opposing any change to a well stablished HE system. On the other hand, students, beyond some short-term demands, were violent and decisive in changing the system.

It was 2016 when the newly elected president Bachelet (2nd term) proposed to the parliament a controversial policy, at the opposite end of Pinochet´s neoliberal turn, of removing tuition fees in HE after 40 years of the highly marketized HE system. The effects, unknown. The impact, unpredictable. This is where my journey as a researcher began."

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION

The effects of Higher Education (HE) becoming an increasingly market-driven sector are still a matter of great controversy. Some supporters agree that HE market-oriented policies have brought positive outcomes in terms of increasing access, fostering students' choices of where to study, and increasing the quality of education (Camelia & Marius, 2013; Guilbault, 2018; Nedbalová, Greenacre, & Schulz, 2014; Zemsky, Wegner, & Massy, 2005). Others concur that a marketized HE system increases the variety of services offered by providers of HE and their responsiveness to students' needs (Guilbault, 2018; Harrison & Risler, 2015). In marketized HE contexts an expanding demand for HE has not only privatised the sector allowing the presence of private HE institutions (HEIs) to cover the demand, but also tuition fees have been implemented to cover the costs of the massification in HE. From a service provider/consumer viewpoint, scholars contend that the implementation of tuition fees has created powerful incentives for HEIs to invest largely in infrastructure providing better services to students; to adopt cost-cutting actions to maintain financial stability; and, lastly, to develop new programmes and services according to students' needs. As stated by Furedi (2010) in Molesworth et al. (2011), supporters of markets believe that this process will turn HE into a more effective and efficient system. Thus, competitiveness in the sector is maximized by a combination of competitive private HE providers, reduced funding from the goverment and higher tuition fees that promote the freedom of choice for students (Cuthbert, 2010; Guilbault, 2016, 2018; Mazzarol, 1998; Ostrom et al., 2011).

Despite these apparent positive effects, other researchers have strongly contested market-oriented policies in HE. With a limited economic role of the government and limited public regulation to HEIs, marketization has challenged the role of HE as a public good, serving for the benefit of society as a whole, and has promoted consumerist values, benefiting the individual purely (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). In fact, it is claimed that a focus on self-interest, wealth and economic success has drastically shifted students' goals, motivations, and the purpose of attending HE (Saunders, 2010). Scholars contest marketization, arguing that policies promoting markets in HE overlook the negative effects of consumerism on HE as a public good, by making HE a private commodity (Carr-Hill, Holmes & Henderson, 2003; Slaughter & Leslie 1997; Slaughter, Leslie, Hopkins & Mazzolini, 1997).

Above all, it is in these marketized HE systems in which tuition fees have been introduced (i.e. South Korea, England, Colombia, Brazil, Chile among others) that middle-class students have been absorbed by overwhelming bank loans and credits (Meyer et al., 2013). Because of tuition fees, eligible young people are being prevented from accessing a public good, increasingly essential to leading full

lives, constituting a violation of justice, and resulting in segregation and inequality (Grugel & Riggirozzi, 2012a; Meyer et al., 2013). In the early days of markets in HE, Ranson (1993) was already declaring that the effects of marketization in HE would be devastating, arguing an increasing inequality and the segregation of citizens. Indeed, scholars have later reasserted that market-oriented reforms have promoted educational inequities, fostered social and academic segregation, and increased social inequality (Bellei & Cabalin, 2013). In the words of Meyer et al. (2013): *"There is no doubt that, to date, global trends in higher education and public policy have resulted in increased inequality in higher education when compared to the state of things some 30 years ago"* (p. 3).

While the effects of marketization has been examined by investigating postgraduate, part-time and international students, these type of students have always been subject to tuition fees (Cuthbert, 2010). Therefore, researchers have largely focused on UG students to investigate the effects of the markets in HE and policies around tuition fees. UG students are of particular interest because they are not only influenced by long-lasting marketized societies, immersed in a culture of marketization, but also UG students are, as claimed by Giroux (2002), Levy (2006) and Jongbloed (2003), critically affected by political changes in educational policies, changing the framework and the purpose of HE. In effect, it is argued that changes in policies that promote marketization in HE have deeply shaped the behaviour of UG students and their understanding of the purpose of HE (Brown, 2008; Brooks, 2018; Palfreyman & Tapper, 2014; Tomlinson, 2014). In this vein, a vast literature refers to students in HE, and a considerable number of constructions of students in HE are found in research. To name a few, students are referred to as *political actors or activists* (Brooks, 2018; Fleet & Guzmán-Concha, 2013; Somma, 2012), *apprentices and junior partners* (Wheeler, 2009), *citizens* (Svensson & Wood, 2007), *clients* (Bailey, 2000; Tight, 2013), *co-creators* (Elsharnouby, 2015), *co-producers* (Finney & Finney, 2010; McCulloch, 2009; Wheeler, 2009), *employees* (Wheeler, 2009), *future workers* (Brooks, 2018), *learners* (Cuthbert, 2010) and *people* (Cuthbert, 2010). Moreover, in policy documents students have been represented as *vulnerable children* (Brooks, 2018), *pawns* (Tight, 2013) and *sources of income* (Lomer, 2018), among others.

But, among the multiple consequences of market policies in HE, scholars have claimed that the implementation of tuition fees and the increasing financial contribution of UG students and their families to the funding of HE has profoundly influenced how students make sense of HE. Scholars have concurred that tuition fees is the most influential and catalytic element in a *consumer* orientation of students in HE (Brooks, 2018; Bunce et al., 2017; Jabbar et al., 2017; Palfreyman & Tapper, 2014), and that tuition fees promote and disseminate this consumerist orientation (Giroux, 2002; Saunders, 2010). Moreover, this consumer orientation has had a significant negative impact on HE and the

students' understanding of the purpose of HE, by transforming undergraduate HE into an instrumental process of purchasing a degree instead of pursuing knowledge (Giroux, 2002; Levy, 2006). Similarly, it has been argued that when students define themselves as consumers they see their relationship with HEIs as an instrumental and external experience and not as a conjoined effort of learning (Maringe & Gibbs, 2009; McCulloch, 2009). Lastly, this consumer orientation has reduced their roles from learners to purchasers of a commodity (Tomlinson, 2017); and some scholars are simply not convinced that market mechanisms can help overcome the challenges of critical pedagogy and equality (Brown, 2008; Collini, 2017; Hemsley-Brown, 2011; Marginson, 2013; Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005; Naidoo & Williams, 2015).

Although tuition fees are claimed to be of the highest influence on students' consumer orientation, research likewise indicates that tuition fees alone do not sufficiently account for such orientation. In effect, It has been argued that a consumerist orientation in students is beyond the application of tuition fees (Williams, 2013). Scholars have suggested that students' consumerist orientation may also be triggered by other elements of marketized societies. For example, students' personal motivations, influenced by national contexts where they live and experience HE, impact on how they understand their HE experience (Budd, 2017). Other researchers have debated about behaviours of the students also being influenced by other members of the university community, such as lecturers, administrators or peers (Budd, 2017; Saunders, 2015); hence, these orientations can change during the different stages of the student's journey in HE (Saunders, 2015). Furthermore, since HEIs are not homogenous, students' orientations may differ depending on the type of institution they attend (Naidoo et al., 2011; Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005). This could mean, for instance, differences my exist between a public or private HEI student. Lastly, the literature suggests that government policies, the broadcast media and newspapers have all been influential in the construction of the student, mostly as a consumer, since these social agents may reflect some of the dominant ways in how being an HE student is to be understood in modern times (Williams, 2011).

Consequently, and albeit students' behaviour can be mostly determined by the implementation of tuition fees (Tight, 2013), in marketized HE systems, students' behaviours are unlikely to be fully determined by the single metaphor of the "student as a consumer" (McCulloch, 2009; Nixon, Scullion, & Hearn, 2016). Furthermore, scholarship suggests that in marketized societies, students do not necessarily express a consumer orientation towards their HE (Bunce et al., 2017; Tomlinson, 2017). Therefore, it seems evident that, in these contexts, any assumption about the relationships between students and how they experience and understand the purpose of HE is

uncertain (Tight, 2013). Additionally, HE policies, such as the application or removal of tuition fees, do not determine students' subjectivities in any straightforward way (Nielsen, 2011). In effect, Williams (2013) has claimed that besides the application of tuition fees, a consumerist orientation of students may be, in effect, a consequence of broader social and political trends towards more marketized societies. In this vein, research suggests that when market discourses and market practices are rooted in a society as part of the culture, it can cross boundaries in society and have an influence that goes beyond the HE system (Hill, 2003; Kotz, 2002; Saunders, 2010). A *culture of marketization* exists when market values of choice, individualism and market relations extend and expands to all domains in life, influencing the daily lives of people, becoming a way of acting, behaving, and talking (Slater, 1997). Furthermore, in a culture of marketization, the language of commercialism and consumerism, promoted in marketized societies, implies that citizens are largely defined through market-driven notions of individualism, competition, and consumption (Giroux, 2002). A culture of marketization exists when people share the meaning and the values of markets ideals in their daily lives.

This seems to be the case in countries such as Finland, Germany, or Scotland. These countries, despite the increasing growth in marketization elsewhere, to date they are still financing public HE (Briggs, 2006; Budd, 2017; Vuori, 2013). In these societies, state-funded students' behaviours have been investigated. Yet, research has evidenced that the "student as a consumer" metaphor seems not to be limited to for-profit education or where tuition fees are applied. In effect, it is argued that in these countries, the orientation of the student as a consumer might be as intense as in fully marketized HE systems (Briggs, 2006; Budd, 2017; Vuori, 2013).

In explaining this particular phenomenon, Polanyi (1944, 2001) and the concepts of a market economy disembedded from society, and the consequences of a marketized society (Polanyi, 1944, 2001) become crucial. Polanyi (1944, 2001) claimed that there are two extreme opposite relations of a market economy to the society in which it operates: a market economy that is "*embedded"* in society and its intuitions; and a market economy that is "*disembedded"* from society. For Polanyi (1944, 2001) markets must be *embedded* in the social institutions and need to be subject to the moral and ethical norms of society so the society can control the effects of uncontrolled market ideals. In the same vein, a market economy *disembedded* from society builds a world in which moral and ethics are subordinated to market principles and ideals. Moreover, he asserted that markets liberated from any economic controls, or in neoliberal terms "free from government regulations or intervention", are governed by the self-regulating forces of supply and demand.

Polanyi (1944, 2001) claimed that a market economy *disembedded* from society is a multidimensional historical phenomenon, affecting the society as a whole, instead of a single theory

of political economy. In a marketized society, the principles of free choice for individuals, efficient economic performance, and economic growth, along with a limited government control, are deeply rooted in society, and members of society interact with these principles on a systematic and frequent basis, creating a culture of marketization. According to Polanyi (1944, 2001) a disembedded market threatens the very basis of human society by commodifying the essentials of human life (i.e. land, labour, etc.). Therefore markets should never be truly and fully disembedded (quite the opposite to what is experienced in extreme marketized societies). Furthermore, in promoting strong self-regulating markets, as supporters of marketization advocate, disembedded market economies will ultimately destroy the society, provoking widespread demands for their social regulation, triggering social crisis. The opposing forces of a market trying to stay fully disembedded from society and the forces trying to regulate and to re-embed the market economy (as in strongly marketized societies) were conceptualized by Polanyi (1944, 2001) as the *Double Movement.* In HE, this double movement could be explained as the effort of society to re convert market policies in HE when market policies have gone too far, have been fully disembedded from society, making HE a commodity. The double movement can be explained in the effort of a society to return HE to its public domain by making HE a public good for the benefit of society as a whole.

The demands for stronger regulation when markets are disembedded, as Polanyi (1944, 2001) claimed, have apparently echoed in Chilean society during the past decade. Particularly in the HE system, years of intense marketization have started to exhibit some negative effects and society has made efforts to re-embed the market in HE back into society. Chile's 40 years of market-oriented policies in HE have not had the expected outcomes of marketization in terms of increased quality and equality in HE. Beyond the increase in access, certainly caused by an uncontrolled growth and an inorganic expansion of mostly low-quality HEIs, researchers have suggested that marketization in Chilean HE has failed (Fleet & Guzmán-Concha, 2013; Somma, 2012). Until 1980 and before the application of market policies in Chile, both public and the so-called traditional private universities (see Glossary, page 14) received around 80% of their budget from central government. In subsequent years, the funding of HEIs decreased drastically. By the 1990, government funding was already reduced to 40% (Brunner, 1993; Brunner & Uribe, 2007; Espinoza & González, 2013; Salazar Zegers et al., 2013; Simbürger & Guzmán-Valenzuela, 2019). In 2015 the government funded 33% of the total budget of public HEIs versus 48% of that of traditional private universities. The difference has been financed by tuition fees. As a result, and remarkably, some private HEIs (specifically the traditional private universities) have received more public funding than state-owned fully public HEIs (Contraloría General de la República, 2017). Moreover, until 2015, around 60% of all Chilean HE students (at public,

traditional private and private HEIs) received financial support in the form of scholarships or loans subsidized by the government (Kremerman & Páez, 2015; Simbürger & Guzmán-Valenzuela, 2019). Of this 60% benefiting from subsidized loans, 66% were enrolled in fully private HEIs. These figures reveal a unique hybrid and complex notion of a public-private HE system in Chile in which the government subsidizes private HEIs, yet scarcely funds public HEIs, and participates in a loan scheme from which the private banking sector has greatly profited from public resources, for decades (Simbürger & Guzmán-Valenzuela, 2019). This hybridity has been profoundly criticized, not only in Chile but in countries such as South Korea, mainly because of the effect of the narrow margin in producing education as a public good but with certain activities lying on the border of commodity and capitalist production (Marginson, 2007).

This complete scenario started to be contested in 2005, when secondary school and HE students became involved in political debates around HE and started to lead massive protest, strikes and social movements against marketization (Bellei et al., 2014; Somma, 2012; Stromquist & Sanyal, 2013). Chilean students protested against one of the most privatized and expensive HE systems worldwide, along with South Korea and Japan (Brunner, 2008), which was primarily financed through student fees. In those days, Chilean families financed 73% of HE, compared with an average of 16% for other members of the OECD (Guzmán-Valenzuela & Barnett, 2013). Chilean students also protested against a system of increasingly poor quality, offered by private, unaccredited HEIs and a system that had deepened the segregation between social classes and the inequality in Chilean society (Bellei et al., 2014). In order to increase the quality of HEIs and to tackle inequalities in HE, after several years of discussions, the socialist government of Michelle Bachelet approved a HE policy reform in 2016 which partially removed tuition fees (*Gratuidad* in Spanish) for a group of economically less privileged students. These students could then attend any public and some eligible private HEIs, fully funded by the state. This policy change was discursively promoted as "*return of the state*" in the policy act (Gobierno De Chile, 2017) and it was considered to be part of a major political long-term goal to bring back HE as a public good in society (Gobierno De Chile, 2017). This "return of the state" refers to the efforts of the government to the partially remove the tuition fees for HE, to the interest of government in funding HE through citizens' taxes, and to the promotion of the discourse of HE as a public good and not a private commodity. Greater government involvement in HE can be a course of action to reduce the impact of marketization, an approach to promote the return of the civic role of students and an effort to dismantle marketization in HE (Lynch, 2006; Marginson, 2013). Moreover, more government intervention in providing and supporting HE could reduce inequality, particularly by looking after less privileged students (Dill, 2003). In the Chilean context, these efforts have in fact

already allowed, for the first time in 40 years, free HE for some UG students and this is expected to be 50% of student body by 2025 (Proyecto de Ley Sobre Reforma Educacion Superior, 2016).

As a result of this change in policy, two groups of students can be identified: 1) *self-funded students*, who are those financially able to pay their tuition fees; and 2) *state-funded students*, who are those whose tuition fees have been fully eliminated and instead the cost of their education is paid by taxpayers. Therefore, the approval of Gratuidad – after decades of an expensive HE system, immersed in highly marketized society – is a phenomenon that goes against increasing marketization.

Research has explained how students experience HE in a marketized HE system, conceptualizing their behaviours in many different ways. However, researchers have not yet explored how a policy that goes against marketization, implemented in a marketized society, challenges the students' understandings of HE and contests the widely accepted notion of the student-as-consumer. In effect, for some scholars, even in marketized systems it is not only inappropriate to conceive the student merely as a consumer, but also assuming such consumer behaviour in students might be partial (McCulloch, 2009; Saunders, 2015; Svensson & Wood, 2007).

Therefore, it is possible that, in a highly marketized society, students' understanding of the purpose of HE may differ when tuition fees are removed, and alternatives to a student-as-a-consumer orientation may emerge. Furthermore, research is yet to explore the effects of such policy on self-funded students and those that are now publicly funded by the state. Lastly, and informed by Polanyi's ideas, it is yet to explore if Gratuidad could be a countermovement to the disembedding forces of marketization, in an effort to ***re-***embed the market economy in society, and, eventually, be an action to start dismantling a culture of marketization in HE.

1.2. AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Processes of social change are in part processes of change in discourses, and changes in discourses may have constructive effects on processes of social change (Wodak & Meyer, 2001; Wodak & Meyer, 2008). Furthermore, social actors have the power to resist or transform discourses (Fairclough, 1992, 1993, 2003). Consequently, the aim of this dissertation is to critically investigate the function and effects of discourses in a context of "free" higher education, in a highly marketized society. To address this aim, this research will explore discursive representations of the student in HE.

The overarching research question (RQ) for this thesis is:

What are the functions and effects of the discourses surrounding a public policy reform of partial removal of tuition fees?

The following three sub-questions address this overarching question:

- How is the public policy of Gratuidad discursively represented in media articles?
- How are students discursively represented in media coverage of the policy reform?
- What are the discourses of UG students regarding their HE experience?

1.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

To address the research aim, this study conducts a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of newspaper articles and data from in-depth interviews with HE students.

In understanding the effects of marketization and neoliberal discourses in society, researchers have increasingly turned to CDA (Rogers et al., 2005). CDA conceptualizes the use of language as a form of social practice. All social practices are tied to specific historical contexts and are the means by which existing social relations are reproduced or contested (Leeuwen, 2008; van Dijk, 1997; van Dijk, 2003). Social change is in part a process of change in discourse (Wodak & Meyer, 2001; Wodak & Meyer, 2008). In this vein, CDA is a type of discourse analysis that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in social and political contexts (Woodside-Jiron, 2004). In particular, the analysis of macro and micro data for this research is framed following Fairclough's (1992, 1993, 2003) three-dimensional approach to CDA: TODA – Textually Oriented Discourse Analysis. This framework refers to (1) the analysis of text, (2) the analysis of discursive practice and (3) the analysis of social practice. Fairclough's TODA approach will be used to unveil and determine media representations of Gratuidad. It will also be used to identify how students are represented in the media and whether (and if so how) these representations differ or not from students' own orientations.

At the macro level analysis, the corpus consists of a selection of 28 media articles from two leading newspapers, opposite in their editorial ideological stance, published from March 2014 through to April 2019. These are the conservative newspaper El Mercurio and the independent left-wing newspaper El Mostrador. Appendix 1 lists the sample of newspaper articles. To investigate students' orientations (micro level), 24 in-depth interviews were conducted with UG students between August and October 2019 in Chile. The study adopted a cross-institutional approach, and so drew on one public and one private university, similar in size and the range of subjects offered, one being research oriented (public) and the other teaching oriented (private). Students studying different subjects were interviewed and two different types of UG students participated in the study: first-year students who

had started their HE in March 2019, when Gratuidad was fully operational; and final-year students who had started their HE before 2016 (when Gratuidad was the subject of political discussion but yet to be implemented). Lastly, the sample considered self-funded and state-funded students (the latter under the Gratuidad scheme). Appendix 2 lists the participants. Posters were placed in various schools and campus buildings inviting students to participate. The poster is shown in Appendix 4 (in Spanish).

1.4. THESIS CONTRIBUTIONS

How changes in policies have influenced students' experiences and how these changes shape their orientations to HE, or not, is still unclear and a matter of great debate (Tomlinson, 2014). A more explicit market-based agenda in HE has been argued to have negative consequences not only for students' pedagogical outcomes, by encouraging an instrumental learning process (Molesworth et al., 2009; Nixon et al., 2018), but also for the promotion of social class segregation, inequality, and injustice (Grugel & Riggirozzi, 2012; Meyer, John, Chankseliani, & Uribe, 2013).

This research sought to explore the notion of what it is to be a student in a very distinctive context. Chile can be considered a highly marketized and neoliberal society (Fleet & Guzmán-Concha, 2017; Guajardo-Soto, 2019). Extraordinarily for such a socio-economic and political context, tuition fees in HE were eliminated in a radical HE policy turn. Analysing the effects of discourses around Gratuidad has offered a holistic view of the change in HE practice and its influence on students´ experiences in HE.

This thesis set out to make two major contributions to knowledge. Firstly, it contributes by offering novel and complementary theorisations of the student, as Apolitical, Risk taker, Striving to be someone, and as Budding social reformer. In doing so, it expands theories of students in HE and offers alternative theoretical explanations of student behaviour in HE. Furthermore, it contributes by empirically confirming the conceptualisation of the student-as-a-consumer and the student-as-an-annoyed client in the Global South; both have so far only been investigated in the of Global North.

Secondly, this dissertation contributes to knowledge by offering a new interpretation of the concept of embeddedness/disembeddedness and Polanyi's Double Movement (1944, 2001).These representations expose a Chilean society that is gradually reembedding the market in HE back to society and its social values. As a policy that removed prices in HE in a strongly marketised society, Gratuidad offers a novel interpretation of how a policy of free education can be a countermovement of the society working against forces who wish to maintain the neoliberal and market system in the HE sector.

This thesis contributes to academic knowledge of students orientations to HE and how students understand the purpose of HE differently to the purchase of a commodity, as it has been suggested in Anglo-American contexts (Giroux, 2002; Levy, 2006). By doing so, this thesis will expand current understanding of student orientations when tuition fees are removed, beyond the student-as-a-consumer orientation. Additionally, this study proposes that, from the view of the Theory of Embeddedness and his concept of *Double Movement* (Polanyi, 1944, 2001), Gratuidad could be an example of a countermovement to resist the markets in HE and an effort from the society to ***re-***embed the market back to its institutions.

Methodologically, this research also brings CDA as a method of analysis not only in the investigation of newspaper articles, which is a method widely conducted when analysing discourses in neoliberal HE contexts, but also in the analysis of individual interviews with Chilean HE students, where CDA is allowed to uncover notions of social power abuse, hegemony, discrimination, and opposition to the ideals of neoliberalism. Moreover, CDA as applied to individual interviews helped in exploring how students, as members of a society, adopt discourses that oppose neoliberal values in HE in particular, and in society in general. Other types of qualitative analysis could have offered more general themes about students' experiences in HE, but CDA has offered a reflective textually oriented analysis of the discourses of students. Linked to social theories, this CDA to individual interviews can expand knowledge of the effects of neoliberal policies in people's discourses in society and their impacts on how students understand the effect of the market. Furthermore, and although CDA is a method regularly applied to individual interviews in other social domains, this research design is rather uncommon, and rarely found in literature that employed individual interviews in the domain of HE.

1.5. STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This thesis is structured as follows. Chapter 2 will review the context in which this research has been conducted. The Chilean HE as a system is described along with its transformation over the years, its composition, and the latest policy changes. Complementary to Chapter 2, Appendix 3 exhibits a "Summary Statistics on the Chilean HE System" for the year 2021 (p. 201). Appendix 3 might be a useful resource to have a better understanding of the current composition of Chile's HE system.

Chapter 3 reviews three interrelated bodies of literature. The chapter starts with a reflection on the key terms and concepts related to neoliberalism and marketization in HE. Also the controversy of HE as a public or private good is examined. Secondly, the chapter examines the diversity of concepts scholars have used to refer to students' responses in HE. The case for investigating students' orientations is made in this section as the most appropriate lens to understand the student. Likewise,

a review of the possible effects of marketization on how students make sense of their HE experience is presented by exposing a multiplicity of constructions of and metaphors for the UG student, beyond the well documented concept of the student as a consumer. The representations of students in policies and media found in the literature are also presented in this section. Chapter 3 concludes by discussing theories contesting neoliberalism and the scholarship of resistance to markets in HE. In this vein, the last section of Chapter 3 reviews the theories of embeddedness and disembeddedness (Polanyi, 1944), and discussions around the effects and risks of a market economy disembedded from the society.

Chapter 4 describes in detail the methodology for this research, grounded in the philosophical paradigm of an interpretivist/constructivist approach. Moreover, the chapter presents the TODA approach to CDA as the most suitable method to explore how media discourses produce, reproduce, and resist the hegemonic neoliberal ideology in HE, along with students' self-representations in HE. Additionally, data collection procedures are described in this chapter. Lastly, the ethics and quality criteria of this study are described plus a reflexive discussion of how this research has been conducted.

The empirical findings in this study are organized in three chapters, each one addressing one of the sub-questions of the thesis.

Chapter 5 reveals the different representations of Gratuidad that emerged from the analysis of media articles. Gratuidad is identified to be contextualized in four main ways: as a social revolution for the future of Chilean children; as an obstacle to reach a more equal society; as a hasty and absurd policy; and as an irrational passion.

Chapter 6 details the representations of students identified via analysis of media reports. Media representations of students portray them as egocentric, as neglected by the state, and as marionettes of a political party.

Chapter 7 presents students' orientations to HE as identified from the analysis of interview data. While the findings confirm some students revealing a consumerist orientation to HE some others an orientation as of annoyed clients, students also appear to have alternative orientations: as apolitical and poorly informed risk takers, as young people striving to be Someone, and as budding social reformers.

Chapter 8 discusses and concludes the findings from the three empirical chapters to respond to the questions about to the functions and effects of the discourses surrounding Gratuidad. Additionally, in this discussion, a debate about the dominance of the neoliberal discourse in HE and the resistance to changes in the social order is also offered. Furthermore, the discursive representation of the student at the macro and micro level suggests that a policy change of removing

tuition fees has apparently influenced how students understand the purpose of the change. To this end, Gratuidad is presented as an example of a countermovement against a disembedded market in HE, to eventually help in ***re-****embedding* the market economy back in society. Lastly, some limitations and a few avenues for future research are also discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER 2: THE CHILEAN HE SYSTEM – FROM MARKETS TO THE REMOVAL OF TUITION FEES

Chile has been considered one of the most neoliberal countries, with one of the most marketized HE systems in the world (Guzmán-Valenzuela & Barnett, 2013). This small country in South America has one of the highest tuition fees in all HE systems around the world (Guzmán-Valenzuela & Barnett, 2013). Yet, this highly marketized HE system faced a radical change in 2016 when for the first time, after 40 years of strongly market-oriented policies, the government implemented a policy that removed tuitions fees in HE. Changes in policy to remove tuition fees after years of strong marketization are a countertrend in neoliberal societies.

This chapter closely reviews the literature related to the transformation of HE in Chile. The major changes and phases in Chilean HE are categorized as four historical moments in Chilean history: a) Historical background: The origins of HE in Chile; b) Marketization in Chilean HE: The 1980 Education Act and Pinochet's neoliberal model; c) The failure of the Chilean HE system: Students resisting marketization; and d) Removal of tuition fees: the 2016 HE reform and the policy of Gratuidad.

2.1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: THE ORIGINS OF HE IN CHILE

One can go back to colonial time for the history of HE in Chile, when colleges were established by the Orders of the Dominicans (1619) and Jesuits (1620), mostly to teach theology, philosophy, and arts (Schiefelbein, 1990). Only in 1842 did Andres Bello[1] establish "Universidad de Chile" (University of Chile) as the first public and secular university in the recently independent country. It focused on research and the development of academic degrees such as medicine, engineering, and agriculture (Schiefelbein, 1990).

In 1888, the Pope founded "Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile" (Pontifical Catholic University of Chile), the first private and Catholic university, as an alternative to the non-spiritual influence of Universidad de Chile. Later, in 1919, the Masonic movement in Concepcion[2] founded "Universidad de Concepcion" (University of Concepcion) (Katz & Spence, 2009). During the following decades, six other universities were created, giving a total of eight in the country. By 1954, Chile had around 20,000 UG students, and the eight universities were fully supported and funded by the government through public resources (Katz & Spence, 2009). By 1967 the worldwide revolution among university students in western countries also impacted Chile, with students and administrative staff

[1] Andres Bello: Venezuelan-born and Chilean poet, scholar, and diplomat. He is considered to be the intellectual father of South America. He became a Chilean citizen and founded Universidad de Chile. Encyclopædia Britannica. https://www.britannica.com/biography/Andres-Bello. Access date 2 April 2022.

[2] Second largest city in Chile. Located 500 km south of Santiago.

obtaining voting power in their institutions (Brunner, 1993, 1997). Around those days enrolment increased and research centres focusing on social issues were created. Enrolments rose from 76,795 students in 1970 (50% women) to 146,451 in 1973.

In 1973, during the socialist regime of Salvador Allende (1970-1973), universities were considered crucial for the development of the country. Vice chancellors and university councils governed their HEIs, and a massive expansion of free tuition enrolments was about to be implemented (Brunner, 1993). In those days, the Chilean HE system was structured as follows:

- Eight universities: two public (state-owned) and six private (three Catholic and three secular corporations), all state-funded based on previous-year budget allocations and according to institutional size, enrolments and costs generated by research and postgraduate programmes (Brunner, 1993).
- These eight universities were known as the "old universities". Of those eight, the six private institutions were referred as "traditional private" (see Glossary). UG programmes were predominant.
- Any intention to create a new university had to be approved by the government in order to secure public funding and legal validation of educational degrees.
- The admission process was based on students' scores on the National Standardized Academic Test (PAA – Prueba de Aptitud Academica, later renamed PSU) introduced in 1967, plus secondary school grades (Katz & Spence, 2009).

In 1973, due to the military coup, Augusto Pinochet came into power. Members of the armed forces were appointed as Vice Chancellors; around 2,000 liberal researchers and lecturers and scholars were made redundant, and more than 20,000 students were expelled from their programmes[3]. Additionally, most social sciences subjects were eliminated from the curricula; 25 research centres related to social sciences were dismantled and closed (Brunner & Briones, 1992). All universities and public libraries with literature on social sciences and Marxist theories were closed; and books were burned in public parks and on the streets. The absolute control of all HEIs and their self-governing bodies were part of what scholars have labelled "*an ideology purification process*" coordinated by the military authoritarian regime (Hunneus, 2016). This was the beginning of what was to culminate in the most drastic changes to come in HE: the 1980 Educational Reform.

[3] Decades later, after the re-instatement of democratic governments (1990), it was revealed that most of these people were tortured, killed, or simply "disappeared". Many others fled into exile and finished their degrees in European countries.

2.2. MARKETIZATION IN CHILEAN HE: THE 1980 EDUCATION ACT AND THE NEOLIBERAL TURN

Following the initial changes faced by HEIs and the HE sector during the first years of the dictatorship; new and more drastic changes were implemented in 1980. These drastic changes were influenced by the ideals of the neoliberal model that was taking over most public domains in Chile, and all implemented by ministers under Pinochet[4]. Although not directly linked to this study, it is relevant to understand that neoliberal policies not only impacted HE, but also meant labour flexibilization, the end to agrarian reform, capitalization of the countryside, and privatization of public enterprises in almost all sectors, including pension funds, healthcare, water, and, certainly, education.

The main reform in HE policy came with the 1980 Education Act. The primary objectives of the reform under Pinochet's dictatorial regime can be stated as follow:

- **Deregulation**: To promote private investment in the creation of new institutions in the sector. Minimum requirements were established for the creation of private HEIs. To diversify the structure, three levels of tertiary education were recognized:
    - Universities: for four and five-year undergraduate programmes leading to professional and academic degrees. Many new private universities were founded. Also, because of the tense political environment in the country, the two state-owned public universities (Universidad de Chile and the Universidad Tecnica del Estado – currently known as Universidad de Santiago de Chile) were required to give up their regional campuses across the country. The reason was to reduce their institutional power and to avoid any kind of confrontation and protests with the military regime. The regional campuses of the two state-owned public universities turned into new regional autonomous public HEIs.
    - Professional Institutes (IP): for four-year courses leading to professional titles with no academic degrees. Several private PIs were created.
    - Centres for Technical Training (CFT): for two-year vocational courses leading to technical certificates only. Hundreds of these were created (Brunner, 1993).

- **Financing and funding**: The public funding was largely discontinued for the existing public and traditional private HEIs. Basic state support was limited to the eight original universities and all the newly created regional HEIs. Furthermore, from this moment on, the institution's core

[4] *The "Chicago Boys" was a group of Chilean economists who studied at the University of Chicago from 1957 to 1970, under the supervision of Milton Friedman, and who had a decisive influence on the economic decisions of Pinochet's regime* (Pitton, 2007).

funding had to be complemented with tuition fees, competition for research funds and contract funding. A small amount of public funding for universities was linked to the Indirect Funding Programme (IFP), known as the "best students formula" as it was based on the best 20,000 scorers in the previous year's National Admission Test enrolled by each institution. No public funding was available for the recently created fully private institutions. Funding for new private institutions could solely come from tuition fees and investments by the owners (Salazar & Leihy, 2013).

- **Loan System**: Lower-income students could apply to a new government loan system that was put in place for public universities. Students attending new private institutions had no access to state loans. This regulation changed as of 1989, when private institutions were allowed to compete for the IFP (best students formula), increased to the 27,500 best scorers in the previous year's National Admission Test (Brunner, 1993). Later, during the democratic governments, these loans were transferred to the banking system and privately managed by local banks, at their interest rates.

- **Public Servants**: Academic and administrative personnel in public institutions lost their civil servant status, which allowed universities to pay market salaries to compete for their staff and also to apply laxer redundancy policies.

- **Research Funding**: Finally, the Fondo de Desarrollo Cientifico y Tecnologico (FONDECYT; Scientific and Technologic Development Fund), a publicly financed national research fund, was created for researchers to compete for research resources on a yearly basis under peer-review control.

The 1980 Education Act utterly reshaped the HE system, through to the present day. Table 1 reveals the evolution of the HE system in Chile since its major policy change in 1980:

TABLE 1. EVOLUTION OF THE HE SYSTEM IN CHILE BETWEEN 1980 – 2021

TYPE OF INSTITUTION OF HE	1980	1985	2021
UNIVERSITY			
Public	2	14	18
Traditional-Private	6	6	11
Private	0	3	30
Total number of Universities	**8**	**23**	**59**
PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTE (PI)			
Private with public funding	0	6	0
Private	0	19	36
Total number of PIs	**0**	**25**	**36**
CENTRE ECHNICAL TRAINING (CTT)			
Public	0	0	10
Private	0	102	41
Total number of CTTs		**102**	**51**
Total of secondary HE institutions	**8**	**150**	**146**

Source: Developed by the author from public information available at www.mineduc.cl. For a detailed description, please refer to Appendix 3.

After the 1980 Education Act, the relationship between HEIs and the state moved from a model of state control to a model of state supervision. Institutions have had autonomy in regulating their market behaviour while the government has acted as supervisor (Brunner, 2008). It was only after the first democratic post-military government, in 1990, that the state started setting up regulatory policies and accreditation programs for private institutions. Between 1980 and 2021, the number of universities grew from eight to fifty-nine, making Chile the country with the highest proportion of private institutions of HE in the world (73.8%), along with South Korea (Espinoza & Gonzalez, 2016). Enrolment in HE increased to 1,294,739 students in 2021 in the entire system, representing about 6.5% of the Chilean population. The financing of HE (i.e. total expenditure on HE) before Gratuidad was estimated to be the equivalent of 2.34% of GDP (OECD, 2011). This explains why Chile had been positioned next to South Korea as the countries with the highest proportion of financing of HE through student tuition fees.

The Chilean HE system has been considered as one of the most marketized structures in the world (OECD, 2016). Despite being presented as an exemplary case within the Latin American context (Ugarte, 2014), the marketization in Chilean HE had not been growing unquestioned. In the words of Brunner (1993, p. 36): *"…the market took over the Chilean HE System, impacting in a) the liberalization of control over the supply; b) the growth of supply; and c) the transfer of the weight of financing to students and their families…"*

In effect, social movements in 2006 and 2011 put the marketization of Chilean HE at the centre of the political debate. One primary reason was a questionable and rather dishonest lucrative business around some HEIs (mostly private). It is almost public knowledge that the investors behind private HEIs had managed to elude the law using legal subterfuges, creating real estate commercial companies or ghost companies created by financial corporations (that rented buildings to universities at remarkably high prices), configuring the perfect business to obtain state subsidies, not paying VAT or income and profit taxes, and making exorbitant profits. According to the Higher Education Information Service (SIES), 55 of the 59 universities revealed surplus (or profit) of £100 million or more for the year 2010. Adding PIs and CTTs, the HE market generated £127 million in the same year. One private PI and one private university (both members of the American conglomerate Laureate International) together made a surplus of £37 million during 2010, a figure that far exceeds the operating margins of other HEIs according to public sources (Camara Diputados De Chile, 2014). In such lucrative business, competition became extremely relevant. HEIs' expenditure on promotion and publicity is the third largest in the total market of goods and services: annually, HEIs (public and private) spend an average of almost £45 million on advertising, followed only by big department stores and mobile companies (Camara Diputados De Chile, 2014).

Other highly relevant arguments for these social protest were the unequal conditions of competition faced by public HEIs; the negative consequences for middle class families' budgets due to high tuition fees; the lack of quality in some unaccredited HEIs (public and private); and the growing inequality and segregation in Chilean society (Bellei & Cabalin, 2013; Cabalin, 2012, 2015). Indeed, according to the OECD (2021) in 2021 Chile was identified as the second most unequal OECD country.

2.3. THE FAILURE OF THE CHILEAN HE SYSTEM: STUDENTS RESISTING MARKETIZATION

During the first decade of the century, Chile received international attention for an unprecedented wave of social protest against a highly marketized HE system (Somma, 2012). The changes in Chilean society became evident in 2006, when public secondary school students (the "penguin movement", named for the colours of Chilean public high-school uniforms) shook the administration of socialist Michelle Bachelet's first government, with their demand for free transport passes.

Having made it to university, these "penguins" came back to the streets in 2011. The movement this time faced right-wing billionaire president Sebastian Piñera. As a businessman, Piñera did not commit to selling his companies before taking office. This was easily represented as the essence of unrestricted neoliberalism. Also, Joaquin Lavin, Minister of Education (until July 2011, then replaced precisely due to the student movement), founder and shareholder of a large private university,

suspected of having violated the anti-profit legislation, provided the perfect antecedents for the movement's demands, which had intensified, now ranging from the provision of free HE for all Chileans students and an effective punishment of corporations profiting from HE, to proposals for funding public HEIs, tax reforms to fund their demands and finally the rescue of the role of the state in HE and HEIs' role in promoting citizenship instead of consumerism (Bellei et al., 2014).

While the first protests in early May 2011 brought to the street a few thousand students, by August the same year, the movement was estimated at 200,000 people, including union workers, environmental activists, indigenous people, and a heterogeneous mass of citizens discontented with the neoliberal economic system as a whole. Additionally, since a large proportion of Chilean families have or expect to have HE students among their members, and since they cannot afford HE tuition fees without taking loans, the movement soon became a massive protest, with the presence of parents, grandparents, and entire families (children included). One of the unintended consequences of the marketization and expansion of Chilean HE was precisely the creation of a large mass of middle-class students with better organizational capacities than their parents. Also, as they had not grown up in the heart of a dictatorship, they were willing to voice their demands. The middle class was indeed the main social class protesting on the streets (Bellei & Cabalin, 2013; Cabalin, 2012, 2015).

Bellei & Cabalin (2013) have suggested that the Chilean student movement was successful because it tried to undermine several basic assumptions of markets in Chilean HE. The first one was private actors profiting from educational activities. Although, as mentioned above, it is illegal for private HEIs to profit in Chile, many of these HEIs were making profits by using the sophisticated legal practices mentioned in previous paragraphs. The movement was critical in spreading the belief that one of the reasons why Chilean education was so expensive (and why families had to struggle so much to pay for it) was that educational corporations were becoming rich out of students' and families' resources. Spreading this information was essential for creating the sense of injustice over the HE system. Furthermore, the questionable quality of mostly unaccredited institutions, many founded without government control, and which had expanded inorganically all over the country, and the failure of success in the job market for students graduating from these HEIs, increased the discontent.

The second effect of the movement was challenging another basic principle of markets in HE: tuition fees and the assumption that citizens would have to pay for HE, and HE considered a private good (Bellei et al., 2014; Bellei & Cabalin, 2013). In this line, the movement claimed that the Chilean HE system was creating massive inequalities between those sufficiently rich to access and complete studies in high-quality HEIs and those less privileged. To eradicate this injustice the movement called for the provision of free and high-quality public HE for all citizens. In that context, HE becomes a right

rather than a consumer good which, depending on market mechanisms, would continue reproducing segregation and inequalities.

2.4. REMOVAL OF TUITION FEES: THE 2016 EDUCATION ACT AND THE POLICY OF GRATUIDAD

Ugarte (2014) has firmly declared that the Chilean HE system has become a success. The arguments rely in Chile being the first South American nation to become a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and a ready to become a developed country. Across a broad spectrum of socioeconomic and political measures, including HE performance, Chile tops the rankings across the Latin American region. Ugarte (2014) argues that the reason for Chile's economic success is its enrolment rates in HE. By 2014, almost 30% of Chile's 25–34-year-olds had attended tertiary education, well above the average for the Latin American region.

However, access to HE in Chile has exploded in recent decades only because of the enormous increase in private provision, with two-thirds of UGs enrolled in private HEIs (Espinoza & González, 2013), which in the early 1980s, only accounted for less than 30% of UG students. Also, greater numbers are due to a gradual increase in the enrolment of female students; students from the least wealthy families; and students from ethnic minorities. Nevertheless, the inequality gap persists, especially at the more prestigious private and public universities (Pitton, 2007). In this vein, Fleet & Guzmán-Concha (2017), Guzmán-Valenzuela (2016) and Pitton (2007) concur that neoliberalism has failed to meet the promise of contributing to the wellbeing of all citizens and that market policies in HE have impacted students and families badly, resulting in severe segregation of the society.

Opponents of the marketized HE system, members of political parties (of various political sectors), leaders and participants of social movements, and critics from various fields of society, pointing to the inequality produced by this form of HE, led the government to urge a policy reform that would offer free education to less advantaged students. The reform, known formally as the 2016 Education Act and termed "*Gratuidad"* (Government Voucher Programme, following an international convention for free tuition systems in HE), was approved by the government of the socialist President Mrs Michelle Bachelet towards the end of 2015 and it was first implemented for the 2016 cohort of students. The policy has been operational since then.

Among its many features, some of them not necessarily relevant to this study, the 2016 policy text considered issues such as: a) coordination of HE as an integrated system; b) the creation of a Secretary of HE to coordinate legislation regarding HE; c) promotion of technical and vocational education (Public IPs and CFTs); d) the creation of the National Assurance System for HE; e) regulations against for-profit HEIs; f) regulations regarding enrolment numbers in HE; g) strengthening of public

HEIs; and h) public financing of HE (Ley de Educacion Superior, 2016). In its Title VIII, about the public financing of HE, the constitutional law states that HEIs that are part of Gratuidad will, by law, offer free HE to students (those who meet a set of socioeconomic criteria) for the total duration of the degree. Title VIII has 24 articles that explain in detail the operationalization of Gratuidad.

The policy has been revised by Parliament a few times since its implementation in 2016. With stricter rules, mostly related to the quality of HEIs, the qualifications of academic staff and years of accreditation. By 2021, 36 universities (18 public, 9 traditional private and 9 private), 8 IPs (all private) and 21 CFTs (10 public and 11 private) had become part of Gratuidad. As of 2020, Gratuidad had permitted 268,872 UG students to attend public and private HEIs tuition-free (MINEDUC, 2020.) According to the Ministry of Education, the total number of UGs in universities (public and private) receiving free education represented 25% of total enrolments in HE in 2019, a figure that will eventually increase to 50% in the coming years.

CHAPTER 3: MARKETIZATION AND THE STUDENT IN HE

Three interrelated bodies of literature are considered to be essential to comprehend the current discussions in which this study is framed. This chapter starts by reviewing key terms and concepts around neoliberalism, and in particular marketization in HE. Theories around the effects of market-oriented policies in HE are discussed. The controversial debate over whether HE is a public or a private good is also examined.

Secondly, the chapter explores the diverse range of concepts that scholars have used to refer to students' responses in HE. The case is made in this section for student orientations as the most appropriate lens to understand the student. Likewise, a review of the effect of marketization on how students make sense of their HE experience is presented by exposing a multiplicity of constructions and metaphors of the UG student, beyond the well documented concept of the student as a consumer. The relevance of analysing and understanding documents in representations of students in policies and the media is also presented in this section.

The review of the literature in this chapter concludes with a discussion of perspectives opposing neoliberalism and stances in which research shows there is some resistance to markets in general and marketization in HE in particular. In this vein, the last section of Chapter 3 reviews concepts of post-neoliberalism, inequality, and segregation. Moreover, it discusses the return of the state to HE framed around the concepts of embeddedness, disembeddedness and the double-movement proposed by political economist, philosopher, sociologist, and anthropologist Karl Polanyi (1944, 2001).

3.1. NEOLIBERALISM AND MARKETIZATION

Scholars have largely described and analysed neoliberalism and its political, economic, and social impact in society, including HE. It is not the purpose of this review to go in depth into its advantages and disadvantages, but some definitions and explanations are needed to understand the influence of neoliberalism in HE and the effects of marketization and privatization.

Neoliberalism can be defined as a theory of political economic practices where social goods/services are maximized by unregulated market behaviours (self-regulated markets), in which the government create and preserve an institutional framework to promote these practices (Harvey, 2005). With its roots in the classical liberalism of the 19th century, this new liberalism has its intellectual foundations in the work of Friedman (1962) and Hayek (1960, 1976) who argued, among other principles, that consumers acting in relatively unrestricted ways, and in their own self-interest, can eventually make better decisions for themselves, rejecting any form of government intervention.

The *neo* (or new) aspect of the liberalism relies on deregulation, privatization, and commodification as primary pillars of liberalism, privileging the interests of private individuals and corporations over the interests of society (Harvey, 2005; Saunders, 2007). Friedman (1962) and Hayek (1976) claim that individuals acting in relatively unrestricted ways and in their own self-interest will eventually make better decisions for themselves. According to Friedman (1962) and Hayek (1976), one of the most serious economic problems of a country is the inefficient allocation of public spending, mostly caused by state interventions, which distort incentives and distort price mechanisms. Price mechanisms are, according to these scholars, the basic principle of a market economy.

