THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SOCIAL AND AFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT
(EMI Section - Psychology - UAM)
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PROJECT 2: INTERVIEWING "SOCIALIZATION AGENTS"

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INTRODUCTION

In this part of the project you will collect and analyze data from interviews with "socializing agents" to explore the ideologies, beliefs and values that support socialization objectives, processes and the meaning of the social spaces in which these agents act. Ideally, the project is a continuation of the first project and returns to key participants in the setting you previously observed. In the interview you will explore the arguments and underlying values "socialization agents" share in relation to: (1) developmental/socialization goals - preferably those you identified and analyzed in the observation; (2) the strategies used to achieve these goals; (3) the spaces and scenarios in which these strategies are implemented. In short, the project has two main learning objectives:

(a) Improve our understanding of the role of beliefs, values and ideologies on development and education in childhood socialization processes.

(b) Think about interviews as a tool for research and professional practice in developmental psychology and education.

WORK AND EVALUATION

This project is completed in groups of students (unless re-organized explicitly, the same group that worked on Project 1) and involves preparing an interview script, conducting the interview(s), analyzing the information and producing a final report. The schedule for these activities will be discussed in class. The final report will have a maximum length of 1,500 words (excluding references and the accompanying materials of the report).

ACTIVITIES AND ASSESSMENT

This project has several parts. Each must be carefully planned and discussed during the sessions we will dedicate in class to work on the project:

(1) Select two socialization agents to interview: As said, ideally, this project continues the work in Project 1. In this setting you should identify people who potentially have a role in organizing the socialization processes observed and identified during the observation (e.g. parents, teachers, assistants, peers, etc.). These agents should be identified taking into account that, as we know drawing from an ecological perspective, that socialization work can be: (a) **direct** (he/she was observed, the agent acted directly on the/a child/children) or; (b) **indirect** (the agent manages or enables different activities in which children's social development is channeled in specific directions).

As you are asked to choose a minimum of two socialization agents you may approach and select participants that can be compared, play similar or different roles in the settings, etc. Choosing these participants is the key issue in the design of this project and is connected to

the research questions you may develop for the project and the type of analysis that you will be able to develop.

(2) Prepare an interview script: The two interviews should draw from shared research questions and then adapted/particularized to each of the agents you interview. The interview script can be written as a set of specific questions or a list of topics/areas to explore. In either case, the script should be structured around the following blocks:

(a) The specific developmental and socialization goals that are relevant / have been identified in the area of experience you are working on.

(b) The strategies used by the interviewed agents to achieve these goals.

(c) The spaces and contexts where (preferably) these strategies and socialization processes take place.

A semi-structured interview (similar in some respects to the "clinical method" that you worked on in other courses) should delve into the reasoning behind the answers provided by respondents. The duration and development of the interview will vary depending on aspects such as the type of questions, issues that emerge, the willingness of the respondent or the time constraints surrounding the interview. In any case, an interview should not be considered as a closed questionnaire and questions/themes should be adapted and follow the answers and reasoning of the agents you are interviewing. Usually, you should be able to complete the interview in a single session but, if necessary, this first interview can be completed in a second session or through informal follow-up conversations in which other issues are explored with the interviewee.

Unless there are circumstances that preclude or discourage this, the interview should be audio/video recorded and accompanied by notes on the interview (ideally completed immediately after the interview). In any case, an interview is a very flexible type of interaction, so the circumstances and format should be adapted to each project (and these adjustments should be discussed in class). The interviews can also be conducted online using real time video-conferencing technology, as has become much more frequent since the COVID-19 pandemic.

(3) Analyze the interviews: This analysis will be adjusted to each project but will generally consist of two parts:

(a) Identify the main themes in the answers provided during the interviews. This part may be relatively schematic and, if possible, should start to make connections with the information gathered in Project 1.

(b) <u>Examine the arguments and rationale</u> behind the identified issues. The logic and format of this analysis will vary across projects but, as general strategy, since you have at least two interviews you can start with a comparison of both interviews (their similarities, differences, convergences, divergences, etc.) and interpretation of these differences / similarities.

(4) Discuss more broadly the place and role of these beliefs and strategies identified in any of the areas of socio-emotional development that are part of the course and you have addressed in your project. In this discussion it is particularly important to consider how the decisions made by the interviewed agents "open" or "close" different developmental paths. Similarly, if you think it is worthwhile (and possible) you can propose ways in which intervention work on beliefs/discourses could optimize their role in social and emotional development.

STRUCTURE OF THE FINAL REPORT

The final report should be organized into different sections/headings. The organization of this report is a bit more flexible but one possible outline is: (I) a very brief introduction to the work done (who was interviewed, why, what the objectives of the interview, etc. were), (II) a section on analysis of results based on what I explained in point 3 above and (III) a section of conclusions based on point 4 above. Finally, the cited literature (referenced correctly, "APA style") and all the attached materials deemed necessary should be added as annexes.