

PHENOMENOLOGICAL RESEARCH ON PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATIONAL RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

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FRAMEWORK

Following Dewey's (1997) and Schwab's (2013) ideas, Clandinin & Connelly (1992) developed their notion of teacher as curriculum maker, it means, the "teacher not so much as a maker of curriculum but as a part of it and to imagine a place for contexts, culture (Dewey's notion of interaction), and temporality (both past and future contained in Dewey's notion of continuity)" (p.365). In this way, teachers are not seen as implementers of curricular plans but as part of the curriculum making process. In other words, they understand that students create their curriculum in their experience at school when they interact with teachers and the environment.

Therefore, the educational relationship creates the framework where learning can take place and students can build knowledge (Atkinson, 2015); it means, relationships generate meeting places that allow the making and reshaping of curriculum.

If teaching takes place in the relationship, it means recognition (and acceptance) of the other person, of the otherness. It supposes trying to come into relation with the other, and it implies also acceptance of the uncertainty that otherness has. Therefore, education is not about the implementation of an education programme in order to achieve (pre)determined results. It is not about intervention on students, but it is an experience of relationship where each one constructs their own story (Molina, Blanco & Arbiol, 2016).

In short, curriculum is made through experiences that are lived in relation and, therefore, we could say that education is an act of relationship (Piusi, 2006). In this way, education does not require that teachers have the most appropriate knowledge and programme for every situation; the educational experience is unpredictable and ineffable, we cannot anticipate or face it completely (Van Manen, 2015). Thus, teaching requires becoming aware of how we build relationships and how we see the other person (Contreras, 2002).

Relational knowledge (as well as the centrality of relations in education) has been subject to study consistently from feminist perspectives (Goldstein, 1997; Piusi, 2006). It has been also studied from a feminist point of view the attitude of experience education in first person (Montoya, 2004, Piusi, 2000). We take it as the capacity to mediate with the environment through the exposition of personal desires, passions, life experience and focusing on what is possible to do at every moment, without expecting external intervention (that is, we should focus on what we can do by our own).

From this theoretical framework, we try to study, think and recognise this relational knowledge in specific curriculum making situations. Thus, research questions are: What is the knowledge needed for curriculum making? How is it built? What is teachers' role in the curriculum making process?

Consequently, in order to answer to these questions, we formulate the research proposal: delve into the knowledge put into play when building the educational relationship in the process of curriculum making. In order to do this, we have followed a teacher for a full academic year (this fieldwork is part of a larger research project [EDU2016-7757-P]), and we have try to understand her experience by focusing on how she builds the educational relationship.

METHODOLOGY

The research is focused on the educational experience, what implies that we have to delve into someone's life and try to understand what a particular person live and experience (Contreras & Pérez de Lara, 2010). These assumptions have led us to outline the paper from a phenomenological point of view. Phenomenology allows us to ask and look for the way in which people experience the world, and also allows us to recognise the essence of the phenomenon (which in this case is the educational relationship) (Van Manen, 2015).

The educational relationship is unique and unpredictable and, therefore, it cannot be reduced to a method or theory (though it can help and orient teachers). For this reason, in this paper we do not try to systematize or generalize ideas, but we show some stories that (instead of theorizing or describing) try to point out and orient towards themes that allow to observe and perceive the essence of education (Aoki, 2012).

In order to do this, in this paper we focus on a teacher that we have accompanied for a full academic year. We have recorded information through observations. As a result of the fieldwork we have composed three scenes (that were lived at school) in which we can observe challenges or difficulties in the construction of the relationship. This use of anecdotal resources in phenomenology is not only a literary device, but stories are the bases of reflection and theorisation (Van Manen, 2003). Thus, by using anecdotal resources we try to get closer to lived experience and, at the same time, think and reflect about it.

After the composition of stories, the next process has been the co-composition of the research text (Huber, Murphy & Clandinin, 2011), it means that we have analysed the results in cooperation with the teacher. In order to do this, we have developed 9 interviews in which we have read and talk with the teacher about the stories. Conversations revolved around three focal points: what difficulties and challenges does she experienced in every story? What knowledge did she put into play in order to deal with the situation? How has she learnt this knowledge?

Consistent with the phenomenological point of view, the final analysis and results are presented with a "thematic" structure (Van Manen, 2003). That is, results are organized by parts that address an essential aspect of the phenomenon under study, the educational relationship.

DICUSSION

When teachers come into relationship with students, they promote that students give experiences a linguistic and symbolic structure and, in this way, they give meaning to lived experience (Aoki, 1993). This process takes places when teachers and students build a bond between them. This bond is not built only with a physical meeting, but it is needed a correspondence between student's desires to know and what the teacher wants to bring to school. Data analysis allows us to think about three themes related with the knowledge needed for the construction of the bond that shapes the educational relationship:

- Listening: if educational relationship is unpredictable, it is needed to listen every student's story in order to promote their curriculum making (Sierra y Blanco, 2017). In

this way, teachers can perceive every person's singularity, know their story, their needs and, therefore, teachers can take care of them and their personal growth

- Experience the relationship in first person. Come into relationship with the other implies accepting that the relationship is unknown and unforeseeable because we do not know the other's story. This attitude produces a feeling of unease that seems inherent to teaching profession, because the opposite situation would imply coming into relationship without listening or accepting students' newness and, consequently, it would hinder the construction of the bond (López, 2006; Molina, Blanco y Arbiol, 2016).
- Confidence: educational relationship is based on authority, it means that it is built from confidence in the teacher when students let him/her orient them and, in this way, they can improve their process of introspection, subjectivisation and transformation (Piusi, 2001). That is, if learning is constructed when two persons' stories meet, it is essential to create space and confidence enough to make students feel invited to come into relationship and been changed by it.

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