In HE, neoliberalism has impacted the sector with reforms that promote marketization, privatization, and the commodification of HE (Tight, 2019; Tolofari, 2008; Winter, 2000). In HE, neoliberalism has triggered the reduction of the nation's expenditures on public HEIs, the elimination of regulatory obstacles to market growth and the liberalization of HE (Brunner, 2013; Harvey, 2005; Tight, 2019). But when referring to the price mechanism in HE, it is argued that prices in HE create powerful incentives for HE suppliers (HEIs) to make large investments, to adopt cost-cutting actions, and to develop new programmes and services. Competitiveness and efficiency are maximized based on competitive private HEIs, less government intervention and the application of tuition fees, all promoting freedom of rational choice for individuals in HE (Cuthbert, 2010; Guilbault, 2016, 2018; Mazzarol, 1998; Ostrom et al., 2011).

Despite these alleged benefits, neoliberalism has been widely contested. Polanyi (1944) refuted the neoliberal ideology by claiming that a free-market economy as a multidimensional phenomenon affects the society as a whole, instead of a single and simple theory of political economy that affects only the economic decisions of a society. Although Polanyi (1944, 1957, 2001) does not refer explicitly to the concept as neoliberalism, he refers to this form of economic liberalism as the ideology behind the commodification of labour, nature, and money and the self-regulation of markets (Polanyi, 1944). Self-regulated markets, asserts Polanyi (2001), are a phenomena with multiple dimensions. Beyond its economic impact, there is the social, political, and even an environmental effect when applying policies that are unregulated. Self-regulated markets, as in neoliberals economies, can impact local communities, can becoming socially divisive, can affect the spirit of solidarity among people, and it can have a deep impact on nature (Polanyi, 2001, pp. 136-138).

Harvey (2005) concurs by asserting that neoliberalism, in modern societies, promotes a populist culture of consumerism and individualism. This culture refers to a society that shares the meaning and the values of markets ideals in their daily lives. A culture of marketization refers to a society in which

market values of choice, individualism and market relations extend and expands to all domains in life, influencing the daily lives of people, becoming a way of acting, behaving, and talking (Slater, 1997). Furthermore, in a culture of marketization, the language of commercialism and consumerism, promoted in marketized societies, implies that citizens are largely defined through market-driven notions of individualism, competition, and consumption (Giroux, 2002).

Harvey, (2005); Levy, Bok, Clark, & Geiger (2006); and Mammadov & Hasanov (2016) describe that neoliberalism fosters massive inequality, increases macroeconomic instability, fails to ensure economic growth, lacks rising wages; and a grows personal debt. At the individual level, Lynch (2006) has argued that under neoliberalism, individuals are solely responsible for their own wellbeing, promoting a consumer behaviour, instead of a citizen role. Furthermore, Saunders (2007) has described neoliberalism as a commanding hegemony that has "*saturated our consciousness so that the economic world we see and interact with…becomes…the only world*" (p. 4).

The hegemonic neoliberal ideas of markets in the HE sector have had negative effects to practice and to the student experience (Saunders, 2007). It is claimed that in a neoliberal HE system, the state has limited its economic role and public regulation. As a result, neoliberalism has misplaced the role of HE as a public good for the benefit of a society, and promoted instead marketization, privatization, and consumerist values for the benefit of the individual (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). It was long ago declared that markets in HE could have tragic consequences, segregating citizens and increasing inequalities and differences (Ranson, 1993). For example, Giroux (2002) expressed his concerns about materialism, consumerism, and commodification of public goods and how these issues have been ruling the behaviours of different segments of societies. Nevertheless, and beyond these red alerts about market policies in HE, marketization seems to be the trend in Western societies, as it will be discussed in the next section.

THE RHETORIC OF MARKETS, PRIVATIZATION AND TUITION FEES IN HE

Neoliberalism has transformed the HE sector by increasing the presence and acceptance of market principles and, consequently, reinforcing the marketization of the sector (Brown, 2008; Georgiadis, 2011; Wedlin, 2008). In HE, neoliberalism and marketization have introduced a new mode of regulation and form of governmentality (Olssen & Peters, 2005), increasing the competition and its accountability to its diverse stakeholders (Naidoo & Williams, 2015).

Away from Keynesian principles, the rhetoric of the market in HE tries to persuade society about its benefits. For example, research has exposed how proponents of markets in HE argue that public

HE systems are too large and complex for governments to fund them on their own. Furthermore, scholars have shown that proponents of markets believe that markets in HE increase competition within and between universities, creating more efficient HEIs, and that private sector management principles will enhance how the HE system operates (Naidoo & Williams, 2015). The practical consequences of markets in HE have included cutting operational costs, abandoning courses and programmes not in demand offering more popular programmes, improving facilities and increased amounts of advertising to improve brand image and increase sales and profit margins (Hemsley-Brown, 2011b). Moreover, in associating marketization – free-market theory framed on concepts of autonomy, price, competition, and information – with traditional marketing – the theory of marketing framed on concepts of product, price, place, and promotion – scholars have agreed with Kotler & Fox (1995), who asserted that HEIs must be customer-oriented institutions, to ensure they respond to student-consumers' needs (Nedbalová, Greenacre, & Schulz, 2014). Following the principles of market theory, Brown (2008) and Jongbloed (2003) have discussed three crucial conditions for markets in HE to operate fully:

1. Competition and autonomous suppliers: market entry would be lightly regulated.
2. Information: choice of HEIs and courses would be based on valid, reliable, and accessible information about their quality and suitability for the individual; and,
3. Tuition Fees: prices would at least cover costs; students would meet those costs from their own funds. The main principle in the marketization in HE is to charge for it as a private good.

Likewise, market policies in HE have stimulated an increase in privatization in the sector (Dill, 1997). Privatization has been defined as the introduction of private capital and ownership into previously public domains. The sale of government businesses, agencies or services to private owners implies a shift from public to private (Newfield, 2008). In the social domain of HE, privatization has taken three forms (Dill, 1997):

a) **De-nationalization**: previously state-controlled academic institutions can become independent.
b) **Outsourcing**: services previously provided by the state sector such as food services, gardening, security, or IT support are placed out to private enterprises.
c) **De-monopolization**: government relaxes or eliminates regulations permitting private colleges and universities to compete with public institutions. This is the essence of the privatization of the system.

In particular, de-monopolization relates to the growth of the system, with massive student access to HE which has shown worldwide radical expansion through private HE systems and probably considered one of the greatest successes of marketization. In 1970, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics estimated that approximately 32.5 million students were enrolled in HE worldwide. In the year 2010, this estimation increased to practically 178 million (almost six times more). The number of HE students is now forecast to reach 263 million by 2025 worldwide (almost nine times more). According to UK HM Government (2013), this growth is an enough reason to make education a tradable and marketable service. In effect, for supporters of privatization in HE, HEIs should clearly identify its audience's needs to satisfy their expectations. HEIs should communicate their identities to all stakeholders to benefit from the HE 'business'. HEIs could have the potential for profitable returns if such HE 'service' can be sold at market prices and traded to those who can afford to pay for it (Camelia & Marius, 2002).

Nevertheless, critics of the free market in HE insist that those who defend the benefits of the markets for HE do not consider how free markets and consumerism impact the society and how it influences the roles of students, and future educated people, in society. Coinciding with Polanyi (1944), the proponents of markets only see positive effects of marketization in HE but they look at this phenomenon from a one-dimensional political economic perspective, instead of as a multidimensional phenomenon. In marketized HE systems, beyond the success of increasing access to HE, the involvement of HEIs and faculty in market-like behaviours has transformed HEIs' basic functions of teaching and research into revenue-generating operations (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). Furthermore, in HE defined as a business, a consumerist language prevails. Particularly with the introduction of tuition fees, HE has been distorted to be a commodity and HE instruction has turned to be mostly vocational, to prepare students-workers for the marketplace purely (Martin & Warwick, 2014).

Proponents of market policies in HE do not ponder the negative impact of consumerism in HE, affecting the orientation of students in their learning process, leading to a lack of citizenship among future educated people, but most of all, undermining the public nature of HE.

HE AS A PUBLIC GOOD OR A PRIVATE COMMODITY?

In the individualist and consumerist marketized society, that has transformed HE, the meaning of HE as a public good or a private commodity and its impact in society, is now strongly debated.

A substantial number of scholars strongly reject the idea of HE as a private good, and strongly endorse the principles of HE as a public good and the source of a more equal society. For some of these supporters, HE is a public good worthy of public subsidies not only because of the positive externalities in society but also because of the failures of a market dominating the system (Hillman,

Tandberg, & Gross, 2014). In effect, public HE cannot be viewed merely as a commercial investment or as a private good based exclusively on the fulfilment of individual needs, reducing the role of HE to just supplying human capital to the market (Painter & Mok, 2008). Giroux (2002) has argued that a vibrant democratic culture is that one that recognizes HE as a public good and defines HEIs as a crucial site where students can gain public voice. Moreover, supporting the notion of equality and HE as a public good, Kwiek (2017) states that the most important non-market public good is knowledge. Knowledge is exclusive to its creator because it is an outcome of learning. To be used, knowledge must be communicated. But, once communicated, essential knowledge retains its value no matter how often it is used. Then marketized and privatized HE, and the concept of HE as a private good, will never be fully successful.

For other scholars, the controversy regarding HE as a public or a private good requires a holistic view to understand the mix of public and private HE in society. Marginson (2018) has provided a useful theoretical framework to understand the concept of public and private services applied to HE. Based on economic and political theory, Marginson (2018) has explained the differences between the public and private benefits of HE and distinguishes non-market and market activities in HE and activities that are owned and/or controlled by states and those that are not owned and/or controlled by the state. Marginson (2018) suggests firstly that inequality is one of the strongest disappointments of marketization in HE. Secondly, the study suggests that equality in HE could be a collective benefit of social democracies. Indeed, social democracy can promote social equality, meaning socially inclusive HEIs, socially stratified HEIs, entry and patterns of completion by social groups, and the extent to which HEIs facilitate upward social mobility.

Conversely, HE as a private good and commodity has a similarly vast number of supporters. These proponents argue that marketization has been successful, and as such HE is a private good that brings private benefits. HE has been defined primarily as an investment in an individual's future earning capacity; people with tertiary qualifications have better chances of employment and better job security (Dolenec, 2006). It is under the premise of HE as a private good, that brings private benefits, that supporters of marketization also claim that HE should be paid privately. This stance in favour of marketization has become the conventional position behind the implementation of tuition fees. In line with the neoliberal theory, HE is classified as a private good to be purchased at a price. In these same terms, provision of HE is subject to the rules of exclusion (students who do not pay for tuition do not receive education) and rivalry (admission spaces, as an HEI's capacity may be limited). From a public policy perspective, these issues invigorate the arguments for market forces to be expanded to educational access and as a consequence to define HE as a private benefit.

As exposed earlier, marketization, privatization and tuition fees have unquestionable influenced the role of HE in society. Furthermore, whether HE it is considered a public or a private good may also influence the experience of students attending HEIs. Understanding how students experience HE is highly relevant since this may help in understanding the purpose of HE, their roles in their own learning process, their subsequent educational experiences, and ultimately their roles as educated professionals will play in society (Saunders, 2015). The literature is extensive with researchers explaining how students make sense of their HE. A diversity of concepts have been applied to refer to students' experiences in HE. Moreover, several constructions have emerged in order to understand the behaviour of the student in HE. These frameworks will be discussed in the following section and the diverse constructions and metaphors of the student in HE will be described.

3.2. THE COMPLEXITY OF UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS IN MARKETIZED HE CONTEXTS

It is argued that the values of justice, freedom, equality, and citizenship are at heart of what HE means to a society (Hofstadter & Smith, 1962). Moreover, it is claimed that members of the HE system should be aware that they are citizens and part of a community of citizens. Based in this logic, students should take their degrees as learning opportunities, which transmit not only knowledge but also attitudes and skills to a democratic sphere (Wolfgang, 2017).

However, it seems that marketization has transformed HE as a social institution. Under the forces of the market, HE is subordinated to market ideals and goals, and the values of justice, freedom, and equality, are strongly contested. Scholarship suggests that the practice of HE has shifted towards marketization and consumerism, influencing how students make sense of HE. Much literature has examined the effect of a market logic in students' behaviours and pedagogy. This effect on students is most notably captured in a dominant notion with which scholars have referred to students in marketized HE contexts: the metaphor of the student as a consumer (Guilbault, 2018; McMillan & Cheney, 1996; Palfreyman & Tapper, 2014; Tomlinson, 2017; Woodall et al., 2014).

Metaphors are one way, among many others, to refer to students in HE and to explain how they experience HE. However, as claimed by Tight (2013, p. 303): "*we are living through a period of considerable changes. Not only has HE greatly expanded in recent decades, enrolling larger numbers of, and more diverse, students, but the way in which HE is paid for has also changed (or is changing) as well*".

These considerable challenges have, therefore, persuaded scholars to explain how students make sense of their experience in HE in many different ways (Tight, 2013). In response to these changes and the consequences for students, extant literature reveals a variety of terms and concepts used by researchers, almost interchangeably, when exploring students' experiences in HE.

CONCEPTUALIZING THE STUDENT IN HE

Different conceptual frameworks have been employed by researchers when referring to students' responses to HE, mostly in marketized HE systems. This diversity of conceptualizations reveals the complexity of modern HE practice (Tight, 2013). No one conceptualization is agreed to better explain the impact of marketization on students. On the contrary, each framework seems to refer to different aspects of the student experience in HE.

In order to understand students' responses to learning, for example, some scholars have conceptualized students by their *approaches* to HE (Angus & McKinstry, 2007). This framework was originally introduced by Marton & Saljo (1976) to examine strategies to learning on Swedish HE students, to understand their academic performance. Biggs (1987) later identified students' different approaches to learning, and how these influence their final learning processes. These researchers determined what is now known as the two approaches to learning: a "deep approach", meaning an intrinsic interest in developing competence in a subject, and a "surface approach", meaning students simply want to meet minimum course expectations (Biggs, 1987; Elias, 2005; Marton & Saljo, 1976).

In the marketized English HE system, and with the introduction of tuition fees and the definition of the student as a consumer, Bunce et al. (2017) conceptualized students by their approach to HE. In particular, a consumerist approach to learning and its impact on academic performance were explored. In effect, it was argued that students' consumerist approaches have some advantages for the student, such as an increase in quality and standards of HE services, for example lecturers being more accessible to students. However, this approach also involves risks to academic standards by promoting a passive, instrumental behaviour to learning for those who identify themselves as consumers. Bunce et al. (2017) agree with previous scholars that have asserted that a "passive" and "instrumental approach" leads students to express little interest in what is being taught and take less responsibility for producing their own knowledge (Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005; Williams, 2013; Woodall et al., 2014). Moreover, these behaviours are closely related to what, on the one hand, is known as low approach or "surface approach" to learning, which is associated with a higher level of consumer behaviour, and in turn lower academic performance. On the other hand, a "deep approach" could be associated with a lower level of consumerist behaviour, and in turn higher academic performance (Biggs, 1987b; Elias, 2005; Marton & Saljo, 1976).

Besides understanding students' approaches to learning, other researchers have focused on their *attitudes*. The scholarship is extensive and controversial in the definition of "attitude" (Gawronski, 2007). However, for Gawronski (2007), attitude can be defined as a set of emotions, beliefs and behaviours toward a particular object, person, thing, or situation. Psychologists claim that

external conditions can influence the way in which attitudes are developed and that people learn attitudes by observing others (Cherry, 2018). In HE, scholars have referred to students' attitudes towards the classroom experience in particular, their attitudes towards the instructor's efforts in teaching, their own efforts in learning, and their satisfaction with classroom learning outcomes (Gremler & McCollough, 2002). By developing and testing a student satisfaction guarantee model, Gremler & McCollough (2002) revealed that students' attitudes towards satisfaction could positively influence both the instructors' evaluations and their learning outcomes. Similarly, Lea et al. (2003) investigated HE students' attitudes to student-centred learning. They suggested that different teaching methods result in different students' attitudes towards the learning process and that students generally hold a very positive view of student-centred learning. These researchers argued that a student-centred approach as proposed by educators has a positive effect on the students' attitudes to learning.

In the context of the English HE system, particularly in relation to fee increases, students' attitudes to HE, motivations for formal learning and expectations of HE have been analysed. The results show that tuition fees have influenced students' understandings of what is expected in HE. It has been argued that students' attitudes are more proactive and focused on learning, probably attributed to the increased costs, and related pressures of participating in HE (Tomlinson, 2014). In this research Tomlinson (2014) has provided a clear understanding that student attitude refers to students in terms of their emotions in HE when, for instance, tuition fees increase.

From a slightly different perspective, scholars have claimed that linguistics, in different fields of study, has increased, multiplied, merged, and even overlapped in the past decades (Gabriel, 2004). It is no surprise then to find scholars who have turned to students' *discourses* and *narratives* to conceptualize their responses to HE. Discourses study language viewed as active entities through which the world becomes meaningful. Moreover, with discourses "the way we talk about the world becomes constitutive of the world" (Gabriel, 2009, p.79). In HE, several scholars have used discourses to answer questions about the relationships between students and HE.

Brooks (2018) has conceptualized the student based on UK HE policy discourses. An inductive, thematic analysis was used to identify dominant themes in the documents and speeches produced by the government. She identified discourses referring to students as "future workers" and "hard-workers". Likewise, Lomer (2018), although focusing exclusively on international students, has also explored British policy discourses in relation to international students' mobility, describing students as "sources of income" or "immigrants of doubtful value".

Students have also been examined based on their *narratives*. Narratives refer to "texts, spoken or written, that usually involve a plot of interconnected events binding different characters together" (Gabriel, 2009; p. 194). Narratives involve temporal chains of events undertaken by the subject under study where verbs denote what a subject did or what happened to them (Gabriel, 2008). According to Riessman (2005), human beings are storytelling individuals who make sense of the world and the things that happen to them by constructing narratives, explaining, and interpreting events both to them and to other people. Narrative is used in research studies to analyse stories of everyday life that are told and constructed to fit social reality (Riessman, 2005). Narratives are meaningful in the sense that they convey meaning by ordering events into a temporal sequence (Beyers, 2006). Nixon et al. (2016) offer a psychoanalytical approach to critically interpret students' narratives of experiences of choice within their university experience. They have explored how the market ideology in an HE context amplifies the expression of deeper narcissistic desires and aggressive instincts influencing students' satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Students' narratives interpreted by Nixon et al. (2016) are a way to investigate the consequences for pedagogy when neoliberal agendas are applied to HE.

Lastly, and as briefly described earlier, scholars have referred to students' responses to HE by identifying them with *metaphors*. Gabriel (2008) defines metaphors as instruments for transferring meanings from one entity to another, a key element in the art of persuasion and a means for creating knowledge. The use of metaphors in qualitative research has provided an opportunity to examine a phenomenon from a unique and creative perspective and to conceptualize intangibles and complexities by placing them in a more familiar, simplified language and context (Carpenter, 2008; Cheeny et al., 1997; Lynne Cameron, 2003). The use of metaphors is enormous in research on students in HE, and the metaphor of the student as a consumer is undeniably one of the strongest ways in which scholars have conceptualized students in the context of marketized HE (Tight, 2013).

Nevertheless, and as extensive as it may appear, the diversity of frameworks presented here is rather limited to fully understand the overall experience of the student in HE. These frameworks respond to the student experience in HE based on very specific enquiries, which have focused on very particular elements of the HE experience, such as students' approach to learning and their attitude to the classroom experience, or on conceptualizing them metaphorically. A different framework to understand and interpret the student in the particular context under study is required and is discussed in the following section.

STUDENTS' ORIENTATIONS IN HE

After decades of a strong market economy that influenced almost all domains of the society, the highly marketized Chilean society is now challenging its hegemonic neoliberal ideology on political, social and economic fronts (Casals, 2022; Gaete et al., 2019; Garcés, 2019; Guajardo, 2019; Ivanova & Almendras, 2021). In the domain of HE, the sector is fiercely contesting this market model not only by removing tuition fees (price in HE) but also by bringing back the involvement of the state in HE. All these changes at the societal level, and not only in HE, require a different and more holistic lens to understand an overall experience of the student in HE. An alternative way to understand how students are making sense of HE in such a challenging context is by exploring students' *orientation* in HE.

Several constructs are associated with student orientation in HE. These have been defined as a set of attitudes, emotions, engagement or behavioural predisposition, and identities expressed by the students during their experience in HE, as described in Budd (2016); Bunce et al. (2017); Tavares & Cardoso (2013); and Tomlinson (2014).

Scholars in the HE and marketing domain have largely referred to students' consumer *orientation*. As the literature reveals, this conceptualization has become significantly relevant in contexts of intense competition, with many alternative HEIs from which prospective students can choose and with a rapidly increasing student population (Bristow & Schneider, 2003). In these marketized HE systems, HEIs are also trying to adapt to the changing landscape in HE by gaining a better understanding of the student. Therefore, in trying to satisfy the student with good-quality HE services, HEIs have referred to their students as their consumers and have attempted to provide services that satisfy their students-consumers' *orientation* in HE (Alves et al., 2007; Bristow & Schneider, 2003).

These scholars have examined students' experiences in HE by exploring their *orientations*. Bristow & Schneider (2003) empirically tested a multi-item scale called the "Collegiate Student Orientation Scale (CSOS)" to understand how HEIs apply marketing concepts and how they consider students' consumerist orientations. Alves et al. (2007) tested an explanatory model to measure students' satisfaction in HE, arguing that students satisfied with their HE experience will demonstrate loyalty to the HEI. These findings reassert that a student's customer orientation should be considered by HEIs in the context of a highly marketized system. Similarly, Alves & Raposo (2009) validated the way of measuring student satisfaction in HE, asserting that satisfaction is better understood when variables such as meeting the expectations, current needs and wishes of students are applied. In a large quantitative study, Koris & Nokelainen (2015) validated a model of educational experience by identifying different categories of educational experience in which students should expect an HEI to be consumer oriented.

Although suitable, in these quantitative studies the *orientation* of the student in HE has been understood as a single unitary reality of a consumer orientation only. Such philosophical stance is more in line with a positivist approach that might not be sufficiently inclusive of any other, different orientation, a student might have in HE. Therefore, a constructivist/interpretivist philosophical stance might be more inclusive and consider how students can construct their own reality in their own contexts. A constructivist reality understands that students may experience HE in many different ways and their behaviours can then be different. Furthermore, in an interpretivist stance, the research is also involved in interpreting these experiences, uncovering different realities of the student in HE. In effect, Budd (2017), adopting a qualitative approach, has applied the notion *orientation* to investigate how students make university-related decisions and how they understand their roles in university. Budd (2017) explains how a student orientation is assumed while understanding German and English UG students experiencing their degrees in HE. Focusing on the analysis of two key themes – instrumentality and students' active involvement or potential passivity – the scholar argued that students' orientations are affected by multi-dimensional factors, such as local and national settings, differences in the countries' labour markets, differences in the national contexts of their HE systems, personal motivations of intellectual development, and, of lesser importance, the differences in tuition fees in these two countries.

This study helps to reinforce the assertion that students' behaviour is unlikely to be fully determined by the application of tuition fees, as claimed by Tight (2013) and Williams (2013), but above all, it shows how the student experience in HE can be better explained when exploring their orientations in HE.

STUDENTS IN HE: NOT ONLY CONSUMERS?

As scholars continue to examine the impact of marketization in HE, research keep exposing that market policies in HE have replaced the democratic state as the primary producer of cultural logic and its public value (Lynch, 2006). Instead, HE and HEIs have been challenged to produce commercially oriented professionals rather than public oriented citizens (Moore, 1995). In short, scholarship has suggested that the language of education has been replaced by the language of the market, in which the student buys a product and lecturers deliver the product. As a result, HE is a service, and, hence, students should be considered as their primary consumer (Carù & Cova, 2003; Mazzarol, 1998; Ostrom et al., 2011).

Similarly, scholars agree that where there is a financial exchange (tuition fees in the case of HE) a consumer experience is produced, and thus HE should focus on students as consumers (Carù & Cova, 2003). Perceiving the students as consumers encourages HEIs to be responsive to the external

social/cultural environment HEIs face to maintain financial stability and to recognize the investment students make for a well-paid future job (McCulloch, 2009). Furthermore, it has been asserted that promoting the image of the student as a consumer can increase levels of information, allowing people to make informed decisions, to obtain a highly and efficiently return on value, improving the quality of service of HEIs (Kalafatis & Ledden, 2013). For Guilbault, (2016), Harrison & Risler (2015) and McCulloch (2009) a student-centric model in HE, acknowledging the student as the consumer of HE, can be highly beneficial for the HE 'industry'. In effect, these scholars are intense in their market ideology when simply referring to HE as an 'industry', not different to any other market in the economy of a country. Moreover, they agree that applying a market system, improves HEIs' responsiveness to students' needs and students are better satisfied with the service received.

However, researchers have, at the same time, contended these claims. In effect, the discussion about students behaving as consumers of HE and consumers of their learning process has become a concern among researchers (Brown, 2008; Guilbault, 2018c; Hubbell, 2015; Molesworth et al., 2011; Zemsky et al., 2005). Large numbers of scholars and students reject the model of HE as a business, recognizing that marketized HE promotes a narrow sense of public value, which is crucial to a democratic culture (Giroux, 2002).

Strongly opposing a consumer orientation of the student, some scholars claim that consumerism in HE has deeply impacted the student learning process (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter et al., 1997; Taylor et al., 2013). Martin & Warwick, (2014) and Molesworth; Scullion & Nixon (2011) have highlighted how marketization and privatization of HE have turned HEIs into consumer-driven consumer-oriented organizations. HE's public interest values have been seriously confronted and, as a consequence, civic discourses have given way to the language of consumerism and the view of HE as another commodity (Wedlin, 2008). Likewise, Giroux (2002) has stated that the neoliberal model of citizenship, privatization and consumerism implies the production of commercially oriented professionals rather than publicly oriented professionals, while Levy (2006) asserts that HE is just another service delivered to anyone who can pay for it and who seeks only individual benefits. When students see themselves as consumers, they see their relationship with HEIs as an instrumental external process and not as a conjoined effort of learning (Maringe & Gibbs, 2009; McCulloch, 2009). In particular, scholars have questioned the effect of a consumer orientation on the academic integrity of students, since instrumentality and passivity could damage their experience if they do not work sufficiently hard and do not profoundly involve themselves in a conjoined learning process (Budd, 2016; Maringe & Gibbs, 2009). Clayson & Haley, (2005) have stated that treating students as consumers creates a mind-set that can be potentially damaging to the student's educational welfare. Naidoo & Jamieson (2005) have reinforced that a consumer-oriented approach promotes an

immediate, concrete, and observable goal over the educational benefit of education, without understanding the overall benefit of an educated society. Furthermore, Molesworth et al. (2009) have scrutinized the notion of the student-consumer by questioning the conventional marketing discourse of "value co-creation" where student-consumers co-create their experience based on their identities. Likewise, Nixon et al. (2016) have concluded that students are little aware of alternative roles available for them when experiencing HE. Apparently, students as consumers understand HE primarily as a commodity that they need to access for a better, well-paid job.

In summary, research has described that students as consumers:

a) Experience the educational involvement as a product rather than a process.
b) Highlight the promotional activities of professors and an entertainment model of classroom learning.
c) Reinforce individualism, consumerism and not citizenship.
d) Have a short-term perspective on the purpose of HE and its benefits.
e) Demand the best grades for the least effort.
f) Feel they are not accountable for their own performance, transferring their responsibility to HEIs.
g) View their relationship with the instructor as a relationship where the consumer (student) is right, and the instructor is interfering with the experience of happiness.
h) Do not view education as a process of learning but as a commodity where the final product is a degree and a job.

These characteristics show the students' understanding of HE as source for gaining a better position in the job market and students fitting in a narrow instrumental justification to see HE as means to get a job in a marketized society.

The construction of the student as a consumer is probably one of the most dominant descriptions with regard to students in HE research, mostly explored in studies from the Global North (e.g. Bunce et al., 2017; Guilbault, 2018; Jabbar et al., 2017; Molesworth et al., 2009, 2011; Nixon et al., 2011, 2018; Woodall et al., 2014).

However, in times of uncertainty and constant change in HE, the student experience might also be complex to understand. Even in marketized HE systems, students do not necessarily express a consumer orientation (Bunce et al., 2017; Tomlinson, 2017). Moreover, students' orientations are unlikely to be fully determined by a single orientation of the "student as a consumer" (McCulloch, 2009; Nixon, Scullion, & Hearn, 2016).

ALTERNATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS OF THE STUDENT IN HE

It is evident that, in marketized societies, any assumptions about the relationships between students and how they experience and understand the purpose of HE are uncertain (Tight, 2013).

Besides the widely employed construction of the student as a consumer discussed in the previous section, scholars have suggested there may be some alternative constructions of students in HE. Table 2 briefly describes the different alternative constructions of the student that the review of the literature has revealed (including that of the student as a consumer) and some characteristics of their behaviour that have been emerged and explained in research, along with themes derived from these characteristics.

TABLE 2. CONSTRUCTIONS OF THE STUDENT IN HE

	Student constructed as:	What could be expected from the student	Themes derived from these characteristics	Authors contributing to these constructions
1	**Activist – Political actor**	Participation in assemblies, public rallies and marches on campus	Political engagement Public engagement Political stance	Abrahams & Brooks (2019); Brooks (2017); Brooks et al. (2020); Cini & Guzmán-Concha (2017); Fleet & Guzmán-Concha (2013); Somma (2012)
		Developing political leadership (e.g. leadership position in student unions)		
		Critic (or support) of government proposals		
		Participation in student unions and political engagement		
		Promoting social and political changes		
		Mentorship (education as a mentorship process)		
		Work hard to achieve academic standards and be proud of achievements		
2	**Aspirant**	The core of the university offering is transformation. True learning is transformative. Students are mature and motivated persons, and lecturers are valued for their professionalism and eminence.	Transformation	Khalifa (2009)
3	**Client**	A closer and individualized relationship between academics and students (i.e. more hours in tutor/student contact)	Clientelism	Armstrong (2003); Bailey (2000); Franz (1998); Tight (2013)
		Expect professional/client relationship (similar to gym trainer and trainee)		
		Express what they expect from lecturers and classmates		
		Come prepared to class meetings and other scheduled meetings		
		University is a professional firm, and the students are clients who pay to receive professional services from that firm.		
4	**Co-creator**	Take full responsibility for their learning and use teachers and other resources to support their effort	Self-responsible for learning Motivation to improve HE experience	Elsharnouby (2015)
		Actively in participating and in co-creating his/her HE experience		

5	**Collaborator**	Student-centred approach that relies heavily on flipped classroom principles and the innovative integration of digital technologies	Cooperation	Nel (2017)
6	**Co-producer/labour contributor**	Since HE is a service industry, unique features of services compared with goods, including customers in the production of the service they receive.	Responsible Engagement/responsibility in learning Lectures' active participation Cooperative learning	Finney & Finney (2010); Halbesleben & Wheeler, (2009); Kotzé & Plessis (2003); Neary (2009)
		Less entitlement and more involvement in learning.		
		Student engages in learning via the body of expertise held by the instructor.		
		Students accountable for their education.		
		Greater focus on learning and earning grades because they have contributed to the process.		
		Actively participates in the class, seeking deeper knowledge into the concepts to understand how they will apply in a future career.		
		Students recognizes that both they and the university bring resources to the educational process.		
		Active participation in the learning process.		
		Emphasis on collective experience of the learning and the importance of the group in encouraging learning.		
7	**Consumer**	Lower learning identity (students not identifying themselves as strong learners)	Low learner identity Passivity in learning Expressions of authority (towards HE) Dissatisfaction Instrumentality Customer service expectation Individualism Vocational orientation Transactional stance Value for money	Bunce et al. (2017); Guilbault (2018, 2018); Nixon et al. (2016); Saunders (2015); Tomlinson (2017)
		Lower involvement in their education and more likely to view themselves as entitled to receive positive academic outcomes		
		High-grades goal but low academic performance		
		Value for money: self-funded students requiring a higher quality of education and positive learning experience		
		Students studying certain subjects (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) would express more consumerist approach or future-career focus than students studying other subjects		
		Students feel entitled to academic outcomes and higher rates of complaint		
		Older students (or non-traditional) are more likely than younger students to view themselves as customers		
		Potential to exercise great authority over matters relating to the programme of study and the wider HE experience.		
		A transactional dynamic to the pedagogical relationship (the idea of students paying lecturers' wages)		
		Instrumentality among students reflects a concern with credentials and how best to attain them and emphasizes the market good value of higher education		

		Expectation that they are "paying" for services rendered by the organization.		
		Distance from educational process and individualist approach to HE Expect different choices of modules and classes		
		Complains about money paid and service received (value for money)		
		Prioritizes personal/leisure time		
		Seeking practical and "real world" subjects and less theoretical thinking (more vocational)		
		Good grades should be given without necessarily doing the work required to achieve them		
		Education is a product students purchase		
8	**Employee**	Passively performing tasks under the direct supervision of tutor	Passivity Competitiveness Subordination	Halbesleben & Wheeler (2009)
		Fellow classmates are competitors or co-workers		
		Grades expectations are based on effort		
		Lecturers are an authority on the subject taught		
9	**Future worker**	Motivation primarily by employment-related considerations.	Future employability Value for money	Brooks (2017)
		Explicit rationale of HE as a vehicle towards better economic returns and employment prospects		
		Interests of students to ensure value for their investment in education		
		Invest time in getting early work-related experience (internship, part-time work)		
10	**Learner**	Pursuing knowledge	Knowledge explorer Subordination	Cuthbert (2010)
		Understanding that the student is not always right		
11	**Pawn**	Individually being small, relatively insignificant, and indistinguishable unit	Globalization discourse Skills improvement	Tight (2013)
		Expect to study 'key subjects' and attend to school to have skills enhanced		
		Acquiring and developing competences for global knowledge economy		
12	**Partial employee**	Education, in their view, is a form of service encounter characterized by the four unique features of services compared with goods:(1) intangibility; (2) inseparability (of production and consumption); (3) heterogeneity; and (4) perishability	Co-production of a service out of necessity or by design	Hoffman & Kretovics (2004)
13	**Partner/stakeholder**	Collaboration between instructors and students "to foster engaged student learning and engaging learning and teaching enhancement"	Contributing Engagement	Clayson & Haley (2005); Elliott & Healy (2001)
14	**People**	Spending extra time at university in social and extracurricular activities	Socializing Socially active	Cuthbert (2010)
15	**Trainee**	College is more of a place to get training for a specific career	Instruction	Saunders (2015)
16	**Vulnerable child**	Afraid of failing	Emotional instability Vulnerability	Brooks (2017)
		Not capable of fulfilling HE requirements		

As Table 2 exposes, explaining how students experience HE is a complex endeavour, and their experiences in a complex HE system is also yet to be fully described. Furthermore, in challenging times of marketized HE systems, it seems impossible to determine students' subjectivities in any straightforward manner (Nielsen, 2011). The constructions proposed by scholars, as shown in Table 2, alongside the arguments of Nielsen (2011) and Tight (2013), reveal the need for further investigation of students in HE, particularly in a context in which tuition fees are just being removed, yet in a marketized society.

STUDENTS REPRESENTATIONS: POLICY AND MEDIA DISCOURSES

Particularly in marketized HE systems, scholars have used a discursive approach to analyse policy and media documents to understand the relationship between texts, values and power and social subjects in this domain (Tight, 2013). In effect, scholars agree that discourses create, reproduce and disseminate discursive formations which migrate into other social domains, such as HE practice and the media (Lomer, 2018). According to Foucault (1972), discourse can be described as a relationship between knowledge, language, power, and how social subjects are created.

In constructing and making visible policy processes, discourses can affect the experiences of social subjects (Lomer, 2018). Hence, the analysis of discourses in the form of media articles (and also government policies) has become relevant when interpreting different constructions of students in HE.

Discourse analysis of media articles is more than analysing the content of texts; it is, rather, concerned with the way in which texts themselves have been constructed in terms of their social and historical context (Cheek, 2004). Particularly with policy documents and media articles, discourse analysis is helpful not only in tracking policy changes (raising concerns, contesting the changes in policy) but also in identifying, understanding, and explaining some of the developments that lead up to the implementation of policies and the ideologies in which the debate is embedded (Cheek, 2004).

Research has revealed several representations of students in policy and media discourses. For instance, analysis has shown how international policy discourses have represented international students as source of income, immigrants of doubtful value and consumers, among others (Lomer, 2018). Furthermore, policy analysis shows that students are not constructed simply as consumers. Instead, government and union documents have constructed the student as a vulnerable subject, a vulnerable dependant, or simply as a child. Moreover, other dominant discourses such as "future worker" and "hard worker" have emerged, arguing that documents construct students primarily based on the considerations of students as future employees (Brooks, 2018).

The consequences of market policies in HE have been closely analysed by looking at discourses that produce and reproduce resistance to such dominant ideology. Therefore, researchers have increasingly turned to a critical approach to discourse analysis to answer questions about the relationships between language and society in current convoluted HE systems (Rogers et al., 2005). In fact, scholars interested in the relationship between language and society have turned to analyse discourse from a critical stance, to describe, interpret and explain such relationships (Woodside-Jiron, 2004). Criticality is part of the method, since it is concerned with analysing structural relationships of dominance, power and control as manifested in the language used (Wodak & Meyer, 2008). Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), explained in detail in Chapter 4, perceives the use of language as a form of social practice. CDA is a type of analytical discourse that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context (Woodside-Jiron, 2004).

In this vein, HE researchers have critically assessed social identities, social relations, and practices of participants in education. Research has analysed the role of discourses in redefining the meaning of HE (and of an academic in particular) in colonizing a kind of corporate academic and the hostility of university contexts (Morrish, 2020). Scholars have also tried to understand government education policies and their role in the production and legitimation of capitalism in HE (Mulderrig, 2003). This critical analysis reveals the instrumental rationality underlying education policy discourses, manifested in the rhetoric and values of the free market, indicating the shift towards the commodification of HE in the UK. Similarly, it has been demonstrated how the expansion of the neoliberal doctrine in HE has influenced official discourses regarding the concepts of economic development and the role of the state in HE (Dolenec, 2006; Dolenec & Doolan, 2013). The neoliberal doctrine and its consequences in HE policies have found their expression in government documents in the field of HE, contrary to oppositional discourses coming from texts emerging from student movements. By comparing official government documents and documents from students' movements, research shows how the neoliberal dogma influences official governmental discourses in HE, producing discourses from the government that oppose to those from students' movements. Governmental policies under a neoliberal doctrine reveal an official rhetoric of an advanced marketized conception of HE, which is to service the labour market and to contribute to economic growth of the country (Dolenec, 2006; Dolenec & Doolan, 2013).

Research analysing discourses in media articles reveals different representations of the student in HE. As part of the vast debate within the social sciences about the effect of the media, the student-consumer representation does not emerge solely as a result of the payment of fees or through policy discourses but also it can be potentially constructed via the popular media. Furthermore, it has

been argued that students can be given other, alternative representations in their experience of HE (Williams, 2011). Media representations of students may reflect back to society in some dominant ways in which the media's opinion of students can have an influence in what it means to be a university student in HE (Williams, 2011).

In effect, CDA of media articles has revealed that the representation of the student is also influenced by other things, such as: the role of parents as co-consumers; the rise in student complaints about negative experiences at university; and the relationship of student-consumers to broader society (Fairclough, 1993). Research has shown how newspaper articles influence the debates on the future HE (Bellei et al., 2014; Bellei & Cabalin, 2013). HE is part of an interconnected network of economic, political, and cultural powers (Cabalin, 2015). Therefore, popular culture, such as that expressed in media articles, should be on the agenda in research on HE. For example, a CDA of newspaper articles debating quality assurance in HE emphasized the dominant neoliberal power relations in the field of HE. In Chile, during the 2011 Chilean student movement, influential newspapers were active participants in the public discussion around HE. The discourses in these newspapers show the resistance of the media in promoting the success of the market-oriented system in the country (Cabalin, 2015).

In conclusion, discourses in media articles seem to have had an influence in the promotion of markets in HE and the student as a consumer, but also in resisting changes by likewise reproducing different representations of students in HE.

3.3. WEAKNESSES OF A *DIS*EMBEDDED MARKET IN HE SYSTEMS

It has been postulated that neoliberalism, its ideals, values, and practices are in retreat or declining (Clarke, 2010; Duncan, 2014). Meyer & John (2013) categorically stated that marketization in HE is in crisis because of tuition fees and the great numbers of middle-class students taking on devastating bank loans and credits. Likewise, Grugel & Riggirozzi (2012) have declared that because of markets in HE, eligible young people are now prevented from accessing a public good that is increasingly essential to leading full lives, constituting a violation of justice, and causing inequality and segregation.

Research has evidenced that as a result of marketization and the reduction in state financing, HEIs have been forced to adopt market-related strategies, to design market-oriented programmes to create sustainable superior value for consumers and to allocate resources more efficiently (Calero, 1998; Camelia & Marius, 2002; Dill, 1997; Mok, 2008; Saunders, 2010). Moreover, the introduction of a price for education and the massive increase in student numbers in HE systems have affected the role of HE in society and the roles of students. In this line of thought, Marginson (2007, 2011, 2016)

has persistently argued that HEIs, once considered centres of independent thinkers, seekers of knowledge and truth, now need to explain their existence and relevance.

While citizens' rights to be educated, regardless of their financial means, seems to be an outdated discussion, it has been claimed that access to HE in particular, probably one of the biggest successes of markets in HE, has been at the cost of increased inequalities, inequities, and segregation (Hill, 2003).

INEQUALITY AND SEGREGATION: THE NEGATIVE SIDE OF MARKETIZATION IN HE

One of the challenges with markets in HE relates to one of the basic premises in a free market economy, that is, information, or, as economists term it, *perfect information*. Most UG students start HE between the ages of 18 and 22. It has been argued that at this age, some students cannot objectively define their roles in HE and cannot effectively evaluate the quality of the HEIs before they enter HE (Dill, 2003). In effect, a market functions properly only if buyers (students) and sellers (HEIs) possess accurate and reliable information about what is needed and the quality of the product. However, this is not always the case in HE. The asymmetry of information can lead private providers to offer any type of degrees, with questionable outcomes of the HE process (Brown, 2008; Espinoza, 2008; Giroux, 2002; Giroux, 2020; Hemsley-Brown, 2011). In effect, *imperfect information* in economic terms, could lead HEIs to take advantage of students (Dill, 2003), offering low-quality education to any students as long as they are able to pay for a degree (Nedbalová, Greenacre, & Schulz, 2014). Consequently, scholars have insisted that the government needs to take part in supporting and providing HE, claiming that students are usually not very knowledgeable about their capacities and their ability to successfully complete a degree programme (Dill, 2003, Jongbloed, 2003).

Equally, it has been asserted that even if the HE system works as a perfectly competitive market (despite the subsidies, grants, and other incentives for disadvantaged students), this system still favours those of high socioeconomic status, causing inequality and inequity in the system (Dill, 2003). Furthermore, it has been claimed that without the state providing and supporting HE, inequality increases. To tackle these issues, greater government intervention in representing the interests of more disadvantaged students has been proposed (Dill, 2003). Inequality needs to be addressed by government intervention in HE to look after less privileged citizens (Dill, 2003; Jongbloed, 2003). Furthermore, it is argued that a government contribution in HE is needed to improve a large-scale redistribution of income, by providing tuition-free HE to less privileged groups (Brown, 2008a; Dill, 1997; Jongbloed, 2003c; Marginson, 2007)

Confusion and conflicting positions between HE, students, and society, based on opposing goals; opposing motivations; the problem of price and value; and the notion of excellence have all

been stated as problems when markets operate in HE (Hemsley-Brown, 2011). In fact, students and society get confused with marketization since private HEIs may seek to profit rather than to advance and disseminate knowledge, the latter being an opposing goal of marketization in HE. It has been suggested that what a student wants to "consume" can distract the student from a genuine educational goal (Hemsley-Brown, 2011). Moreover, markets exist to buy and sell goods and services for whatever price the market can stand. This is the opposite to HE, where the good (the degree) has to be earned through an autonomous effort and personal achievement. In marketized systems the best product on the market is the one which is most problem free for the purchaser and delivered ready-made for instant use. Conversely, good education cannot be experienced by anyone except the learner. This is an experience never ready-made, never free of effort, since students need to engage in their own learning process (Hemsley-Brown, 2011).

Moreover, two issues, mostly ignored by the supporters of markets in HE, are the questionable effect of the price mechanism and the expected overall outcome of the learning experience in terms of quality and equality (Jowsey, 1998). The price mechanism tends to fail in HE firstly because tuition fees are often paid by others. Principally in the group of 18-24 UG students these are families, banks (in the form of loans) and government (in the form of grants etc.). Furthermore, these fees are paid back long after consumption (Hemsley-Brown, 2011). Although the proponents of markets highlight that variations in price, quality and value offered by HEIs may drive prices down (a decrease in tuition fees), research reveals that in providing low-cost HE, the free market mechanism results in a highly segmented system where the most advantaged can afford to attend the high-priced, high-status HEIs and the least advantaged only lower-priced, lower-status institutions, dramatically increasing segregation within society (Hemsley-Brown, 2011b; McMurtry, 1991).

One of the major negative consequence of prices in HE relates particularly to the promotion of inequality. Universities tend to set high tuition fees as a signal of quality. These fees are justified with discourses of excellence and high quality, attracting the best-qualified applicants. On the basis that HE is a "prestige" good and a signal of success, many less privileged students are left out of the system, and this promotes segregation and inequality (Hemsley-Brown, 2011). Research has already evidenced how market-oriented reforms have increased educational inequities, social and academic segregation, social inequality, and school discriminatory practices (Bellei & Cabalin, 2013).

Secondly, tuition fees and systems of financial aid disseminate the redefinition of students as consumers, and students' involvement with their institutions becomes increasingly defined by their consumer orientation, as discussed in the previous section. In reasserting this stance, Wedlin (2008) has agreed with Hanlon (2000) and Lynch (2006) that advancing marketized individualism will further

weaken public interest values among those who are university educated. Individualism weakens "public values for the public", as Harvey (2005) has observed, legitimizing an economic and self-interest in students (Harvey, 2005). In marketized societies, HEIs are no exempted from dealing with empowered students seeing, acting, and behaving as consumers, moving away of the traditional value of HE in educating citizens.

This tendency to replace a citizenship and public service notion with a consumer notion has been strongly debated and scholars have concluded that there are sufficient arguments for the state to return to HE. If the state does not return to support HE, the market will continue to promote social and economic inequality (Bauman, 2013; Cardoso, Carvalho, & Santiago, 2018; Giroux, 2002; Giroux & Giroux, 2009; Lynch, 2006; Shumar, 1997).

DISEMBEDDEDNESS AND NEOLIBERALISM: SOCIAL CRISIS, DOUBLE MOVEMENT AND THE EFFORT TO *RE-EMBED* MARKETISED HE IN SOCIETY.

Neoliberalism has been considered to be a dangerous ideology for HE practice (Giroux & Giroux, 2009; Lynch, 2006; Saunders, 2010). Indeed, at this point there is little doubt about some negative effects of market policies in HE. Recapitulating what has been discussed in previous sections, marketization in HE has arguably deformed HE goals, motivations, methods, standards of excellence and standards of freedom (Davis, 2007; Giroux, 2002; Giroux, 2020; Hill, 2003).

Different voices have been raised, theories and ideas have been debated to reposition HE as a public good and to retrieve the role of students in HE other than that of the consumer. It has been claimed that neoliberalism and market-oriented policies in HE can be contested with counter-hegemonic discourses that could induce more state intervention in HE (Brown, 2008).

The financial crisis of 2008 was in effect a break point in some scholars' understanding that market fundamentalism has started to lose its legitimacy and its claims on democracy (Giroux & Giroux, 2009). Defined as a multidimensional crisis of neoliberalism, the 2008 crisis has been considered the beginning of the shift from neoliberalism (Fraser, 2010).

Some scholars have explained this shift by coining the concept of *post-neoliberalism*. Grugel & Riggirozzi (2012) believe that post-neoliberalism can be used to symbolize a different conceptualization of the state based on the state as an institution with moral responsibility to respect and to deliver fairness and justice to its citizens. From a political theory perspective, post-neoliberalism is defined as a reaction to excessive marketization. Post-neoliberalism can be understood as a call for a new form of social contract between the state and people, and the construction of a social consensus on the demands of growth and business interests and sensitivity to

poverty and citizenship (Grugel & Riggirozzi, 2012). Post-neoliberalism combines an attempt to refocus the direction and the purpose of the economy through the return of the state enhancing citizenship and promoting the public sector, including public HE.

Likewise, grounded on concepts of justice and the role of the state in HE, Fraser (2010, 2017) has argued that neoliberalism has paid insufficient attention to inequality and fair access to social services. Moreover, it is claimed that this economic system logic should be addressed with a non-economic understanding of a different modern neoliberal society. Fraser (2010) has tried to confront the ideals of neoliberalism and marketization by proposing a concept around emancipation, aiming to overcome forms of domination rooted in the economy and society mediating in conflicts between marketization and social protection. The basis of her theory relies, though, on a framework originally proposed by Polanyi (1944, 2001).

In understanding the effects of neoliberalism, and the potential effects of a self-regulated HE market, this research subscribes to the views of Polanyi (1944, 2001) in that neoliberalism has triggered social crises and has brought negative effects on modern, marketized, societies.

Polanyi (1944, 2001) elaborated an interpretation of the potential effects of capitalism and self-regulating markets, particularly in its form of post Second World War's liberalism. Fraser (2010), echoing Polanyi, has claimed that what today is called "neoliberalism" is nothing but the second coming of the very same 19th century belief in the "self-regulating markets" asserted by Polanyi (1944, 2001) in *The Great Transformation*. Polanyi, a great opponent of modern capitalist societies coined the concepts of Embeddedness and Disembeddedness (Polanyi, 1944; 2001) to conceptualise the effects of what is, in today terms, neoliberalism.

For Polanyi (1944, 2001) markets should be *embedded* in society and its social institutions, under the dominance of society and subject to moral and ethical norms of the society. On the contrary, an economic system separated from social institutions or *disembedded* from society, as in self-regulating markets found in neoliberal economies, builds a world in which society, morals, and ethics are subordinated on market principles and values. According to Polanyi (1944, 2001) disembedded "self-regulating" markets, are a matter of great concern for societies. Polanyi (1944, 2001) claims that an unleashed expansion of capitalism creates a multifaceted crisis that goes beyond economic effects only. A disembedded market can disintegrate communities, damage the spirit of solidarity among people, and destroy nature. A market economy *disembedded* from society can be socially divisive, self-destructive, and has no long-term future. Polanyi (1944, 2001) even proposes that marketized

societies can be so destructive that even capitalist production should be protected from self-regulation markets (Polanyi, 2001, pp. 136-138).

In particular, the author of this thesis believes many of the effects claimed by Polanyi (1944) can indeed be observed in today's neoliberal markets and societies and, as then, attempting to adopt a neoliberal system is destroying society. This is evidenced, for instance, by the handling and fallout of the 2008 fiscal crisis; high inflation rates and fall in production following the Covid19 pandemic. Further evidence can be seen in how markets and society take responsibility and attempt to stop or reverse climate change. In the author's opinion these are examples of crises provoked by disembedded market economies immersed in neoliberal systems.

These divisive and damaging effects of a *disembedded* market present serious risks for society mostly because it commodifies everything (from natural resources to labour and education), and damages society by causing inequality and dissatisfaction, as asserted by Polanyi (1944, 2001). A disembedded market attempts to transform vital elements of social life and of human dignity into commodities (Faria, 2018), and in dissociating the market and its self-regulation rules from social institutions, basic aspects of social life, like education, the subject of interest in this study, become commodities (Polanyi (1944, 2001). In effect, as exposed in the literature review, neoliberalism, and neoliberal policies in HE, aimed at promoting a self-regulated market in HE, conceive HE as a commodity. Furthermore, students are considered economic subjects and consumers of HE.

Consequently, neoliberalism and markets in HE and the notion of student-as-a-consumer reveals the disembeddedness of the HE system from the moral and ideals of education as a public good for the benefit of a vibrant democratic society, as claimed by Giroux (2002). Moreover, as advocated by Polanyi (1944, 2001) a market economy and society are not separate entities but are one object of human invention in which individuals are social beings and not economic agents, unlike the marketised HE system which views the student only as an economic subject (or as a consumer). In the author's view, for the benefit of society, a HE system should always be *embedded* in society and its social institutions.

In theorizing embeddedness/disembeddedness, Polanyi (1944, 2001) concurred that individuals are social agents; and basic aspects of life, such as education, should be in the public domain, with open access, implicitly endorsing the principles of HE as a public good (Polanyi, 1944, 2001). According to Polanyi (1944, 2001) promoting strong self-regulating markets will not only destroy society, but it will also provoke widespread demands for social regulation, searching for social protection and trigger a powerful social crisis. This phenomenon was certainly seen in 2005 and 2010 in the Chilean social movements, which were fighting against a neoliberal and disembedded HE system.

The forces of the market trying to expand and to continue to be fully disembedded from society, opposing to the forces trying to regulate and re-embed a neoliberal society for social protection, were conceptualized by Polanyi (1944, 2001) as the "*Double Movement".* Polanyi (1944, 2001) asserted that the forces that aim to expand marketization will inevitably be met by counter-movements that will protect social life from the negative effects of a market economy disembedded from society. The double movement in HE could be explained as the effort of society to dismantle a culture of marketization in HE when the market policies have gone too far, making HE a commodity. The double movement is the effort of society to bring HE back into the public domain.

The removal of the tuition fees in HE in a highly marketized society (as is the focus of this research), reveals an intended effort by a society to reconcile the expansion of a neoliberal and disembedded market in HE. One that has followed the norms and ideals of a self-regulated market in HE for several decades, in an attempt to re-establish the social order and the social protection, as proposed by Polanyi (1944, 2001). Understanding the effects of Gratuidad and its consequences for the Chilean society may assist in validating Polanyi's double movement and offer empirical support in the context of HE.

While the aim of marketization is to keep promoting individualism and a commoditized society, removing tuition fees may support the notion of HE as a public good, not commoditized, and this may overcome the domination of neoliberalism in the practice of HE, promoting HE to students as active citizens, and beyond the orientation of the student-consumer. Furthermore, re-embedding the market in HE can reveal the intention of a society and the state to re-embed the market to confront the negative effects of neoliberalism in general and a culture of marketization in HE in particular.

3.4. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Controversial as it is, the market in society has its supporters but also its strong opponents. Certainly, much is being said regarding the negative effects of a marketized HE system, in particular in relation to the student experience in HE. The orientation of the student as a consumer in these market-oriented systems has been widely studied. The notion of the student as a consumer implies that HE is compatible with a market ideology, something that is rejected when there is a clear stance that HE is not a commodity (Hill, 2003). Moreover, scholars have been devoted to understanding the student in marketized HE systems and the effects of marketization on the orientation of the student when attending HE. None of these theories has been analysed in a context of the removal of tuition fees after decades of marketization in HE, or, moreover, in a society that is still highly marketized. Yet, new and more dominant orientations of students may emerge from a context that is resisting and contesting marketization in HE.

Additionally, the literature reveals that a public dialogue can seriously defend the public role of HE as an institution of civic culture whose purpose is to educate students for active and critical citizenship, and to create a civil society that prioritizes citizen rights over consumer rights (Hill, 2003; Lynch, 2006). Fraser (2010) has made important efforts in addressing the current decline of neoliberalism. However, Polanyi's *Theory of Embeddedness* (Polanyi, 1944, 2001) offers a unique theoretical perspective to understand the impacts on student orientations of a counter-trend policy that removes tuition fees in HE in a marketized society. The elimination of tuition fees in HE in Chile's highly marketized society may validate that Gratuidad can become a counter movement in society, with its corresponding effects on students' orientations, to potentially ***re-***embed the market in HE into Chilean society.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents a coherent justification for the methodology, design, and the method of analysis, that will generate the results of this dissertation.

In addressing the research questions of this study, it has been critical to bear in mind the philosophical paradigms and approaches that better explain the effects of a market ideology in HE and the students' orientations in HE. Philosophical paradigms are understood as the "basic belief system or the world view that guides any investigation" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In approaching these paradigms, the researcher needs to consider and respond to three essential issues. These are the ontological position of the researcher to understand reality; the epistemological position of the researcher in acquiring knowledge and formulating the conclusions; and the methodology, which will involve the notions about how to obtain knowledge of the world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

As discussed below, constructivism, typically linked to social sciences research, assumes that reality is socially constructed in people's minds and by the perceptions of others; and it interprets how people make sense of, or understand, the world in which they live (Creswell, 2014; Patton, 1990). Likewise, an interpretivist approach looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social world (Creswell, 2014); and whilst positivists hold that there is only one reality, interpretivist believe that reality is subjective, multiple, and socially constructed (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In the context of this dissertation, the aims are in line with the definitions provided by Creswell (2014); Patton (1990); and Silverman (2014), where the researcher will understand the world of students in HE as being socially constructed, where students in HE can respond with different and multiple orientations.

Lastly, the most appropriate design and data collection techniques for this study are discussed. A CDA of a corpus of media articles and interviews conducted with HE students will be explained in the last sections of this chapter. It will conclude by discussing some ethical issues and quality criteria, and with a personal reflexion from the researcher.

4.1. PHILOSOPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN THIS RESEARCH

To conduct a clear and precise study, this research has firstly identified the ontological assumptions that have informed the epistemology, which, in turn, has informed the methodology that has guided the research (Cohen et al., 2007). This chapter in general, and the following section in particular, is built following Guba's understanding of paradigms (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) as well as Denzin and Lincoln's research process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

ONTOLOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS

As discussed in Chapter 3, self-regulated markets, and markets in HE and its effects are conceptualised, perceived, and understood from different, and often opposing perspectives. The definition of HE either as a public good or a private commodity reveals the complexity of the nature of a neoliberal system in this sector.

Similarly, when referring to students' experiences in this HE context, they do not occur in one single or unique way, and their orientations towards HE might not be confined to one single behaviour. To take this into account, the following sections detail the author's ontological stance in examining the elements of the self-regulated markets and student experiences in such context.

To begin with, the ontology of neoliberalism and self-regulated markets is to be sought. As exposed earlier, like the original liberalism of the classical school of economics, neoliberalism as an ideology, favours small government and self-regulated markets to create an environment in which private interests can succeed. However for Polanyi (1944, 2001) self-regulated markets and marketised societies are a utopia in the sense that they will never become a historical reality. Polanyi argues "that the idea of a self-adjusting market implied a stark utopia" and that "such an institution could not exist for any length of time without annihilating the human and natural substance of society" (Polanyi 2001, p.3).

Although there is considerable discussion about the social constructivist notion of self-regulated markets, the liberal governance and institution, and recent critique of Polanyi's work, the intention of this ontological analysis is not to theorise about markets, or the relations between economics and economic sociology. The utopianism of a market according to Polanyi, discredited at times by some neoliberal proponents, has become the central argument that a self-regulating economic system is an imaginary construction of society; as such, it is impossible to achieve (Seccareccia, 2012). Additionally Polanyi (1944, 2001) emphasises the construction of fictitious commodities (land, labour, money) which are not produced according to what is needed on the market. As concurred by Somers & Block (2014) these false commodities become subordinated to market mechanism.

Lastly, market rationality is a specific historical construct and highly specific to a particular time, place, and social institutions. This rationality implies that in the autonomous sphere of a market based system, there simply is no economy without social institutions like the government and government intervention (Rodrigues, 2018; Somers & Block, 2014).

Secondly, in relation to students' experience in HE, the multiple orientations of the student in HE confirms the assertions of Ramsden (2008) and Tight (2013), that the complexity of current marketized contexts implies different multiple realities in the relationship between students and their HE experience. Thus, it may be possible that when a market system is resisted, contested, and challenged, representations of the students might indicate that alternatives to the consumer orientation can become more dominant.

Consequently, analysing the effects of markets in HE, Gratuidad as an effort to re embed the market in HE into its social institutions, and the influence of this policy on how students make sense of HE, from an objective position, seems to be rather unsuitable. From a constructivist stance, markets are a social construction and students, as members of the HE practice immersed in a system that is absorbed by a self-regulated market ideology, are considered meaning-making individuals who construct their own HE experience and act in their world by interpreting it (Cohen et al., 2007). Hence, in understanding students' orientations and what it means to be a university student in this neoliberal context, this dissertation is informed by the paradigm of social constructivism.

Adopting a social constructivist paradigm draws on Denzin, Lincoln & Guba's (2011) perspective that:

> *"A goodly portion of social phenomena consists of the meaning-making activities of groups and individuals around those phenomena*".

This relativist view of the world means that the world exists, but how the HE system and the student are represented and self-represented can be construed in very different ways.

EPISTEMOLOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS

The epistemological position in a research study addresses how the researchers come to know reality (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Krauss, 2005). Particularly in social sciences, scientists have expressed some disagreements regarding how research can come to conclusions and about what can be considered knowledge (Lincoln & Guba, 2011; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In effect, in the last decades, besides the objectivity of quantitative approaches, several new paradigms have emerged in the social sciences as alternatives to the positivist approach in research (Lincoln & Guba 2011; Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

In the objectivist view of positivism, the researcher maintains a detached, objective view in order to understand the facts (Denzin et al., 2011). In contrast, under a relativist view of the world, where a single phenomenon can have multiple interpretations, interpretivism seeks to understand a particular context with the belief that reality is socially constructed. Interpretivists believe that reality

is subjective, multiple, and socially constructed and that data cannot be removed from context, and, as such, promote the generation and construction of knowledge (Denzin et al., 2011). In order to explore the sense-making of students in this research, an interpretivist paradigm provides the framework to examine their experiences in HE. Interpretivism allows the researcher to view the world through the experiences of the participants admitting the possibility of multiple perspectives and different interpretations of how students experience HE.

In seeking answers for this research, this study will interpret the language used in the media and by students to construct an understanding of their experiences related to HE. In interpretivist research, qualitative data are gathered primarily in the form of spoken or written language rather than in the form of numbers (Polkinghorne, 2005). Likewise, the role of the researcher needs to be considered, because the role of the investigator and the object of investigation are assumed to be interactively linked (Tsang, 2016). The findings in interpretivist research are created as the investigation proceeds, and knowledge is acquired through interactions between the investigator and the respondents (Lincoln & Guba 2011; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In interpretivism, the researcher becomes a focal point of interest because the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection, but also the analyst of such data. In rejecting the perspective of a detached, objective observer, interpretivists argue that individuals' behaviour can be understood by the researcher by sharing their frame of reference. Morrison et al., (2018) claim that "understanding of individuals' interpretations of the world around them has to come from the inside, not the outside". In this sense, the research is influenced by the researcher's values and the values that inhere in the context where the research is conducted (Cohen et al., 2007).

Since a constructivist/interpretivist approach perceives the enquirer as orchestrator and facilitator of the enquiry process (Lincoln & Guba 2011; Guba & Lincoln, 1994) the researcher collaborates with the participants in the construction and interpretation of a phenomenon (Denzin et al., 2011). Hence, it is possible to argue that it is difficult to explore the students' orientation in HE from a value-free perspective; and it is therefore imaginable that the findings may be influenced by the position and ambiguities of the researcher (Denzin et al., 2011). As acknowledged earlier, constructivist research coexists with the influence of the researcher. Accepting the researcher's own reflexive process taking place during the research is suitable to explore the phenomenon under study, by interpreting the language used in the data and understanding the meanings implied in the language used in interaction with the researcher. Therefore, a reflexivity section is discussed at the end of this chapter),

4.2. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

The research methodology determines the nature of the study, where the context, limitations and restrictions are considered (Cohen et al., 2007). Additionally, the approach to the research allows the researcher to determine the design used to analyse the data and the data collection techniques (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Literature about how scholars have studied students´ experiences in HE reveals different methodological approaches that certainly respond to the aims and objectives of those projects. In several quantitative studies, the enquiry has aimed to explain, predict, or measure facts regarding the student as a consumer in HE, framed on positivist paradigms and using quantitative methodologies. However, this single unitary reality stands in a philosophical paradigm that is not sufficiently inclusive for the philosophical stance of this study.

Research endeavours that assume an interpretivist/constructivist paradigm generally operate using qualitative methods (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Qualitative research gives grounded reports that are necessary for the interpretivist to fully understand the context in which the research is conducted (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012). Furthermore, qualitative methods under an interpretive paradigm describe a world in which reality is complex and socially constructed, and where the view of the world is through a series of individual eyes where participants of the research have their own interpretations of reality (Willis, 2007). A vast amount of literature has explored students' experiences guided by qualitative approaches. In fact, it is argued that if the researcher seeks to understand the experiences of students in HE, a qualitative method is more suitable (Cohen et al., 2007). Accordingly, and informed by the philosophical considerations exposed above, a qualitative methodology better suits the aims of this research project. Firstly, a qualitative methodology, based on a philosophical stance that the social world is constructed and interpreted, offers principles and techniques that seemed to better answer the research questions. Secondly, in qualitative methodology the methods of data collection are sensitive to the contexts. Chilean HE and the removal of tuition fees bring a unique empirical context to explore alternative orientations of students in HE in comparison with a highly investigated student-consumer orientation.

In the construction of meaning, as the main task of qualitative research, the research design, and data collection techniques, are all interrelated elements in designing high-quality research (Denzin et al., 2011). The number of qualitative designs available to researchers in the social sciences is extensive and diverse (Creswell, Hanson, Clark, et al., 2007). In effect, qualitative research is characterized by a "loosely defined" group of designs which collect information from a range of sources to draw direct experience and meaning (Preissle, 2006, as cited in Cohen et al., 2007).

Interpretivists draw on several methods, tools and techniques to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Denzin et al., 2011).

In this diversity of methods, it becomes important to recall the aim of this research. This is to critically investigate the function and effects of discourses of the student in a context of "free" higher education, in a highly marketized society. The analysis of the effects of discourses means reviewing and evaluating texts in documents of any form, printed or digital, or orally transmitted and transcribed, to be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge (Bowen, 2009). The analysis of texts has been done using different methodologies and alternative research methods, based on content or by themes, quantitatively or qualitatively (Bengtsson, 2016; Elo et al., 2007; Vaismoradi et al., 2013). Qualitative content analysis (QCA), for example, is an appropriate method to give meaning to data when a positivist or post-positivist paradigm is assumed, providing one single overall picture of the material being reviewed (Baker & Levon, 2015; Bowen, 2009). The purpose of content analysis is mostly to describe the characteristics of the document's content (Vaismoradi et al., 2013).

Conversely, thematic analysis is a form of pattern recognition, with themes emerging from the data becoming the categories for analysis (Bowen, 2009). Thematic analysis enables clear identification of prominent themes and allows organised and structured ways of dealing with these themes (Mary Dixon-Woods et al., 2005). Although the literature shows that media documents have been analysed thematically, some researchers are suspicious about the strength of thematic analysis in terms of not providing high-quality data as in other research designs since it does not allow researchers to make claims about language use (Nowell et al., 2017). As recommended by Vaismoradi et al. (2013), thematic analysis is suitable for researchers who wish to employ a relatively low level of interpretation in their studies.

On the contrary, discourse analysis seems to be more suitable when a higher level of interpretive complexity of the text is required. The analysis of texts not only represents and reflects a certain version of reality; texts also play a part in the construction and maintenance of that reality; and when texts are analysed as data, a social constructivist view suggests that language does not merely describe social processes and structures but creates and supports them (Saarinen, 2008). Accordingly, and under the challenging and changing marketized HE systems (Tight, 2013), scholars have justified a discursive approach to analyse texts in the form of discourses in order to understand the relationship between texts, values and power and the effects of these discourses on a particular social practice.

A CRITICAL APPROACH TO DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

There are numerous definitions of discourse and discourse analysis as a research approach in qualitative research (Alvesson & Karreman, 2000; Cheek, 2004). Although it is beyond the aims of this chapter to review the various definitions and approaches of discourse analysis, it is relevant to understand the role of discourses, having in mind the research questions and the context of analysis.

Foucault (1984), as cited in Rear & Jones (2013), postulates that discourses actively constitute social reality by constructing objects of knowledge and social identities and that methodologies of discourse analysis enable the researcher to reproduce the wider social world. Discourse analysis is more than analysing the content of texts; it is, rather, concerned with the way in which texts themselves have been constructed in terms of their social and historical context (Cheek, 2004). Discourse analysis is helpful not only in tracking policy changes, raising concerns and describing them, but also in identifying, understanding, and explaining some of the developments that lead up to the implementation of the policies and the ideologies which are embedded in the debates (Cheek, 2004). Furthermore, education researchers have gravitated towards discourse analysis as a way to make sense of the ways in which people make meaning in educational contexts (Rogers et al., 2005).

As probably expected in any qualitative study, several different perspectives are applied when conducting analysis of discourses. But researchers interested in the relationship between language and society, and texts showing competition between social actors and their differing ways of viewing the world, have turned to a critical analysis of discourse. This view of discourse has assisted scholars in describing, interpreting, and explaining such relationships of power and dominance (Woodside-Jiron, 2004).

The critical analysis of discourses reproducing hegemonic notions of identity, social relations and systems of beliefs, and their genuine impact on the social world, is the type of discourse analysis that best suits the aims of this research. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) perceives the use of language as a form of social practice, normally tied to specific historical contexts of change and by which existing social relations are reproduced or contested (Fairclough, 1992, 1993, 2003). In CDA, discourses are an integral component of social processes (Fairclough, 2003). Moreover, CDA assumes that processes of social change are also, in part, processes of change in discourses, and that change in discourses may have constructive effects on processes of social change (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, 2008). CDA, unlike other forms of discourse analysis, not only includes a description and interpretation of discourses in context, but also explains why and how discourses work (Woodside-Jiron, 2004). Likewise, again unlike discourse analysis, CDA focuses on the role of discursive practices in the maintenance of the social order and in social change. Investigation proceeds by the analysis of specific instances of language use

or the analysis of the communicative event in relation to the order of discourse (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2012). In this sense, CDA is a type of analytical discourse research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context (van Dijk, 1993, 1993b). Furthermore, discursive practices have ideological effects in that they produce and maintain unequal power relations between groups of people. In the majority of cases, CDA takes the part of the underprivileged and tries to show up the linguistic means used by the privileged to stabilize or even to intensify inequalities in society (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, 2008).

In the field of HE, CDA has been conducted to explore connections between educational practices and social contexts (Mullet, 2018) by describing, interpreting and explaining the connections between language and important educational issues (Woodside-Jiron, 2004). One such issue is the connection between policy-making and educational practices, texts being considered as sensitive barometers of social processes, movements and diversity (Woodside-Jiron, 2004). Hence, a critical stance in analysing the discourses emerging from the media and from students, in the form of articles and interviews' transcripts, offers a more persuasive view of the relationship between the discourses around Gratuidad and the students in the social change faced by Chilean HE practice. Moreover, in understanding, exposing and analysing how a marketized society reproduces the ideology of the market and concurrently resists a dominant ideology seeking more social equality, CDA, through the analysis of language, offers a thorough method for this study.

FAIRCLOUGH'S APPROACH TO CDA: TODA – TEXTUALLY ORIENTED DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

CDA takes a number of different approaches and incorporates a variety of methods that depend on research goals and theoretical perspectives (Mullet, 2018). This research will refer to the discursive and critical framework of CDA proposed by Fairclough to analyse the discourses in this study. Fairclough, (1992, 1993, 2003) refers to his method for CDA as a *Textually Oriented Discourse Analysis*: **TODA**.

TODA is built on Halliday's (1961, 1978) Theory of Language in which language is a form of social practice, and it is what it is because of its social structure (Fairclough, 1992; Halliday, 1961, 1978). TODA identifies three constructive effects of discourse. Firstly, discourses contribute to the construction of social identities. Secondly, discourses help to construct social relationships between people. Thirdly, discourses contribute to the construction of systems of knowledge and belief (Fairclough, 1992). Fairclough, (1992, 1993, 2003) also highlights how social actors have the power to resist or transform discourses. Social actors have also the properties of being socially determined and

capable of individual creativity; moreover, they are capable of creatively transforming discourse conventions.

TODA is a form of three interrelated processes of analysis of discourse which are tied to three interrelated dimensions of discourse (Fairclough, 1992). These are:

1) The object of analysis (discourses) – in this research the discourses are from a corpus collected from newspaper articles and in-depth interviews.
2) The processes by which the object is produced and distributed (in writing) by human subjects, as explained earlier, this will take the form of published articles and interview transcripts.
3) The socio-historical conditions that govern these processes – as explained in detail in the previous chapters, this refers to the drastic change of removing tuition fees in a highly marketized society and HE system.

According to Fairclough (1992) each of these dimensions requires a different kind of analysis: 1) **text analysis** (description); 2) **processing analysis** (interpretation); 3) **social analysis** (explanation).

Following Fairclough's TODA (1992), at the **textual level**, the analysis of the discourses in the corpus, both articles and interview transcripts, has been organized under the main categories of textual analysis: vocabulary (words), grammar (clauses and sentences), cohesion (links between sentences), and structure (organizational property of the text). These categories are oriented to the "form" dimension of the text or the more descriptive part of the analysis, mostly following Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (Fairclough, 1992). In particular, at the level of vocabulary, the focus is on specific words, meanings and metaphors. At the grammatical level, the description of the text is centred on elements of modality and transitivity.

At the **discursive practice** level, the analysis of the selected discursive events focuses on the "meaning" or "interpretative" dimension of the articles and interviews, and includes the analysis of force of utterances, coherence of the text and intertextuality. These three categories are what Fairclough (1992) claims to be the production and interpretation of text. In particular, the concept of intertextuality is of the highest interest in TODA.

Intertextuality takes two forms: manifest and constitutive intertextuality. Manifest intertextuality refers to texts drawing on earlier texts and thereby contributing to historical development and change. Constitutive intertextuality, also defined as interdiscursivity, relates to the analysis of orders of discourse or the different discursive formations in terms of genres and types of discourses found in the texts (Fairclough, 1992; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Wodak & Meyer, 2001).

The discursive practice level focuses on how authors of texts draw on already existing discourses and genres to create their own discourses around Gratuidad and HE, and on how the researcher applies available discourses and genres in the interpretation of the texts under analysis. This discursive practice level of analysis connects and mediates between the pure descriptive textual level, in which the words and sentences from the corpus have been analysed, and the social practice level, which relates to the dominance of a neoliberal political economy, the concentration of the media, and the contestation of this ideology by students, particularly in HE social practice.

There is no doubt that the distinction between textual and discursive practice analysis is rather misleading (Fairclough, 1992, 2003). Discursive practice is in part textual analysis and in part social analysis. This complexity arises because the textual level refers to the definition of words as they are exposed in a clause (its form or signs) and the other part as the potential meaning of that word in a sentence, that is later discussed in a particular social practice (this is the interpretation of the words in a clause, in a particular genre). Furthermore, the discursive practice analysis reveals how hegemonic discourses keep reproducing and how these are also resisted.

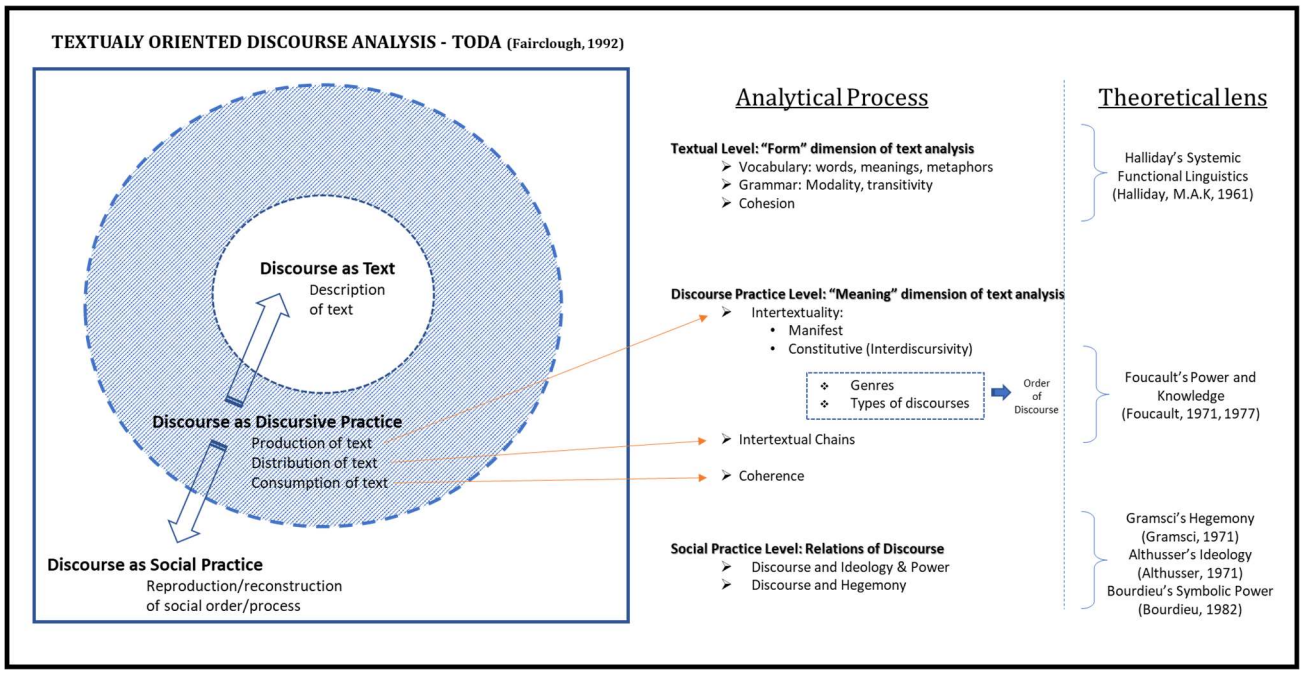
Lastly, the **social practice** analysis reflects on the explanation of the effects of the discursive practices in shaping and changing the social order as a consequence of the discourses around Gratuidad. The focus is mostly political, that is, upon ideological and hegemonic effects in transforming or reproducing systems of beliefs, social relations and social identities in Chilean society, long dominated by neoliberal ideology, and the marketized HE practice.

It is important to state that this three-dimensional analysis cannot be conducted in isolation. As postulated by Fairclough (1992) the analysis moves from interpretation to description and back to interpretation, which means analysis of text is then followed by the analysis of discursive practice and social practice, and back to again to the analysis of text and of discursive practice. Moreover, the analysis inevitably overlaps. Therefore, it is not necessary to proceed in a specific order. In effect, a researcher can start with an interpretation of social practice or with the descriptive form of the text. For the purpose of this research, the framework did follow a strict analysis of the linguistic features of the text followed by the interpretation of the discursive practice, ending with the interpretation of the social practice in which the discourses are embedded.

To better understand the analytical framework, and for illustrative purposes only, the researcher has added an explanation related to the analytical process for each dimension, along with the theories that inform each level, as proposed by Fairclough (1992, 1993). Moreover, doted lines and arrows have helped in illustrating how the analysis at the discursive practice is in relation with the

other levels. An adapted graphic of TODA is presented in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Graphic adaptation of TODA



CORPORA WHEN CONDUCTING A CDA

Since CDA is applied to the analysis of texts in this study, and there is no existing corpus suitable for the research purpose, then a corpus was needed to be assembled (Baker, 2006). A corpus is a collection of pieces of texts and documents, carefully selected and ordered according to explicit criteria, to be used as a sample of the language to be analysed (Baker, 2006; Nartey & Mwinlaaru, 2019).

Likewise, when conducting a corpus-based study, a simple collection of texts arranged without observing almost any rule will not assist in high-quality research (Rizzo, 2010). The set of texts gathered to form a corpus must fulfil specific requirements and must be selected and ordered according to some previously established criteria (Nartey & Mwinlaaru, 2019; Rizzo, 2010). Considerations in constructing a corpus concern the overall design, such as the kinds of texts included, the number of texts, the selection of particular texts, the selection of text samples from within texts (extracts), and the length of text samples. Two factors are particularly relevant for the study of a CDA approach to analyse the data: the size of the corpus and its representativeness.

SIZE AND REPRESENTATIVENESS OF THE CORPUS

To achieve trustworthiness in this corpus-based research, some criteria regarding size and representativeness of the texts were required. Bowen (2009) has suggested that the concern should not be with the number of documents or texts analysed; rather, it is the quality of the documents and the evidence they contain, given the purpose and design of the study, that are important (Bowen, 2009). In this same vein, Baker (2006) has suggested that the size of the corpus depends very much on the type of questions that are going to be asked and how important those questions are for the overall research endeavour. Furthermore, particularly when an interpretive approach is considered for the analysis, such as CDA, some authors have agreed that it is possible to get much more useful data from a small corpus (Baker, 2006; Mullet, 2018).

Fairclough's TODA (1992) is designed for the analysis of a relatively small number of documents and texts. The very detailed linguistic analysis suggested by his framework would be impossible to conduct on a large collection of texts. Also, when documents are being used for verification or triangulation purposes, even a few documents can provide an effective means of completing the research (Bowen, 2009). Fairclough's approach relies on carefully selected texts only to exemplify the main categories of his approach (Koteyko, 2006). As proposed by Fairclough, (2003), in order to conduct a high-quality qualitative social analysis based on a detailed text analysis, smaller samples of research material rather than large bodies of text can be more productive. In effect, as shown in previous research, scholars have critically analysed policy documents and newspaper articles where the appropriate amount of data for a publishable study has been determined to be between 16 and 20 documents (Brooks, 2018; Williams, 2013). Baker (2006) also suggested that documents and texts of similar size are more representative. As stated in the previous paragraph, when analysing documents from a discursive approach, a much smaller amount of data is needed (Mullet, 2018).

For the present study, the corpora has involved two sets of data. One corpus contains the discourses emerging from a set of newspaper articles and will be referred to as macro level data. The selection criteria for the articles is explained in detail in the following section. This corpus emerged from data already available and publicly accessible. As macro level data, the articles were accessible to the researcher early in the research process, therefore articles were collected, read, and preliminarily analysed, prior to conducing the in-depth interviews. The second corpus refers to the discourses that emerged from in-depth interviews. This micro level data was directly collected in person by the researcher during the fieldwork in Chile in 2019. The criteria to select interviewees are explained in detail in the following section.

Regarding this corpora, epistemologically positioned in the interpretivist vein, it is wise to acknowledge that the collection of secondary data and the preliminary analysis of macro level data could have influenced the views of the researcher, when conducting the interviews (micro level data). Likewise, this knowledge could have also influenced the interpretation of the discourses emerging from the students' interviews. Moreover, as newspaper articles are in the public domain, it is important to consider that these articles, words, phrases, and expressions, could have also influenced the views and discourses of the students themselves having, eventually, an impact on this second corpus (micro level).

The influence of macro level data in the micro level corpus is, in effect, an essential element in the analysis of discourse. By collecting and analysing macro level and micro level data, this research has assumed that discourses are an integral component of social processes (Fairclough, 1992, 2003). As components of social processes, it is assumed there is a relationship between macro and micro level discourses. This relationship is understood as the functions of a discourse and the effect it can have in other discourses (Fairclough, 1992, 2003). As discussed earlier, macro discourses can influence others' minds (Van Dijk, 1993). Moreover, discursive practices have ideological effects in that they produce and maintain unequal power relations between groups of people. Therefore, macro level data (newspaper articles' discourses) has been collected and analysed with the understanding that these discourses could have an effect on the discourses that emerged from students' interviews (micro level data).

Nonetheless, the researcher has continuously reflected on the relationships between micro and macro level data and its effects and influence when interpretating the data. The relationships between both data sets have been part of the reflexive process, as described at the end of this chapter.

Lastly, following the guidance of Fairclough (2003) the corpus derived from the media articles was read and re-read in its entirety several times. During this process of reading, keywords, phrases, and concepts were identified to carefully select extracts and quotes from each communicative event. Then, informed by Fairclough (2003), each selected extract or quote was allocated within one or more of these broad topics of analysis. The second corpus emerged from the in depth interviews. Audio files were fully transcribed by the researcher in the original language and complete transcripts deposited into NVivo. In terms of the analysis, the process set out by Fairclough (2003) was followed. This involved, selecting extracts and quotes from the interviews' transcripts to cluster them into topics for further analysis. A complete and detailed description of the data is presented in the next section.

4.3. DATA COLLECTION

The research material depends very much on the research questions and the researcher's knowledge of what could be relevant within the domain of interest (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). For the purpose of this research, the two methods used to collect the data is explained in the following section.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Discourses in media articles have been relevant when examining different constructions of students in HE (Williams, 2011). Although there is no accepted canon of data collection, particularly in CDA, it has been agreed that most CDA approaches analyse documents that already exist and are in the public domain (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). Hence, the corpus for the macro level analysis comprises of publicly accessible and already published media articles related to the public discussions on the approval of the new policy of Gratuidad and students in Chilean HE.

The selection of articles that are ultimately part of this corpus followed the principles of forming a corpus discussed in the previous section. This criteria considered relevance, significance, size, representativeness in relation to the research questions. The criteria is described in detail as follows:

a) Relevance (coverage) of the newspaper

According to the Chilean Readership Report from the National Association of Media Agency (Asociacion de Agencias de Medios, 2017; 2018) there are around 100 newspapers (printed in Spanish) in Chile. Mostly, these are local newspapers with regional news and local coverage. Of the 100 newspaper, seven of them have national coverage: El Mercurio, La Tercera, Pulso, La Hora, La Segunda, Las Ultimas Noticias y La Cuarta. Las Ultimas Noticias and La Cuarta are defined as daily sensationalist/tabloid newspapers, entertainment media similar to the Daily Mirror in the UK, offering news on the entertainment and show business and not strictly linked to political or economic issues (Asociacion de Agencias de Medios, 2017; 2018). El Mercurio and La Tercera, on the contrary, as suggested by Gronemeyer & Porath (2017), are considered the most influential printed media in the country. Likewise, in his research of media analysis in Chile Cabalin (2015) described El Mercurio as the most influential newspapers in Chile. By influential Cabalin (2015) also refers to national newspapers that generate debate in the political, economic, and social national agendas. Therefore, the selection of newspaper was narrowed down to influential newspapers with national coverage

only: El Mercurio y La Tercera.[5] However, as a consequence of the concentration of ownership in Chilean newspapers, these 2 main printed media sources are owned by economic groups that own the principal editorial companies in which these newspapers are published: Grupo Edwards for El Mercurio and Grupo Copesa for La Tercera (Asociacion de agencias de medios, 2017; Gronemeyer & Porath, 2017). Both Grupo Edwards and Grupo Copesa are largely known for their connection to right-wing parties, strong links with the establishment of the neoliberal model of Milton Friedman in Chile and their recognizable conservative editorial line. Both newspapers are recognised for their uniform editorial viewpoints and an increasingly homogeneous view on political issues (Gronemeyer & Porath, 2017). Consequently, **El Mercurio**, having the highest weekly national circulation and weakly reading index (Statistical Portal, 2018), is the newspaper selected as one of the sources for the corpus.

To enrich the analysis of discourses that inevitably arise from differing political editorial lines, **El Mostrador** is the second source selected for this corpus. Given the concentration of media ownership exposed in the previous paragraph, no printed newspaper with a declared differing editorial line exists in the country (Cabalin, 2015). However, El Mostrador, is considered one of the most influential newspapers with a liberal editorial line, in contrast to El Mercurio. **El Mostrador**, founded in 2000, is claimed to be governed by editorial principles of independence, informative pluralism, respect and positive appreciation of diversity, promotion of human rights and civilians, the control of established powers and citizen dialogue within or through the media (El Mostrador, 2018). Although El Mostrador is an online-only news resource (not printed), according to Newman et al. (2018), there is a clear growing trend towards majority consumption of online news in Chile. Evidently, this assertion is reaffirmed when El Mostrador is ranked second in the list of the leading online news sources (when removing from the ranking sources that are not considered written media such as radios and tv channels), and only after the online version of El Mercurio itself (Ranking de medios digitales en Chile, 2018). Therefore, following the criteria of relevance and coverage, the two newspapers to be considered as central sources for this corpus are **El Mercurio** and **El Mostrador**.

b) Relevant keywords

The selection of articles within El Mercurio and El Mostrador followed a reference made in a study conducted by the Research Centre of CUECH and Universidad de Chile (CUECH, 2016). According to Unidad de Estudios CUECH (2016) words and expressions used by congressmen, politicians, public personalities, and influential people have been part of the public discourses since the first suggestions of a tuition-free education and since the beginning of the discussions of a change in policy in

[5] Pulso, La hora and La Segunda are the afternoon re prints from the morning news published in El Mercurio and La Tercera. Therefore these printed media were excluded.

Parliament (Unidad de Estudios CUECH, 2016). These words and expressions were used in building arguments for the approval or refusal of the reform. From this research conducted by Unidad de Estudios CUECH (2016) 5 words were only relevant, hence, selected as key for searching media articles (among many others not directly related to this research such as: Plurality, Primary Education, Constitution, Financing, HEIs autonomy, accreditation, etc). These 5 keywords are (English translation presented):

In Spanish:	In English:
Estudiantes	Students
Educacion Superior	Higher education
Gratuidad	Free education
Igualdad	Equality
Equidad	Equity

c) Time of publication

The selection of articles was also framed within a specific period of time. This is since the day President Bachelet assumed her second term as President, that is, **11 March 2014**, and ends on **30 April 2019**.

March 2014 through to April 2019 is the timeframe used to capture the essence of how students have been constructed since the beginning of the discussion about possible changes in the Chilean HE policy, to the partial implementation of this reform in 2016, to its full application in 2019. It is pertinent to explain that the removal of tuition fees was one of Bachelet's key manifesto pledges and a central part of her speeches during her second term in office. Bachelet started the discussion about free education from the moment she assumed her role as President in 2014. Thereafter, the HE reform became an essential part of her government and a common topic of discussion among politicians and public profile officials. Although the policy on HE was formally approved in January 2018 by the National Congress and published in Chile's Official Journal in May 2018, after two years of intense discussions, the National Congress approved a draft of the policy solely related to the removal of tuition fees in December 2015. This draft of the policy was implemented for the first cohort of HE students in March 2016 (and it is considered the initial legal framework for free tuition in Chilean HE and is known as Ley Corta de Gratuidad (2015).

During this timeframe, Chile has also seen a major change in the political sphere. Despite the effort of the socialist government of Michele Bachelet to promote challenging policies on behalf of the people, the citizens elected a different party to govern the country in March 2017. Since then, conservative party leader Mr Sebastian Pinera has been President of Chile, which also brings an enriching period of discussions until the final approval of the policy in 2018.

Articles from El Mercurio have been accessed via Nexis, a leading worldwide provider of online news (available at University of Nottingham Libraries). Articles from El Mostrador were accessible only on site at the Chilean National Library (Biblioteca Nacional in Spanish). They were accessed in several visits made by the researcher while in the country.

d) Representativeness

After the criteria of type of source, keywords and time of publication were determined and the searched conducted, 18 articles emerged from El Mercurio and 16 from El Mostrador. Of a total of 34 articles published in these 2 newspapers a representativeness criteria was applied. This is, in first place, articles that strictly referred, along with the keywords in their texts, to the policy of Gratuidad and students in HE. In second place, a determined intention of the researcher to have a balanced corpus in terms of editorial lines, drawing upon 14 articles from each source.

Ultimately, 28 articles, with a total of 22,179 words, were finally selected for this analysis. A description of the of articles' sources, headings, number of words, can be reviewed in Appendix 1.

The corpus was deposited in NVivo for organizational purposes. On NVivo, extracts and quotes from the articles were selected and clustered, as explained in the previous section. To answer research question 1 (the findings are discussed in Chapter 5), a set of 103 relevant extracts/quotes within four broad topics of analysis have been identified. For the analysis of research question 2 (the findings are discussed in Chapter 6), 41 relevant quotes and extracts and four broad topics of analysis were identified. With these selections, the corpus was narrowed in order to conduct a detailed examination of the functions and effects of the discourses in these widely read newspapers. When the selection of extracts was completed, and using an Excel spreadsheet, each extract and topic was analysed using TODA to reveal the features of the text and functions of the discourses.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH STUDENTS

To explore students' orientations, in-depth interviews were conducted. In conducting in-depth interviews, the world is understood as seen by the respondents, enabling the researcher to capture the points of view coming from the participants' own voices (Patton, 1990). Data generated via interviews are transformed into written texts through transcription, becoming a narrative of the discourse told by the student (Polkinghorne, 2005).

Social actors such as students have the power to resist or transform discourses (Fairclough, 1992, 1993, 2003). Hence, individual interviews were conducted to capture discourses from students attending an HEI in their first and last year.

This study adopted a cross-institutional approach conducted in the city of Talca (Chile)[6] during 2019. Three pilot interviews were arranged in April 2019, before the definitive field work. These were useful in identifying and resolving potential problems with the questions. They also helped in estimating the time to collect enriching data from the interview. Students were invited to participate by publishing a poster in different schools, campus buildings and students' boards at their HEIs. The poster (in Spanish) is presented in Appendix 4. Actual data collection was conducted between August and October 2019, in a neutral site (local public library). Two groups of students were interviewed:

A. **First-year HE students – T1**: To explore different orientations of students when they are at the start of their HE journey. These particular students had started their HE in March 2019, when Gratuidad was fully implemented. To guide the interviews and the questions, these students are named as students in time 1 (students in their first year of their HE experience).
B. **Final-year HE students – T2**: To explore if orientations of students in HE differ when students are at the end of their HE experience. Students in this group usually started their HE in 2016 or earlier, when Gratuidad had just been approved or when tuition fees had not been removed yet. To guide the interviews and the questions, these students are named as students in time 2 (students in the last year of their HE experience).

Interviews were conducted and recorded with the participant's consent in Chilean Spanish. At the time of the interview, 12 participants attended a public HEI and 12 a private HEI. For balance, half of the participants were state-funded students (under the Gratuidad scheme) while the other half were self-funded (private personal funding or private/public loans). For sample diversity, a mix of new entrants (1st year) and final-year (4th year) students formed part of the sample and students from different fields of study were also considered. These were: Health Sciences (Medicine, Nursing, Physiotherapy); Business Studies (Administration and Accounting); Humanities (Law and Political Science); Art (Architecture and Graphic Design); and Engineering. The final dataset consists of 24 in-depth interviews (27 hours of audio material)[7]. As in the corpus from the media, the interview data was transcribed and deposited on NVivo in its original language, only for organisational purposes. On NVivo, the interview data was grouped and clustered to topics of analysis as explained in the previous sections. Guided by Fairclough (2003) extracts and quotes from the 24 interviews were identified.

[6] *Talca is a city in the central region of Chile, about 255 km (158 mi) south of Santiago. It is the capital of Maule Region (7th Region of Chile). As of the 2017 census, the city had a population of 203,873. The city hosts one public university, 4 private universities, 5 professional institutes, and 5 centres of technical training.*

[7] *The complete dataset for this research comprised 36 interviews (38 hours of recording). However, to present a balanced set of interviews in terms of years of study, course of study and source of funding, 24 were finally selected.*

Next, each extract/topic was subsequently translated into English and transferred to an Excel spreadsheet for analysis using TODA.

To access the interviewees, two HEIs were selected. The first university is a fully private teaching-oriented university. This university is part of the Gratuidad scheme, with approximately 10,000 UG students. The disciplines offered include social sciences, art and health sciences. One of its main campuses is located in the city of Talca (Chile). The second HEI is a research-oriented fully public university. By law, this university must be part of the Gratuidad scheme, with approximately 11,000 students. It offers the same disciplines offered by the private HEI. Its main campus is also located in the city of Talca (Chile).

4.4. ETHICS, QUALITY CRITERIA AND PERSONAL POSITIONING TO THIS STUDY

Anonymity, confidentiality, and privacy have been considered in this interpretivist project (Lincoln & Guba, 2011; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In this research, student information is confidential, to protect their identities. Only their forename is used, for organizational purposes. The two universities will also be anonymous, although characteristics of the institutions will necessarily be presented. Interviews have been transcribed, codified and analysed manually. Although all the data remain anonymous, quotes are used in the thesis. Only the researcher and the thesis supervisors will have access to the information derived from the interviews. Recorded files are password protected and kept safe on the University of Nottingham (Microsoft One Drive) servers for two years prior to deletion.

Appropriate ethical approval was granted by the Nottingham University Business School Ethics Committee before conducting the field work. Participants were informed about the research when registering for the interview. A document with a full description of the research was electronically shared with students before the interview (in Spanish). Students signed a consent agreement at the time of the interview. Lastly, participants were compensated with a £10 voucher for their participation in the project. Appendix 5 presents an English version of the document with the information presented to the participants.

With regard to quality, researchers have claimed that qualitative research requires, by its nature, its own set of criteria to evaluate its quality (Northcote, 2012). Although the issue of quality criteria in constructivism is not well resolved, good-quality qualitative studies depend on examining the trustworthiness of the research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Following the definition of Guba & Lincoln (1994) and Denzin & Lincoln (2011). trustworthiness in this research will involve aspects of credibility, transferability and conformability.

Establishing credibility means confidence in the truth of the findings. Credibility of a qualitative research depends upon the ability and effort of the researcher (Pandey & Patnaik, 2014). One technique to establishing credibility, among others, such as persistent observation or prolonged engagement, relates to triangulation, a technique used to ensure that an account is rich, robust, comprehensive and well developed (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Triangulation of sources involves using and combining multiple data sources in an investigation to produce greater understanding of the phenomenon (Golafshani, 2003). As a technique to establish the credibility of this research, secondary data in the form of document analysis is applied to explore possibly different students' orientations in HE. In the notion of constructivism and multiple realities, multiple methods are considered a quality criterion for this research (Golafshani, 2003). Thus, media analysis may be used in combination with in-depth interviews as a means of combining methodologies and triangulating the information collected in the study of student orientations in HE.

Transferability in qualitative research is extremely difficult, since these enquiries are often specific and the findings are applicable to a particular environment or a small group of individuals (Pandey & Patnaik, 2014). Findings and conclusions are not necessarily applicable to other situations and populations. However, in line with a proposal made by Guba & Lincoln (1994) it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that sufficient contextual information about the field work is provided to enable the transferability of this research to be assessed. By describing the phenomenon in sufficient detail, the researcher can eventually evaluate the extent to which the conclusions drawn are transferable to other times, settings, situations and people (Pandey & Patnaik, 2014). Lastly, steps must be taken to ensure, as much as possible, that the findings of this research are the result of the experiences and ideas of the participants. Conformability in this research, which can be comparable to objectivity in quantitative research, will use the technique of reflexivity to systematically consider the context of construction of knowledge and the biases of the researcher during the research process.

Reflexivity refers to the engagement, by the qualitative researcher, in continuous self-critique and the provision of an explanation of how his own experiences did or did not influence the stages of the research process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Qualitative researchers are encouraged to record biases, feelings and thoughts and to state them explicitly in the research report (Krauss, 2005). To evaluate the credibility of a discourse analysis, an explicit acknowledgement must be made by the researcher that the analysis is the product of particular theoretical frameworks, assumptions, biases and values (Creswell, 2014; Earthy & Cronin, 2008)

This dissertation started with a personal statement from the researcher. In effect, the perception of students' orientations in HE, state-funded students and self-funded students and the

change in HE policy in Chile are all indirectly shaped by the own experience of the researcher being part of the HE sector. The researcher writing this dissertation has worked in a public, research-oriented HEI in Chile for 17 years. This time allowed him to experience the challenges of HE in Chile in general, and also allowed him to observe, from a first-person perspective, how students live their daily lives while attending this HEI. From both a lecturer's and a senior administrator's standpoint, the researcher has been immersed in the discussion about students studying in a very expensive system, with few opportunities for less advantaged students, yet in a society that seems to keep promoting HE as a commodity.

During the past decade, the researcher also experienced how students protested and occupied university buildings during the social movements in Chile, demanding better quality of HE, a less expensive system and equality in HE. Their discussions were mostly about HE as a public good and not a private commodity, and if HE should be financed by society or by students themselves. The researcher interacted with them, talked with them in formal and informal meetings, and agreed with some of their viewpoints whilst disagreeing with others.

This experience led the researcher to be part of this research enquiry, asking his own questions: Who is the student? Why do students want to attend university? Why do some students attend a public and others a private HEI? How could free education influence their understanding of public education or education as a public good and not a commodity? The researcher himself studied for his undergraduate degree in a Chilean public HEI, and although some of his studies were partially covered by a national scholarship, he, as did many others, finished with heavy financial debt for his education. Is it possible that a country such as Chile, considered small and still a developing economy, can afford free education for less privileged students? Will state-funded students understand that this is a collective national effort of a whole society to educate them? Will the influence of a strong neoliberal society that has prevailed in the past 40 years still influence the students when they are studying tuition-free? How intense is the market ideology influencing people's lives?

The experience of the researcher in this field of HE in Chile has enhanced his awareness of how students may experience HE. His experience also brings biases to the research, and although all effort was made to ensure objectivity, these biases might have shaped the interpretation of the data collected in both newspapers and interviews.

CHAPTER 5. FINDINGS – GRATUIDAD REPRESENTED IN MEDIA

This chapter analyses the discourses in news media surrounding the public policy of Gratuidad. It therefore addresses the sub question 1 of this dissertation:

How is the public policy of Gratuidad discursively represented in media articles?

As it has been explained in detail in Chapter 4, the corpus for this Chapter comprises of public accessible media articles surrounding the policy of Gratuidad and students in Chilean HE. A total of 28 articles, consisting of 22, 179 words from El Mercurio and El Mostrador, published between the 11th March 2014 until 30th April 2019, are part of the corpus. A balanced corpus of 14 articles from each newspaper were considered. Appendix 1 contains the information of the corpus: source, heading, number of words, etc. Extracts of these articles are identified by the number of the extract, if an extract is explicitly presented in the chapter, along with the number of the article listed on the table in Appendix 1 (i.e. Extract 1.1 N1 refers to an extract from article 1 on the table).

This chapter examines four topoi developed from a CDA of the articles of both newspapers. These topoi are: 1) Gratuidad as a social revolution: A collective and radical social turn for our children's future; 2) Gratuidad as an obstacle and an injury to society: The faults of the policy in promoting a more equal society; 3) Gratuidad as a hasty and absurd policy: A poorly designed reform; and 4) Gratuidad as an irrational passion: a sacred devotion to free education.

5.1. GRATUIDAD AS A SOCIAL REVOLUTION: A COLLECTIVE AND RADICAL SOCIAL TURN FOR OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE

The media articles, regardless of the source, reproduce that a change in the HE policy, and the approval of Gratuidad are challenging, difficult, and complex events. Moreover, trying to challenge a long established marketized HE system is also reproduced, along with a sense of collectivism in reconstructing a public HE system. These representations, that emerged from both El Mercurio and El Mostrador, frame Gratuidad as a social revolution and a collective effort of society for a better future of Chilean children.

Gratuidad as a challenge to current HE practice is reproduced in Extract 1.1. (El Mostrador N25). In this extract, the text juxtaposes the complexity of dismantling a HE system that has been operating for several decades, and the importance of a HE system in which HEIs do not profit from it.

Extract 1.1.

	Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
1	The Minister of Education, Adriana Delpiano,	Sergio Bitar: the	El Mostrador	04/10/2015
2	referred to the policy reform of Higher	shot at the feet	Art. 25	
3	Education, which enters Congress' discussions	of the Ministry		
4	today, **assuring that 'dismantling a market**	of Education		
5	**system is very difficult to do in a year or two.**			
6	**Mainly because it is a system that has been**			
7	**going on for many years**, very complex, very			
8	heterogeneous. **We are not writing on a blank**			
9	**piece of paper'.**			
10	She stated then confirmed that **profits in HE will**			
11	**be highly punished** within the universities.			
12	**Universities, by law, are non-profit**, therefore,			
13	real restrictions are put in place for that to			
14	occur... **'It will not end with profiting in HE, but**			
15	**the appropriate sanctions are established**,			
16	based on the number of students who attend			
17	these institutions. That's why **we believe free**			
18	**education is such a good opportunity for HEIs**			
19	**to become non-profit'** Delpiano declared.			

Metaphors, as the one presented in line 4: **"assuring that '*dismantling a market system is very difficult to do in a year or two*'"**; along with modal elements "**assuring**" and "**very difficult**" (line 4 and line 5) reproduce the difficulties of changing an apparent strong and intense marketised HE system. Likewise, **"We are not writing on a blank piece of paper"** (line 8) serves to neuter the impact of a reform by presenting the position that developing a new system will not be possible without building on the legacy of the existing one. Any changes will have to be made within what is already in place. These features of the text reveal a language that presents how challenging it is to change long-standing systems and the intensity of market principles, that still reproduces the robustness of market system in HE.

A reprimand and penalty to those HEIs, which continue operating unlawfully, also illustrates an ideational function that firmly stands against free market policies and the marketisation in HE. This is evident in line 10: **"Profits in HE will be *highly punished* within the universities. *Universities, by law, are non-profit***" emphasising that HEIs acting unlawfully will be penalised. The interdiscursivity is evident in a mix of legal discourses "**Universities, *by law,* are non-profit, therefore, real restrictions are put in place for that to occur**" (line 13); free market discourses "**It will not end with *profiting in***

***HE*, but the appropriate sanctions are established**" (line 15), and socio-political discourse "**That's why *we believe free education is such a good opportunity* for HEIs to become non-profit**' (line 18). This high level of interdiscursivity intends to change the current order of discourse, by validating a determination to penalise business-like HEIs. Moreover, interdiscursively**,** Gratuidad is not only represented as a revolution against marketisation, but also as an authority to radically change the forces of the market in HE.

This defence of Gratuidad as a radical change in society, reproduced in an article with an editorial line close to the government political ideals such as El Mostrador N25 could be expected. However, surprisingly, the analysis of other press articles published in the newspaper, opposite in its editorial line and known to be a strong supporter of the neoliberal and market ideology, reveals a similar representation. Gratuidad represented as a remarkable change towards reconstructing a more equitable society emerged from the analysis of El Mercurio (N14), best illustrated in Extract 1.2 below.

Extract 1.2.

	Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
1	Discursively, it is argued that **this transformation**	Where is	El Mercurio	24-04-2016
2	**represents** moving from an **education conceived as**	educational	Art. 14	
3	**a consumer good** to an education **recognized as a**	reform		
4	**guaranteed social right. Above all, the approved**	heading?		
5	**reforms are historic**, and they **will already offer a**			
6	**new educational paradigm** and the **promise of**			
7	**greater equality and inclusion**.			

The change in policy, as a significant turning point in the HE system, is forcefully and coherently reproduced in Extract 1.2 (El Mercurio N14). This also reproduces the importance of public HE. The use of the metaphor "**this *transformation* represents**" (line 1); the tone about the approval of the reform when stating that education is "***recognized* as a *guaranteed* social right**" (line 3); and the assertion of "**Above all, the approved reforms are *historic,* and they will already *offer a new educational paradigm*"** (line 4). With the use of the adjective "**historic**" and "**new educational paradigm**"; all evidence the lexical choices representing Gratuidad as conversion, a makeover, or a revolution in society. Furthermore, the sentence in line 6 "**the promise of greater equality and inclusion**" implicitly emphasises the potential power and wide-ranging influence of Gratuidad, not only in the HE sector, but also in the rest of Chilean society. Thus, besides a remarkable turn in HE, Gratuidad is also represented as a political decision that can impact society beyond the HE domain, bringing social justice and equality in Chile.

Gratuidad, discursively constructed as a significant event in the history of the country, is intertextually connected with other discourses identified within the corpus.

As the political speech of Michelle Bachelet, President of Chile and one of the main advocates of the change in HE policy, is reframed in another article (El Mercurio N13) from the right-wing media, the approval of the Gratuidad represents a significant transformation in society. In N13, the media applies several metaphors to represent the impact of Gratuidad as a reform that is a symbolic of a societal change, beyond the HE sector. In "***A milestone was met*** **this afternoon when the MPs dispatched the reform**" Gratuidad is represented as a significant event in society, which is metaphorically reaffirmed later in: "**we want to build a more equitable country**". The article reproduces an aspiration of working together for a better society. The combination of metaphors and lexical choices intends to align citizens in the debates around free education with a political discourse of Gratuidad as a mechanism to achieve a more equal society, and as a sort of a counter movement to markets. Additionally, the text emphasises the notion of a collectivist goal "***By advancing on free higher education, we want to build a more equitable*** **country with equal opportunities**". Article N13 reproduces a discourse of aspiration of a more equal country, constructed collectively, as the metaphor "**we want to build**" exposes, which certainly differ from what is, generally, an individualist neoliberal discourse (Fairclough, 1993) and, particularly opposite to dominant discourses found in marketized systems, such as Chilean HE (Simbürger & Guzmán-Valenzuela, 2019).

Furthermore, the pronoun **'us'** and the sentence **'coming together in these efforts'** reproduce the sense of togetherness and collectivism. This discourse of collectivism is emphasised with nouns, such as "**an instance of encounter**" and "**social cohesion**" represent the effort of Gratuidad as an opportunity to promote a more collectivist society. Moreover, Gratuidad is represented as an accomplishment that accentuates the good benefits not only for HE but also for society by projecting a better future with the approval of the new policy: "**Chile is better today than yesterday, because it has a policy that guarantees students to study in accredited institutions for free**" (line 13). By the sole mention of "**Chile is better today**" the discourse constructs Gratuidad as transformational and progressive not only for HE but for to the Chilean society in its entirety.

The media reproduces the difficulty in understanding the meaning of equality by questioning if Gratuidad will certainly bring such equality into society. However, as it emerges in the analysis of Extract 1.3 (El Mostrador N27), a discourse of confusion is then reframed by reproducing a discourse that represents the opportunity that Gratuidad brings in changing society.

Extract 1.3.

	Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
1	**There are too many discourses**, **criticizing** what it	Education	El Mostrador	08-04-2019
2	has been done and what it has not been done,	as a right	Art. 27	
3	**visualizing** what is best for the future, **how we can**			
4	**build a better society**, what is the way to reach that			
5	much "**desired perfect" society**. Does this exist? **I do**			
6	**not know; it is probably a utopia** ...but I think that			
7	**one of the great answers** to this question is the			
8	**quality of education and free education**…			
9	**We should** start by focusing on the boys and girls of			
10	today. **They are the future**, through them **we will**			
11	**build a better society, we will be able to make**			
12	**changes, we will educate** our citizens who will			
13	constantly question themselves about who they are,			
14	but **how to achieve it**? I think **it must be based on**			
15	**the fact that education is a right, so society has to**			
16	**be accountable for that.**			

Gratuidad, as an influential movement to reach a more equal and collective society, seems to be a confusing concept at first, particularly in a society highly influenced by market policies that have promoted market principles and ideals for decades. Lines 3 to line 6: **"how we can build a better society, what is the way to reach that much "desired perfect" society. Does this exist? I do not know; it is probably a utopia"** reproduce the perplexity exposed by the author in what could be a social turn in HE. The notion of something unknown reproduces that a better society is difficult to reach and some kind of illusion. In effect, the feeling of confusion around the meaning of a more collectivist society could be a consequence of decades of a political rhetoric of the benefits of free market policies and discourses of the individual and private benefits of HE (Amaral & Magalhães, 2015; Kotz, 2002a; Olssen & Peters, 2005).

Nevertheless, these uncertainties are immediately countered by a narrative that a "**better society**" can be possible, and this could be possible by achieving "**quality of education and free education"** (line 8). Moreover, the relation in that quality of education and free education leads to a better society reaffirms the commitment for all members of society in achieving such a goal. Similar to N13, the discourse of togetherness around this goal is reproduced once again in Extract 1.3. line 10: "***We should*** **start by focusing on the boys and girls of today. They are the future; through them** ***we will build*** **a better society…**". The collective change in society is reaffirmed with modal verbs, such as "**we should**" and "**we will**", that are repeatedly used in the text (line 9,10, 11) emphasizing that

education is a legal entitlement: "***the fact*** **that education is a right**" (line 15). Furthermore, the assumption that education is a duty of society: "**society *has to be* accountable for that**" (Line 15 and 16) reveals an imperative, connoting this legal entitlement for free HE as essential and urgent duty of citizens to achieve an equal society. Gratuidad discursively constructed as a responsibility of the entire society also reproduces a discourse in which the future of the citizens, in the name of children, boys and girls of the country, is the responsibility of all citizens today: "**We should start by focusing on the boys and girls of today. They are the future…"** (line 9). Consequently, beyond Gratuidad constructed as revolutionary, collective effort, to build a more equitable society, Gratuidad is discursively constructed as "for the future of our children".

5.2. GRATUIDAD AS AN OBSTACLE AND INJURY TO SOCIETY: THE FAULTS OF THE POLICY IN PROMOTING EQUALITY

In contrast to discourses representing Gratuidad as a social revolution for a more equal society, the critical analysis of the corpus also reveals alternative, and rather conflicting constructions of the reform. Whilst the original policy reform was to benefit only students attending public HEIs, the analysis of the discourses across the articles, reveal a resistance of the media in the direction of the policy by reasserting and reassuring that private HEIs, mostly traditional-private HEIs[8], also contribute to social justice and social equality. Irrespective of the editorial line, media discourses contesting the scope of Gratuidad were identified, representing it more as an obstacle in achieving social equality and as an injury, when referring to its authentic effects in the promotion of equality. Furthermore, these discourses also reproduce the complexity of the Chilean public private HE system, representing it as an obsolete and outdated..

The notion that Gratuidad assists in achieving a more equal society and greater social justice, regardless of the funding nature or origins of HEIs, reinforces the depiction of private HE also contributing to such equality. The media analysis unveils the attempt of private HEIs to defend and protect the role of private HEIs in achieving equality by reproducing the influence these private universities have in the system. In doing so, frustration on the announcements of the government by not including private HEIs under the scope of Gratuidad is firstly reproduced. In effect, article El Mostrador N16, reproduce the hindrance, from a policy that will not benefit private HE students and does not recognise private HEIs contribution to social justice and equality. This is revealed in the clause "**we believe that the government's announcement represent a *setback*…"** reproducing opposition to the direction taken by the policy, as it will ultimately be an impediment for equality after all. The article

[8] *Refer to Glossary for its definition.*

analysis unveils a discourse around Gratuidad as a policy that is ultimately undermining all the efforts in the student movement, which forcefully battled to achieve a free HE system. In direct reference to the authority and the authors of the policy, the assertion **"*must keep*"** in **"This government *must keep* its campaign promises…"** later remarked in **"social justice *denied for so many years*"** implies an obligation and a necessary commitment from the government to fulfil the ultimate goal of Gratuidad, which is to achieve a more inclusive society**.**

The media also reproduces that private HE is instrumental in achieving a more equal society. Hence, Gratuidad should include private HEIs. As in El Mostrador N16, in from El Mostrador N15, both articles from the left leaning newspaper, discourses extending the policy, beyond public HEIs, to include private HEIs are reproduced as well. The lexical choices found in article El Mostrador N15 particularly: **"…which means a *profound reform* of tertiary education *to all students*, ending profits in HE, inclusive access, universal free tuition"** and **"A society without privileges and without discrimination should be reflected in decisions *regarding all students* in higher education"** accentuate the reproduction that Gratuidad should be for the entire student population in HE, regardless of the type of institution.

The requests for Gratuidad to include all students are also validated in Extract 2.1 from El Mostrador N23, the left wing newspaper. From the analysis, Gratuidad is represented as being deficient and worthless, as exposed in: "**Without higher levels of financing to the [educational] system, it is not possible to think that a relevant improvement will be achieved**" (line 5 to 7).

Extract 2.1.

	Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
1	"... **financing higher education is to invest in**	VC rejects the	El Mostrador	15/04/2016
2	**the economic and social development of the**	reform and	Art. 23	
3	**country**...**generating a great contribution** to	responds to		
4	the development of Chile. **Without higher**	Ministry [of		
5	**levels of financing** to the [educational]	Education]		
6	system, **it is not possible to think that a**	Delpiano: "**It**		
7	**relevant improvement will be achieved**"... In	**is extremely**		
8	this line, he [VC Sanchez**] proposes that**	**statist, so we**		
9	"**public financing must be both continuous**	**cannot accept**		
10	**and competitive**." **In other words, public**	**it**"		
11	**institutions – state and private –** can have			
12	**access to the same funds** [free education			
13	funding].			

The article reproduces the deficiencies of the policy ultimately attempting to bring together all HEIs in one and unique analogous HE system, contending there are no differences between what is public and what is private in HE: **"In other words, public institutions -state and private- can have access to the same funds [free education funding]"** (line 10). Discursive practices attempting to bring down the distinctions between public and private domains are particularly intense in press discourses (Fairclough, 2003).

Extract 2.1 is producing a mix of discursive practices, a hybrid effect, as posited by Fairclough (2003), to maintain the social order by reproducing an unclear and blurry boundary between public and private HE, validating the value of private HE and its contribution to social justice. This discursive practice is resisting the change in the HE practice by questioning the genuine contribution to equality and social justice Gratuidad and representing Gratuidad as an obstacle to such social equality.

This representation of Gratuidad as an impediment to the promotion of social justice is intensified in articles from El Mercurio. These are contesting discourses reproducing the mistakes made by the government by promoting a policy that is represented as unsound, inconsistent, faulty, and defective.

The discourse in Extract 2.4 (El Mercurio N8) validates a discourse of Gratuidad as mistakenly proposed by the government and representing it as a faulty policy.

Extract 2.2.

	Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
1	***Reporter: Is there a negative image from*** *of*	"**This leaves**	El Mercurio	24/05/2015
2	*the New Majority Coalition [governing party]*	**me puzzled**, it	Art. 8	
3	***towards private universities****?*	makes me		
4	**It is obvious that it is so**. **There is a lot of**	lose all		
5	**prejudice and ignorance of certain realities**.	confidence"		
6	To give an example, Diego Portales University			
7	holds high levels of quality... **it is much more**			
8	**inclusive than others**. **Why poorer students**			
9	**who want to study there are not able to**			
10	**receive support?** but CRUCh universities that			
11	are of poorer quality and hold lower			
12	accreditation get that support? **That is**			
13	**discrimination.**			
14	*Reporter: What socioeconomic profile do your*			
15	*students have?*			
16	"**We are one of the very few** [HEIs]that have			
17	students from all neighbourhoods, from all			

18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28	counties, **well balanced**. **We are a radically inclusive university**; more than **80% of the students receive some kind of financial support**. He stated that ""**60% of vulnerable students do not attend HEIs that belong to the CRUCh**"…Today, **more than half of the students and the vast majority of the poorest students attend a university outside the Council of Rectors [CRUCh]**. **If the criteria is social justice, I would like them** [government] **to be consistent**"			

The headline is intertextually reframing a sense of confusion: **"This leaves me puzzled**", as a direct report from the interviewee in the article, reproduces negative effects of Gratuidad towards private HEIs. These allegations are based on, presumably, a mistaken perception from the government or society that private HEIs are not socially inclusive. This presumption could be, however, an effect of the question asked by the author of the text: ***Is there a negative image*** **from of the New Majority Coalition [governing party] towards private universities?** (Line 1), in which the answer is categorical in asserting that presumably negative image of private HEIs: **"*It is obvious* that it is so. There is a lot of *prejudice and ignorance* of certain realities"** (line 4).

Confusion and inconsistency is validated with several lexical choices used in the text, for example, in line 6: "**To give an example, Diego Portales University holds high levels of quality... it is *much more* inclusive than others**" reproducing a comparison between one private HEI's quality and another HEI, not explicitly specified (but presumably a public one). The use of the question to an unknown listener (probably someone from the Government) "**Why poorer students who want to study there are not able to receive support?**" (Line 8) is a persuasive enquiry to an ignored agent in the text. This enquiry validates the sense of a defective policy which leaves students in need "**poor students**" (from private HE students) out of the scope of the reform. From line 16: **"We are *one of the very few* [HEIs] that have students from all neighbourhoods, from all councils, well balanced. *We are a radically inclusive* university…"** the article reproduces that private HEIs are strongly committed to, and are an advocate of, social equality.

Discourses of a policy that mistakenly reinforces public HEIs only, are again uncovered in the textual analysis of El Mostrador N18, now representing Gratuidad as a political error. The text in the article accuses the government, questions its actions, and asserts that the policy is faulty by criticizing the capacity of the government and by reproducing the responsibilities in the mistakes of the policy

"…makes a crude analysis of the reform's faults: *There continues to be an enormous weakness in the government's approach*". An accusation to the government is reproduced in a narrative that also questions the decision to only focus Gratuidad on public HEIs: "***Instead of*** **reinforcing and promoting a mixed regime"** and **"if one looks specifically *at what is being done*, a good part of the project is dedicated to *strengthening the public universities*, as if the HE that the State should be concerned with were only part of the whole"**.

This incapacity of the government to promote a policy that excludes private HE students, is intensified in El Mercurio N6. The tone in **"The government makes a completely arbitrary distinction"** exposes a strong criticism to the government and its political decision of not opening the financial benefit of Gratuidad to all students, regardless of the type of HEIs. In effect, the use of the modal adverb "**completely** and the use of the adverb **'only'** in **"to benefit *only* some students and their families"** reassures that some students are not considered in the policy and that Gratuidad is in effect excluding them. This discourse, reproducing confusion: "**this reform is difficult to justify**", ends up representing Gratuidad as more of a segregating than an inclusive reform.

Elements that reproduced an accusation against the government and its responsibilities in implementing a policy represented as an injury, are best illustrated in Extract 2.3 (El Mercurio N5)

Extract 2.3.

	Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
1	MPs of the left coalition **declared that**	Left wing MPs	El Mercurio	16-07-2015
2	**budgetary adjustment cannot lead to**	criticize the	Art. 5	
3	**"discrimination" against vulnerable young**	free education		
4	**people who will be left out of the system**, in	formula in 2016		
5	response to criticism from the VC of Alberto	and asks		
6	Hurtado University. Not only Walker (MP)	MINEDUC		
7	considered reviewing the proposal, but also the	[Ministry of		
8	former Minister of Education, Nicolás	Education] to		
9	Eyzaguirre, also agreed.	extend the		
10	MP Robles stated that "**public universities**	policy to		
11	**should be prioritized, however, private ones**	private HEIs		
12	**[HEIs] should be treated equally. "It is a mistake**			
13	**that, because of fewer resources, private**			
14	**universities are left aside".** Meanwhile, MP			
15	Mario Venegas stated that "**young people who**			
16	**study in private universities belong to the most**			
17	**vulnerable families...** on the contrary, in public			
18	universities there are children from the			

19 wealthier families," for which **he asked the** 20 **reform to be reviewed**.			

Line 2 "…**lead to discrimination against vulnerable young people who will be left out of the system**" reproduces an exclusion of certain students. The statement "**MPs of the left coalition *declared* that budgetary adjustment *cannot* lead to discrimination",** in line 2 and line 3 respectively, accuses the government of ignoring any sort of financial support to students from private HEIs. More significantly, the lexical choices in: **"*vulnerable young people* who will *be left out* of the system"** (line 3) and in "**young people who study in private universities belong to the most vulnerable families**" (line 15) imply that private HE students, presumably a type of student in real financial need and eligible for the benefit of Gratuidad, are being intentionally excluded by the policy. In line 6, criticism in the direction taken by the policy is reproduced: **"not only Walker considered reviewing the proposal, but also former Minister of Education, Nicolás Eyzaguirre"** and also in line 18 **"for which he asked the reform to be reviewed"**. Moreover, the cause-and-effect argument in the text, which states that if there are **"budgetary restrictions…"** this **"will lead to discrimination"** (line 2) attempts to represent Gratuidad as a hindrance to greater social equality and an intervention that will eventually lead to an opposite goal.

The financial and economic discourses reproduced in line 2 "**budgetary adjustment cannot lead**" and line 12 "**because of fewer resources**", mixed with a social justice discourse reproduced in line 16 "**young people who study in private universities belong to the most vulnerable**" accentuate the harmful effect of Gratuidad by not considering these students. It also uncovers its limitations to reach social justice. Consequently, the discourses of an ill-thought-out policy and the representations of Gratuidad as being mistakenly approved, with the inconsistencies proposed by the government, reveal an unexpected and rather contradictory construction of the reform. Considering that the main aim of the change in the HE policy has been to promote equality and social justice; in these discourses, the faults of the policy and the political errors of the government conclusively reveal a construction of Gratuidad as exclusionary and Gratuidad as an obstacle to a more equal society.

Lastly, the discourses of incompetence of the government in the promotion of a HE policy that is an obstacle to a more equal society, leads to, what can be considered, a radical interpretation of the press coverage analysis. El Mostrador N15 is an article from the newspaper with an editorial line again in line with the government's political position. In N15, the metaphor of harming private HEIs and that all HEIs should be treated equally, making no difference between public and private, illustrates a damaging effects of Gratuidad. In this left leaning newspaper article, the reasons for private HEIs to be included in the benefits of the policy are categorical: "**These universities [private]**

demand a space and recognition *for their performance and inclusive nature*". In these lines, a peremptory request to the government to consider all HEIs as equal is reproduced. Also, a sense of disagreement with the Gratuidad not fulfilling its purpose is intensified, by producing a discourse that Gratuidad is being implemented under a HE system that is outdated. The use of the metaphor "**archaic dilemma of 'State or Market**', '**Public or Private**' presumes a system that is out-of-date or old fashioned, a representation of an obsolete system that still categorises educational institutions depending on their ownership or source of funding.

Likewise, Gratuidad as an injury is represented when analysis reproduces the strong political influence of public HEIs. In this case, El Mercurio N8 is resistant to the change in policy by reproducing a sentiment of suffering and of being affected by the policy in the sentence '***Afflicted*' after the presidential announcement**". Being harmed by Gratuidad seems to be strongly connected with the premise that public HEIs are highly political and influential entities. The lexical choices in **"*very powerful* lobbies**" and **"*strong lobby* of the CRUCh"** along with the assertion **"power of the lobby"** and the use of the verb **"*imposing* their needs"** reproduce, with a very negative connotation, the strong influence of public HEIs in politics and in policy discussions. These reproductions are interpreted as Gratuidad being instrumental to a ***'cartel'*** of public HEIs, organised under CRUCh. According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, ***'Cartel'*** refers to "an association of independent firms or individuals for the purpose of exerting some form of restrictive or monopolistic influence on the production or sale of a commodity"[9]. This definition can help in interpreting the article in that CRUCh as an organisation of public HEIs is a powerful organisation with the purpose of exerting certain influence in the change in policy. As line 15 unveils: "**Those are very powerful lobbies, more focused on the money than on quality and equality**", the discursive practice highlights a highly politicized HE system, but moreover, a cartel-like behaviour of public HEIs.

Ultimately, **"It's bad news, sometimes frankness hurts, and this has hurt, he said"** is a clause from El Mercurio N5 that reproduces harm and pain by the implementation of Gratuidad. Similarly, not only a first-person pronoun intensifies the construction of a policy that is harmful; also several other metaphors are used to critique the change in policy and simultaneously to represent concern on the direction of such changes, all exposed in El Mercurio N8 in: "**I am surprised and *hurt, very hurt*, that the reform has been limited only to the universities of the Council of Rectors**". The metaphor in "**They keep changing the rules of the game**" is a critique to the fluctuating decisions to previously defined parameters and governing principles on how the policy is being implemented, supporting the construction of Gratuidad as an ill thought out policy. Also, the lexical choice made by a direct quote

[9] *https://www.britannica.com/search?query=cartel*

of the author of "**…*if those students are offered free education* somewhere else, *obviously* they are going to leave *even if* our university is better...**" reveals the damaging effects of the policy, especially to HEIs admissions and enrolment processes. The risk of implementing Gratuidad as it is in the text of the policy is accentuated in "**They are playing with fire**" with the harming results to private HEIs. Still, this clause is directly connected with another metaphor: "**Why do they cut the wings to poorer students?**". In this line, the author first nominalises the producer of the policy by referring to "**they**" as the causing agent of the damage. This nominalisation seems to imply "they: the bad" and implicitly "we: the good" in the use of a metaphor that expresses concern of limiting opportunities to private HEIs students that will not be benefited by the policy: '*…cut the wings…*'.

Along with El Mercurio N5, article El Mercurio N8 also represents Gratuidad as an injury in relation to a future admission process and future admission numbers, which could affect the future financial stability of those institutions. In El Mercurio N8, by limiting the reach of free educational reform to private providers, the media emphasizes Gratuidad as an injury to society.

5.3. GRATUIDAD AS A HASTY AND ABSURD POLICY: A POORLY DESIGNED REFORM

Reproductions of Gratuidad being deficient and a hindrance to achieve a more equal society emerged across the articles analysed. Representations of Gratuidad as an obstacle and as an injury, but above all, as a policy that seems to be faulty are all validated with discourses of resistance and explicit opposition to Gratuidad. The discourses resisting the change in policy because of its design not meeting its original aim, are also representing Gratuidad as a hasty and absurd policy.

"**Finally, the effects and *impacts of the reform are so far limited***" is the first sentence in Extract 3.1. from El Mercurio N14 reproducing how restrictive the policy is.

Extract 3.1.

	Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
1	**"Finally, the effects and impacts** of the reform **are**	Where is educational reform heading?	El Mercurio Art. 14	24/04/2016
2	**so far limited**. **To say that there are better** quality			
3	opportunities, **greater** equality, less segmentation,			
4	a different climate in schools, a new vision about			
5	educational matters or a more organized higher			
6	education system, **all this is not serious**. This			
7	belongs to the **world of Bacon's idols**: fail to reason			
8	clearly and **confuse reality with wishes**. On the			
9	other hand, some **negative effects are already**			
10	**visible**. The system of higher education has been			
11	stressed to the maximum...**the promised free**			

12 13 14	**education has created more chaos than benefits**. There will be an increasing intensity in **the competition for resources"**			

The metaphor of '*Bacon's idols'* in line 7 is intertextually reframing a misleading notion of a policy of free education in Chile, particularly when other discursive practices have been, reproducing the success of the HE system for decades. The power relation between a discourse that promotes a HE system considered one of the primary engines for the economic development of the country (Ugarte, 2014); and a new notion of HE as a free good, is unveiled in this metaphor. Bacon's idols metaphor reproduces a sense of disorder and confusion in the design of the policy (line 12). These notions then re affirm a discourse of incompetency of the government, as explained in the previous section. Additionally, it reveals a representation of Gratuidad as a messy policy.

Similarly, a succession of discourses that firmly reproduce negative consequences of free HE education for young people and to society in general, are exposed in El Mercurio N4 exhibited in Extract 3.2. This extract best illustrates the hegemonic neoliberal ideational function of the text, by representing Gratuidad as an unsound concept "**the *fallacy of* free education**" (line 1). Likewise, HE as a public good is compared to a private benefit, such as attending a music concert. The verb "**installed**" reproduces Gratuidad as an imposition or something enforced, ignoring, and not alluding to the massive student and social movements that promoted and supported the HE reform.

Extract 3.2.

	Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14	In 2011, the year in which **the fallacy of free education was installed in** Chile, here and there, only in music, young Chileans spent about 50 million dollars. So first: Christian Democratic Party MPs begin to understand that a **large part of Chileans** prefer to **act freely rather than** be supressed by the **machinery of social equality…** But **don't let the socialists come and tell us** that we must finance higher education for those who use the money they have - and here it doesn't matter how they get it - **for their concerts, sport events**, recreational, cultural or wardrobe needs. A long time ago **we said** that the reform [free education] would be a serious damage to the personality of our	Three facts about free education	El Mercurio Art. 4	11/11/2015

15	young people.... If approved, it will become one			
16	more of **those self-cultivation plants that will lead**			
17	**them towards a harmful consumption**,			
18	**undoubtedly turn them into dependents of**			
19	**socialism, into slaves of the State**			
20	Third is music: The Pearl Jam concert just took place			
21	at the National Stadium. Some 50 to 60 thousand			
22	young people attended paying tickets between £25			
23	and £114. As the old sports reporters would state,			
24	"**they left at the box office**" about £3 million... or			
25	more.			
26	**Who** spends an amount of money equivalent to			
27	**100-120 full higher education degrees**?			
28	**A group** is made up of **people who have the money**			
29	**to indulge themselves** and who, therefore, in no			
30	way deserve free education. **The others are people**			
31	**who made a great financial effort** to see their			
32	favourite band and who **therefore are perfectly**			
33	**aware that when they want to save for something**			
34	that seems important to them, **nothing will stop**			
35	**them.**...			

Line 7 "**the machinery of social equality**" reproduces a contradiction with those representations found in other articles in the corpus, in which Gratuidad is in part a need for a more unified and collectivist society, away from the individualist marketised society. Conversely, the discourse represents Gratuidad as a policy which aim is purely political, apparently planned, or organised by a socialist government with simply political purposes. Starting in line 5, Gratuidad as a collectivist is being contested by asserting that individuals prefer freedom of choice or autonomous decisions, one of the premises in a neoliberal society i.e.: **"a large part of Chileans prefer to act freely"**. In effect, the text emphasizes this representation of Gratuidad by also constructing the HE student as a prisoner of a political ideology as illustrated in line 18: "**undoubtedly turn them into *dependents of* socialism, into *slaves of* the State**". The adverb "**undoubtedly**" and the metaphoric construction of students as "**slaves of the State**" uncovers the effect of a dominant discourse of individualism and rejection to government involvement in people's lives, constructing the identities of students as free choosers in a free market society. The author's comparative analysis between HE and music concerts reveals the author's own identification with the ideological belief in free markets, which is re-affirmed by the use of several linguistic choices to describe that HE is just another commodity in society, such as music' concerts.

Discourses reproducing a lack of organisation in the policy preparation and unplanned reform are exposed in several other articles of the press coverage as illustrated in Extract 3.3. These extracts are interdiscursively connoting Gratuidad being discussed and approved in precipitated environment, raising many questions about its true effects in society.

Extract 3.3.

Extracts
What if the ideological model that this administration is promoting is wrong? **What would be plan B? Hopefully** the experts who are designing the changes have this in mind. The **absence of an answer to this question shows little planning.** Source: **What is the Plan B** if the ideological model that justifies the free education is wrong? El Mercurio - 05/10/2014
"**If we were to discuss** the financing of the reform with some type of tax, and you also tell me that quality will be assured in the system, I understand the idea. **But if** free education is the answer you will give to the quality problem in the higher education system, **then I have many doubts**" Source: What is the Plan B if the ideological model that justifies the free education is wrong? El Mercurio – 05/10/2014
There is still no good reason to promote this policy, which is **costly, doubtful from an access point of view, and highly regressive**. The argument that access to this education is a social right and that this requires its "**de-commodification" or lack of price is theoretically and empirically weak** Source: **Insisting on a policy of free education**. El Mercurio -23/02/2015
... **a policy that is debatable** on its own merit and **that should at least** be accompanied by requirements for the institutions regarding desertion. Otherwise, the incentive **may be to expand** enrolment and obtain resources, but without an effective commitment to the curricular advancement of these young people. Source: **Discriminatory and poorly designed** Free Education Policy. El Mercurio -17/11/2015

The interpretation of the textual analysis in Extract 3.3 uncovers that press articles, mostly those published on the right leaning newspaper El Mercurio, validates a discourse of a misconceived policy questioning the real effects of Gratuidad. Despite the representations of Gratuidad as a collective effort that will promote a more equal society revealed in section 1 of Chapter 5; the theme related with a misconceived policy reveals a representation of Gratuidad as being hasty.

Lastly, illustrated in Extract 3.4. discourses of disapproval and rejection, producing a representation of an unsound policy are also reproduced. The text asserting that this is a political move that is in "**retreat"** represents Gratuidad as a policy that goes against global trends of marketization in HE. The discourse reproduces the poorly designed policy and a deception. All in all,

intertextually, Gratuidad is framed as inflexible, regressive, not really inclusive. Still more, as exposed in the extract from the left leaning newspaper El Mostrador N18 (05/07/2016), the discourse is explicitly and profanely representing a Gratuidad as nonsensical or absurd: "**It is true that the implementation of this policy is *bullshit***".

Extract 3.4.

Extracts
With few exceptions, **it is a policy that is rather in retreat** throughout the world. **If it is not better in terms of access, its costs are even more evident,** among which are the regressive distribution of these disbursements, the impossibility of **using them in other public programs with greater social return**s, and the **inflexibility that this entails** for the development of HEIs depending on state funding decisions. **In any case**, **it is possible to imagine** a series of scenarios where the combination of the **announcements leads to segregation**. It is still unusual that, **despite the time of government has been in office, they continue to insist on poorly designed policies** and without the slightest expert's support. Source: New Confusions in Higher Education. El Mercurio N6 - 16/07/2015
It is true that the **implementation of this policy is bullshit**. It is that the "Concertacion" [Left wing governing party] always have had **talent for doing everything backwards**: **To help students, they sold the students to commercial banks** - to whom I also owe because of my two university degrees - for **the next 20 years**! Source: Undoing a knot: Quality versus Free Education. El Mostrador N28 – 27/06/2017
"For two years of work, **the result is extremely poor**". **Likewise**, the author of **"Nueva Mayoría. End of the illusion**" makes **a crude analysis of the project's mistakes**: "There continues to be **an enormous weakness in the government's approach**. Instead of reinforcing and promoting a mixed regime, as announced by the President, if one looks specifically at what is being done, **a good part of the project is dedicated on how to strengthen the public universities** Source: Brunner: "The government insists on a free system that seems unsustainable to me" – El Mostrador N18 - 05/07/2016

5.4. GRATUIDAD AS AN IRRATIONAL PASSION: A SACRED DEVOTION TO FREE EDUCATION

Gratuidad is once more being contested and critiqued by discourses of concern about a potential overestimated value of university degrees when HE becomes free. Gratuidad is lastly being represented as an irrational passion, a sacred devotion to a university degree.

Particularly in Chile, some scholars have framed the evolution of the HE system with the concept named – in Spanish – '*Universiti**tis***' (Errazuriz, 2014; Waissbluth, 2018). This metaphor referring to a contagious disease (i.e. meningi***tis***) has been used to represent a massive access to HE over the years and to posit a fervour among people, mainly parents, for their children to obtain a

university degree. An 'infectious disease' of attending a university refers to the overvaluation of these post-secondary degrees, a social pressure that, according to the articles analysed, will be increased with a reform of free education.

Extract 4.1.

	Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
1 2 3 4 5	**The cherry on the cake** ... in Chile the free education, **the longed for and sanctified free education**, has brought with it a collateral damage: **it has made it easier to pursue these spurious "university" degrees.**	The damaging myth of "Universititis"	El Mostrador Art. 17	08/02/2018

This is the metaphor used in the heading of an article from El Mostrador N17, illustrated in Extract 4.1. In this article the metaphor "**the cherry on the cake**" connotes a general knowledge about the meaning that something that is already good, becomes even better. In Extract 4.1 (line 1) the text ironically reproduces quite the opposite in terms of the negative final effects of Gratuidad, other than getting better. Besides all the already exposed negative consequences of the free education policy, the text reproduces a sense that Gratuidad will bring more damage than benefits. Gratuidad is not only represented as a sacred devotion i.e.: "**the longed for and *sanctified* free education**" (line 2) but by "**collateral damage**", a military term that refers to the harm of innocent people and property, the analysis reveals a harming effect of a sacred passion for free education education. The collateral damage represents an unintentional consequence of the policy. A policy that seemed to be of good purpose is being more harmful than beneficial.

This is what opponents to marketised HE systems claim as the harm of overvaluing HE degrees, a topic already in discussion in early 2000 (Cronin & Horton, 2009) or, as it was described at the beginning of this section, the effect of "***Universititis***". As the provocative heading in the article tries to assert: "**The damaging myth of 'Universititis'**"; Gratuidad is represented as a policy generating an untended harming effect by pushing students to attend any sort of HEIs regardless of their quality, as illustrated in line 4: "**it has made it easier to pursue these spurious "university" degrees**."

Lastly, as El Mercurio N4 reproduces in "**the only inspiring fetish**" (line 2) in Extract 4.2, the adverb "**only**" accentuates that there is nothing more meaningful in the reform other than simply not paying for education. The reason why Gratuidad is important, particularly for students and their parents, is because it will offer free education, and this is far more important than Gratuidad as a move to a more collectivist society.

Extract 4.2.

	Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
1 2 3 4	**They [students] are not even interested** in the forgotten Quality, because **Ms. "Free Education**" is the only **Muse, the only inspiring fetish**, formulated as a **supposedly legitimate demand.**	Three facts about free education	El Mercurio Art. 4	11/11/2015

A discourse of devotion to Gratuidad only because of its free tuition indicate a differing reproduction, in fact, quite the opposite to Gratuidad represented as a collective effort for a more equal society. Secondly, the discourse is reproducing, with a very negative connotation, expressions of a compulsion or an obsession in the search for free education. The noun "**fetish**" reveals an ideational function of the text to reproduce that Gratuidad is a simple and easy gratification. Furthermore, this gratification is irrational, and it has become a holy devotion for students.

5.5. CRITICAL DISCUSSION: CHAPTER FINDINGS

The primary purpose of this chapter was to answer the sub research question:

How is the public policy of Gratuidad discursively represented in media articles?

The main findings of this chapter revealed the effects of discourses in the press article exposing two rather opposite representations regarding the change in the HE policy. Firstly, the discourses frame Gratuidad as a social right, that is needed to build a more equal society. Gratuidad is represented as an opportunity to build a more collectivist society. For example, with the use of several metaphors and modal elements the press media expose affinity with what several scholars have posited regarding markets in HE, reproducing a negative connotation of marketisation in HE and the culture of marketisation within the HE sector. As Extract 1.1 shows: **"Profits in HE will be *highly punished*** (line 10); "**Universities, *by law,* are non-profit**" (line 13); "**It will not end with *profiting in HE*** (line 15), and "**That's why *we believe free education is such a good opportunity*** (line 18) the mix of free market, legal and political discourses, suggests a high level of interdiscursivity. As posited by Jørgensen & Phillips (2002) "a high level of interdiscursivity [in a text] is associated with change, while a low level of interdiscursivity might unveil the reproduction of an establish order" (p. 20). Hence, the interdiscursivity in this extract exposes an attempt to change the current orders of discourse by rhetorically promoting changes to the status quo in the HE system, punishing otherwise HEIs not complying with the new law, and implicitly attempting to reconstruct public Chilean HE. Likewise, in the same idea function, the text juxtaposes free education as an opportunity for higher education to

be non-for-profit, constituting a discourse that promotes the eradication of the market ideology in HE.

Moreover, by informing and promising that for-profit in HE will be punished, a new social relation between a public HE system and society can be interpreted. According to Fairclough (2003) informing, advising, promising are all ways of acting and creating a new social relation between subjects. Assertions, such as "**Profits in HE will be highly punished**", express a commitment and **"… but the appropriate sanctions are established**" express a sense of compromise. In the sentence "**Above all, the approved reforms are historic**" (Extract 1.2 line 4) a rhetoric of a social revolution with the change in policy is revealed. Also with "**The promise of greater equality and inclusion**", an ideational representation of a better society is symbolized (Extract 1.2 line 6 and 7).

The press article also emphasizes the position of the government by reproducing Gratuidad as "**a guaranteed social right**" (extract 1.2 line 4), which has an imminent effect in promoting an alternative and different meaning of what HE is and constructing it as an alternative new discursive practice about public education. The representation of Gratuidad as a revolutionary collective effort for a better society can be interpreted when analysing the discourses in El Mostrador N13, as in "**we want to build a more equitable country**" and El Mostrador N27 "**We will build a better society**", which reveals how a collective effort of the rest of the society as participants of the future of new generations.

Nevertheless, and regardless of the explicitness of the interest of the government about bringing back the state to HE to create a more equal society; the interpretation of the texts reveal competing discursive relationships between the different press articles: from those defending the implementation of the reform and those who forcefully reject it. Strong metaphors are used to contradict the construction of Gratuidad as a required necessity for a more equitable society. Indistinctively of the political position in the editorial line of the media articles, negative critiques of Gratuidad are uncovered, constructing it as a harmful policy, promoted by an incompetent government. Moreover, discourses reproduce a clear intention in defending the presence of private providers and their contribution in achieving a more equal society; but ultimately the ideological function of the text is repeatedly presented, forcefully reproducing the benefits of liberal markets for HE and the negative effects of free HE. Intertextually, almost all articles argue about a more equal society and a more equal HE. However, while conducting the analysis, differences in discourses regarding the impact of Gratuidad emerged.

Discourses that strongly reproduce the contribution of private providers of HE to promoting equality leads to a representations of Gratuidad as an obstacle to reach equality. As the narrative of

some press articles illustrates (El Mostrador N15 and N16 for example) the defence of private HEIs to their contribution to social justice and equality are reproduced, for instance in: "**we believe that the government's announcement represent a setback…"** and the obligation of the government to fulfil the ultimate goal of Gratuidad in **"This government *must* keep its campaign promises…"** meaning that the government needs to include private HEIs in the new policy.

Not including the students attending private HEIs as part of the new legality, is represented as an injury provoked by Gratuidad. This is evident when the article asserts that a private university (University Diego Portales) is much more inclusive than others (Extract 2.2 line 6) and when the discourse represents a sense of uniqueness by constructing a private HEI as totally, profoundly committed to, and as an advocate of, social equality: **"We are *one of the very few* [HEIs] that have students from all neighbourhoods, from all councils, well balanced. *We are a radically inclusive* university…"** (line 16).

The construction of Gratuidad as being faulty reveals an identity function when the analysis uncovers a discursive practice of accusing the government of the errors in promoting a mistaken policy, as reproduced in El Mostrador N18: "**There continues to be an enormous weakness in the government's approach**". Likewise, the narrative style of El Mercurio N6, reproduces the incompetence of the government by promoting Gratuidad, in which impact is opposed to its original aim of achieving a more equal society. Clauses, such as "**The government makes a completely arbitrary distinction**" and **"This discriminatory nature of the reform is difficult to justify",** uncover the discursive practice of accusing the government of an incongruous policy and that the government's proposed policy is faulty by excluding HE students that are in real need of financial support.

Similar to Extract 2.3, an accusation to the government for promoting a policy that is an obstacle to a more equal society is reproduced. The mix of social and political texts, intertextually manifested in direct reporting from quotes of several MPs, constructs the political errors of the government and the faults of Gratuidad. Also, private and public HE is conceptualized as one and equal system. Additionally, a relational and identity function are exposed in constructing the social benefit of extending Gratuidad to all students regardless of the type of provider (public or private). The intention to defend the contribution of private HEIs with what public HEIs do; and their recognition as part of the HE practice, reveals the representation of Gratuidad being implemented in an obsolete HE system or "**archaic**" system (El Mostrador N15).

In these press articles, even though a low level of interdiscursivity can be inferred, an ideational function of the text in defending private HEIs, and a rhetoric that private HEIs should also be funded by the state, reveal the effects of the discourses to reclaim a long-standing social relation between free market in HE - with its corresponding private HEIs - and the rest of society. Discursive

practices reproducing the need of extending public/government funding to private institutions, ultimately reproduce the concept that private HEIs are an accepted or acknowledged part of the HE system.

Beyond the representations of Gratuidad as an obstacle, intertextually connected with several press discourses indistinctively of the editorial line of the source, these representations are highly related with a complex interdiscursive discourse representing Gratuidad as an injury. As illustrated in from El Mercurio N5 and N6, the analysis reveals a discursive practice that reproduces the restriction of the policy and intertextually contesting Gratuidad by representing it as an injury to society. The metaphors of being '**hurt**' by the proposed policy is discursively constructing an injury provoked by the policy.

Albeit the government discourses of bringing back the state to HE and building a more equitable HE system for the society[10], evidently promoting the benefits of the reform, the analysis uncovers contradicting constructions of Gratuidad. Representations of a hasty and absurd reform are found in the articles. An ideational function to reject government intervention in a society can be interpreted when the discourse represents Gratuidad as misconceived and unsound; also framing the reform as an imposition "**the year the *fallacy* of free education was *installed* in Chile**" (Extract 3.1 line 1). The metaphors that Gratuidad is a fallacy and that is being introduced by decree as in "***installed***", the article ignores the massive student and social movements, known as 'The Chilean Winter' (Pickett, 2018), that occurred as part of the discussion for free education. These movements, that had taken place in Chile in previous years, not only emerged as a resistance to the increasing tuition fees and marketization in HE, but as advocates of free education they were also demanding a more equal society against the neoliberal ideology predominant in Chilean society. In effect, the student movements have been one of the main advocates and promoters of the change in the HE policy (Bellei et al., 2014; Cabalin, 2015).

Discourses reproducing a negation of any positive consequence of financing HE with public resources emerged in: "***There is still no good reason* to promote this policy…its 'de-commodification' or lack of price is theoretically and empirically weak**" (Extract 3.3). Moreover, the reform is persistently framed as inflexible, regressive, not inclusive; but above all, Gratuidad is framed as poorly designed. Curiously, even discourses form from a left leaning newspaper El Mostrador N18, which could be expected to be supportive of the reform as the editorial line aligns with the ideology of the government, offensively and intensively represent Gratuidad as nonsensical and absurd: "**It is true that the implementation of this policy is bullshit**" (Extract 3.4)

[10] *Extract of the address to MPs: "…a way to reposition public education…to advance in building a public, more fair, equal, and inclusive HE system" President Bachelet address to the House of Parliament (2015)*

Lastly, social and discursive practices uncovered in the analysis, construct Gratuidad as an "**irrational passion"** and some sort of **"sacred devotion to free education"**. Some press articles reproduce an effect of Gratuidad as overestimating and over valuing HE degrees (Extract 4.1). The overvaluation of HE degrees is not an unknown phenomenon in marketised HE system, in which the argument is strictly linked to the economic development of a country (Brunner, 1993; Espinoza & González, 2013; Guilbault, 2018; Williams, 2013).

The change in the HE policy into Gratuidad will not only make it easier to obtain a university certification, but also it will keep promoting this overvaluation of post-secondary education by reproducing additional negative consequences of the policy. This is the promotion to more students attending any sort of HEIs regardless of their quality (line 4). Moreover, the force in the discursive practices of Extract 4.2 reveal the intensity in rebuilding and reconstructing the ideational, relational and identity effect of the discourse, supporting the negative consequences of Gratuidad. Through the interpretation of the discursive practice, the discourses of Gratuidad totally contradict those discourses representing the need for a change in policy. Instead, Gratuidad is presented as a misleading and fallacious inspiration, particularly in reference students, member of a long standing marketized society, who have been intensively influenced by a culture of marketization.

In the following Chapter 6, the analysis of functions and effects of media discourses representing the student will be discussed.

CHAPTER 6. FINDINGS – STUDENTS REPRESENTED IN MEDIA

This chapter examines the media articles of the corpus of this study to uncover discursive representations of the student during the approval of Gratuidad. Hence, this chapter is addressing the following research question:

How are HE students discursively constructed in the press media coverage of Gratuidad?

As a reminder from Chapter 5, the corpus for this Chapter also comprises of public accessible media articles surrounding the policy of Gratuidad and students in Chilean HE. A total of 28 articles, consisting of 22, 179 words from El Mercurio and El Mostrador, published between 11th March 2014 until 30th April 2019, are part of the corpus. The description of the articles is presented in Appendix 1. Extracts of these articles are identified by the number of the extract, if an extract is explicitly presented in the chapter, along with the number of the article listed on the table in Appendix 1 (i.e. Extract 1.1 N1 refers to an extract from article 1 on the table).

This chapter examines three topoi developed from a CDA of the articles of both newspapers, presenting three representations of students. These topoi are: 1) Students as irrational and egocentric: The unreasonable policy of tuition free HE; 2) Students as neglected by the state: Abandoned or not deserving of public funding; and 3) Students as marionettes: Manipulated by parents and political parties.

6.1. STUDENTS AS IRRATIONAL AND EGOCENTRIC: THE UNREASONABLE POLICY OF TUITION FREE HE

A defence to the neoliberal perspective of HE as a commodity, along with discursive representations of Gratuidad as hasty, absurd and as an irrational sacred devotion, were all exposed in Chapter 5. Likewise, articles from El Mercurio almost exclusively, also reproduce discourses of irrationality of students for the approval of Gratuidad and their demands for free education, representing the student as irrational and egocentric in their requests.

As it will be discussed below, the analysis reveals the instrumentality in students to obtain the necessary academic credentials to face the future, and how to best attain these credentials with little effort. This description is very close to the construction of the student as a consumer identified in Halbesleben & Wheeler (2009). Likewise, the representation of students as irrational and egocentric strongly relates to the metaphor of student-as-consumer presented by Saunders (2015), who argued that students see education as a product, and as such, they will always try to pay less. Furthermore, the representations of students as irrational and egocentric identified in this section, can be framed within characteristics of distance with the educational process and the individualist approach to HE,

as described in the metaphor of the student-as-a-consumer by Nixon et al. (2016).

The article Extract 1.1 from El Mercurio N10 reproduces discourses and portrays students as irrational when demanding free education.

Extract 1.1.

Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
There is still no good reason to promote this policy, which is costly, doubtful from an access point of view, and highly regressive. The argument of the students that access to education is a social right and that it requires its "**de-commodification" or lack of price is theoretically and empirically weak…** The free education policy in Chile **could cost between 2,200 and 3 billion pounds**. A **disproportionate share of these resources** - half or a little more - would benefit students and families who come from the top 20% income. **These resources replace private money** and means stop investing, for example, in supporting a better secondary education...**It is not clea**r, then, how access to higher education for the less fortunate students would improve. **It is not uncommon**, therefore, that **many countries are increasingly favouring well-designed student aid policies along with charging of fees**.	Insisting on a policy of free education	El Mercurio Art. 10	23/02/2015

In line 1, modal adjectives are used to condemn the approval of the policy: "**There is still no good reason to promote this policy, which is *costly, doubtfu*l from an access point of view, and *highly regressive*".** Immediately, starting in line 3, the text implies the irrationality of students in such demand: "**The argument of the students that access to education is a social right …is theoretically and empirically weak"**. These lines, in the present tense, reproduce an academic discourse to criticise the requests of the students. The meaning in **"theoretically and empirically weak**" reproduces that a demand for free education is not supported by evidence. This assertion validates a rhetoric that casts doubt about Gratuidad as a sensible and reasonable demand in terms of equality. This rhetoric supports the image of students being unreasonable in demanding something that could be tackling inequality. This chain of intertextually linked intellectual/academic discourses is reinforced in line 6 **"its "de-commodification" or lack of price is theoretically and empirically weak"** reproducing the

ineffectiveness of eliminating tuition fees. Interdiscursively, **"The free education policy in Chile could *cost between 2,200 and 3 billion pounds*"** (line 8) reproduces another mix of financial/economic discourses framing the financial facts behind the cost of implementing Gratuidad. This financial discourse denotes the cost in pursuing Gratuidad as excessively high. In effect, the juxtaposition between the cost of Gratuidad with alternative uses of the public budget reproduce a sense of a selfishness in students. The analysis suggests that investing public money in other alternative public demands, such as other levels of education, would be better for society: **"These resources replace private money and means stop investing, for example, in supporting a better secondary education"** (line 13). Furthermore, when expanding this comparative analysis with the actions taken by other countries in terms of HE policies, the discourse is validating a rhetoric that questions Gratuidad as a genuine demand in terms of equality and reproduces an image of students being unreasonable.

Extract 1.2 from El Mercurio N4 produces a discourse that contests the genuine intentions of students in their demands for Gratuidad. Extract 1.2 is part of an El Mercurio N4 which was published while intense student marches and strikes were taking place in Chile. The primary intentions of these social movements were to demand the elimination of tuition fees in HE, among other social changes (refer to Chapter 2 for more information about student movements).

Extract 1.2.

	Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
1	**They [students] are not even interested** in the	Three facts	El Mercurio	11/11/2015
2	forgotten Quality, because **Ms. "Free Education**"	about free	Art. 4	
3	is **the only Muse, the only inspiring fetish**,	education		
4	formulated as a **supposedly legitimate demand.**			
5	A **second interesting fact** is that student unions			
6	are becoming **more and more** pressure groups			
7	whose objectives are, **obviously, to pay less and**			
8	**get more.** A green sign hangs on a university			
9	campus. It states: "**2015 [students] Demands**:			
10	Unified admission system; tuition fees according			
11	to the admission year; student insurance; flexible			
12	tuition fees according to academic load; tuition			
13	fees debt condonation; increase in internal			
14	scholarships; student welfare department". The			
15	first eight requirements are, **as you can see,**			
16	**economic issues**. **Not a word about quality of**			
17	**education or equality.**			

Intertextually chained with discourses of an ill thought policy, as interpreted in Chapter 5, the students' interest for Gratuidad is metaphorically labelled as a **"Muse"** in **"the only Muse, the only inspiring fetish"** (line 3). As a source of inspiration and a symbol of atypical personal gratification, the association of the text with this metaphor, along with the adjective **"only"** reproduced twice in the same clause, creates a forceful tone in casting doubts of the real interest of students in Gratuidad and representing them as irrational.

Extract 1.2 cast doubts about the true meaning behind the students' movements which were discursively promoted as free education for a more equal society (Bellei et al., 2014; Bellei & Cabalin, 2013). Gratuidad has apparently a different meaning to students. The adverb **"supposedly"** in line 4 reproduces doubts about the demands of students being truly aligned with the discourses of Gratuidad as a promoter of social justice. Conversely, this misleading interest of students in the new policy reproduces the discourse that students are acting rationally but, economically rational, by denoting an interest to avoid paying the costs of their education: ***"obviously, to pay less and get more***" (line 7). Starting in line 9, the press article quotes the list of students' requests to their university management from a demonstration banner hanging from outside of a university building. Using quotations are a compositional strategy of intertextuality used by the producer of the text to position the students' demands for Gratuidad as driven by individual and personal needs, rather than to collective societal needs, as categorically asserted in the text "***as you can see*****, economic issues. Not a word about quality of education or equality"** (line 15). Discourses of individualism, selfishness and the costs of privately funding HE, construct students as irrationally devoted and even egotistical in demanding the policy.

The analysis of articles published during the political discussion of Gratuidad (2014 – 2016) frame the intentions of the students as a simple way to evade paying for their education. These intentions are rather different to the discourses around Gratuidad during the student's movements. Article El Mostrador N22, one of the very few articles published in the left-wing newspaper that discusses this topic, reproduces a discourse of urgency in students, that is, an insisting urgency for free education i.e. **"we demand"; "nothing will stop them"**, as presented in Extract 1.3 – A. The article heading is particularly coherent with a discourse referring to students as individualistic agents when using the noun **"ultimatum"** in the heading **"ACES [Secondary Schools Students' Association] give Del Piano [Minister of Education] a week's *'ultimatum'* to comply with their request"**. This clause reproduces the urgency in the requests (free education) of an individual who is solely focusing on their needs. In effect, the following section B in Extract 1.3. accentuates this image, with an extract of El Mercurio N4. A discourse of economic rationality is evident in Extract 1.3 – B by comparing students

and a cost of attending a music concert. This analysis seeks to compare that a concert obviously has a price, and students understand about pricing. In the clause **"who [students] therefore are perfectly aware that when they want to save for something that seems important to them, nothing will stop them",** the economic knowledge of students is reassured, emphasizing a representation of students as economic agents. Moreover, the discourse realises how the students, who understand the concept of priorities, rely on their self-interest when making decisions.

This rationality in the decision-making process is well established in economic discourses reproduced again in an extract of El Mercurio N12 in section C of Extract 1.3. The students, as any other economic agent, should behave rationally when a certain tax is applied to pay back their education. In this section, the reproduction of an interview – to a well-recognised Chilean economics professor and frequent commentator in the newspapers – exposes a relational process between economic terms, a financial and economic discourse, in an attempt to defend the ideological posture of markets in society in general, and in HE in particular. The metaphor of trying to stay away from behaving economically rational, as stated in: **"You can hide from the economic incentives, but you can't get away from them"**, intensifies a discourse representing students as economic subjects, responding to economic forces, and thus acting like another consumer.

Extract 1.3. The irrationality in the demands of students for Gratuidad

Extracts
A. Secondary students organized in the Secondary Students Coordinating Assembly (ACES) submitted a **list of requests** to the Minister of Education Adriana Delpiano in preparation to the educational reform project…**We demand** that this policy, **discussed within four walls, should be withdrawn**, said Agustín Ayala, leader of the High School of Maipú. Source: ACES [Secondary Schools Students' Association] give Del Piano a week's "**ultimatum**" to comply with their request. El Mostrador N22 - 29/06/2016
B. The third piece of information is music: The Pearl Jam concert just took place at the National Stadium. Some 50 to 60 thousand young people attended paying tickets between £25 and £114. As old sports reporters would say, "**they left at the box office**" about £3 million...or more. **Who** spent an amount of money equivalent to **100-120 full higher education degrees**? **A group** is made up of **people who have the money to indulge themselves** and who, therefore, in no way deserve free education. **The others are people who made a great financial effort** to see their favourite band and who **therefore are perfectly aware that when they want to save for something** that seems important to them, **nothing will stop them.**... Source: Three facts about free education - El Mercurio N4 - 11/11/2015

C. **You can hide from the economic incentives, but you can't get away from them**. Sooner or later they matter. **What we know is that people <u>do respond to incentives</u>**, even if they are small. For example, if students are given a ranking of grades, they change school. And regarding the discussion about **whether a university credit system is different or a free system** in which graduates must then pay a tax for a limited number of years, Urzúa maintains that there are differences. And then the **incentives become relevant**: "**if I know** that I am going to pay a tax, **I have certain** behaviours; if I know that it is a credit, there are other types of incentives". **The scholar prefers** a system in which "there is a link between the **amount owed and the amount of payment...prices give relevant information to decide where to attend** and aligns the incentives, and because **there is evidence** that a quality education system has a high private return.

Source: "What is the Plan B if the ideological model that justifies the free education is wrong?" - El Mercurio N12 - 05/10/2014

Hence, a coherent and cohesive discourse is reproduced to delegitimise the requests of HE students for Gratuidad. Thus, these reproductions help in constructing a student who is rather selfish and individualistically trying to avoid paying any price for their HE. Moreover, the texts are cohesively exposing economic and financial discourses (i.e. taxes, returns, investments) that reproduce yet again the rationality in the decision-making process that any individual would make when price is part of any transaction. In this line, a concept of value for money, commonly found in consumer behaviour can be interpreted. In effect, Bunce et al. (2017) has described that students-consumers are aware of the concept of the value for the money they pay. Thus, this representation can be assimilated to the student as a consumer. However, intensified, and in a certain way exaggerated (Gratuidad is compared to a fetish in Extract 1.2), these discourses are ultimately reproducing an image of the students as someone who is nonsensical in their demands, only thinking about their own benefits, unreasonable, and egocentric.

6.2. STUDENTS AS NEGLECTED BY THE STATE: ABANDONED OR NOT DESERVING PUBLIC FUNDING

The media analysis has also offered an opposing and divergent construction of the student in HE. Distinctively emerging from articles published in El Mercurio, a sense of rejection and objection to the direction Gratuidad in the text of the law is reproduced. Discourses casting doubts around the genuine benefits of Gratuidad and its true impact in its current form of the law along with a sense of uncertainty and vulnerability of private HE students are reproduced in some articles. Furthermore, discourses questioning if HE students should be entitled to public funding and the little conviction around this, are also reproduced. Gratuidad, not clear in scope, and not appropriately focusing in

identifying its true aim, is presented as impacting students particularly attending private HEIs and representing them as students neglected by the policy.

In the words of the head of the Universidad de Chile[11] Student Union (FECh) in an article from El Mercurio N7, the disagreement of students themselves with the way Gratuidad is being proposed in the text of the law is reproduced. Rejection to the current text of the policy is reproduced and advice to revise the focus of the reform to truly strengthen public HE is produced. In the clause **"*it is essential* to be able to *discuss the principles* of the reform"** the adjective "**essential**", frames the current configuration of Gratuidad as in urgent need of improvement. Moreover, with the noun "**principles of the reform**", the discourse emphasises the need to review the fundamentals of Gratuidad, representing it as an unclear reform in the form that has been defined by the government. The sentence "***before discussing* the finances and the whole situation, aspects such as the strengthening of the public system *should be addressed*"** is intertextually reframing previous discussions between the students and the government about the direction of Gratuidad. In a causal effect, a discourse requesting to revise the proposed policy is realised. Moreover, by omitting the voice of the government or the legislature, the text is categorically framing the wrongs of the reform, implying that Gratuidad implemented as it is, will not have its desired impact. Moreover, Gratuidad is being questioned by the student leader for not being precise, misleading the focus by pertaining to only the financial terms of the reform and not to its main aim of promotion of equality in Chilean society.

In effect, the causal-effect relationship disclosed in El Mercurio N7, manifests the negative impact of Gratuidad in private HE students. The linguistic choices of used in "**When *you talk* to the ministry, *you realize* that there is no certainty**…" and the notion of time in "**month after month they change the rules"** reveal a dialogical approach between the student and an absent converser, an omitted voice of the government. With the analysis of these features of the text, Gratuidad, repeatedly altered, constantly changing, causing ambiguity, vagueness, is detrimental to private HE students.

In the sentence "**…the duty of the Government is, regardless of its restrictions, to treat students equally and not segregate those who attend certain institutions [HEIs]"** the author is categorically reproducing a mandate not to exclude students from the policy. The indecisiveness of the government and the continuous changes in text of the policy, reproduce a discourse of uncertainty for the future for private HE students and a discourse of exclusion produced by the same policy that seeks to promote equality, hence representing students, especially those attending private HEIs, as neglected by the state.

[11] Universidad de Chile is the oldest institution of HE owned by the State in Chile (founded in 1842), with a national and public character, it is a research-orientated institution organised into 14 faculties. More information is discussed in Chapter 2 on the Chilean HE system.

The sense of a political mistake by limiting public support to certain types of students only (i.e. public HEIs); and discourses that reproduce negative effects of a restrictive policy by not including students that are presumably in more need of government support, emerged in the analysis of Extract 2.1 from El Mercurio N6. Extract 2.1 is a good illustration of a discursive representation of students negatively impacted by a rather restrictive policy:

Extract 2.1.

	Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
1	**However, this is not the decision made by the**	New	El Mercurio Art. 6	16/07/2015
2	**authority. They [government] have restricted the**	Confusions		
3	**policy, that would originally begin with students**	in Higher		
4	**who belong to the households that make up the**	Education		
5	**60% most vulnerable in the country**, **to only the 25**			
6	**universities that make up the Council of Rectors**			
7	**[CRUCh]** and to a very limited set of FE			
8	institutions...**We should be remind them that**,			
9	according to the information provided by the 2013			
10	Casen survey, **less than one third of the students**			
11	**from the households of the most vulnerable 60%**			
12	**attend CRUCh universities.** The rest are enrolled in			
13	the other institutions of higher education			
14	**Beyond the convenience on simply extending free**			
15	**education** to all students regardless of their			
16	socioeconomic status, - **widely debated in the**			
17	**country** - there is more agreement that **vulnerable**			
18	**sectors require determined support**…			

The adverb used in line 1: "***However,*** **this is not the decision made by the** ***authority*****.** ***They [government] have restricted the policy*****, that would originally begin with students who belong to the households that make up the 60% most vulnerable in the country**" reproduces some contradiction between what the government said or promised in relation to the scope of Gratuidad, and what was finally presented by the government for approval. The passive verb in reference to a silent voice of the government in "***they [government] have restricted*** **the policy"** denotes the limitations in the policy. Furthermore, stating that Gratuidad will be implemented **"*to only the 25 universities* that make up the Council of Rectors [CRUCh]"** (line 5) connotes the exclusionary nature of the reform. Several other HEIs will not be considered within the government's decision, hence many other students will also not be part of the policy. This connotation is reinforced in the text (starting in line 10): "***less than one third of the students*** **from the households of the most vulnerable 60%** ***attend***

CRUCh universities**"** implying that two thirds of students eligible for Gratuidad will be ignored, or simply neglected by a public policy.

Accentuated in articles published in the right-wing newspaper, the discursive representation of a student neglected by public policies is presented via a discursive strategy, in which HE students are not necessarily worthy of receiving financial support from public funds. Financing HE with public funding is also construed as a political error. As part of an article from El Mercurio N9, in Extract 2.2, the mix of economic and financial discourses reproduce the necessity of the government to focus on other more urgent demands, beyond funding HE with public money.

Extract 2.2.

	Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
1	**Resources should be prioritized** on pre-school and	The	El Mercurio	21/05/2015
2	primary education, before proposing free higher	educational	Art. 9	
3	education for students attending private HEIs. **This**	debate, a		
4	**would be regressive** in the sense of providing	look from		
5	resources to [HE] students who belong to a	inside		
6	**privileged group** of the population, and who,			
7	thanks to their professional work, **will be able to**			
8	**generate higher economic returns** than those who			
9	could not access the tertiary level.			

Gratuidad is fundamentally questioned for allocating public resources incorrectly. The use of several modal verbs in the sentences "**Resources *should be* prioritized on pre-school and primary education…**" (line 1) and "**This *would be* regressive…"** reasserts the negative effects of using public resources in private students. The text indeed denotes that this decision will not tackle the problems of inequality, hence the funds should be use somewhere else (line 1: pre-school and primary education). The discourse reproduces that there is better use for the money spent on Gratuidad and on private HE students i.e. a policy focusing on funding primary education (line 1) accentuating the notion of HE students neglected by the state.

The text in Extract 2.2 re asserts the errors of the policy by arguing that if HE students receive public support, they are fortunate, explicitly categorising them as a: **"privileged group"** (line 6). Furthermore, the text juxtaposes funding HE with students that will be part of a privileged educated social class, to support their point that this group in the society do not deserve funding because of the private benefits of HE: **"will be able to generate high economic returns"**, as illustrated in line 7, more "**than those who could not access…**" (line 8,9).

In this extract, the discourse is representing the HE students as not worthy of the financial support from Gratuidad, in particular those students attending private HEIs. In a relational function between clauses and a mixed a financial (line 1), social (line 6) and economic (line 8) discourses, construct the image of a private HE student that should not be considered in the group of students benefitting from Gratuidad. As a result, these students should be excluded from any public benefits.

The representation of 'neglected students' is emphasised in other texts, by producing discourses of inequality and segregation in excluding students that could be eligible for the public benefit of Gratuidad. The Extract 2.3. from El Mercurio N1 is intertextually reframing a legal discourse that reproduces a strong criticism of the legal structure of Gratuidad, as it has been proposed by the government.

Extract 2.3.

	Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
1	**They added that**, these differences in criteria,	Constitutional	El Mercurio	22/10/2015
2	**instead of ensuring equality before the law**	Court and	Art. 1	
3	**and equal opportunities for all these**	vulnerable		
4	**students**, "**imposing conditions will make**	students:		
5	**their application [Gratuidad] impossible for**	"Additional		
6	**some students, leaving them in a situation of**	requirements		
7	**evident exclusion, not only because of their**	are imposed		
8	**social condition, but also because of them**	on their		
9	**belonging to a particular institution". The**	personal		
10	**magistracy objects that those vulnerable**	condition"		
11	**students are imposed for the grace of the**			
12	**policy...conditions unrelated to their**			
13	**personal or academic situation**, such as the			
14	fact of being enrolled in certain Universities			
15	and FE Institutions, **establishing an eventual**			
16	**exclusion** with respect to them".			

Adverbs and verbs in line 3: "***instead of ensuring equality before the law*** **and equal opportunities** ***for all these students***" help in producing a discourse about the legal opportunity that the government has, in effect, to promote equality in Chile. This is presented by the argument that Gratuidad should be extended to all HE students, beyond the type of HEIs they attend. However, Gratuidad in its current form is limiting its impact, re-affirming a discourse of exclusion. This exclusion is reasserted with the use of several modal verbs and adverbs, as exposed in line 4: "***imposing conditions*** **will make their** ***application*** **[Gratuidad]** ***impossible*** **for some students, leaving them in a situation of** ***evident exclusion*****, not only because of their social condition, but also because of them**

belonging to a particular institution".

The legal discourse in line 10: **"The magistracy *objects*"** accentuates the rejections to a hasty policy. The discursive strategy is based in the assertation these '***are***' the students who need to be supported by Gratuidad; these are the students in need; thus no restrictions should be applied: **"The magistracy objects that *those vulnerable students are imposed* for the grace of the policy...conditions unrelated to their personal or academic situation"**.

The analysis here reveals that the legal limitations of Gratuidad are also limiting the goal of more equality. Furthermore, the notion of students being ignored, irrespective of their socio-economic condition, is intensified by an interpretation of the students as being even legally abandoned by the government.

Articles from El Mercurio have emphasized Gratuidad as an absurd policy; but along this representation, articles accentuate discourses that represent students as ignored by this absurd policy. Moreover, the analysis reveals discourses representing students as defenceless by being neglected by the state. The voice of the Vice Chancellor of the Jesuit private university Alberto Hurtado University, Rev. Montes is intertextually framed in El Mercurio N7. Similar to article N1 from El Mercurio, the discourse starts framing Gratuidad as unfair or inequitable: "**absolutely discriminatory treatment".** However, the features of the text in this article reveal that, there are students in more need then those HEIs supported by the state, particularly when Rev. Montes refers to his own students attending Alberto Hurtado University.

Forceful and coherent, the voice of the VC is explicitly expressing rejection to the direction of the policy "**Personally...I strongly regret it…"**, but a rhetoric defending private HEIs to be treated equally to public HEIs is intensified as the following line illustrates "**for the *children* at my university *who have the most needs*".** The meaning of the words and features of the text (underlined) reproduce a discourse of need for public funding to private HE students, otherwise they are being left defenceless by the government.

Similarly, by silencing the voice of the public HEIs leaders (HEIs that are members of CRUCh), the text re affirms the rhetoric that Gratuidad is not promoting equality. On the contrary, the meaning of the text is connoting inequality by considering public HEIs as a privileged group of universities: **"A specific group of institutions *is once again* privileged…"**. The implementation of Gratuidad benefitting only a certain group of HEIs (CRUCh HEIs: Public and Traditional Private), and thus only students attending those HEIs, favours, once again, some students only, and excludes others.

Lastly, in El Mercurio N7 the noun **'discrimination'** is used several times in the article. Along with other elements of the text, reproducing the deficiencies in the policy of Gratuidad, the discourse

represents the student as defenceless. This interpretation can be informed by the construction of the student constructed as vulnerable children (Brooks, 2017). However, this concept refers to students as vulnerable in relation to their emotional instability and incapacity to fulfil the academic requirements of HE. Therefore, the meaning in representing students being defenceless refers more to the stress generated by not having the financial resources to cover the cost of HE.

Extract 2.4, part of El Mercurio N5, best illuminates the discourses of restrictions when implementing Gratuidad, that help in constructing students as neglected by the state.

Extract 2.4.

Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
MPs of the New Majority (government coalition) **affirmed** that budget adjustment **cannot lead to "discrimination"** against vulnerable young people who **will be left out** of the public policy. **Limiting free education to CRUCh is absolutely insufficient**. **Many private institutions have low-income young people,** and **they are the ones who most require this support**. (...) **It is bad news**, sometimes frankness hurts, and **this has hurt**, he said. Meanwhile, the president of the Cristian Democratic Party, Jorge Pizarro, stated that the benefit "**has to be expanded** and **we will try to reach an agreement** with the Government. **We cannot approve a law like this**" **The President [Bachelet] must be accountable of the inequality that she is creating by having different access to scholarships by students who may belong to the same socioeconomic level.** The President [Bachelet] **is not serving the Chilean** citizens**. She promised that free education would be for everyone without discrimination**. She talked a lot about equality and **now she is turning her back on middle-class and vulnerable families** whose children study at private universities.	Left wing MPs criticize the free education formula in 2016 and asks MINEDUC [Ministry of Education] to extend the policy to private HEIs	El Mercurio Art. 5	16/07/2015

Line 2 **"…*affirmed that* budget adjustment *cannot lead to 'discrimination'* against vulnerable young people *who will be left out of the system*"** reproduces a contradictory notion of Gratuidad. The modal verb '**affirmed**' and '**cannot lead'** inform that Gratuidad is deficient by not including all students. The adverb **'absolutely'** reconfirms this assertion (line 7). However, particularly in line 6 **"*Limiting* Gratuidad to…"** the sentence reproduces affinity with the clause that present students attending private HEIs, are those in real need for public financial support (i.e. **'low-income young people'**).

In Line 9: "***they are the ones who most require this support***, students are presented as those that really need to be included in the policy. Moreover, a metaphor of pain and injury, illustrated in "**this has hurt"** (line 10-11), help in realising the discourse of disapproval and sorrow for excluding private students. This discourse is validated by reframing the narrative of an MP "**the benefit '*has to be expanded* and we will try to reach an agreement with the Government**. **We cannot approve *a law like this*"**" (line 14). The present tense of the verb uncovering an obligation **"has to be expanded",** reproduces the notion of a demand to change the policy and to include students from private HEIs. Also, because of the duty of an MP is to approve the legal framework of Gratuidad, the text reframes a negation about the policy in its current form by neglecting students, beyond the type of HEIs they attend: "**We cannot approve *a law like this"*".** In this clause the author is reproducing the involvement of the MPs, and probably his political party, in opposition to such exclusion of private HE students.

Lastly, in line 18: **"The President [Bachelet] *must be accountable* for the inequality that she is creating by having different access to scholarships by *students who may belong to the same socioeconomic level*",** the responsibility to generate inequality, mainly created by the government's decisions, is reproduced. The discourses realise that public and private HEIs students should be all covered by Gratuidad: "**students who may belong to the same socioeconomic level"** (line 21). Furthermore, the criticism about students being openly excluded is strongly emphasized later in "**The President [Bachelet] *is not serving the Chilean citizens*. She promised that *free education would be for everyone* without discrimination**" (line 23). Using the metaphor about being a public servant, the criticism to the government and its performance, in the name of the President Bachelet, her actions and her policy of Gratuidad are reproduced. Line 23 reproduces the criticism about her decisions, her performance in her duties as President, some sense of untruth in her speeches, presumably from her electoral campaign, and the deficiencies in the policy of Gratuidad.

Likewise, line 26 **"She talked a lot about equality and now *she is turning her back* on middle-class and vulnerable families"** reproduces a discourse of deception for not achieving what was committed. Metaphorically, the text is validating a discourse of neglection to a particular group of society: *"she is turning her back on middle-class and vulnerable families..."***.** In alluding to '**The**

President', as head of the country, the discourse is ultimately reproducing the responsibility of the state in not considering certain types of students, thus constructing a representation of the student as neglected by the state.

6.3. STUDENTS AS MARIONETTES: MANIPULATED BY PARENTS AND POLITICAL PARTIES

Discourses of misleading expectations are reproduced in the articles analysed in this section. The topos not only refers to students believing in the political speeches of certain political parties, in particular the socialist party, but also in the manipulations from their parents who are discursively constructed as highly influenced by the marketized society. These discourses have sought to represent the student as a marionette of their parents or puppets of the politicians.

In a highly marketised HE system, discourses of productivity and becoming a more developed economy are reproduced to argue in favour of massive HE systems and private systems. These discourses, highly dominant in neoliberal societies, produce discursive practices that promote the need for and the over valuation of HE degrees (Guilbault, 2016, 2018; Woodall et al., 2014).

With 40 years of an intense marketised society, discourses of economic stability and the discourse of a better future with a university degree, have intensively infiltrated the Chilean society and has become part of the discursive practice when thinking about the future. However, as illustrated in Extract 3.1. from El Mostrador N17, the analysis uncovers that these discourses juxtapose with discourses that cause misleading expectations about HE and the opportunity of obtaining free education and the pressure of parents to pursue HE, even if the children have a wish to pursue something different.

Extract 3.1 reproduces the manipulation of the parents in their children's future in post-secondary school studies.

Extract 3.1.

	Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
1 2 3 3 4 5 6 7 8	**Parents say it, children believe it: "I only want my children to go to university". They are honestly convinced that this way they will do better in life**. And so, **the social and family pressure is to attend "university**." **They do not say 'I want my son to go to the DUOC or INACAP', because that would mean something like "low class". And they also truly believe that their children will earn more money in life this way.**	The damaging myth of "Universititis"	El Mostrador Art. 17	08/02/2018

9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	It is **very possible, almost certain**, that if your children reach the scores **to meet the demanding entrance requirements to enter Law at the PUC**, Medicine at the University of Chile, or Engineering at the University of Concepción, **they will do very well in their economic life** (I make it clear that I am not necessarily referring here to vocations). **But if their children barely make it into a non-accredited or 2-year university degree, with low or no admission requirements**, **the myth collapses quickly,** and it is very possible that**, even if they get Gratuidad, they will end up working as taxi drivers or of cashiers**, **unhappy and wasting a lot of money from their own or from the State.**			

In Line 1, the use of the adverb **"only**" in **"I *only* want my son to go to University"** accentuates the intention or wish of parents for their children to pursue, almost exclusively, a university degree. In effect in line 2 and 3 "**They are honestly convinced *that this way* they will do better in life"** and **"social and family pressure is to attend 'university'**", the lexical choices confirm how families are involved in pressuring students to opt for a university without considering any other forms of post-secondary education. Line 2 and 3 reveal the colonisation of an economic discourse in the daily narratives of Chilean families, intensified in a present and future tense, reproduced in the clauses **"they are…convinced..."** and **"…this way they will do better…"**

The intertextuality in Extract 4.1 is again evident in the use of quotations reproduced in line 4: **"They *do not say 'I want my son to go to the DUOC or INACAP[12]',* because *that would mean something like "low class*".** Intertextually, this discourse of rejection to pursue any other form of Further Education (FE), such as a Professional Institute or even worse, a Centre of Technical Formation, is intensified. In effect, in pursuing a FE degree, a discourse of future segregation is produced, and clearly parents do not want that for their children. Although it is not the purpose of this chapter, a closer interpretation of this clause could support a representation of FE students as future low ranking citizens. Likewise, the text realises an economic discourse defending university degrees only because of the economic stability that they bring in the future of their children: "**And they also truly believe that their children will earn more money in life this way"** (starting in line 6). This is very strong in marketized societies.

[12] DUOC and INACAP are two well established and most prestigious Further Education institutions in Chile, granting mainly 2-4 technical/vocational degrees.

However, such dominant discourse in Chilean marketised HE also exposes contradictions in this context in particular. In effect, a university degree could bring a better and brighter future, but this is only possible if the student attends a well-established, recognised, and accredited institution (line 9 and on). This sentence is coherent with line 1, in which the author reproduces a sense of hope and not necessarily a fact: **"*I want* my son…".** Extract 4.1. This reasserts that the neoliberal HE brings economic benefits of pursuing a university degree for a better economic future. Nevertheless, the contradiction emerges when a discourse casting doubt about the truth in this assertion in the Chilean context. As illustrated in line 16 **"*But if their children barely make it* into a non-accredited or 2-year university degree, with low or no admission requirements, *the myth collapses quickly*"** the conditional **"if"** and the metaphors around the myth of a better economic future is questioned. A discourse of doubt about the real chances of students to access a prestigious HEIs, that will lead them to a more financially stable future, is reproduced.

"If" students meet the entry requirements to access a university, and "***if***" they are eligible according to the policy conditions, Gratuidad could allow more people to attend universities. Apparently, not all students can meet the requirements to attend an HEIs: "***But if their children barely make it…***". Those students who can access HE, sometimes they do so by being admitted to universities of questionable quality. Indeed, due to the aggressive increase in access under the application of neoliberal policies in Chilean HE, many students can only access HEIs of low quality, with lower admission requirements, producing a discourse, in which the ultimate dream of a better economic future, is axed, making Gratuidad false, as the analysis in line 9 reveals: "**the myth collapses quickly**" (line 18). However, Gratuidad has scarcely considered changes in the HE system itself and its configuration. The discussion about the 2016 Policy Act focused mostly on the removal of fees. Aspects related to the HE system itself, such as the quality of HEIs, more control on the accreditation process, among others, were left as a secondary consideration.

Extract 3.1 can be very controversial in its narrative. A discourse that casts doubt about the truth of a better economic future when obtaining a university degree is realised. From line 19, with a comparative adjective reveals that Gratuidad will not necessarily lead to a better future: "**it is very possible that, *even if they get Gratuidad*"** (line 19,20). Moreover, a competing discourse with the well- established economic discourse for a better economic future is presented. This is the case in Line 21 that connotes how students attending low quality HEIs will ultimately be seen as citizens of lower class and making lower salaries "…**they will end up working as taxi drivers or as cashiers"** (line 20). Line 20 reproduces a discourse that contrasts with the neoliberal discourse in marketised societies of a greater economic financial future. The explicit reference to these jobs might be part of a larger

discursive practice around taxi drivers, or cashiers as professions of low-quality roles in society, low income, or simply lower class. Line 20 reproduces an economic discourse around money or time wasted when pursuing a university degree. This discourse is juxtaposed with the discourse of manipulation of students, who can be facing a similar future, if they continue being manipulated by the marketised society or by parents strongly influenced by a culture of marketization.

The notion of students as being easily influenced by others is represented in El Mercurio N9. Similarly, to other media articles in this analysis, El Mercurio N9 reproduces manipulation in the demands that students have for Gratuidad. Besides the strong influence of parents in pushing their children to opt for university degrees as their future post-secondary education, in El Mercurio N9 a discourse of manipulation coming from political parties and political leaders is also realised. This discourse can be interpreted from the following clause: **"Students *have not acted properly as students*…this is when they carry out acts of violence, *encouraged by their party leaders*, the Communist Youth Union of Chile, that evolve into attacks and unacceptable assaults to their own university campuses"**. The lexical choices in **"have not acted properly"** and **"encouraged by"** evidence that students, conducting these actions, are inspired by others and these actions are not a result of their free will. The lack of independence of students in their way of acting or behaving while protesting for accessing free education is reproduced in the clause. The actions of the students ending in destructive demonstrations and active riots are reproduced as pushed by others, and not by their own decisions. The text reinforces this manipulation when stating that these actions **"evolve into attacks"**, unveiling the meaning that the demonstrations do not start as active or destructive, but the influence of the communist party, leads the students into these reactions. Moreover, one of the clauses of the article **"…They act like terrorists…burning their own university buildings. One thing is to pacifically protest, the other is about destructing everything…they would not do this all alone…",** denotes extremisms and radicalism in students' actions. Discourses of political manipulation seek to frame the student as someone easily influenced, used, and controlled by others (i.e. communists). This discourse represents the student as someone who needs someone else to act, actions pushed by others, a marionette of these political leaders.

The image of students as marionettes is emphasised with a somewhat stronger discourse that asserts the negative effects of Gratuidad on the personality of the students. This is best illustrated in Extract 3.2 from El Mercurio N4.

Extract 3.2.

	Quote	Heading	Source (Article's Number)	Publication Date
1	**Do not let the socialists come and tell us that we**	Three facts about free education	El Mercurio Art. 4	11/11/2015
2	**must finance the HE** to **those who know how to use**			
3	**the money they have**, for their music concerts,			
3	sports and recreational events.			
4	**A long time ago we said that Gratuidad will be a**			
5	**serious damage to the personality** of our young			
6	people. **If approved,** it will become the seed that will			
7	lead them towards a harmful consumption,			
8	**undoubtedly, to turn them into dependents of**			
9	**socialism, into slaves of the State**.			

Line 1: "***Do not let the socialists come and tell us*** **that we must finance the HE"** reproduces, with a strong tone, some negation to the approval of the reform, implying that the reform is being imposed by members of the Socialist Party. These assertions neglect, once again and as discussed in previous sections, all the social movements led by students towards the change in policy. Moreover, a negation to the decision made by the ruling party of the government (the socialist party is the governing party and the political house of President Michelle Bachelet) is, undoubtedly, reproducing the ideological view of the editorial line of this newspaper article. In line 2"…**those who know how to use the money they have…"** the discourse reaffirms that HE students, not mentioned and ignored in the text, are rational and can make rational decisions. A defence to the neoliberal ideology and the construction of the student as consumer are produced in this article. This is not surprising, indeed, coming from an article published in the right-wing newspaper El Mercurio, which has always been supportive of the neoliberal turn made by Chile in the early 1970's and since the early days of Pinochet's dictatorship.

Furthermore, a further interpretation from this extract reveals a juxtaposition between this representation of a student as a consumer and a more compelling construction of the student. The discourses in this article are intertextually chained with discourses of Gratuidad as an injury exposed in Chapter 5. In line 4 of Extract 3.2: **"Gratuidad *will be a serious damage* to the personality of our young people"** the features of the text frame students as being harmed by Gratuidad.

Similarly, as the adverb **'undoubtedly'** is used in line 8 as a strong assertion to a discourse of injury provoked by Gratuidad. However, in this case the injury is to the students' personality, which can affect the long-standing rationale of the capitalist society and the principles of the independent chooser. The metaphor of Gratuidad changing their behaviours as illustrated in line 8: **"*to turn them***

into dependents of socialism, into *slaves of the State*" produces a discourse of dependence to their actions or their way of thinking. Metaphorically, the text is referring to students as dependants of a political ideology. In this case, the ideology of the ruling government. Moreover, the student is constructed as someone with no option other than to obey the dictation of the government or forced to adhere to such 'socialist' ideology.

6.4. CRITICAL DISCUSSION: CHAPTER FINDINGS

The primary purpose of this chapter was to present the finding in relation to the discourses from press media, answering the following research question:

How are HE students discursively constructed in the media coverage of Gratuidad?

Associated with the representation of a policy that is hasty, ill thought and faulty, the textual analysis has revealed the intense rejection to a policy when interpreting the construction of the HE student, as the direct beneficiary of the change in policy. These representations attempt to construct, in the first place, a student that is individualistic, egocentric and irrational.

Extract 1.1 from the right-wing newspaper article El Mercurio N10 accentuates the discourses of mistaken, faulty, and illegitimate policy. The analysis of the social and discursive practice exposes an ideational function of text that rejects any change in policy. Furthermore, the comparative analysis between Gratuidad and the alternative use of these public resources, and a comparison to other countries, not mentioned in the text, but that could certainly refer to countries where neoliberal policies are not being questioned by the society (Line 18), produces the effect that Gratuidad, as social right, is a mistaken demand from the students. This reproduction reveals a rather subtle construction of the student as overly persisting in a demand that is, at least, unreasonable.

A contrasting discourse regarding the real interests of students in terms of Gratuidad are presented in an ideational function that sarcastically name Gratuidad as **"Ms Free Education".** The intentions of students in pursing Gratuidad compared with a sexual object that brings individual gratifications: "**only Muse, the only inspiring fetish**" produces a false, conflicting, and quite individualist interest of the student with the change in policy. The effect produced by the discourses positions the rationality of the students, the rational of any consumer, seeking individual benefits only. Moreover, a relational function uncovers a representation of the students making rational decisions by demanding to pay minimum price for their education, as exposed in line 7 **"obviously, to pay less and get more".** Ideational and relational functions in Extract 1.2 connote a false and slightly contradictory intention of students in their demands for Gratuidad. These functions uncover how the

text intends to keep legitimising the neoliberal policies in HE. Furthermore, the discursive practices intensify the tone by representing the student as irrational and egocentric by pushing for an unreasonable policy of Gratuidad.

Intertextually chained with the discourses of rejection and the representation of Gratuidad as a hasty policy, discourses uncover some rather conflicting representations of students. Discourses of a superficial policy of Gratuidad is exposed in El Mercurio N6 **"*it is essential* to be able *to discuss the principles* of the reform"**, seek to frame the mistakes of a policy which is negatively impacting private HE students. Intertextually framed, the text discloses a relational function that seeks to present these private HE students in a precarious situation, compared to those attending CRUCh HEIs. The effect of representing students in a disadvantaged and precarious situation, attempts to alter the orders of the discourses about what students should be eligible to obtain from Gratuidad, in an effort to pressure the government to expand the policy to publicly fund private HE students.

Gratuidad, as restrictive and negatively impacting students, is exposed in the analysis in Extract 2.1. Being published in the right-wing newspaper El Mercurio, in this Extract 2.1 the dialogical approach exposed in line 8: "**We *should remind them* that…"** intensifies the absence listener, the absent voice of the socialist government that has a different political ideology of the editorial line of the newspaper. This dialogical effect attempts to inform that the small percentage of vulnerable students attending public HEIs will be privileged with the implementation of the policy. The discourse informing these acts underpins the ideological position in the discourse about not supporting the policy; and criticising the government for its implementation. The text analysis in Extract 2.1 reveals a discourse questioning the policy by pointing out mistakes of a reform that is leaving private HE students out of the coverage of the policy, uncovering a construction of the HE students as being neglected.

The interplay of informing and confirming produce the effects to change the orders of discourse regarding the genuine impact of Gratuidad on the HE students and in promoting equality. This attempt in changing the current orders of discourse acts as a reconfiguration of how Gratuidad was discursively constructed, what Gratuidad actually is and what Gratuidad should be, in order to continue to fulfil its original aim of equality promotion. This interplay challenges the discourses surrounding the policy to reconsider the current direction of Gratuidad and to be inclusive of all students, regardless of the HEIs they attend. This discourse is reconstructing the students as being abandoned, especially those in real need for public support, whom have been discursively constructed as those in more need and that do not attend CRUCh HEIs.

As exposed earlier in the analysis of this chapter, the press is legitimising a discourse of rejection of a policy of free HE offered to HE students, constructing them as economic agents that will produce and generate income in the future, as exposed in El Mercurio N9 in Extract 2.3 line 6 **"and who, *thanks to their professional work*, will be *able to generate higher economic returns*."** The representation of the student as an economic agent, reinforces the hegemonic economic ideology in the HE system. In effect, this right-wing newspaper article employs long standing neoliberal discourses to reproduce that HE students do not deserve public funding.

The critical analysis of the media further uncovered shifting discourses rejecting Gratuidad to private HEIs students; to discourses of exclusion of HE students for not deserving funding from public budget; to discourses of powerless students; all helping in constructing an image of students as defenceless. A mix of social and political discourses intends to shape the social practice about private HE students and construct them as being in real need to access Gratuidad. Considering that Gratuidad could be the ruling policy for the future of HE in Chile, and its current direction did not include private HE students, the articles deepen the notion of private students as being unjustly neglected. The media analysed builds on the change of the orders of discourse to propose an equal treatment to all, private and public HE students, by intensifying a representation of private HE students also needing the financial support from the state. The analysis of the media articles accentuates the discourse of Gratuidad being short in its scope. Moreover, HE students attending private HEIs are the students in real need for financial support, thus they must be considered in the benefits offered by Gratuidad. In an evident criticism to the government, the press discourse continues its attempts to expose the ideological position of markets in HE, a posture that seems to be strongly colonised by the economic system into the Chilean media. The government is represented as not promoting social equality with the implementation of Gratuidad. Moreover, El Mercurio stresses a discourse of exclusion and segregation emerging from the government decisions. This discourse of inequality and discrimination as generated by the state leads to an interpretation of a defenceless student facing a restrictive public policy.

The influence of the neoliberal ideology is evidently exposed in discourses reproducing the effect of studying in HE as associated with the future economic stability of the student. These discourses frame students as not having a voice in their decision about their future; moreover, the discourse represents students as being manipulated by others as El Mostrador N17 illustrates "**Parents say it, children believe it…"**. Nevertheless, a contradiction is exposed in this discursive practice. Despite the efforts of the government to offer free HE, a policy, on which the focus has been mainly about removing tuition fees; the discourse reproduces a manipulation that will ultimately impact

students by creating a misleading expectation about their future. This is strongly asserted not only in a discourse of fictitious benefits or a **'myth'** of pursuing a university degree, as line 19 illustrates. Accentuated in line 21 **"*even if they get Gratuidad*, they will end up working as taxi drivers or as cashiers**, **unhappy"** the adverb **"even if they get"** which reproduces a contraction with a market discourse of a better future with a HE degree. Line 21 accentuates that even if HE is free, this will not necessarily lead to a more stable financial future for students, due to the lack of quality and a convoluted HE structure in the Chilean HE system.

The attempts of the press discourses to maintain the social order in reference to HE are intensified when reproducing a notion of students not acting by themselves in the campaign for free education in the country. On the contrary, the student is constructed as someone "***encouraged by***" others, implying they are influenced by others in this case, the influence of members of a political party: "…**the Communist Youth Union of Chile…".** The relational function in this discourse unveils that HE student are not acting by themselves; furthermore, it reveals that this manipulation is turning them into something else i.e. revolutionaries.

The concept of students being controlled by others is reemphasised in the press discourse, producing a tougher construction of the student. As the discourses in Extract 3.3 reveal, a strong ideational function attempting to preserve the valid neoliberal policies in HE, or from a different perspective, to neglect any influence of the state into the HE system, produces the special construction of the students as acting like the marionette of certain political ideologies. This ideational function exposes the identity of the discourse in negating the influence of the state in HE and reaffirms that students are rational in their decision; hence, any government intervention will cause damage to students **"A long time ago we said that Gratuidad will be a serious damage to the personality of our young people"** (line 4).

The discursive practice defends the hegemonic ideology of the rationality in the students and is trying to maintain the orders of discourse in reference to markets and free markets in HE. In this attempt, the text is discursively constructing the student as someone who will permanently rely on the support of the socialist government, as line 8 illustrates. More strongly, the functions of the text reproduce the HE student as prisoner of the current ruling government or a puppet of a socialist ideology.

In summary, the media discourses reveal several differing and conflicting constructions of HE students as direct beneficiaries of Gratuidad. These are students as irrational and egocentric, demanding an unreasonable policy; students as neglected by the state; and students that, are cast as marionettes and are strongly influenced by others in their support for a tuition free education.

The following chapter will explore the discourses of the HE students themselves, analysing their discourses regarding their own HE experience; and their orientations towards HE.

CHAPTER 7. FINDINGS – STUDENTS' ORIENTATIONS

This final empirical chapter examines the discourses students produce and reproduce, to identify their orientations in HE. The chapter aims to answer the last research question of this dissertation:

What are the discourses of UG students regarding their HE experience?

In the previous empirical chapters 5 and 6, the functions and effects of media discourses were analysed to determine the role of the newspapers in contextualising Gratuidad, and to identify representations of students in their coverage of the policy reform. The discursive representations that students construct of themselves also needs to be investigated to understand how they make sense of their HE experience in this context. As described in the methodology chapter, the data for this section comprises of twenty-four in-depth interviews (twenty-seven hours of audio material). At the time of the interview, 12 participants attended a public HEI and a further 12, a private HEI. Half of the sample were state funded students (under the scheme of Gratuidad). The other half of the participants were self-funded. For sample diversity, a mix of new entrants (1st year) and final year (4th year) students formed part of the sample and students from different fields of study were also considered. For a complete report on the participants' sample, please refer to Appendix 2. Texts and extracts of interviews will be identified by the student's forename, followed by the number in the table in Appendix 2 (i.e. Nicole S8 is student 8 in the table).

The findings show the linguistic choices made by the students in relation to their experience in HE; these have been interpreted to identify the different orientations of the students. As it would probably be expected from a highly neoliberal and marketised Chilean HE system, the findings have revealed some commonalities with the construction of the *student as a consumer*. This image is particularly reproduced with discourses of individualism, and HE experience as a product that can be bought. Similarly, the findings also suggest a confirmation to the construction of the *student as a client* representing students that seek a client/professional relationship during their experience. However, this representation has been extended to the *student as an annoyed client,* referring to students who express frustration and annoyance when their HE experience does not materialise in this client/relationship way.

The CDA has also offered other, more novel representations of the students, constructed through discourses around indifference, fear, and retaliation due to political engagement. Moreover, discourses of confusion and impulsiveness in choosing a course of study are exposed. The chapter

then explores discourses of relief, as Gratuidad tackles economic vulnerability along with hope and determination for a better future. Lastly, the chapter discusses discourses of collectivism and collaboration to promote social change.

This chapter has been divided into 2 sections. Section 7.1 will present the commonalities of the findings with the constructions already identified in the literature. Firstly, the construction of the "**student as a consumer**" will be briefly described. While this image has been already explored in other studies, the findings here come to validate research conducted in the Global North with this study from the Global South, an area of scant empirical research. As claimed by Xu et al. (2018) and re-affirmed by Macfarlane (2020), the student as a consumer construction could be considered a 'myth' because of the lack of empirical evidence. Macfarlane (2020) claims that some studies: 'do not provide any evidence that this macro-level trend [marketization] has automatically led to an attitudinal change among students, even though this view is widely asserted as a given…' (p.542). Thus, the findings in this chapter will help in validating with empirical data what has mainly been conceptualised by the use of a metaphor of the student as a consumer. Secondly, a representation close to the student as a client is discussed and confirmed. This is a construction that has also been explored and developed before in Bailey (2000); Franz (1998); Tight (2013) among others, however, while the analysis unveils some similarities with this construction, particular discursive representation presented here is extended and is better identified as "**student as an annoyed client**". Although some traces of the student as a consumer and the student as an annoyed client emerged in discourses from students attending a public university, the analysis revealed that these representations were mostly expressed by students attending a private university. Furthermore, the source of funding was not a differentiating factor in such self-representations.

Section 7.2 will discuss the findings in relation to alternatives to a student-as-consumer orientation.

7.1. CONFIRMING SOME ORIENTATIONS OF THE STUDENT

STUDENT AS A CONSUMER

Individualism, selfishness, and value for money are manifested in the linguistic choices made by Cinthia (S1), a final year state funded student in Business at a private university. A cause effect sentence is used to argue in favour of having students' protests at her university, expressed in the following sentence: **"…it was very short [the strike]. Three days at most. Well, I think it is because they [the authorities] gave them [the students] what they wanted"**. The analysis uncovers that students were being indulged by the authorities in order to finish the movement: **"they gave them**

what they wanted". The past tense not only connotes that if there was ever a strike, it was not for too long; but also, it denotes that student movements are not very welcomed or tolerated at this HEI. In addition, the third person pronoun uncovers the lack of involvement in such activities by the participant Cinthia (S1). In the following clauses **"No no no! they [students] are never on strike or anything like that at this university"** and the exclamation in the sentence **"ha-ha no! no strikes…I love that there are no strikes [at this university] …"** a negation is repeated several times and then intensified by the adverb **'never'**. This reveals opposition to strikes at her HEI. Moreover, the constant use of the third person plural in the pronoun they 'the authorities of the university' and they 'the students' reproduces the distance between the participant and her own HE experience. Also, the last clause expresses her happiness and support at her private university not allowing student strikes, thus not interrupting university activities.

Cinthia's interview presents a syntactically cohesive structure in the text. The discourse is not only intertextually linked with other discourses (a conversation or dialogue between the students on strike and authorities of the University), but it also shows coherence between the clauses exposing a discursive practice of individualism by rejecting and opposing social movements.

Drawing in market and economic discourses, the student-consumer representation is best illustrated in the Extract 1.1 from Camila (S13), a first-year state funded student at a public university studying health sciences:

Extract 1.1

…**they want to move us** to a new campus…**You know I came to this university because I liked this campus**. Because **I liked the green areas and the buildings**… the other campus is totally different. A much smaller thing…so I say to myself: **'when I came and enrolled at this university they sold me the story about its campus**, **they did not sell me the story from the other campus.** So, **if I have to move** to the new campus, **I have to have the same** facilities as here or even better**. Period!**.

Camila-Public-Free-Health Sciences-1st year

The pronoun **"they"** and **"us"** in **"They want to move us to a new campus"** (line 1) is a linguistic choice found in other students' narratives, such as in Cinthia's (S1). This lexical choice uncovers distance and detachment between the student and the HE experience, through referring to the authorities of the university as **"they"** and using **"we"** to refer to the students. This detachment between the student and her HE experience as a whole, can evidence some disinterest with the entire HE experience, a behaviour that Halbesleben & Wheeler (2009); Nixon et al. (2016); Saunders (2015) among others, have described as an individualist approach to the HE experience.

In line 1 a causal effect reproduces the reasons for accessing this institution **"You know… *I came to* this University *because I* like this campus"**. The tone in the exclamation **"You know"** at the beginning of the sentence emphasizes to the interlocutor the reason exposed in the remainder of the text. As line 2 shows **"I like the green areas and the buildings",** an attitude towards the infrastructure of the university is reproduced, revealing more of a consumer attitude and much lower learning identity (Bunce et al., 2017). Likewise, by metaphorically reproducing the action of buying and selling a product, the consumer representation keeps intensifying, in this case referring to a campus with green areas and parks, as exposed in line 3 and 4: **"they sold me the story about this campus…"**. The rhetoric of an economic exchange between the student and the HEI is metaphorically expressed in buying and selling a tangible product i.e. university campus. This metaphor reveals a student drawing on marketing and economic discourses to describe a commercial transaction similar to a business-like purchase. Furthermore, such representation of a consumer is realised by the categorical demand stated in line 4: **"if I have to move to the new campus, I have to have the same facilities as here or even better. Period!"**. The linguistic choice in the verb in **"I have to have…"** in its present tense reproduces an ultimatum, a 'must have'; and the categorical use of the noun "**Period"** reproduces an ultimatum or a warning, a discourse of demanding consumer rights. This is a student as a consumer exercising her authority over matters not necessarily related to her learning experience, but to a wider HE issue, as claimed by Tomlinson (2014), such as having access to high quality facilities.

In these examples, the discourses reproduced a HE experience evaluated on the basis of value for money, similar to buying a commodity other than a HE experience aimed at personal development. These self-representations of Cinthia (S1) and Camila (S13) indicate an orientation of the student, vastly discussed in the literature, and equivalent to the '*student-as-consumer'* metaphor.

STUDENT AS AN *ANNOYED* CLIENT

The critical analysis of the text has also offered an interpretation of the student looking for a more personal and individualised HE experience, with the expectation of a professional/client relationship with both their HEIs and lecturers, which has been conceptualised in the literature as the student as a client. In effect, by understanding HE as a professional service, the image of the student as a client relies on a professional/client relationship between the students and their HEIs (Bailey, 2000; Franz, 1998). This metaphor has also been endorsed by Armstrong (2003), who appeals to a participative and involved role of a service/client relationship; he suggested to view "the university as being like a professional firm and the students as clients who pay to receive professional services from that firm" (p.372).

Although, some characteristics in the passivity of the student as consumer metaphor are present in the construction of the student as a client (Tight, 2013), the distinction is observed in that a client "is one for whom professional services are rendered" (Bailey, 2000; p.354). Armstrong (2003) also suggested that the difference is that customers rely on their own judgment to evaluate a purchase, whereas clients must rely on the professionals to tell them what they need and in delivering a good service (p. 372). In the client metaphor, a higher level of professionalism is needed along with an active participation of the student (Bailey, 2000). In this vein, several elements in analysis reproduce discourses that work in representing the student as a client.

In the case of this research, a more refined analysis has allowed the extension of this representation. Constructed around the discourses of aggravation, frustration, and criticism when this client/professional relationship is not delivered, this discursive representation has been better conceptualised as a *'student as an annoyed client'*.

Notions of the student as an annoyed client can be interpreted from the interview with Yisel (S24), who is a state funded first year at a public institution. She points out: **"…mmm[thinks]…It is just the lecturer…mmm [thinks]…how can I say it? There are different types of lecturers, right? … There is a lecturer who is super didactic, who is interested in the student's learning. And [there are] other lecturers who arrive [to the classroom] to simply show their ppt slides…"**. In this sentence, not only the adverb **"just"** connotes the relationship with the lecturers might be the only issue of concerned in her experience, but also, the connection between sentences **"There is a lecturer…And [there are] other lecturers"** shows a comparison between different teaching styles uncovering a student who is knowledgeable about the impact of different teaching styles in her learning process. The interpretation of this knowledge also uncovers that Yisel (S24) is actively engaged in the delivery of the HE service, as it was claimed by Bailey (2000). Concurrently, a sense of annoyance is realised when the relationship client/professional fails to comply with the role of the lecturer to motivate the student. As explained in the fitness trainer/trainee client metaphor of Bailey, (2000) and Franz (1998), in a student as a client, it is believed that the role of the lecturers also includes motivation to learn and motivation about the delivery of the module.

Similar to Yisel (S24), a sentiment of frustration due to the absence of professionalism in the service delivered by a lecturer, is reproduced by another student attending the public university and paying tuition fees. In her last year of Art, Natalia (S20) states **"… I feel that there is not good communication with Lecturers… the problem is I think he lacks communication skills"**.

Likewise, the analysis of the data exposes a discursive practice about a personalised, individualised relationship between the student and their lecturers validating the representation of the student as an annoyed client, when this experience is not met. Yet, this representation has been mostly framed within narratives of students attending a private HEI, as evidenced in the words of David (S3) a last year student in Health Science **"…here the school directors [course director] cannot refuse to talk to the students. We complained and now they must have designated hours to speak with the student who requires it …"**. The verb **"must"** reproduce an obligation of a personalised service. The demand for a professional service is reasserted with the clause "**…From the Vice Chancellor down…they need to be available**", reproducing the need for a substantial relationship not only with lecturers and administrative staff, but, in an overemphasising and exaggerated claim, even with the main authority of the university. A discourse reproducing the need for a close relationship of the student and the HEI reinforcing the concept of students demanding an individualised top-down relationship with the entire organisational structure as posited by Armstrong (2003) and Bailey (2000). Lastly, in the clause **"In fact"**, the nouns **"uniqueness"** and **"personalised",** and the expression of satisfaction at last, in: **"And in fact, the uniqueness is that School Director knows all the students…I think she knows everyone's name, super personalised …. I like that…"** the assertion **"In fact"**, the nouns **"uniqueness"** and **"personalised",** and the expression **"I like that"**, reproduce satisfaction with a personalised and professionalised HE experience, exposing a cohesive discursive around a discourse of a client/professional relationship.

Discourses of students who are involved in their HE experience but are concurrently annoyed when the level of professional service required is not met, are also exhibited in Nicole's interview (S8), who is in her last year of studying Health Sciences at a private university: **"For example, a Spanish Lecturer arrived last year, and She didn't even know the rules of the University. She hadn't even studied the regulations. She didn't even know the deadlines for the coursework exams. How can that be possible**?". The repeated use of the adverb **"even"** accentuates the annoyance of the student at the lack of professionalism exhibited by this new Spanish lecturer. The question, directed to an unknown listener, reproduces disbelief for such unprofessional behaviour in the recently contracted lecturer. Even more, the assertion: **"So I went to the director and talked to her about this lecturer"** continues to expose involvement and active participation. Following the claims of Bailey (2000), this discursive practice can reaffirm the orientation of a student acting like a client but better represented as an annoyed client.

Lastly, in connection to the above textual analysis, a discursive representation of a student as an annoyed client is best exhibited in Extract 1.2 from Javiera (S6):

Extract 1.2.

1	**I raised the issue, so it reached the director of the school**. I told him [director] that he [lecturer]... well, he [lecturer]
2	was telling us one thing**, that the coursework was done this way, after a week he would change it** …and it was like…
3	he wasn't sure about the coursework…. **And I said "huh…oh no…I am not going to keep my mouth shout**…and **I**
4	**raised the issue** with the director. So the school director **came and had a conversation with us**. **I felt that I need to**
5	**say something. And I did!**
	Javiera-Private-Free-Business-1st year

Extract 1.2 reproduces an active engagement in the relationship between the student and the service delivered from a lecturer as shown in **"I raised the issue with the director of the school"** (line 1). The interest in escalating a problem that affects the student's HE experience is presented, connoting an active involvement in what the student considered a module/lecture that is well delivered by the lecturer. Moreover, in line 3 **"And I said 'huh…oh no!…I am not going to keep my mouth shut…and I raised the issue to director'"** an exclamation of **"huh…oh no!…."** reconfirms the act of escalating a complaint regarding the unprofessional conduct of the lecturer. These elements of the text expose a discursive practice accentuating the annoyance of an unsatisfied client.

In summary, this section has presented a discursive representation of the "*Student as a Consumer*", validating this widely identified construction (e.g. Bunce et al., 2017; Guilbault, 2018; Jabbar et al., 2017; Molesworth et al., 2009, 2011; Nixon et al., 2011, 2018; Woodall et al., 2014). It also revisited a representation that has been constructed here as the "*Student as an annoyed Client*".

The following section will present more novel representations which emerged from the analysis.

7.2. ALTERNATIVE ORIENTATIONS OF THE STUDENT

The following section 7.2 will present four topoi that emerged from the CDA of the interviews. These are representations of the student as a) Apolitical: Indifference, Fear and Retaliation of political engagement; b) A poorly informed risk taker: Confusion and impulsiveness in choosing a degree; c) Young people striving to be *Someone*: Economic relief and aspiration for a better future; and d) Budding social reformers: Promoting collectivism and social changes.

STUDENT AS APOLITICAL: INDIFFERENCE, FEAR AND RETALIATION OF POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

The linguistic choices made by some students reproduce indifference towards political engagement due to family attachment, economic vulnerability, and some sense of false interest in activism. In addition, discourses of fear, threats, and retaliation from private university authorities are

reproduced, as a justification for their disengagement in political activities. Instead of supporting or confirming a construction of the student involved in political activities as identified in the student as an activist or a political actor (Brooks, 2018a; Cini & Guzmán-Concha, 2017b; Guzmán-Valenzuela, 2016b; Somma, 2012), these discursive representation support an orientation of the "**Student as Apolitical**".

The student as apolitical emerged from an analysis across the data regardless of a participant's source of funding or course of study. Discourses of indifference due to family attachment and economic pressure to finish their courses were more distinct in students in their last year of study (4th year). Also, discourses of fear, oppression and apprehension that were interpreted exclusively from interviews to students attending a private university.

Indifference to political engagement: family attachment, economic vulnerability, and false activism.

Cristian (S2), who is studying Law in his 4th year, reproduces a discourse of emotional dependency with the use of lexical verbs, such as **"I want to"** or **"I miss my"** in the sentence: **"I want to be close to my parents… being a university student has been very hard for me, first of all …Living here. Being alone... I miss my family...".** The semantics in the sentence reproduce sentiments of sorrow, and attachment to the family. The text is coherently structured with the connecting clause: **"I don't have time for that *shit* of taking part in the [student] strikes or come and sleep on campus [in occupied university buildings]. I prefer to get my things [from student accommodation], take the bus and go home [back to hometown]".** The use of a vulgar slang reasserts that political activism is not a priority in comparison to spending time with the family. It reproduces antipathy in participating in such activities. This sentence is juxtaposed with an active voice asserting the action of physically getting away i.e. "**taking the bus and go home**", leaving behind the strike, connoting that being at home, with the family, is more rewarding to him then some political nonsense. The lexical choices in the text indicate a discourse of indifference towards any political activity.

The prioritization of time with their family over political activism were expressed by other students. For instance, Camila (S13), a 1st year student at a public university states: **"Yes, I travel [to hometown] every weekend, there is no one single weekend that I don't go [to visit parents] [laughs]. Why should I stay [during weekends]? I prefer honestly being with my family than being at the strike…"**. The categorical tone exposed in **"there <u>is no one single</u> weekend…"** alleging that weekends are for family activities. The query about staying in the city of Talca for the weekend reveals that, for Camila, staying in her university town over weekends implies participating in the political activities.

The rhetorical question assists in reaffirming indifference towards political activism and that travelling home is more rewarding than being politically involved. In effect, the adverb **"honestly"** reaffirms the conviction that participating in the strikes is of no interest and, thus, her time with the family is more important.

Denoting a lack of interest in political activity is also exposed as a cause effect sentence in Camila's interview (S13) **"… I don't participate in movements because that's not for me...".** This discursive strategy relies on an immature approach towards political talks "**I find that politics it's like… for mature people ha-ha [laughs].** ***You meant adults?*** **Yeah…I don't know…like my parents…they usually talk about politics…".** Although, not strictly comparable, the feeling of being immature or arguing that political engagement is for older generations (i.e. her parents) could suggests a sense of childishness. While previous research suggested a construction of the student as a vulnerable child (Brooks, 2018a), this metaphor was derived from studying policy documents, and refers to students as vulnerable dependants. In the case of Camila (S13), the analysis reveals a discursive practice signifying indifference towards political issues: **"…politics is for mature people…**".

A discourse reproducing lack of interest in political activities is legitimised in the interview of Cinthia (S1), a final year Business student at a private HEI. Drawing on a discourse around time constraints and rationalisation exposed in: **"No, no, no [repeats] I am honestly not interested. <u>I don't have time for that</u>…I don't know how they have time for all that political stuff?,** the discourse reproduces a legitimate desire i.e. **"honestly"** of not being involved are exposed. As a query to an omitted student activist along with a silenced answer in "…**I don't know how they have time for…"** demonstrates that for Cinthia (S1), protesting and manifesting is simply not relevant. This irrelevance is intensified by referring to those as political **"stuff",** connoting a derogatory tone and little importance to such activities.

Likewise, Hugo's interview (S15), who attends a public university in his 4th year, reveals a broader rejection to politics in general, firstly, due to the influence of political parties in students' protests and in internal university politics. His attitude towards political activities is exposed in: **"… there is too much influence from political parties, and you see people…who have a very strong connection with political parties…students in the strike then connected to for example, a political party X or Y… So no! The truth is that [politics] does not attract my attention. Actually… there is no time and because it didn't catch my attention at all."** The student has made several lexical choices i.e. **"too much influence"**, **"very strong connection"** reproducing his rejection to political engagement. Secondly, as in Cinthia's interview, time constraints are also a discursive strategy for the lack of engagement in the student movement. But above all, in essence there is simply a lack of

personal interest emphasised in the tone of his last sentence **"it didn't catch my attention at all"**.

Although a discursive association between indifference and economic vulnerability did not widely emerge in the data, Ignacio (S16) exposes disinterest in political engagement, by reproducing discourses of economic constraints in students and their families. This is illustrated in Extract 1.1:

Extract 1.1.

1	I think **there is no student participation because everyone is like me**: **'I came to the U to get my degree because I**
2	**am the first in my family**, or because my family, for example, works in agriculture or services... and **basically I can't**
3	**waste time**, **because I have to get my degree** and **start working**' so that is why many students **they just do not want**
4	**to get involved** in the strike.
	Ignacio-Public-Paying-Law-4th year

The Extract 1.1. from a self-funded student, reproduces disinterest, as evidenced in discourses from previous students. Economic vulnerability is exposed as the justification for not being active in political activities. Intertextually associated to discourses from other students, Ignacio (16) justifies the indifference to political activities by reproducing economic restrictions. Similarly, as someone who is the first generation university student in his family, the discourse of economic constrains is realised in line 2: **"I came to the U to get my degree because I am the first in my family".** Moreover, in the metaphor: **"basically I can't waste time, because I have to get my degree and start working"** intents to expose the importance of focusing on studying other than other activities. Studying is the means to get a job and a salary, and as such it has to be finished soon. Spending time on other activities, other than coursework is not allowed. Once again, the economic discourse of an opportunity cost is uncovered. The extra time in pursuing a degree by participating in political activities is against the goal of graduating and having a paid job as soon as possible, as this might help in economically supporting the family. By maintaining focus on finishing a degree, the participant draws on another discursive strategy by reproducing discourses of indifference to political activism.

Further evidence of students, particularly those in their last year and those attending a public HEI, representing themselves as indifferent or being apolitical, is presented. Discourses of false activism and dishonest engagement are reproduced.

Extract 1.2.

1	Many [students] strike **just for the show and to show off**, but then **[they] never contribute with ideas** or anything
2	else. **Yes, there were many [students] who voted yes** [to go on strike] but **then we went back home** [to their families
3	in hometown] **ha-ha [laughs]**. **To me it is very simple: For instance I voted yes, but then I went home [hometown]**
4	… **I had too much to study…did not want to waste any time on that** [strike].
	Fernanda (S14)-Public-Free-Health Sciences-4th year
6	I mean, **I came to the assembly and voted yes**…**but basically because there was a Switch competition** [video game],
7	a Nintendo Switch championship at Faculty of Health **so everybody came to play basically ha-ha [laughs]**. We made
8	hot dogs…that was fun [reaffirms].
	Kari-Public-Free-Law-4th year

Extract 1.2. cites the narratives of students, in which the lack of true commitment by pretending to be engaged in political activities is reproduced. The semantics in **"Several [students] strike <u>just for the show or to show off</u>, but then [they] <u>never contribute</u> with ideas"** reveals the idea that some students want to be seen as politically active, but do not truly engage. Moreover, the adverb **"several**" supports the sense that this argument could be a customary practice for students to show up at the voting sites (to promote the strike) but then they disappear. This is categorically reaffirmed with the lexical choice **"there were many"** denoting a large number of students that follow this false activist practice. Furthermore, the first-person plural effect in **"…we went back home ha-ha"** demonstrates closeness with Fernanda's self-disengagement in political activity, despite her voting yes (line 3), that is lastly emphasised with an unembarrassed exclamation of happiness for not actively participating in the strike. The phrase **"I had too much to study…I did not want to waste any time on that"** is once again adopted as a form of discursive strategy for being detached from political activities, as in Cinthia (S1). Despite false activism, by reproducing time constraints and rationalization, the text exposes economic pressure to finish a university degree, as evidenced previously in other discourses from final year students.

A discourse of total disengagement with the real aim of the political activity is more evident in the second part of Extract 1.2. In line 6: "**I came to the assembly and voted yes…but basically because there was a Switch competition [video game]"** discourses of false activism are exposed when the structure of the clause evidently denotes there was no other reason other than a personal interest in the promotion of the student strike. As unveiled from Fernanda's quote, Kari's (S18) reproduces, once again, lack of engagement in political actions, but also she exaggerates this practice by accentuating the notion that this is a common practice among a larger part of the student population, as she reveals **"…<u>so everybody</u> came to play basically ha-ha [laughs]".**

Fear, threats, and retaliation for active participation in politics

Discourses of fear, threats, retaliation, emerged particularly from students attending a private HEI. The absence of student political engagement is uncovered in the grammatical use of a constant negation, repeated and categorically exposed across the data from students at the private university. This is the case i.e. **"There is no mobilization. There are no student mobilisations, at all"** (Cristian S2) or **"here at this university the issue about mobilizations is very…very difficult"** (David S3), categorically denying problems linked to student's political involvement. Moreover, **"They [students] are never mobilized"** reaffirms this discourse of absolute disinterest by students in political activity.

Nevertheless, the justification for the negation to participate in political activities is found in words and phrases that connote concern and oppression in private HE students. Cristian (S2), in his last year of Law, adopts a discourse that distances himself from political engagement because of negative consequences. This is illustrated in the third person effect: **"…students do not want to do it, it's because of their fear.** *Fear?* **Yeah, fear…"**. This justification is a discourse of fear of retaliation against those involved in political activism. The text not only reproduces a sentiment of concern for those active in student politics. The repeated queries, directed presumably at students who have participated in the movements, reveal the impact of such political involvement by doubting their future at the university i.e. "**what happens to their matriculation? To those who were involved, next year?"** Moreover, a causal effect sentence reproduces a discourse of retaliation to those actively involved by presumably cancelling the matriculation at the university: "…**because this is a private university… it is easy to identify who they are… what happens to their matriculation?**. The discourse of fear and retaliation is emphasized with modal verbs and the semantics of a sentence that reveal that in a private HEI, students can be easily replaced by new students: "**…do you think they will have problem with students [admission numbers] …. the university will always have students next year".**

David (S3), in his last year of Health Sciences, draws on a legal and a market/business discourse to reproduce fear and distance to political activism: **"…the fact is that this is a private university, it had certain clauses in the contracts regarding any mobilization…so no one wants to get into trouble!"**. The noun in the phrase **"the fact is"** expose the categorical tone in the argument. The legal and business discourse i.e. **"clauses in the contracts"** stresses the legal power of university authorities to stop students striking, which is then connected with a clause that reasserts a discourse of fear: "…**so no one wants to get into trouble!"**

The legal discourse is once again reproduced in Francisca's interview (S4), although, not as categorically as in David's (S3) interview. Francisca (S4), a last year student of Social Sciences expressed: **"I think it's decreed in [not clear] ... mmm I think, it comes from the Vice Chancellor….**

They [students] are never mobilized... Even they are forced to take down protest posters and protest banners…. that is why we have not promoted more movements, because they will not let us". In identifying that this is a norm emitted by the highest authorities from the university, the discourse reproduces how political activities are mostly prohibited at this university, and the illegality of involvement of students in political activism. Furthermore, juxtaposed with the sentence "**because they will not let us"** a discourse of oppression can be reproduced.

STUDENT AS A POORLY INFORMED RISK TAKER: CONFUSION AND IMPULSIVENESS IN CHOOSING A DEGREE

Narratives of students around their experiences in deciding whether to enrol in a particular university and how they chose a course of study are analysed. The analysis reveals discourses of confusion, superficiality and poor information about the HE system and the different type of courses/degrees; but also, impulsiveness and irrationality when choosing an UG course are reproduced. These discourses, exposed in several elements of the textual analysis, have worked in representing the "student as a poorly informed risk taker".

These discourses were rarely reproduced by students attending a public university. The representation of the student as an ignorant risk taker was constructed from discourses reproduced particularly by private students both self-funded and state funded, from all ranges of HE courses.

Confusion, superficiality and ignorance about the HE system and the difference between courses

Confusion is reproduced when students fail to differentiate between types of post-secondary education, this being a Higher Education Institution (HEI), as in a university, or a Further Education Institution (FEI) as in a professional institute (PI), or a centre for technical training (CFT). Confusion and ignorance are evidenced in the interview of Rodrigo (S9), a last year law student: "…I originally studied at DUOC [name of a FEI] **that can be seen as a university…you know**; however, **I think it is** an institute [professional - FEI]. **I think it is similar** to a university, **but…[thinks]…yeah… it is an institute…I really don't know ha-ha** [laughs]. At the beginning I **kind of knew that it was not really like** a university, but **I thought that being a private institution**, I **still thought that it could still be similar to** a private university"

Several of the lexical choices made by Rodrigo reproduce poor information about the system. Verbs **in "DUOC can be seen as a"; "I think it is an institute", "I think it is similar", "I really don't know", "I kind of knew"** all express an approximated opinion, an unclear knowledge about a post-secondary institution that is publicly known and legally established as a FEI. The adjective exposes homogeneity between a FEI and a university. Particularly the modal verbs and adverbs in **"I kind of**

knew" and **"I thought that being... I still thought I could be considered"** not only denote both educational institutions are somehow interchangeable in Rodrigo's discourse, exposing his moderate knowledge; but also, connote his confusion between two completely different forms of post-secondary education in the Chilean system. In Chile, students are selected in the most prestigious universities based on their performance in a national selection test and their scholastic performance in secondary school. While FEIs do not require National Admission Test scores to enrol in their courses, universities require a minimum score depending on the course of study. Additionally, FEIs offer courses that take only between 2 to 4 years, these are only technical or professional degrees, while universities courses are of a minimum of 5 years, and are academic (i.e. Bachelors, MSc, and PhDs). For the detailed information refer to Chapter 2: The Chilean HE Context.

Superficiality and poor information are also indicated in the narrative of other participants. Hugo (S15), in his last year in Health Sciences, not only demonstrates naivety when stating **"I had not much information on Nursing, but the name of the degree "Nurse" sounded really nice to me other than others [degrees]".** The analysis also connotes superficiality in his justification for choosing a course of study. Hugo's shallow decision is at the opposite end of what some scholars have explained as main motivators for studying Nursing, such as, having done voluntary work in the care area, attraction to the occupation since adolescence or simply the failure of applying to another degree (Ferri et al., 2016). In effect, the justification for choosing the degree unveils ignorance and superficiality about what the profession is really about. By projecting himself as a Nurse, Hugo produces a marketing discourse of self-image and personal branding, more than a vocational discourse as a motivation to choose a degree in Nursing: "… **'Nurse' sounded really nice to me…".**

Elements that produce discourses of confusion, superficiality, and ignorance also emerge across the interviews of private HE students when narrating their experience of choosing an institution or a course. A good illustration of these discourses emerged from David's interview (S3) in Extract 2.1:

Extract 2.1

1	**No, I did not know really** [what to study]. *Did you talk with anyone?* **No. not really. I kind of liked Physiotherapy**…**but**
2	**during the trend of Engineers in Risk Prevention**, **everyone was studying that, so I thought about that too**… but I
3	applied to Nursing at [name of university] and then at [name of another university]. *Are there other universities that*
4	*offer your course here in Talca*? **Mm [thinks]... UTALCA, I think…I don't know really**.
	David-Private-Free-Health Sciences-4th year

The analysis denotes the absence of information, asserted with the adverb, repeated several times: **"not really"**. The informal phrase **"I kind of liked"** reveals that there was only some extent to his knowledge about the course, partial knowledge about the different courses of study is reproduced

in his interview. As in Hugo's interview (S15), superficiality is evidenced when analysing the justification for choosing one course or another. This is repeatedly emerging from the discourse of private students, as exposed in **"…but during the trend of Engineers in Risk Prevention, everyone was studying that, so I thought about that too…"**. Line 2 connotes that a decision to choose a course of study could have been made based on popular tendencies at the time of enrolling to his course, more than any real thorough vocational justification. Furthermore, based on public information (also presented in detail in Appendix 3: Outlook of the Chilean HE System), there are three universities in the city of Talca (public and private) that offer Nursing as an undergraduate course. Conversing with David, he expressed that he was born and raised in Talca. However, when asked whether this course is offered by other universities in Talca, his insecurity and sense of doubt reaffirms the discourse of ignorance about HE. In effect, the analysis of this extract does not support any other interpretation of his choice of university or degree, other than that of a poorly informed student.

Impulsiveness and irrationality when choosing a degree

The representation of a student as poorly informed is associated with a representation of a risk taker when discourses of impulsiveness in the decisions made by students are reproduced. Moreover, analysis of textual features produces discourses of irrationality for what could be considered a major step in their life. Once again, these discourses are not different across self-funded or state-funded students. However, as in the previous section, all these discourses were reproduced by students attending a private university.

Cinthia (S1), a last year Business student, shifting from one course of study to another, from one institution to another explicitly reproduces indecision in her future studies: **"At [university 1] it was Nutrition. And then it was Business [university 1]. And here later at [university 2] …this one was third on my list. So, I waited at [university 1] in Nutrition and Dietetics and in Business in the waiting list, here in Talca".** However, a coherent interpretation of the semantics of her narrative exposes more distinctly the discourse of an unreflective action when she finally decided on a degree: "**…So I decided to come here and matriculate myself here [university 2], period! [exclamation]. So, I just enrolled in Business, and here I am**". The discourse of unreflecting is categorical in the lexical use of **"Period"** at the end of the text asserting that, with no more thoughtful thinking, the decision was made.

The same phrases are repeated in Nicole (S9), a last year Health Sciences student: **"I thought about studying Psychology. Psychology or Computer Engineering… But Law was also a good option…I was very undecided ha-ha [laughs]"**. Although, the last part of the sentence explicitly denotes indecision and vagueness, as in Cinthia's interview analysis, Nicole shifts from a course in one

domain of knowledge (Psychology) to another rather opposite (Computer Science). This shift from one course to another can insinuate a sense of playing with her future. However, in a deeper interpretation, and knowing that she finally enrolled in the field of Health Sciences, can represent her as adventurous, as she was almost gambling with her future.

Lastly, extract 2.2 from Cristian (S2) best illustrates a discourse of impulsiveness and a discursive construction interpreted as that of a risk taker:

Extract 2.2

1	**Law caught my attention because lawyers seems to be educated people**, I had a cousin who studied that and for
2	me it was like an admiration. **But then Psychology crossed my mind**…**I have always wanted to study Psychology**. So
3	**I was sitting, waiting to sign the papers** [matriculation process] at the School of Law…**And at that moment I looked**
4	**at my scores** [national admission test scores] and **said fuck it!** [vulgar expression] **…I have the scores for Law…forget**
5	**Psychology**.
	Cristian-Private-Paying-Law-4th year

Firstly, the justification for studying law (line 1) is exposed in a causal effect clause not very different from the analysis of the interview with Hugo (S15), discussed earlier, reproducing absence of information as a shallow and superficial reason for choosing a course. But the lexical choices made by Cristian (S2) reproduce indecision and certainly a very sudden, almost unthoughtful thinking: **"caught my attention"; "crossed my mind".** Secondly, the physical action of sitting and waiting reproduces a sense of serenity and a reflective moment. The analysis of the moment in time and space when the decision about what course to choose is being made (line 3) unveils that a major decision about his future is made in the very last minute. Deciding about what HE course to choose in the last-minute reveals he did not have a solid pre-conceived idea of what he wanted to study. What should be a highly involved decision, seems to be portrayed as a spontaneous decision. Furthermore, the tone in the physical action **"I looked at my score"** and the exclamation of a strong vulgar interjection in line 4, reproduce a discourse of impulsiveness and informed decision by changing his mind all of a sudden. This impulsiveness and informed decision are reinforced in a forceful and coherent practice in the last sentence of the extract: **"I have the scores for Law…forget Psychology",** justifying that an impulsive decision is being made in the moment. The sense of change and making such an important decision in the very last minute, in Extract 2.2, supports not only the image of an impulsive student, but also an adventurous risk taker, eventually making a wrong choices.

STUDENT AS YOUNG PEOPLE STRIVING TO BE *SOMEONE*: ECONOMIC RELIEF AND ASPIRATION FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Two years after the policy was approved, discourses of relief, due to some economic difficulties being lessened with Gratuidad, are reproduced by students. Also, discourses of aspiration, hope and determination for a better and brighter future are also realised, constructing an image of a student whose aim in life it to progress, to reach higher goals, to grow and to succeed in life. These discourses have constructed the representation of the "Student as young people striving to be *Someone*".

These discourses are reproduced indistinctively of the course of study, year of study or even the type of institution of the participants. However, with few exceptions, pointed out in the analysis, these discourses were strongly reproduced amongst state funded students who became beneficiaries when Gratuidad was approved. The analysis will also show that this was a rather sensitive conversation for some participants, revealed with elements of the text exposing hesitation when talking about economic vulnerabilities, and expressing sentiments of sorrow when breaking into tears while narrating their experiences.

Relief as economic difficulties are now tackled with Gratuidad

Cinthia's (S1), a state funded last year Business student from a private university narrates: "**My parents don't have [silence]…mmm…. let's say [reluctant]… the money to pay for my studies [tears]**. Firstly, by making a pause and exposing some silence in the conversation, Cinthia exposes hesitation about opening up and talking about some sort of economic vulnerabilities. Such hesitation is then reaffirmed with an emotion of tears which can all together be interpreted as a moment of deep reflection on her particular story about HE.

A repeated noun **"very"** and a colloquial expression **"Phew"** connotes the financial relief for Cinthia and her family when Gratuidad was granted, as the following text exposes **"So when I got Gratuidad... Phew [exhales]… They [parents] were very …very happy…. My mom said it was a respite, because with that [Gratuidad]…I didn't have to worry about not being able to finish [degree]"**. Words and phrases such as **"respite"** and **"don't have to worry"** connect cohesively with the causal effect sentence in becoming a state funded student exposed later: **"…I didn't have to worry about not being able to finish…"** which ultimately connotes a relieving discourse in a student that does not have to concern herself with economic restrictions in order to complete her HE. It is also evident from the intertextuality in the text when referring to a conversation with her mother revealing that this sense of relief extends to her whole family.

Furthermore, phrases like **"…you know, we normally don't get many benefits [from the government]"** and **"… all these years my parents have borrowed [bank credits] for all this…this will**

help us so much" expose this unusual assistance received from the government, that is then juxtaposed with the implications of public funding being absent for such a long time. In effect, "**this will help us so much"** expresses the categorical tone in the significance of Gratuidad tackling her economic vulnerability, realising a discourse of relief and respite.

Phrases unveiling the significance of government support to tackle economic difficulties in students and their families are reproduced in other interviews. As exposed in Kari (S18), a state funded final year student attending a public university, who was in her second year when Gratuidad became law and she was eligible for being state funded: **"They [teachers] always told me I was smart…I had to study and take advantage of the opportunities, because it would be easier [attend university], because my parents are from [silence]…mmm..... poor economic situation. And truly…[silence]… Uni… it has cost me nothing, nothing, nothing [repeats]…how am I not going to study? [tears]"**. The discourse reproduces the sense that if there are capacities as in **"They [teachers] always told me I was smart"** the economic restrictions would not be an impediment anymore. The decision to enrol in post-secondary education was not only related with the eventual approval of Gratuidad, as unveiled in "**I had to study and take advantage"**, but the modal verb in **"it would be easier"** also indicates that continuing with post-secondary education, would not be a problem. Similar to Cinthia, Kari also shows hesitation when exposing the economic situation in her family, with pauses and silences in between clauses. But the significance of having access to Gratuidad and the relief of not having to pay fees are strongly emphasised with words like **"truly"** and **"nothing"**, repeated on several occasions. Ultimately a self-reflective question and the emotion and tears, reaffirms the relief in becoming a state funded student.

Other students reproduce the relief in becoming a state funded student in a less emotive and more rational and categorical discourse. Fernanda (S12), last year Business student, draws on an economic discourse to expose the contrast of receiving a scholarship from the government before the policy was approved **"… even if you got the scholarship…some universities charged you, let's say a tuition fee of 6 million (Ch$) [£6,000] for my degree but the Reference Tuition Fee [maximum fee covered by government grants] was 4 million (Ch$) [£4,000]. You were left with a gap of 2 million (Ch$). And in our case [family]…with what [resources] do I pay those 2 (Ch$)? [exclamation]…. we didn't have another option than a credit [bank loan] and if not, you could not study…imagine…now it is all covered I don't have to pay anything…anything".** She emphasises that if scholarships to support the cost of tuition fees were granted, this governmental assistance was still insufficient **"even if you got the scholarship…"** thus the difference in tuition still leaves the student in some economic vulnerability. The discourse reproduces the sense of being semi neglected by the government or being

hopeless with the policy before Gratuidad as revealed in the phrase **"you were left with a gap…"**. Moreover, the question to an absent listener reaffirms the tone of the economic vulnerabilities before the new policy. The relief due to her being granted Gratuidad in her second year, is highlighted with the lexical choices in a discourse that envisages what it means to not have to pay tuition fees or that gap, repeatedly reasserted with the exclamation in the pronoun: "**now it is all covered I don't have to pay anything…anything".**

A last good illustration of a discourse of relief as Gratuidad helps in tackling economic restrictions in students, is exposed in Extract 3.1 from Francisca (S4), shown below:

Extract 3.1

1	**He [father] has always said to us that we should continue studying, that this will allow us to have a better**
2	**future**…**not depending on any one**…**but we knew it was difficult in our family**, because we are two of us [siblings]
3	studying [at university] ... And I also have a younger sister, she's 14, she's in first year [secondary school]. **So yes**
4	[exclamation] ...**that's why Gratuidad saved us**. **Without it** [Gratuidad] I would have not **had the option to continue**
5	**and finish [degree].**
	Francisca-Private-Free-Social Sciences-4th year

The intertextuality in the discourse is evident when exposing a conversation with an absent voice (the father) reframing the relevance of post-secondary HE. Pursuing a degree is reproduced as having an independent life and the notion of woman being independent and self-reliant, probably drawing a feminist discourse quite intense nowadays in Chile. Explicitly, the text show that post-secondary education was not an easy goal, but the reference to the other members of the family also studying or planning on attending university reveals, that this is mostly an economic restriction in the family. However, the categorical **"So yes!"** reveals exclamation of the excitement that is followed and re-affirmed by the metaphor of Gratuidad as a liberator/saviour/rescuer. The different grammatical and lexical choices expose not only a discourse of relief while Gratuidad challenges the economic difficulties of families, but also, the discourse of a better future and the potential of a happier life by becoming a state funded student.

Aspiration, hope and determination for a different future

The discourses of relief reproduced by students shows its coherence when the analysis equally unfolds discourses of aspiration, hope and determination because of the possibilities and benefits that Gratuidad now offers to students and their families.

One student expresses: "**So I say to myself do not restrict your dreams. I believe that people can dream big. And the idea is to fulfil dreams in this life. But here at Uni it was more...like I grew up and I started feeling more like I was fulfilling my dreams"** (Ignacio (S16). Self-conviction and faith in greater, better opportunities connote the sense of hope and aspirations for something better in life. In a very reflexive and rather poetic conversation with Ignacio (S16), who is a self-funded final year law student at a public university, the words not only unveil that with HE, the student has reached some maturity, but his aspirations are also being or have been achieved.

However, phrases more related with an aspiration to accessing HE and aiming for a different and better future are manifested across other interviews. Modal adverbs **"always", "only"** add additional meaning to the semantics when time is involved in thinking what to do in the future **"since primary school"**, reproducing a discourse of a long-term aspiration and strong determination to continue to post-secondary educations. This is illustrated in **"I always had the thought …the idea…of the university… since primary school", "at the end the university is like the only thing"** (Roberto S22), a state funded, public university student. Moreover, the discourse of aspiration and determination is also strongly reproduced in **"we [family] think it is our way for emerging in [thinks]... to have something to rely on …that's why I always encouraged myself to study….to get somewhere in life".**

"Emerging" and **"I always encouraged myself"** are lexical choices that connote the intention to evolve, from bottom up, to aspire for more or better. The vocabulary in **"something to rely on"** and **"get somewhere in life"** also relate to metaphors that validate the sense of believing in HE as the hope for something better, and the notion of progressing, moving from one phase to another in his life, all working in reproducing a discourse of aspiration and hope.

Through the first-person effect, the student adopts a discourse of ambition and aspiration but also of hope in a future that could be, apparently, more stable, reliable. This future is possible while accessing a university degree which in turn is only possible because of Gratuidad. By numbering the members of the family that are currently going to school **"I don't come from a poor family…but there are four of us and all going to a subsidized private school",** the text exposes the economic vulnerabilities of the family. However, some linguistic choices, in the following sentence, also reveal the aspirations and hope to gain access to a HE degree beyond the complexities of a big family and the spending in a semi-private school. The expectation for something better, apparently better than what it is at the moment, as Fernanda explains: **"…but I <u>always wanted</u> to go to a good school [secondary], so I <u>could prepare myself</u> to go to university…to have an education and <u>be someone in life</u>"** (Fernanda S14), a state funded public university student.

The metaphoric construction of being someone (as exposed by Fernanda) or aspiring to be someone, helps in uncover, that in the Chilean society, not having a HE degree can mean being *'no one'*. The indefinite pronoun 'no one' can be understood as being nobody, absence of a person, a concept in a social context, can be interpreted as a person that has been negated or neglected by the rest of a dominant powerful society. In effect, the analysis suggests that some students rely on a rather competing discourse of a nullified citizen, a section of the society that has been forgotten or neglected by public policies. However, they see in Gratuidad, a policy approved by the time of the interviewing process, as the hope to progress in life or to be considered in society. This discourse is further evidenced when a student, in a very strong tone and categorial mode asserts that some sectors of society have been ignored by these policies, hence this sector of society has not had real opportunities to progress in life (Extract 3.2).

Extract 3.2.

1	**Thing is that we [families] were abandoned! We as a middle-class families [plural] cannot project our lives with no**
2	**education…now imagine without Gratuidad** … In Chile's per capita income is quite high, **but it is not exactly what it**
3	**is... I feel that it is not the real thing, for example I… I don't come from a very poor family…let's say we don't**
4	**struggle for mmm [thinks]…money for food for example…but if I was studying without Gratuidad**, my parents
5	couldn't pay me the lease for the house here in Talca or my books for example….**so thank God, that would have**
6	**been it!**
	Camila-Public-Free-Health Sciences-1st year

Camila replies in the metaphor **"we [families] were abandoned",** to reveal that her family has been neglected by the public policies. A repeated first-person plural effect shows that this neglection has not only impacted the author of the text, but it also connotes that the consequence is felt in a wider group of the Chilean society **"<u>we as a middle-class</u> families"** (line 1), which in Chile represents approximately 48% of the population (OECD, 2019). In effect, a double negation uncovers the real need in accessing HE, but that this is an impossible goal to accomplished without the assistance of the government and the tuition free policy of Gratuidad. Moreover, the grammatical cause effect choice in **"if I was studying without Gratuidad, my parents couldn't pay me the lease...so thank God, that would have been it!"** (Line 5-6) further denotes not only gratitude; but also connotes relief due to the approval of Gratuidad and a hope that her aspirations can be accomplished. This discourse comes to validate the representation of the student as being more than no one, but someone in society.

The analysis of the interview to David (S3), Extract 3.3, is compelling in illustrating the discourses of aspiration, hope and determination.

Extract 3.3.

In other words, **I don't want to be like my parents**…I want something better….my parents **are dependent on a wage**, they are **ordinary workers with not much education**… **They work the shit out of them [vulgar exclamation]** with almost **no social rights** …that's really unfair…**That is why I wanted to study** because **I wanted to have a different life**.

So my mom was like: '**but son, how are you going to go to university? you can't, we don't have the money for that**' ... that was **basically because of the tuition fees more than anything**…**I come from a family with little resources you know, but I wanted to get a degree…and I was going to be the first one in the family…you know …a poor family [sad]…In fact all my relatives were like…'oh David is going to Uni' [smiles]**…because no one ever in my family has [pursued a degree].

David-Private-Free-Health Sciences-4th year

The different features of the text in Extract 3.3 are expressed in a consistent active voice, first person effect, modal adverbs, and exclamations, i.e. "**they work the shit out of them"**, bring together the aspirations of a better standard of living by access to a HE degree. The narrative by David, expressed in a rhetoric of economic and social progress as a consequence of obtaining a HE degree, interpreted as a better, fairer, job, is not very different to the notion of the student as a future worker (Brooks, 2017). However, in this interpretation, the analysis also reveals an intention and self-determination for progressing, as part of personal growth and to differentiate himself from the rest of the family's past. The intertextuality exposed as a conversation with his mother evidence the restrictions of the family and the decreased possibility of pursuing a degree. But the verbs and tone in the phrases reaffirms a discourse of aspiration and determination as in **"but I wanted to get a degree…and I was going to be the first one in the family".** Ultimately, the student not only voices contradictory emotions when putting together the phrases **"…a poor family…"** and **"Oh David is going to Uni…"** revealing emotions of melancholy and joy. Also, the discourse of hope is intertextually legitimised as framed in the presumed conversation with relatives, which unveils admiration for accomplishing his goal.

STUDENT AS BUDDING SOCIAL REFORMERS: PROMOTING COLLECTIVISM AND SOCIAL CHANGES.

Whilst the discourses of indifference and fear to political engagement presented in Section 1 seek to frame the student as apolitical, the analysis of the interviews also reveals discourses of collectivism and collaboration. Furthermore, discourses of commitment and engagement in social changes are reproduced. These discourses seek to frame students who understand the notion of working collectively, more than individually, to reach common goals or the common good. Jointly, these discourses represent the student as a budding social reformer. As it will be evidenced, with very

few exceptions, these discourses have been particularly reproduced by students attending a public HEI and are beneficiaries of Gratuidad (i.e. state funded students). Even more, with few exceptions, the representation of a student as a budding social reformer is strongly evidenced in students majoring in Health Sciences subjects.

Collectivism and a collaborative spirit are realised when students think about graduating and, instead of staying in the big cities where access to better jobs are most likely or more comfortable by having access to all kinds of services, the student decides to move to the extremes of the country. The south of Chile is a geographical area full of extremes: extreme weather, low connectivity, small rural villages, insufficient public services. To promote access to public services (i.e. GPs) in isolated rural areas, the government instituted several decades ago '*Programa Servicio Pais'* (*Country Service Program* in English)[13].

Phrases like **"My plans finishing this [university]… I would like … I would like to go to the extreme south"** unveils an intention and a personal projection, that is then reaffirmed with connecting clauses like: **"because I want to apply for Servicio Pais to go to the south, to practice what I've learned and also to help the rural communities at least a little".** The cause effect in the sentence "to practice what I have learned" reveals the goal of supporting isolated communities as a matter of giving back to society, to help in supporting communities in disadvantaged areas. Moreover, evidenced in what the texts unveils as a duty of the profession: **"I think that is what a doctor has to do"** (Nelly (S21), final year, Medicine, probably relying on the ethical or social responsibilities of physicians, the discourse of promoting collectivism and collaboration is being reproduced.

As the past tense in the phrase: **"…when I arrived [university] as I told you, I was super competitive…"** reproduces individuality and an aggressive attitude towards other people, that attitude has changed or does not exist anymore. Cited from Camila (S13), a first year, public state funded student, the text is a comparison with a opposite and competing discourse of a more collective view of the world. In her following sentence **"…at the strike in my school, I realized that we had to be together to achieve things. Alone I didn't get anywhere…"** when narrating that participation in a student movement, verbs and tone expose a change in behaviour, together as a community will help in achieving common goals. Moreover, the metaphor **"Alone I don't get anywhere"** reveals the sense of stagnation. This metaphor works in reproducing a negative connotation of an individualistic spirit; a discourse about progress can only be reached in a collective way.

[13] '*Servicio Pais' is a non-for-profit public organisation that promotes equality by giving access to public services to citizens living in extreme isolated areas of the country and also by giving work opportunities to young professionals. The program, funded by the government, is open to recent graduates with a social spirits to start their careers as public servants in extremely isolated locations.*

Other students, participating in another social movement, also reproduce discourses of collectivism and collaboration: **"…I don't know much about politics but…I participated [strike] because I was really interested in the social issue in the school…I don't know… the well-being of our students"** (Natalia S20), public self-funded, 4th year. Her involvement in an activity, beyond the politics behind the movement, is juxtaposed with a genuine interest in the comfort of others i.e. the student community. This is manifested in adverbs that express the true reasons for such political engagement; and a first-person effect repeatedly found in the text uncovers closeness and connection of the participant with issues beyond her individual political interest. In particular, the grammatical choice in **"our students",** evidences the opposite to a discourse of individualism. The first-person plural reveals identification of the participant with a discourse of belonging to a community and a collectivist view of her experience as a member of the university.

The student as social justice warriors is also constructed in discourses seeking to frame the student as committed and engaged in activities that promote changes towards social rights. The categorical tone in **"I participated in the assemblies; I participated in the discussion... I think it was needed, and I was truly committed to this cause. Without these battles we achieve nothing."** The first-person effects and the lexical verbs express the level of engagement of Fernanda (S14), health science final year student, in promoting actions to tackle sexual harassment and sexual assaults at universities. Her narrative is framed in the nationwide feminist movement led by students that took place during 2018 and 2019. The text exposes her conviction in engaging in this social movements. A commitment that is then explicit in the text but also reasserted with an adverb that uncovers her honest engagement in the strike. The metaphor of a battle, an imminent military discourse, works in constructing a student that is confronting and contesting the society and engaging in activities that will produce some change. The military discourse is intense and categorical, revealing that this is the way to achieve such changes. Moreover, the plural noun reveals these social movements could not be only one single event. This means that there is more than one single fight, which can be interpreted as someone who can have gained experience in challenging the status quo in society, thus a budding reformer.

The word **"fight"** is repeatedly used in narratives of the students. David (S3) is the only private student who reproduces a discourse of challenging the society by engaging in acts of collectivism and promoting social changes. In his last year of Health Sciences, David (S3) reaffirms a conviction of being engaged in social activities, already uncovered in the analysis of Fernanda (S14): **"…I have been able to participate in the Union [National Student Union Nursing] and this has given me many things [thinks]…it has made me see life in another way… I believe that we must fight for what we believe**

in…". The verb exposing the opportunity of engaging in activities at the National Student Union, connotes a change for himself, a personal growth, exposed very reflectively. This sentence reaffirms its affinity with the rest of the text, validating his conviction to social change and the explicit image of a fighter for a better society.

Likewise, the first-person plural effect in the interview of Jose Tomas (S17) connotes a strong commitment in activities that could challenge the society: "we went on strike, of course" **"We also joined the feminist occupation". "We spent a month and a half working on reformulating how we wanted the school to be carried out in these matters".** Discussing the experience of changing the protocols against sexual harassment at universities, Jose Tomas expresses his conviction and desire to be involved in this change, not only himself, but others, as the plural nouns reveal. This engagement involving not only Jose Tomas but more students, more of a community, in which the effects are more collective than on an individual level, is intertextually validated in the phrase **"..It was a decision of the students… for the students",** which refers to the famous phrase 'One for all, all for one' popularized in the novel The Three Musketeers, by Alexandre Dumas (1844). In this phrase, the notion of a collective approach achieving social changes is reaffirmed. The promotion of social changes is also evidenced in the last phrase of Jose Tomas (S17), a self-funded, first year health science student: **"At the school there were no protocols such as sexual abuse…now we have them ha-ha".** The past-present tense uncovers that the commitment in promoting social changes, expressed earlier in the participation of a feminist movement, had the desired effect. The sense of joy exposes a student who feels happy for a goal accomplished, in this case a change in protecting female students, beyond him being a male student.

Lastly, the best illustration of a discourse that promotes collectivism and a commitment towards social changes is exposed in the Extract 4.1 from Ignacio (S16).

Extract 4.1

1	I mean, **in the understanding that education is a right and as a right**, **fundamentally, it cannot be limited.** That is
2	why we had all these [movements] …**basically** the system that we had was not free, it was a system of scholarships
3	**… but it is simply not a universal free education**. **Listen…my parents pay for my degree,** but **I agree with my**
4	**classmates** because **I understand we are building a society here, if you know what I mean!**
	Ignacio-Public-Paying-Law-4th year

The cause effect sentence (line 1) reveals acknowledgment and conviction to social rights. The belief of HE as a social right is categorically defended with several adverbs i.e. **"fundamentally", "basically", "simply"**. Moreover, this conviction is validated with the rhetoric that all social rights should be accessible and free to all. By the phrase **"Listen…my parents pay for my degree"** reveal a

strong tone in reassuring that, beyond his personal funding status to access HE (he is a self-funded student), a commitment to social change is still evident and aligned with other students that are probably in more need than he is. Moreover, the connection of sentences with the metaphor in line 4: **"we are building a society here"** works in acknowledging that engaging in social changes is a concurrent action to an ongoing process for constructing a better society. Particularly the vocabulary in line 4 seeks to frame a student as committed and engaged in social changes. Linguistically the student is reassuring that his stance towards justice and equality are heard: **"…if you know what I mean!".**

7.3. CRITICAL DISCUSSION: CHAPTER FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter was to present the interpretation of the finding in relation to the research question:

What are the discourses of undergraduate students regarding their HE experience?

The findings have revealed several novel discourses of students while experiencing their HE, as well as commonalities with discourses of students elaborated in extant work.

Validated empirically from voices emerging from the students themselves, the first self-representation refers to students constructed as consumer. This conceptualisation of the student as a consumer is probably one of the most dominant metaphors with regards to students in HE research (Emerson & Mansvelt, 2014). In this vein, the analysis conducted across the data, reveals some commonalities with this vastly explored construction of the student, predominantly studied in the Global North (e.g. Bunce et al., 2017; Guilbault, 2018; Jabbar et al., 2017; Molesworth et al., 2009, 2011; Nixon et al., 2011, 2018; Woodall et al., 2014).

Arguing that students express a consumer orientation, students are assumed to know what they want, are able to decide appropriately and demand their rights accordingly. In effect, the language of some participants exposes a discursive practice that seeks to frame them as someone who demands their rights and who are willing to raise their voice for the sake of personal individual satisfaction. For instance, in interpreting the analysis of Cinthia (S1), a consumer representation is recognised when rejecting that the university's activities are being interrupted by political movements. In this line Bunce et al. (2017) has described that student-consumers demand value for the money they pay. This value for money concept could be more relevant in a private university in which a large population of the students pay tuition fees. Moreover, if students are striking, it can be understood that the HE service is interrupted. A consumerist orientation is evident when there is a

notion of complaining about the money they have paid and the lack of expected service received, as Saunders (2015) has explained.

The distance between the subject and the experience of attending to a HEI reproduced in this discourse reaffirms and confirms an individualistic approach to HE, as claimed by Nixon et al. (2016). Likewise, as it was uncovered in the analysis of Camila (S13) a discourse of an economic agent, relayed in an economic and marketing discourse of buying and selling a HE experience, reinforces a construction of a student as "**a consumer".**

Paradoxical enough in the case of Cinthia, registered at this private HEI, she is studying for free, as she was recently awarded Gratuidad. Yet, another claim for this consumer orientation could be explained in Tomlinson (2014, 2016), who argues that older students are more likely to view themselves as consumers than younger new entrant students. However, age is just a proxy for being more mature or goal oriented. Hence, consistent with a marketised society, the market discourse keeps trespassing towards the HE social practice, even beyond the elimination of tuition fees. A consumerist approach is certainly beyond the application of fees, as asserted by Williams (2013).

Besides this imminent self-representation of students as consumers, an confirmed and extended image of the student as a client has been uncovered. Criticism, an intensified aggravation, and frustration of a client needing to get a service, and if absent, discourses of annoyance, conceptualised the student as **"an annoyed client".**

As it was explained earlier, some of the passivity of the student as a consumer orientation is present in the construction of the student as a client (Tight, 2013). The distinction is that a client "is one for whom professional services are rendered" (Bailey, 2000; p.354). Additionally, in a client metaphor a higher level of professionalism is needed; along with an active participation of the student and respect for the professional offering the service (Bailey, 2000). Based on the metaphors of (Franz, 1998), the interview with Yisel (S24) refers to the fitness trainer/trainee client metaphor in which the role of the lectures includes motivating students to learn and being motivated to deliver the module. The student as an annoyed client is constructed from a discourse that reproduces irritation when this role is not being performed by the professional i.e. lecturer, as explained further in **"I did not come here for that…I want someone who can teach me".** Likewise, drawing on the mountain guide client metaphor, the analysis of Natalia (S20) represented the client of a mountain-climbing guide demanding conditions for this relationship to be successful. In the HE context for example, the lecturer (guide) should have good communication (skills) to teach and engage in a professional teaching capacity (safely navigate the group toward its goal to reach the summit) (Bailey, 2000). An annoyed client was presented in Extract 1.1. in which Javiera (S6) explicitly expresses her intentions to escalate a

complaint about a bad educational service. According to Bailey (2000), in the concept of the student as a client, it is expected that lecturers behave according to their professional responsibilities. Moreover, it is claimed that most students expect and prefer clearly defined expectations and responsibilities (p. 363). When this relationship is not met, a student as an annoyed client can be constructed.

Beyond these interpretations of students, other more distinct orientations have emerged from the analysis. Drawing on discourses of indifference, fear, and retaliation from private HEIs, the analysis has exposed a rather contested representation of students as **"apolitical"**.

Numerous studies have identified student's political engagement and activism, constructing the image of students as activists and as political actors (Brooks, 2017; Cabalin, 2012; Cini, 2019; Cini & Guzmán-Concha, 2017; Fleet & Guzmán-Concha, 2017; Guzmán-Concha, 2019; Klemenčič & Park, 2018). Equally, students themselves have expressed their desire to be politically active (Abrahams & Brooks, 2019). Moreover, a recent study has claimed that students see their potential to be significant political actors and see themselves as the political future of their countries (Brooks et al., 2020).

However, this representation of a student as apolitical reveals the exact opposite. A discursive practice of indifference, caused by a strong emotional attachment to the family unit was uncovered in several interviews. In reference to current students in HE, these discourses of emotional attachment and emotional dependency could be explained with what has been termed as "snowflake generation". This concept has been used to explain the lack of engagement of HE students in political activities and who are usually in need of "safe spaces" in HE, as argued by Finn (2017) and Furedi (2016). Likewise, indifference to political engagement was also expressed as a matter of economic restrictions. When students represent themselves as apolitical, discourses of indifference and disinterest were mostly found in students in their final year of study who adopted a repertoire of time constraints to justify their disengagement. In interpreting this finding, these students might be focusing on their future careers. This is similar to what Brooks (2017) conceptualised as student as a future worker.

The discourse of fear and retaliation represents the student as apolitical at its best. These discourses, distinctively reproduced in students attending a private university, reveal the discursive power of the authorities of these privately owned universities. The neoliberal discourse is intertextually manifested in a mix of legal and economic discourses reproduced by the students.

The rationale of free choice in HE and perfect information to make rational decisions exposes the disembeddedness of the market in a society. Studies in the field of student choice in HE have ranged from the most diverse perspectives (i.e. sociology, psychology, economics, and more (Simões & Soares, 2010), and explored behaviours that follow a sequential course of action: starting from

problem recognition to evaluating alternatives to using parents and teachers' advice (Moogan et al., 1999; Moogan & Baron, 2004). Equally the influence of peers, teachers, careers advisers, parents, and other significant adults has been analysed (Moogan & Baron, 2003). Moreover, the personality type (Terry et al., 1999); cost of relocating or commuting (Gibbons & Vignoles, 2009; Simões & Soares, 2010) or the role of institutional attributes (Drewes & Michael, 2006) have all become relevant elements in the choices made by students. A study conducted in Scotland, a HE context similar to the Chilean tuition free system, has claimed that the academic reputation; distance from home and location; and employment prospects are some of the most relevant elements when choosing a HE institution (Briggs, 2006b; Briggs & Wilson, 2007). Nevertheless, the decision that follows after graduating from a secondary school revealed that students' decision making constitutes a complex ongoing and social process, rather than an isolated individual event, in which the social and economic context becomes relevant in making such decision (Holmegaard et al., 2014; p. 21).

Surprisingly, for a decision that can be life changing, and with a process that involve so many elements, discourses of confusion, superficiality and poor information about the HE system and the different type of courses/degrees were reproduced by students. Along with impulsiveness and irrationality when choosing an undergraduate course, these discourses construct a representation of a student as **"a poorly informed risk taker".** These discourses, distinctively reproduced by private university students, are consistent with discourses revealed in the media analysis that constructed the students as egocentric and irrational (please refer to Chapter 6).

Confusion and poor information were manifested in the analysis of Rodrigo's (S9) interview. In effect, as evidenced in the empirical chapter 2, in the social practice of the Chilean neoliberal HE system, FEIs are normally identified as institutions of lower quality and for less competent students, since no admission test is required. With the hegemonic neoliberal discourse crossing boundaries in the society, Chilean families and students are pressured to continue with post-secondary education, sometimes without understanding what the difference is between a university and a professional institute (FEI). As Chile possesses a unique and complex hybrid public private HE system (Simbürger & Guzmán-Valenzuela, 2019) the strong presence of private HEIs (75% of the total student population in Chile are enrolled in a private post-secondary institution) reveals the power of a marketing discursive practice to recruit students. In such a competitive pseudo market, extensive and resource intensive advertising and admission campaigns are mostly conducted by private universities and FEIs, often considered of low quality (Wörner & Santander, 2016). This marketing practice to recruit students, generates confusion and misinformation among students and their families about the difference between a FEI and a private university, and encourages uninformed or irrational decision making.

Superficiality is reproduced in other participants to explain the reasons for choosing a degree. For example, the reasons why students choose to study Nursing have been investigated (Ferri et al., 2016), however, by projecting himself as a Nurse, Hugo (S15) reproduces a discourse of self-image/self-brand more than vocational discourse as a motivator to choose a degree on Nursing: "… **'Nurse' sounded really nice to me…".** Moreover, the irrationality in taking decision unreflectively and impulsively are validated across the analysis. Several students, mostly attending a private university, produce discourses of choosing a course of study irrationally, impulsively and with not much thought put into such an important decision. Although the analysis does not reveal any specific reasons for such impulsiveness, an identity of being a post-secondary student, or a future professional, holding a degree seem to push them to make fast, uninformed, and irrational decisions.

In a public document from President Bachelet addressed to the Parliament, she referred to the change in HE policy as *"…a way of building a more equitable system with a design that does not imply an unsustainable financial burden for students and their families… ensuring a public education that allows to build a more fair, equal, inclusive country… These changes will have major repercussions on the future of our children and grandchildren…a commitment to make Chile a country with more and better opportunities to our youth"* (Gobierno de Chile, 2016). Whilst there is no intention in analysing this quote from Bachelet, the semantics in this extract uncovers what some scholars have deeply analysed in policy documents. In effect, referring to students as children (underlined in the quote of Bachelet) is a notion well investigated by Brooks (2017c) when analysing students constructed in British policy documents. In her analysis, she conceptualises the students as vulnerable children referring to their emotional instability or their fear of failing in HE, as analysed from the documents. To some extent, vulnerability is a recurring theme in the narratives of the students. However, this vulnerability is, by far, more related to an economic difficulty and the troubles of covering high tuition fees and other costs related to HE for those with a genuine aim to continue with post-secondary education.

In section 7.2.3 an alternative representation was presented. This is the representation of the student as **"young people striving to be *Someone*"** constructed from discourses of relief as economic vulnerabilities can now be better handled with Gratuidad, and also discourses of aspiration and determination to progress in life. These discourses, distinctively reproduced in state funded students and independently of the course of study or institution, represents a student who is determined to progress in life, but without a policy of Gratuidad this would have not been possible.

As shown in the analysis from Cinthia (S1) and Kari (S18), the expressions of emotion and joy connotes discourses of relief and hope in students that do not have to concern themselves with economic restrictions to complete their HE. The intertextuality evidenced in the meaning dimension

of the textual analysis of other interviews demonstrates the importance of accessing HE beyond the action of receiving a post-secondary degree. As described in Francisca (S4), pursuing a degree also means independence and the notion of a woman being independent and self-reliant.

The sense of aspiration, in which the participant represents himself as a subject who values the positiveness of the experience in HE, is also reproduced in the text. Ignacio's (S16) text analysis exposes motivation for being a student, reaching maturity and for projecting himself to a better future i.e. "dream big". These characteristics have been framed in the metaphor of the student as aspirant proposed by Khalifa (2009). In the essence of the student conceptualised as an aspirant, learning is the core offering from universities, and from the understanding that true learning is transformative. A student as aspirant "focuses on the interaction between students and universities in the process of learning and on the role of the interacting parties: students, professors, and institution"(Khalifa, 2009; p. 182). Furthermore, good students are really aspirants of transformation, and they are self-motivated; they welcome challenges, and enjoy achievement, just as the analysis from Ignacio shows. However, as it was evidenced in the analysis, the discourses reproduced by the students do not work in any way near to representing the student as an aspirant as described in Khalifa (2009). The discourses realised by the students here, refer to aspiring for a better future, hoping that a better future is possible, and determination to achieve a better future. This discourse was clearly exposed when analysing the metaphor exposed by Fernanda (S14), which juxtaposed not having a HE degree with being *'no one'*. A challenging discourse of a nullified citizen was analysed earlier in the text (Extract 3.2), reproducing how public policies have neglected certain parts of the society, giving hope through the implementation of Gratuidad as an opportunity to change the social order.

Lastly, the discourses of collectivism and collaboration, along with a commitment to social changes has worked in representing students as "**budding social reformers"**. This alternative orientation emerged from analysing discourses that are opposite to those explained in Section 7.1. Particularly reproduced by public university and state funded students, the effects of such compelling discourses can be interpreted as the start in transforming some of the hegemonic effects of the neoliberal ideology in HE. Students identifying themselves with social rights, social changes, and social justice, not only reproduce a new social practice in HE, a social practice in which a new belief about HE defines HE as a social right and consequently as a public good. Moreover, this transformation of the relation between public HE and society, can help in transforming other social practices, far beyond HE.

The following chapter will recap on the findings and discussions offered in the three empirical chapters and will connect these with further theoretical frameworks, presenting the theoretical contribution of this thesis.

CHAPTER 8. CONCLUSION: CONTRIBUTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

A critical discussion and a conclusion for each research sub-question were presented in Chapter 5, 6 and 7. This chapter will present an overall discussion and final conclusion of this dissertation. It starts by restating and addressing the aim of the thesis. This is followed by a recap of the main findings – representations of Gratuidad and students in the media analysis, and the students' orientations. The contributions of this work are then discussed, connecting the empirical findings with the framework of the market's embeddedness or disembeddedness in society.

The results of this study reassert that, at the macro level, neoliberal discourses are still hegemonic in Chilean media, resisting the implementation of Gratuidad and opposing any change in HE practice. Likewise, the media represent students in line with the principles of a market economy, ideals strongly present in their discourses. At the micro level, the market values are also reproduced by some students in their experience of HE. These findings evidence that a culture of marketization is strongly disembedded from society, resisting and defending the values of self-regulating markets.

Equally, the findings in this thesis also show that the hegemonic power of the neoliberal model in Chilean HE seems to be resisted, with discourses of change. A countermovement to re-embed the market into society is exposed, with Gratuidad considered as an opportunity to reconcile the expansion of the markets in HE, in an attempt to re-establish the social order in society. In this evident *double movement* (Polanyi, 1944), the students also seem to be influenced by the change in policy, with discourses that represent themselves as social reformers interested in promoting collectivism (opposite to the individualist view of the world found in market societies) and social change.

Lastly, this chapter recognises the specific limitations of this research. Additionally, some avenues to continue the academic conversation about dismantling marketization, the HE system in the Global South and students in HE are discussed.

8.1. AIM OF THIS THESIS

This research aimed to critically investigate the function and effects of discourses in the context of "free" higher education in a marketized society. To address this aim, this research explored discursive representations of the student that may have supported alternative theoretical explanations of students' behaviours in HE. The overarching RQ for this thesis was presented as:

> *What are the functions and effects of the discourses surrounding a public policy reform of partial removal of tuition fees?*

The following three sub-questions addressed this overarching question:

- How is the public policy of Gratuidad discursively represented in media articles?
- How are students discursively represented in news coverage of the policy reform?
- What are the discourses of university students regarding their higher education experience?

These questions were answered as follows. Firstly, Gratuidad is contextualized in three main ways: a hasty, absurd policy; an obstacle to achieving a more equal society; and a revolution directed at the future of Chilean children. Secondly, media representations of students portray them as egocentric, neglected by the state and as marionettes of a political party. Thirdly, while the findings confirm a consumerist orientation to HE and a client orientation for some students, others appear in alternative guises: as apolitical and poorly informed risk takers, as young people striving to be Someone, and as budding social reformers. Lastly,

8.2. THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

This research sought to explore the notion of what it is to be a student in a very distinctive context. Chile can be considered a highly marketized and neoliberal society (Fleet & Guzmán-Concha, 2017; Guajardo-Soto, 2019). Extraordinarily for such a socio-economic and political context, tuition fees in HE were eliminated in a radical HE policy turn. Analysing the effects of discourses around Gratuidad has offered a holistic view of the change in HE practice and its influence on students´ experiences in HE.

This thesis set out to make two major contributions to knowledge. Firstly, it contributes by offering novel and complementary theorisations of the student, as Apolitical, Risk taker, Striving to be someone, and as Budding social reformer. In doing so, it expands theories of students in HE and offers alternative theoretical explanations of student behaviour in HE. Furthermore, it contributes by empirically confirming the conceptualisation of the student-as-a-consumer and the student-as-an-annoyed client in the Global South; both have so far only been investigated in the of Global North.

Secondly, this dissertation contributes to knowledge by offering a new interpretation of the concept of embeddedness/disembeddedness and Polanyi's Double Movement (1944, 2001). Gratuidad, as exposed in Chapter 5, has been represented as a revolution for the future of Chilean children, by resisting the neoliberal discourse of individualism and promoting the positive effect of free education in a more equal society. These representations expose a Chilean society that is gradually reembedding the market in HE back to society and its social values. As a policy that removed prices in HE in a strongly marketised society, Gratuidad offers a novel interpretation of how a policy

of free education can be a countermovement of the society working against forces who wish to maintain the neoliberal and market system in the HE sector.

Section I of this chapter, presented below, confirms market dominance in HE practice by exposing several media representations of Gratuidad that reproduce the hegemony of the market and strongly resist the change in the social order. Moreover, this study analysed the media representations of HE students from the Global South, validating some and extending other representations already explored in the literature. Ultimately, some student orientations such as "the student as a consumer", or "an annoyed client", validate studies already conducted in the Global North. Alternative orientations reveal the effects of the dominant market ideology, and this also contributes to current knowledge of students in HE.

Section II below discusses how the social transformation in Chilean HE is enacted through discourses that resist the long dominant discourse of marketized HE. A discussion is presented around the findings of Gratuidad as a revolution and for the future of Chilean children, resisting the neoliberal discourse of individualism and promoting the positive effect of free education in a more equal society. In this same vein, alongside the representations of Gratuidad that resist the return of the state in HE discussed in Section I, due to its recent implementation and to the best knowledge of the researcher, these are novel contributions to theory, since this is the very first study to analyse media representations of a policy that removes tuition fees in a highly marketized society. Additionally, this study reveals that students present themselves as people striving to be someone in this challenging landscape of HE; and ultimately that some students represent themselves as social reformers.

I. RESISTING THE CHANGES IN MARKETIZED HE PRACTICE

That neoliberal discourses are still dominant in the Chilean media is the first claim that this research makes. As possibly expected from a society that was dramatically challenged with strong neoliberal policies in the early 1970s under a dictatorial regime, the so-called neoliberal experiment (Fornazzari, 2013), the findings corroborate the significant role of the market economy in society overall, and particularly in HE practice. The media discourses reproducing a strong resistance to the application of Gratuidad, representing the policy as absurd, hasty, an injury to society, evidence the intensity of a market *disembedded* in society (Polanyi, 1944). Also, the effect of the media in representing students as irrational for demanding a policy that intends to re-embed the market into society exposes the strength of the marketized society, in a movement that attempts to maintain the social order of the marketized HE practice.

In Chapter 5, the critical analysis of the media discourses around Gratuidad revealed

representations of Gratuidad that powerfully contested the change in policy. The CDA of press articles showed how Gratuidad was repeatedly constructed as not fulfilling its aim. Gratuidad was represented as an *obstacle to social justice* by not including all HE students and being particularly *exclusionary* to private HEI students. With a discourse that strongly defended the contribution of private HEIs to the educational system, Gratuidad was also represented *as an injury or a harmful* policy. Indeed, the effect of the discourses in the media revealed two elements of the orders of discourse: action and representation. In the first, discourses reproduced a belief about the positive impact on society of the academic activities of private HEIs; the latter, a mix of political and social discourses, interdiscursively promoted HE as helping in achieving social justice and social mobility, regardless of the type of HE institution, public or private.

Categorizing public HEIs and the private HEIs together presupposes that all HEIs are the same, and hence they should be on equal terms by government. In effect, representations of public as private HE systems as homogenous have been claimed already in the literature (Simbürger & Guzmán-Valenzuela, 2019). In the particular context of Chilean private HEIs, these heavily rely on how the HE system has been structured over the years, since the major change of 1980 (as detailed in Chapter 2). In Chile, a high percentage of the student population from the lowest-income families, hence less privileged students, attend private institutions. As described by Simbürger & Guzmán-Valenzuela (2019) large numbers of low- and middle-income students attend private HEIs in Chile. With many of these HEIs publicly funded by the state, this phenomenon has produced an unclear thin line between public and private HEIs in the Chilean sector, making the system convoluted and confusing for the students and their families.

Chapter 5 reveals media producing an ideological view of what they consider to be a private good to represent it as public good, as apparently public is perceived as better than private to Chilean society. Marginson (2007) has already discussed this blurred line between public and private systems in HE. Although the analysis cannot be generalized, since it might be different depending on the judicial structure particular to each HE system, the effect of these discourses is to reclaim and nurture the relationship that Chilean society has had with a long-privatized education. This is the private education that has been immersed in HE practice for several decades and private HEIs are claiming their contribution to social equality by educating, precisely, the less privileged students. This thin line between public and private, exposing a hybrid system, generally emerges in neoliberal discourses trying to defend the current practice or social order in a particular domain of society as asserted by Fairclough (2003). Chapter 5 uncovers discourses with the media attempting to continue with a particular social practice in HE. The media discourses intent to defend and maintain the ideological position of private HEIs as being required within the system; the promotion of the neoliberal

marketized HE in which private education is no different from public education; and thus, equal treatment for private and public HEIs should be offered by the state, by extending Gratuidad to these HEIs. These discourses, representing private HE as being as positive as public HE, reproduce a positive image of private HEIs. These discourses represent private HE as unrelated to a privatized system connected to the ideology and values of markets. The representation of Gratuidad *as a hasty and absurd policy* is interdiscursively connected to Gratuidad *as an injury to society.* Moreover, the findings disclosed many instances of meta discourses and ironic statements, all with a sense of suspicion or distrust, leading to a representation of *Gratuidad as an irrational sacred passion* for free education.

Overall, and regardless of the source – right or left-leaning newspaper – Gratuidad was discursively constructed as a questionable political decision; discussed in an environment of urgency; of doubtful effectiveness in the promotion of equality; and financially weak. The force in these representations reinforces the strong market disembedded from society, in which both left- and right-wing media sources contested and criticized Gratuidad. The neoliberal ideology immersed in Chilean HE practice for decades was challenged by the removal of tuition fees and as could be expected, the media powerfully resisted efforts of society to the re-embedding of the market back in society.

In Chapter 6, the media discourses representing students were intertextually chained to some of the discourses revealed in Chapter 5. The media contested the changes in HE by producing several conflicting and opposing representations of the HE student. These were predominantly constructed in articles published by El Mercurio, the right-wing newspaper and long advocate of the neoliberal system in Chile, since the Pinochet's dictatorship (1973 – 1989). These discourses are attempting to protect the principles and ideals of the marketized HE and to preserve the social order in HE practice. Articles from El Mercurio delegitimized the students´ demands for equality and free education, by being suspicious of the true and genuine intentions of students in relation to Gratuidad. By reinforcing the idea that Gratuidad is some sort of a fetish for students, the discourses reproduced an individualistic and selfish aim in Gratuidad, attempting to represent in the media the idea that a hegemonic neoliberal ideology is still present in students' lives.

By representing students as *egocentric and irrational*, the media rejected and negated what might be a genuine interest of students in achieving a more equal society, legitimizing an individualist discourse of students found in the widely used student-as-a-consumer concept (as claimed in Bunce et al., 2017; Guilbault, 2018; Jabbar et al., 2017; Molesworth et al., 2009, 2011; Nixon et al., 2011, 2018; Woodall et al., 2014). In effect, in legitimizing an individualistic and selfish discourse of the students regarding HE, the practice of marketized HE is maintained, relevant to marketized societies to maintain the social order in the HE domain, as claimed by Fairclough (2003). As shown in Chapter 2, the evolution of Chilean HE shows how the HE system has been absorbed by market practices, the

most relevant being the one that relates to students, and their parents, paying high prices for post-secondary education. These market practices emerge in the media discourses by reproducing individualism and the private benefit of HE.

An ideational function of the discourses analysed in Chapter 6 was also to reproduce the power of the press to intensively disseminate the belief that HE students do not deserve any public funding. The influence of the market ideology is evidently exposed by reproducing the economic aim in pursuing a HE degree, associated with future economic stability for students in a globalized economy and society. The media discourses reproduce a narrative of the future labour of students being a commodity, similar to the macro analysis of contemporary HE policies conducted by Tight (2013), which conceptualizes the student as a pawn. In his metaphor the student is a relatively insignificant and indistinguishable unit, a pawn in a larger game in which the future work of the student is considered a commodity, one that helps to maintain national competitiveness. Although similar to Tight (2013) in the notion that the future labour of students is a commodity, the media analysis representing the student *as neglected* by the state refers mostly to the consequences of highly marketized societies, shaping the society in which the student is an economic agent, and HE is a private good; hence the students should not be entitled to receive any public aid. HE as a private good brings private benefits; therefore no public funding should be allocated to the system, nor to students.

Chapter 6 concludes by exposing the pressure of the parents on their children to obtain a university degree almost exclusively, rather than any other post-secondary education (i.e. FE degree). Interdiscursively connected to the macro analysis conducted by Tight (2013), the analysis of the media in this case present the students being manipulated by their parents, or *as marionettes* of the parents' wish for a more stable economic future for their children. The analysis in Chapter 6 exposes the media being strongly colonized by neoliberal discourses, regardless of the source or editorial line. On the one hand, in maintaining the current order in HE practice, even El Mostrador reproduces discourses against changes in HE. El Mostrador, although overall supportive of the policy of Gratuidad, still produced discourses not only questioning the government, but also the direction of the policy and the students promoting Gratuidad. El Mostrador, the newspaper with an editorial line aligned with socialist ideals and close to the socialist government, exaggerates the discourse of a marketized society rejecting any form of post-secondary education other than a university degree. The consequences of pursuing a university degree by bringing a better economic future for the children is presented in contradiction to the low quality of some unaccredited HEIs and the access of more disadvantaged students to those poor-quality universities (i.e. the myth of *Universititis*). El Mostrador, strongly contesting the implementation of Gratuidad, reproduces a negative connotation of students representing them as being manipulated by their parents. This manipulation is manifested by pushing

them to study a university degree, without even considering the quality or the type of HEI they will attend.

On the other hand, the intensity of the market discourse and the marketized society is also found in discourses from El Mercurio. Being the newspaper that has voiced the free market ideology for several decades, El Mercurio reproduces the strengths and positive effect of a free market system. Rejecting the influence of socialism on students, it represents students as puppets of the socialist party. The persistent negative connotation of students being manipulated exposes the strong and deep roots of the neoliberal discourses in HE practice. Moreover, by reproducing the negative effects of Gratuidad on students' experiences in HE, the media is insisting in maintaining the status quo in HE, and to maintain the dominant ideology.

As discussed in Chapter 7, the discourses reproduced by students themselves show some similarities to those from the media. The student *as a consumer* orientation in which discourses of individualism and selfishness are reproduced validates what the literature has earlier explored. A consumer orientation emerged even in students funded by the state, confirming what has previously been evidenced in countries in which HE is free (Nielsen, 2011; Vuori, 2013).

Also, an orientation of the student *as an annoyed client* is identified in the study. By considering HE as a service, and the HEI as a professional firm, as claimed by Armstrong (2003), the educational service works towards the needs of an involved active student-client. However, a discourse of frustration with a service that is not being delivered has worked in representing this student *as an annoyed client*. In effect, drawing on the extensive body of literature discussed in early chapters of this dissertation, the orientation of students as consumers on the one hand, and the orientation as a client on the other, reveals that the marketized society has evidently trespassed the boundaries of the broader social practice of HE.

In effect, Williams (2013) has claimed that a consumer orientation in students is beyond the implementation, or in this case the elimination, of tuition fees. Williams (2013) claimed that a student-consumer behaviour can be a consequence of broader social and political trends towards more neoliberal and marketized societies. Similarly, this analysis reaffirms the claim that when marketization is rooted in a society as part of the culture, it can have an influence that goes beyond a HE system, crossing boundaries in society (Hill, 2003; Kotz, 2002; Saunders, 2010).

Therefore, consistent with the views of Polanyi (1944, 2001), even when tuition fees are eliminated, the power of principles of a disembedded market can shape the social practice of HE, with students reproducing discourses of individualism and selfishness. Furthermore, this assertion endorses the concept of disembeddedness in a highly marketized society of Polanyi (1944, 2001). In understanding these representations of the student, the elimination of tuition fees does not

necessarily influence or have an impact on how students understand HE, and the consumer orientation may persist.

While these two orientations, as a consumer and as an annoyed client, help to illustrate the degree of marketization in Chilean HE and its influence on students, other representations at this micro level are also uncovered, contributing to the literature on students in HE.

Firstly, other studies have described the political influence and political engagement of Chilean students in social movements and student protests (Bellei et al., 2014; Bellei & Cabalin, 2013; Cabalin, 2012; Cini & Guzmán-Concha, 2017a; Fleet & Guzmán-Concha, 2017; Gill & DeFronzo, 2009; Guzmán-Valenzuela, 2016; Somma, 2012). These scholars validate what Brooks (2017) has claimed – that students are often at the forefront of many contemporary protests, both on and off campus. However, students reproducing discourses of indifference and fear to engage in political activities contradicts these claims. As the findings in Chapter 7 show, students self-represented themselves *as apolitical*, justifying this orientation in the value they give to family time and, therefore, expressing no interest in spending time and effort in participating in politics. Another explanation is found in the discourse of fear of failure, particularly when so close to finishing, which could be consistent with the metaphor of the student as a vulnerable child (Brooks, 2017). However, as posited by Brooks (2021), the type of vulnerability impacting students' experiences in HE might differ from country to country. In particular, within the Chilean context, this could be understood as economic vulnerability in a hegemonic neoliberal society in which students are pressured to finish their degrees quickly and to start earning an income.

Nevertheless, the discourses of fear, threats and retaliation represent the student as apolitical at its best. These reproductions manifest how practices of intimidation, and some of vengeance, are present among the administrators of private HEIs. Private HEIs are the result of marketization in HE. In the case of Chile, more than 70% of students in HE attend a private HEI (Espinoza & Gonzalez, 2016). Many private providers of HE rely on the tuition fees of students. Several private HEIs would not be eligible to be part of the Gratuidad scheme, due to their minimal accreditation or low quality (as discussed in Chapter 2). As the social order is changing because of the implementation of Gratuidad, the resistance of private HEIs to any change in their systems seems to come at any cost, even if this means retaliation against students who participate in any political movement that promotes a change in practice in HE. In line with the arguments of Fairclough (1993), a hegemonic neoliberal structure of a private HE system intends to legitimize its existence producing discourses of fear and retaliation reproduced by students when they get actively involved in political activities in private HEIs.

Secondly, in the social context of marketized HE systems, the rationale of free choice is

embedded in the rhetoric of markets ruling HE. Under this economic logic, it is assumed that good information is available and so students can make logical and rational decisions (Tavares et al., 2008). Moreover, it has been argued that sometimes students make their decisions for a number of other cultural or emotional reasons (Tavares et al., 2008), exposing some sort of irrationality in such decisions (Dill, 1997). However, a hegemonic economic discourse of free choice in a marketized HE system has been strongly questioned. It is claimed that in HE perfect information to make rational decisions is not always available, and students may be faced with much confusing information (Briggs, 2006; Briggs & Wilson, 2007; Dill, 1997; Tavares et al., 2008; Tavares & Cardoso, 2013). In Chapter 7, the discourses of confusion and superficiality validate the claims of Briggs (2006); Briggs & Wilson (2007); Dill (1997); Tavares et al. (2008); and Tavares & Cardoso (2013) by revealing an orientation of students *as poorly informed risk takers*. As posited by Polanyi (1944), in a disembedded self-regulated market, individuals face several risks. Apparently, the self-regulating market in HE has produced the risk of providing superficial and unclear information to students making such important decision. The students making some irrational, last-minute and risky decision about their HE produce an image of themselves as poorly informed, one of the many consequences of this marketized university system.

To summarize, discourses analysed to this point produced and reproduced the social power and ideology of the market in society. These discourse intent to maintain the social order that has ruled the HE system since the implementation of the neoliberal system in Chile.

Likewise, the impact of the strong market values and practices uncovered in market discourses found in the media shows that neoliberalism has shaped the daily life of Chilean society, rejecting any sort of public funding in HE. Chilean media and the right-wing newspaper El Mercurio have been supporting a limited view of HE as a private good. Shaped by the market discourse, El Mercurio mostly attempts to influence society in that any alternative discourses about financing HE with public resources, as the policy of Gratuidad is suggesting, does simply not suit the dominant discourse of HE as a private good.

Furthermore, as presented in this section, the discursive representations of Gratuidad and the orientations of the students perpetuate the damaging effect of a neoliberal system in Chilean HE. These are the efforts of market societies to maintain a disconnected view of the free market in the relation between the HE system, society and its citizens. As the government and the media ideologically shape and control society (Fairclough, 1993), the discourses opposing the change to Gratuidad highlight a discursive manipulation, influenced by the free-market ideology that has strongly shaped Chilean society for more than four decades. This hegemonic ideology evidences the *disembeddedness* of the market economy from society, as suggested in Polanyi (1944). Furthermore,

strongly rooted in Chile's broader social practices (i.e. health system, pension system, water utilities and many others), the power of the neoliberal ideology is crossing boundaries, dominating the media and HE, beyond the political decision of removing tuition fees in HE. In effect, the social system of the press, shaped by the market ideology, accentuates the promotion of the social order of the marketized society by neglecting public funding directed to HE, by portraying privatized HE as being similar to public HE, and by acknowledging a positive image of the neoliberal university.

The critical analysis of the discourses in this thesis has exposed the forces of these hegemonic discourses trying to reconstruct a social reality in which HE has evolved during the last decades. According to Foucault & Rabinow (1994) these are the efforts of a neoliberal system to maintain the social order when the social reality seems to change. In the Chilean context, the hegemonic marketized discourse represents the interest not only of the media proprietors, who are particularly concentrated in Chile (Cabalin, 2015; Katz & Spence, 2009; Pitton, 2007), but also those economic groups that have profited from the privatized HE system during its decades of existence.

Next section reveals further interpretations of other representations of the policy that removed tuition fees in HE and its early impact on students. These interpretations could illuminate further the effects of Gratuidad, audaciously suggesting that it can be an attempt from society to start dismantling a culture of marketization.

II. DISMANTLING A CULTURE OF MARKETIZATION? GRATUIDAD AND POLANYI'S DOUBLE-MOVEMENT

Besides the evidence of the disembeddedness of the market in Chilean society and its influence on HE practice, insights into change have also emerged, with discourses of resistance to the dominance of market ideals in HE; discourses that challenge the inequality that the neoliberal system has promoted; and discourses that seek to promote collectivism for the future of society. These representations, rather unorthodox for such a marketized context, might offer an answer to the audacious question asked at the start of this dissertation: dismantling a culture of marketization?

The analysis of the media revealed discourses resistant to an individualist and segregated society. These are discourses of collectivism and togetherness, not only in relation to HE but in other spheres of society beyond HE itself (such as pensions, public health, local government).

Some of the findings reported in Chapter 5 reveal a powerful discourse around Gratuidad seeking to reconstruct the importance and relevance of public HE in society. The analysis of the interplay between elements of meaning (representation, action and identification) in connection with elements of knowledge, control, power and ethics (Foucault & Rabinow, 1994) uncovers an effect on

the discourses reproducing a social transformation and a reconfiguration of what HE is or should be in Chilean Society. These discourses represent Gratuidad as a new social order in what it means for Chileans to achieve free public HE. The ideational effect of the discourses, similarly, reproduced across the articles independently of the source (El Mercurio and El Mostrador), influence the constructions of new relationships between members of society and their HE system. This is, as predicated in Fairclough (1992), the social knowledge about what education means and the belief of the final purpose of public HE in society.

In resisting the market and tuition fees rhetoric, reproduced in the articles analysed, exceptions to this dominant marketized and privatized HE discourse sought to construct HE as a need for society; therefore, HE should be offered free of any charge and accessible to anyone. These discourses represent the importance of Gratuidad as a necessity to accomplish a less individualistic society. With a high level of interdiscursivity and a mix of socio-political and social justice discourses, efforts to change the current order of discourse about HE and, eventually, a change in the Chilean social order in the promotion of a more collectivist society were evidenced. Furthermore, as the media discourses include the rest of the society as part of the future evolution of HE for future generations, the discourses reproduce how challenging this change could be for HE practice, and that such challenges are to be faced as a common responsibility of society as a whole.

The different forms in which the discourses figure in the press articles frame Gratuidad as a *social revolution*, which will eventually restore a sense of *collectivism in society*, a sense rather opposite to the individualist practices found in strongly disembedded market societies (Polanyi, 1944). Ultimately, this collective revolution will lead to a better, more equal society, "*for the future of our children*" (Chapter 5 Extract 1.4). With these findings, a first insight into Gratuidad as an attempt by society to bring the market back under the domain of society can be claimed.

Along with discourses of an overcoming spirit and relief, representing Gratuidad as a social revolution, a representation of students as *young people striving to be someone* acts as a positive reaction to the hope given by the implementation of Gratuidad to many who, not able to pay for their education, could have not accessed HE without the support of Gratuidad. These disputing discourses that contest HE as a private good that needs to be bought and paid for are reproduced despite the strong efforts of the media to maintain the status quo in HE. The change in the HE policy, reproduced as an opportunity to change HE practice, not only reveals that free access to HE means a relief for a sector of society that needs public support, but also some hope for a better future, yet in a very neoliberal society. Evidently, students from privileged high-income families do not need public funding to pay for HE; less privileged low-income students have always been in the scope of public policies

covering their needs, including scholarships and grants to pursue post-secondary education (Brunner, 2013). However, middle-class families, who represent almost 50% of Chilean society according to OECD (2019), have been absent and apparently neglected from the scope of public policies and the support of the government. The hope that the implementation of Gratuidad has represented for them brings a transformation in the social relation between a new, less marketized social practice in HE and middle-class citizens. These discourses of relief, hope and aspiration, mostly reproduced by state-funded students and independently of their type of HEI, reveal that a hegemonic discourse of a neoliberal and marketized HE and society can be contested when policies such as Gratuidad are implemented.

Finally, and diametrically divergent to the effect on the discourses of the media, discourses of the students reveal a challenging exception to the dominant discourse of students in marketized contexts. Besides the construction of student as consumers, frequently described in the literature in general and also in some of representations explained earlier in the empirical findings in particular, students' representation could be a sign of a change in the future of HE. These are discourses that seek to frame students as knowledgeable of working collectively, more than individually, to reach common goals for the common good. These are exceptions to the representation of Gratuidad as a hasty and absurd policy or to the student as egocentric or a marionette of a political party. These are also exceptions to the dominant discourse of marketized HE and HE as a private good. Moreover, these discourses, representing the student as a *budding social reformer*, mostly reproduced by students attending a public HEI and beneficiaries of Gratuidad (i.e. state-funded students), reveal wider impact of the policy of Gratuidad. The effects of discourses around collectivism, collaboration and commitment to social reforms could eventually transform the hegemonic forces in the neoliberal HE system.

As a consequence, the transformation in HE of removing tuition fees in a very disembedded market economy, could be claimed, although courageously, that this novel representation of the student is in effect a result of the application of Gratuidad. Moreover, the findings discussed in this Section II can support the claim that Gratuidad, as in the Double Movement of Polanyi (1944, 2001), can be an example of a countermovement between the society and the market. Gratuidad as a counter movement can be the effort of society to resist the market in HE, to eventually start ***re-embedding*** the market back to its institutions, and eventually start dismantling a culture of marketization in HE.

8.3. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The previous section highlighted the contributions of this study by validating that a culture of

marketization is beyond the application or removal of tuition fee, as has been discussed mainly in research on the Global North. Also, the previous section has considered how Gratuidad could be an attempt to re-embed the market into the society and the impact of this on the experience of students in HE. However, as in any research venture, this study has some limitations, and these are addressed below. This section will end by suggesting some avenues for further research in this area.

The first limitation of this study is related to the sample. The corpus for this research was rigorously selected, considering factors of representativeness and key words related to the topic of study. Moreover, the media articles were selected from the two most read newspapers in Chile, following a rigorous methodological protocol (all these discussed in Chapter 4). However, as frequently occurs with corpus-based research, there are flaws in selecting the corpus from the right source, choosing the articles and within the right time frame of publication. The texts selected will not always give a full picture of the social practice under study (Fairclough, 1992). Moreover, there is always a concern about "cherry picking" articles that can make the interpretation easier or direct it to a particular finding (Baker & Levon, 2015).

In terms of the sample of students, some limitations can also be highlighted. The participants for this study attended two universities that are located in a region outside of the capital city (in the region of Talca, very much similar to the East Midlands in the UK) in an area that is less metropolitan, and more rural. It can be argued that, because of the geographical location of the HEIs, the experience of the students might be different that of those in the busy and rapid-paced life of a city like Santiago. Santiago has also been the epicentre of the student movements and students have normally been more mobilized in Santiago than in other cities in the country (Bellei & Cabalin, 2013; Cabalin, 2012, 2015). The convenient location (easy to travel from the capital) and the easy access to participants led to these two universities being selected. However, there are other public universities in Chile, in different locations, founded before 1980 and others after 1980, and different in size. Similarly, there are a wide range of private HEIs. A different selection of HEIs could have led to other types of participants being accessed, with different narratives about their HE experience. The researcher sees no limitation to the diversity of participants in terms of gender, payment scheme, year of study and type of HEI; however, a more balanced selection of students in terms of their courses of study could have also shaped the interpretations around their orientations differently.

The second limitation of this study, as is often the case with research under an interpretative paradigm, is that the social realities explored in this dissertation do not constitute a complete interpretation of the discourses analysed. All the interpretations in this study are dependent on the particular view of the researcher and the assumptions made in viewing the data. Although much effort

has been put into staying as close as possible with the texts under analysis, it is bold to say that all the data have been interpreted widely and with no bias. In particular, in conducting a CDA, the questions are around objectivity, partiality, selectivity in the selection of the texts and the interpretation. It is wise to mention at this point that the analysis has indeed been sensitive to tendencies of the interpreter (Fairclough, 1992). As described by Scheglogff in Wodak & Meyer (2008), CDA can be more of an ideological interpretation, and not really an analysis, in which the interpreter exposes his own political biases. In effect, the author of this work is widely experienced in the social practice under analysis, not only as a Chilean national but also as directly involved in HE with an academic and leadership position in a public university, therefore the interpretations are inevitably shaped by the views and own understanding of the researcher himself. Furthermore, drawing any further conclusion with respect to broader social changes in broader social practices within the Chilean context would be premature considering the limits of this research, which has focused on the social practice around HE only.

Lastly, one limitation particularly relates to the textual analysis in TODA. On the one hand, in the analysis of meaning making, texts have casual effects and ideological effects. It is in the latter that the philosophical paradigms to understand the data might influence the interpretations. As a multidisciplinary approach to social research, CDA has been informed by critical theory, realist ontology and constructivism. Since the inter- or trans-disciplinarity of CDA has not yet been achieved, each paradigm and theoretical framework might bring different interpretations (Wodak & Meyer, 2008). On the other hand, operationalizing CDA at the textual level always requires some level of expertise. As posited by Fairclough (2003), while it is not essential to have a background in language analysis to conduct a CDA project, deeper knowledge in conversation analysis and linguistics training could have help in offering a clearer analysis and interpretation of the findings.

Further avenues to extend this research can be suggested as the following three points. First, future research should pay attention to the sample. In terms of the media, the concentration of the media in Chile does not give much space to search for different printed newspapers with different editorial lines. However, the semiotics of other sources of media could certainly be analysed to explore discourses at the macro level, i.e. television news, television interviews and sensationalist newspapers. In terms of students, the sample should be made more diverse by including students in other cities and attending other universities, higher or lower in quality, and students studying other courses. As presented in the Appendix 3, the HE system is complex and there is a large number of HEIs, of different size, accreditation, orientation (research or teaching oriented), etc. Moreover, it could highly be relevant to explore the views of students attending FEIs (professional institutes and centres

for technical training), as a new amendment to the policy of Gratuidad in 2021 has included some of these post-secondary institutions as part of the Gratuidad scheme. Similarly, for CDA the social context is critical. Thus, similar research should be conducted in another country, such the UK, in which great discussions have emerged around reducing tuition fees and even removing them.

Second, recent events in Chile could completely change the discourses both in the media and for students. Chile has seen drastic change since the collection of the data for this study (August – October 2019). As never seen before, on 18 October 2019, Chile faced a major social outbreak as a result of unresolved tensions that configured a true "crisis" that emerged basically because of neoliberal model implemented during the 1970s and the continuing segregation and inequality in the society. This was a collective action that started with a massive evasion in the metro of Santiago, organized by secondary school students and coordinated through social networks motivated by the increase in the ticket price (an increase of £0.30). The demonstrations spread throughout the country in the following weeks to support demands for improvements in the public health service and to the pension system, demands for free high-quality education and demands relating to environmental issues, etc. (Ivanova & Almendras, 2021). Since then, a new government has taken power (the new president, Mr Gabriel Boric, is one of the student leaders of the Chilean Winter in 2011 and was a frequent activist in later movements), and a new constitution, written by an assembly of elected members, is due to be implemented. The rapidly changing social context offers a new opportunity to explore changes in the discourses of students and to reflect on the interpretations given in this study. Furthermore, a longitudinal study with those participants who were attending their first year at the time of the interviews could bring new insights into their orientations, now that they are at the end of their studies.

A last recommendation comes from the methodological stance. Relations of power and ideology could be analysed following an approach other than discourse analysis. As mentioned in the limitations considered above, different insights can emerge if a different theoretical framework is used. The media exposed a very strong opposition to Gratuidad and represented the student as an economic agent; therefore a media analysis from the perspective of the public sphere and the colonization of the media as a theoretical framework (Baxter, 1987; O'Mahony, 2021; Wessler, 2018) could bring new insights into the dominance of the markets in different spheres of society.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – THE SAMPLE OF NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

N	HEADING	DATE	PUBLISHED BY	WORDS
1	Constitutional Court and vulnerable students: "Additional requirements are imposed on their personal condition"	22-10-2015	El Mercurio	860
2	Constitutional Court determines that the criteria for access to Gratuidad in 2016 will discriminate against students	11-12-2015	El Mercurio	1115
3	Discriminatory and poorly designed Policy of Gratuidad	17-11-2015	El Mercurio	727
4	Three facts about Gratuidad	11-11-2015	El Mercurio	659
5	Left wing MPs criticize the free education formula in 2016 and asks MINEDUC [Ministry of Education] to extend the policy to private HEIs	16-07-2015	El Mercurio	1009
6	New Confusions in Higher Education	16-07-2015	El Mercurio	700
7	Mineduc excludes private universities in the reform for next year.	15-07-2015	El Mercurio	1340
8	"This leaves me puzzled, it makes me lose all confidence"	24-05-2015	El Mercurio	1833
9	The educational debate, a look from inside	21-05-2015	El Mercurio	1064
10	Insisting on a policy of free education	23-02-2015	El Mercurio	506
11	Access to Higher Education	11-10-2014	El Mercurio	563
12	"What is the Plan B if the ideological model that justifies the free education is wrong?"	05-10-2014	El Mercurio	955
13	Parliament approves higher education policy amid criticism for its impact on quality	25-01-2018	El Mercurio	854
14	Where is educational reform heading?	24-04-2016	El Mercurio	983
15	Free education and equality	09-06-2015	El Mostrador	858
16	University lecturers: "We cannot allow students to be excluded"	12-06-2015	El Mostrador	473
17	The damaging myth of "*Universititis*"	08-02-2018	El Mostrador	758
18	Brunner: "The government insists on a free system that seems unsustainable to me"	05-07-2016	El Mostrador	478
19	Universality in free education would cost US$3.5 billion: Valdés asks, aren't there other needs such as health or pensions?	06-07-2016	El Mostrador	452
20	Free education funded by taxing new professionals	13-10-2016	El Mostrador	581

21	President Bachelet: "We can say with pride that there is no longer any region of Chile without a public university"	21-04-2017	El Mostrador	445
22	ACES [Secondary Schools Students' Association] give Del Piano a week's "ultimatum" to comply with their request	29-06-2016	El Mostrador	161
23	VC of the UC [Universidad Catolica] rejects the reform and responds to Minister [of Education] Delpiano: "It is extremely statist, so we cannot accept it"	15-04-2016	El Mostrador	354
24	Sergio Bitar: the shot at the feet of the Ministry of Education	04-10-2015	El Mostrador	1219
25	Adriana Delpiano [Ministry of Education]: "It is very difficult in a year or two to dismantle a market system"	04-06-2016	El Mostrador	328
26	Bachelet on Constitutional Court and free education policy: "I hope they primely thing about Chilean families	01-12-2015	El Mostrador	298
27	Education as a right	08-04-2019	El Mostrador	574
28	Undoing a knot: Quality versus Free Education	27-06-2017	El Mostrador	2032
			Total	**22,179**

APPENDIX 2 – STUDENTS SAMPLE

Student	Name	Gender	Type of University	Payment Scheme	Degree Subject	Level of Study	Length of Interview
1	Cinthia	F	Private	Free	Business	4th year	1h 10
2	Cristian	M	Private	Paying	Law	4th year	1h 15
3	David	M	Private	Free	Health Sciences	4th year	1h 22
4	Francisca	F	Private	Free	Social Sciences	4th year	1h 5
5	Gabriela	F	Private	Free	Health Sciences	1st year	55m
6	Javiera	F	Private	Free	Business	1st year	1h 20
7	Leonardo	M	Private	Free	Business	4th year	1h 15
8	Nicole	F	Private	Paying	Health Sciences	4th year	1h 10
9	Rodrigo	M	Private	Paying	Law	4th year	1h 15
10	Sebastian	M	Private	Paying	Business	4th year	1h
11	Yasna	F	Private	Free	Business	4th year	1h 5
12	Yessenia	F	Private	Free	Health Sciences	1st year	1h
13	Camila	F	Public	Free	Health Sciences	1st year	1h 10
14	Fernanda	F	Public	Free	Health Sciences	4th year	1h 25
15	Hugo	M	Public	Free	Health Sciences	4th year	1h 35
16	Ignacio	M	Public	Paying	Law	4th year	1h 21
17	Jose Tomas	M	Public	Paying	Health Sciences	1st year	1h
18	Kari	F	Public	Free	Law	4th year	1h 5
19	Naomi	F	Public	Paying	Architecture/Art	4th year	1h 10
20	Natalia	F	Public	Paying	Architecture/Art	4th year	1h 8
21	Nelly	F	Public	Free	Health Sciences	4th year	1h 10
22	Roberto	M	Public	Paying	Health Sciences	4th year	1h 25
23	Sergio	M	Public	Free	Business	4th year	55m
24	Yisel	F	Public	Free	Business	1st year	1h 13

APPENDIX 3 – SUMMARY STATISTICS ON THE CHILEAN HE SYSTEM, 2021

Type of Institution	Origen*	Member of**	Number of Institutions	Accredited Institutions	Not Accredited Institutions	% of Accredited Instituions	Average years of Accreditation (max 7 yrs)	Registred UG Students	% of students	PSU**	Subscribed to PSU System	Requirements	Gratuidad	Additional Government Aid	Degrees Offered	Years
Universities	Public	CUECH - CRUCH	18	18	0	100%	4.7	174,242	13.46%	Mandatory	16	PSU	16	Available	BSc - MSc - PhD	4 or more
	Traditional-Private	CRUCH - G9	11	9	0	82%	5.7	138,613	10.71%	Mandarory	9	PSU	9	Available		
	Private (1)(2)	CUP	30	19	11	63%	2.3	342,926	26.49%	Optional (1) (2)	12	PSU optional (1) (2)	5	Available (1) (2)		
Total Universities			**59**	**46**	**13**		**4.2**	**780,391**	**60.27%**		**37**		**30**			
Professional Institutes (PI)	Private	CONIFOS	36	17	26	47%	1.4	379,838	29.34%	Optional (1) (2)	6	PSU or High Sch. diploma	6	Available (1) (2)	Professional	4 or more
Total PI			**36**	**17**	**26**		**1.4**	**379,838**	**29.34%**		**6**		**6**			
Centre for Technical Training (CTT)	Public (3)	n/a	10	n/a	n/a	100%	n/a	n/a	n/a	Not applicable	Not applicable	High Sch. Diploma	5	Available	Techinal	2
	Private	n/a	41	16	32	39%	1.2	n/a	n/a	Not applicable	Not applicable	High Sch. Diploma	6	Available (1) (2)		
Total CTT			**51**	**16**	**32**		**1.2**	**134,510**	**10.39%**		**11**		**11**			
Total			**146**	**79**	**71**			**1,294,739**	**100.00%**		**54**		**47**			

Source: Developed by the author from different public sources (2022).

n/a = Not available
* The State of Chile recognizes 3 types of Universities: Public, Traditional Private and Private (see List of Terms for further definitions)
** Chilean State Universities Consortium (Consorcio de Universidades Estatales de Chile-CUECH)
** Chilean Universities Chancellors Council (Consejo de Rectores de Universidades Chilenas-CRUCH)
**G9 - Red de Universidades Publicas No Estatales (G9 Public Non-State University Network)
**Private Universities Corsortium (Corporacion de Universidades Privadas-CUP)
**Private Higher Education Institutions National Council (Consejo Nacional de Instituciones Privadas de Educación Superior-CONIFOS)
**PSU - Univeristy Universal Admission Test (Prueba de Seleccion Universitaria PSU)

(1) To be elegible for Gratuidad, private HEIs (Traditional-private and fully private HEIs) must be part of PSU
(2) Only Private HEIs accredited for at least 4 years, constituted as non-profit legal entities, and non-profit legal controllers, are eligible for Goverment Financial Aid and Gratuidad
(3) Public CTT were also created under 2016 Education Act.
(4) PI and CTT are free to define their own system of admission.

Sources:
http://www.gratuidad.cl/
https://www.mineduc.cl/
http://www.psu.demre.cl/index
http://redg9.cl/
http://www.uestatales.cl/cue/
http://www.consejoderectores.cl/inicio
http://www.cupchile.cl/
http://www.sistemadeadmision.consejoderectores.cl/

APPENDIX 4 – POSTER INVITING POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS TO BE INVOLVED IN THE RESEARCH

APPENDIX 5 – RESEARCH INFORMATION GIVEN TO PARTICIPANTS

Nottingham University Business School
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

Information for Research Participants

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the research project. Your participation in this research is voluntary, and you may change your mind about being involved in the research at any time, and without giving a reason.

This information sheet is designed to give you full details of the research project, its goals, the research team, the research funder, and what you will be asked to do as part of the research. If you have any questions that are not answered by this information sheet, please ask.

This research has been reviewed and given favourable opinion by the Nottingham University Business School Research Ethics Committee.

What is the research project called?

Dismantling a culture of marketization? Alternative students' orientations in a context of tuition fees removal in a marketized society

Who is carrying out the research?

If student research, please include details of the module/course/final qualification and your supervisor's details. Please do not use abbreviations that research participants will not understand – e.g. NUBS, ESRC, PI etc]

Patricio Sanchez-Campos: main researcher for this project. Doctoral student at Nottingham University Business School located in the United Kingdom. This research is the main requisite to achieve the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in business and management. The supervisors for this research are: Doctor Elizabeth Nixon: Elizabeth.Nixon@nottingham.ac.uk Doctor Ekaterina Nemkova: Ekaterina.Nemkova@nottingham.ac.uk Professor Heidi Winklhofer: Heidi.Winklhofer@nottingham.ac.uk

What is the research about?

[Please include a brief, lay summary of the objectives of the research. Please address this direction to (potential) participants – you're not writing this for the ethics committee. Please avoid technical terms and academic jargon (e.g. 'ethnography', 'semi-structured interviews') which participants will not understand.

In many different countries, tuition fees in universities are one of the main sources of financing higher education studies, and students or their families have been asked to pay tuition to achieve a university degree. However, the contribution of students to the costs of higher education through tuition fees is a continuous debate among researchers because of the potential negative consequences on students' behaviours when attending a university or while students experience their life in a university. Ultimately, current research shows that this experience influences how the student may behave in the society, as a whole.

Higher education in Chile becomes of particular international interest because after 38 years of a highly expensive system of a mix of private and public universities (and very similar as other countries such as UK or South Korea), the Chilean government approved in 2016 a new university reform that partially removes tuition fees for a group of students, to attend any public and some private universities for free. This is what the government has called *Gratuidad* (free education for higher education in Spanish).

This research is trying to comprehend how students understand the meaning of being a student when choosing and attending a university when the system now offers an opportunity of paying or not paying for education, and how these understanding changes over the time when the student is already attending a university meaning how students change their view of higher education depending on the how far they are in their journey to get their degree. This project will also try to explore if the students understanding of what it means to be a higher education student also differ if the student attend a public or a private university.

What groups of people have been asked to take part, and why? *[Please include information about how participants have been identified / chosen. Again, this should be written for participants and addressed to them]*

The participants have been chosen to represent the different groups of students that will help in answering the main questions of this study. Students in this research will be participating voluntarily after being informed about the research through board postings at 2 secondary schools (one public and one private) and 2 universities (one public and one private) located in the same city. Participants will then be invited to participate in the research by voluntarily signing up to be interviewed. Three different groups of students are intended to be interviewed. Below is the explanation of the 3 groups.

1) First year university students. These students are considered in this research since their experience in a public or private university will help in exploring different orientations of the student when they are at the start of their HE journey.

2) Last year HE students. These students are considered in this research to explore if orientations of students in HE may differ when students are at the end of the HE experience.

What will research participants be asked to do? *[include any potential for benefits and risk of harm. Please also mention any prizes/expenses/payments for participation in this section. You should also mention how long any interview/survey is likely to take and in the case of interviews, whether you intend to record them.*

Students will be asked to engage in an open conversation of approximately an hour in a, where possible, neutral location (not school or university) to talk about their lives and stories in experiencing the choice of universities for their undergraduate degree and their stories of their lives when already attending a university.

If the student is under 18 years old, an adult be attending the interview, although he/she will not be allowed to interfere in the conversation.

Interviews will be recorded with the previous consent of the participant.

Interviewees will be offered a compensation of £10 voucher for an hour interview.

What will happen to the information I provide? *[include information about data storage/retention, as well as how the information provided will be used in the research – extent of anonymity, will direct quotes be used, how will participants be referred to etc]*

The information will be only used for the purpose of this research. The data collected (conversation recording) will be stored privately and will not be shared to any parties besides the researcher's own use.

Where necessary, direct quotes will be used in the research output to better explain the interpretation of the interviewee's experience. However, participants' names will be not be revealed. According to the research main objectives, real names are not needed. Real names will be changed for anonymity purposes.

Regarding to shelter data, the record of the interviews will be used for academic purpose only. It will be transcript, codified and analysed manually. Only the researcher and the project supervisors will have access to the information from the interviews.

Recorded files will be password protected and kept safe in the University of Nottingham (Microsoft One Drive) servers for two years before deletion

What will be the outputs of the research? *[If this is student research, please give details of the assignment you will write as a result of the research as well as any other purpose for which it may be used.]*

As a doctoral student, the research output of these interviews would primarily fulfil the requirement for the degree of doctor in business and management at the University of Nottingham. As required by the school this will be as a form of a thesis. A thesis is a final report of a research conducted for 3 years and it is about a 80,000 words document which includes, among other sections, the review of previous literature in this field, the methodology applied for the research, the collection of data, the findings and interpretation and the final conclusions of the study.

The results of this research, after being concluded, will be submitted according to the Business school requirements and it will be eventually published in an academic peer reviewed journal, just for academic discussions.

The student can obtain a soft copy of the final findings of this dissertation, if asked.

Contact details

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Business School University of Nottingham
Jubilee Campus (North Building B77) Wollaton Road, Nottingham NG8 1BB – United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0) 115 8466490
Elizabeth.Nixon@nottingham.ac.uk

Complaint procedure
If you wish to complain about the way in which the research is being conducted or have any concerns about the research then in the first instance, please contact **Patricio Sanchez-Campos** or **Dr. Elizabeth Nixon**.

Or contact the School's Research Ethics Officer:
Chris Carter
Nottingham University Business School
Jubilee Campus
Nottingham NG8 1BB
Phone: 0115 84 66062
Email: Davide.Pero@nottingham.ac.uk

APPENDIX 6 – INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

INTERVIEW GUIDE

(Chile: August – October 2019)

At the start of the meeting: Remind the participant about recording the interview (as stated in the first email contact). Ask if it is ok to record.

If recording is not allowed, inform the participant that some written notes might be taken during the conversation, only for transcription purposes.

Initial Statement (recorded if allowed)

Hello XX and thank you for your time.

As I informed you in our first contact by email, this research is about students' experiences in HE and what is like to be a university student.

I would like to confirm you have agreed on recording the interview, which is only for transcription and translation purposes. Please remember this is a voluntary conversation and you can stop it at any time if you do not feel comfortable. There are not wrong or right answers in our conversation; and more than opinions I'm interested in listening to your own stories and specific examples of things that have happened to you (with as much detail as possible) about becoming and being a HE student.

Keep in mind this is an anonymous interview and your name will not be revealed. Also, I would like to remind you that the research has been approved by NUBS Ethical Committee all the information about the research is in the Ethical Approval Information Document I have shared with you before this meeting, also by email.

Ideally for me this conversation will last about one hour. Then, let us begin…

Question 1. Please can you tell me about the time [perhaps during secondary school] when you first started thinking about going to university? What were your thoughts in that time? Tell me about that…[14]

- Tell me about influential people during these conversations? How was that?

Question 2. And, when you were about to decide on a HEI or what university to attend, how was that? Tell me that story…

- Tell me more about your thoughts about the different options? How did you come to a decision?
- Describe me your secondary school? Public? Private?

Question 3. Now that you are attending a university. Let's talk about yourself…How is it to be a university student? How similar or different from what your expectations?

Question 4. What can you tell me about your lectures/classes? How are your lectures?

[14] *Sub questions under main question are triggers questions to keep a flow in the conversation.*

- Tell me how you prepared yourself for classes and exams.
- Tell me about your classmates? How do you relate to them?

Question 5. Now, please can you tell me about your experience with your lecturers/professors?

- Can you tell me any story you might have with professors/lecturers?
- Do you recall any professor being particularly influential or a lecturer that stands out during this time as student?

Question 6. Now tell me, when you have to attend your school or university's administration offices, Is there any story good/bad experience you would like to talk about? Or can you tell me about when you go to the library, tell me about these experiences? Is there any story good/bad experience you would like to talk about?

Question 7. Tell me about your life outside lectures?

- Describe me more about your activities outside of class
- Tell me about the Students' Union here? Do you recall your SU being involved in the strikes?

Question 8. Have you thought about your plans after graduating?

Anything you would like to add or clarify further about your experience as a university student?
Thank you very much. This conversation has been really helpful for my research. If you have any question after this conversation, please do not hesitate in contacting me.
I would like you to sign these forms (1. Compensation reception form and 2. Ethical Approval: Information for participants).

Have a good day!

APPENDIX 7 – SAMPLE FROM EL MERCURIO ARTICLE N4 (IN SPANISH)

November 11, 2015 Wednesday

Tres datos sobre gratuidad

BYLINE: Gonzalo Rojas

LENGTH: 659 palabras

El 2011, el año en que se instaló la falacia de la **gratuidad** en Chile, entre unos y otros, solo en música, los jóvenes chilenos gastaron unos 50 millones de dólares.Por una parte, se trancó la glosa que debía darla a luz en este primer paso legislativo. La Democracia Cristiana parece no tener el ánimo bien dispuesto y después de leer a los Lavados -gracias a la sensatez de sus opiniones- más de algún demo reciente debe haber pensado que valdría la pena volver a la DC del pasado, a esa que promovía el humanismo sin marxismo.

Ahí está el primer dato: la Democracia Cristiana comienza a entender que una gran parte de los chilenos prefiere esforzarse con libertad antes que ser molidos por la maquinaria de la **igualdad.** Mejor pagar la educación con lo mío a que el Estado me quite a los míos.

Un segundo dato interesante es que las federaciones de **estudiantes** se están convirtiendo cada día más en grupos de presión cuyos objetivos son, obviamente, pagar menos y obtener más. No les interesa en absoluto la olvidada Calidad, porque doña **Gratuidad** es la única musa, el único fetiche inspirador, lo que se expresa a través de la formulación de reivindicaciones supuestamente legítimas.

Un letrero verde cuelga en un campus universitario. Dice así. "Petitorio 2015: Matrícula única; arancel año de ingreso; seguro estudiantil; rebaja de arancel a menor carga académica; condonación de la deuda; aumento de becas internas; servicios básicos; departamento de bienestar estudiantil". Las ocho primeras exigencias son, como se ve, económicas. Ni hablar de Calidad. Y el letrero sigue con otras tres demandas, de notable transparencia: "Eliminación del compromiso docente (ni idea cuál será, pero debe eliminarse), más democracia y pronunciamiento sobre reforma educacional".

Y uno que pensaba encontrarse con algo así como "profesores con más dedicación, mejor presupuesto para bibliotecas y mallas curriculares más flexibles". Qué ingenuidad.

El tercer dato es la música.

Acaba de tener lugar el concierto de Pearl Jam en el Estadio Nacional. Asistieron unos 50 a 60 mil jóvenes que pagaron entradas entre los 24.500 y los 114.000 pesos. Como diría el viejo relator deportivo, "dejaron en boleterías" unos 3 mil millones... o más.

¿Quiénes gastaron ese platal equivalente a un total de 100 a 120 carreras completas de la **educación superior**?

Un grupo está formado por personas que tienen la plata para darse cualquier gusto y que, por lo tanto, de ninguna manera merecerían **gratuidad** en sus estudios. Otros son tipos que hicieron un gran esfuerzo económico para ver a su banda favorita y que, por lo tanto, tienen perfecta conciencia de que cuando quieren ahorrar para algo que les parece importante, no los detiene nada. Y ambos grupos ya se están preparando, porque vienen los Rolling Stones dentro de poco.

El 2011, sí justamente el año en que se instaló la falacia de la **gratuidad** en Chile, entre unos y otros, solo en música, los jóvenes chilenos gastaron unos 50 millones de dólares. Algo así como 1.200 carreras completas de la **educación superior**.

Entendámonos: que cada uno haga lo que quiera con su plata y que sea responsable de sus decisiones ante quien corresponda. Pero que no vengan los socialistas a decirnos que debemos financiar la **educación superior** de quienes usan los dineros de que disponen -aquí da lo mismo cómo los consiguen- para su bienestar musical, deportivo, recreativo, cultural o de vestuario.

Hace mucho tiempo que dijimos que la **gratuidad** sería un grave daño a la personalidad de nuestros jóvenes. Falta poco, si se aprueba, para que se convierta en una más de las plantas de ese autocultivo que los llevará hacia un consumo dañino, sin duda el más apto para convertirlos en dependientes del socialismo, en esclavos del Estado.

LOAD-DATE: November 11, 2015

LANGUAGE: SPANISH; ESPAÑOL

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Periodico

APPENDIX 8 – EXTRACT OF AN INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT (IN ENGLISH)

The following is an extract of one interview that has been translated into English for illustration purposes. The first 2 pages of the interview are exposed only.

Interview number	3
Name	C.
Year of study	First year
Public or Private HEI	Public
Tuition or Free education	Gratuidad (Free)
Degree	Health Sciences

Date: Friday 30th of august 2019
Time: 10.30 – 11.44 (1 hour and 14 minutes)
Patricio interviewer: in **bold**

Thank you very much, Camila, please feel as relaxed as possible. This, more than an interview, is a conversation and I would like to start with some information first. Well, as you know, this is a study that I am conducting from the University of Nottingham in England as part of my doctorate. It is a study related with the experience of being a university student, what does that mean for you to be a university student. I'm interested in your experiences, your stories and with examples if you can, right? More than your opinions, I want you to tell me your stories. Lastly, I wanted to remind you that this study has been fully approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of Nottingham and all that information I have shared with you by mail. I wish we could have a conversation of at least one hour, if possible

Yeahhh…. I'm good at talking, so:::[laughs] ...

[laughs] That's good that is fantastic. Well: Camila, I would like you to remember and tell me when you started thinking about studying in a university. What was going through your mind? Who did you talk with? Can you tell me that story?

Well, my family always:::: we are three children. My parents are together ((married)), and always in my family…I am the youngest of my siblings… so as my sister is the oldest, she studied at INACAP ((technical college)), she has a technical degree in administration. My brother did not continue in university, but I …I mean it is like my family always urged me to study at the university. Because they always told me that it was important…that it was sort of an economic issue and that I had to look for something that I wanted to study. I remember when I was in eighth grade ((primary school)) I liked agronomy, and when I was a little girl I really liked journalism. Because I wanted to be like…on TV haha [laughs]…those typical things of journalism. And then when I was in the first year of secondary school I realized that I really liked the area of health care because I consider myself a super helpful person. And I really like the issue of helping people. And I also looked for an area that I liked very much, which was related with babies and pregnant women and all that…so I always watched videos of births in my house, on TV and everyone… my parents were like "how is that you're watching that disgusting thing again" and I´m like" but mom if it's not bad at all" and well, that's how it started the thing of ((going to university)) … I always felt that I came with the "chip installed" of having to study at a university.

What does that mean "come with the chip installed"? Tell me about that.

I believe that much of what someone is… comes from the family. For example, in my house, my parents always encouraged me to study since I was little. For example...My parents didn't. My dad did not even finish secondary school. Neither of them finished secondary school, but they always told that it was very important, because…for example… my dad taught me how to multiply and to add with beans. And so it was entertaining. He always taught me that mathematics was very important, so that people do not fool you with money, and all those things. So then I studied in my secondary school… a technical secondary school….I studied a technical degree in accounting ((technical secondary school)) which has nothing to do with what I am studying now.

Was that a…?

mmm…a technical secondary school. And there I realized that I really wanted to graduate with SOMETHING from school, instead of just taking the scientist-humanist track. Because one never knows about the turns in life in the future, so if I was going to graduate from the secondary school, I would already have this ((technical degree)) ... additionally… I live in Curico, so there (.) my school (.) my school is super well recognized in terms of technical studies. So I knew that at least I could work on something, although it was not exactly what I liked, but ...It happened that I realized… when I was already in the second grade of secondary school ((second of four grades)) when one has to choose ((different tracks in secondary school))... to continue the scientist-humanist track which is the conventional education...

Classes are divided then into tracks…ok…and..

Mmmm:: I decided to take the technical track where you can get an accounting or administrative degree…So my sister, who is very much a woman of numbers, always told me "look, this is going to help you" and I always listen to my sister a lot…because I see her as a reference for me. She is also my oldest sister. So there I had a difficult personal moment between [doubtful]… damn if I take the scientist-humanist track maybe later I don't have to take pre-university school ((a private training system that only prepare students to take the National Admission Test PSU)) to apply to university?Also, on the other hand, if I took the technical track I wasn't going to have biology courses which were something very important for the degree I wanted to study. Then I realized that maybe it was better to study the technical degree, because I was going to have something, and the truth is that…at least… I was going to graduate with a tool… and that was it. I finished that and as I have always been very competitive personally, not with the rest of the people, so then I said "Alright, if I'm going to study this ((technical degree))… I have to do it well."

Can you describe me more about that of "being competitive personally"?

For example I::: feel that there are people who are competitive, but with other people. They compared themselves with others. For example, if one gets a six ((Chilean marks scale run from 1 to 7. Four is passing grade)), the other has to get a six point five because one has to be better than the other. In my case, for example, if I take a test… and I get…I don't know, a six, and I realize that I didn't do well in some topics, I try to do better in the next test. So it is like having a new goal...