

Procesos de cambio educativo en contextos de segregación escolar: Una investigación basada en el diseño

Processes of educational change in contexts of school segregation: A design-based research

Cristina Zhang-Yu^{1*}, Silvia Camps-Orfila², Jose Luís Lalueza², Sarai García-Díaz², Domitila Viñas-i-Rodríguez³

1 Departament de Psicologia, Institut de Recerca Educativa, Universitat de Girona

2 Departamento de Psicología Básica, Evolutiva y de la Educación, Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, España

3 Institut Escola El Til·ler, Barcelona, España

* cristina.zhang@udg.edu

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Background

The processes of racial and socioeconomic school segregation, the inequalities that generates in learning opportunities and its relationship with scholarization, constitute a serious obstacle to social and educational equity. During the last 30 years, most of the research carried out in Spain has provided analyses focused on otherness, based on deficit perspectives. We believe that it is needed to reframe how we research on learning and teaching, since the intercultural proposals have made invisible how power relations are shaping teaching-learning processes in the school context, which affects directly to their futures. In this article we report a Design-Based Research (DBR) currently under development and lasting more than four years, which is part of a set of actions for educational change in an institute-school from Barcelona (Catalonia) started on 2017 as a strategy of educational continuity in a historically segregated suburban neighborhood of Barcelona. Specifically, we focus on one of the projects, based on the Fifth Dimension and Funds of Identity approach in which educational team, school students, undergraduate students and researchers collaborate to create artistic artifacts. The activities are based on historic-cultural approach to learning and critical pedagogies and are codesigned by school's educational team, undergraduate students and researchers.

Aims

The aim is to carry out a historical analysis of the transformations and tensions in our system of activity attending to the participation and agency of the educational team, school students, undergraduate students and researchers.

Method & procedures

Considering this RBD as a context of activity, we will use an approach based on the cultural-historical model analyzing the historicity, multivoicedness and contradiction. The research cycles developed follow the school calendar: needs analysis (June) > design (July and September) > implementation and monitoring (October to May) > evaluation, needs analysis (May and June) > new design proposal (July). At the time of writing this article, we are entering the fifth cycle. Participants involved are students ages 10 to 15, undergraduate students, teachers, researchers and artists/activists. We draw on information gathered from design documents, evaluation reports, meeting minutes and field notes. This documentary analysis is interspersed with group discussion processes of analysis and construction of meaning from the different roles we adopted (researcher, researcher-educators and director of the center) and based on the activities developed. We reach consensus on the different analyses and return to the axes, while putting them in dialogue with the objective and the research questions.

Results & discussion

We present a chronological account that begins in the 17-18 academic year and concludes in the current 21-22 academic year. All activities are carried out weekly during school hours and throughout the school year. Weekly follow-up of the activities was carried out with the teachers involved in the activities and the university students, through post-activity meetings. The emergence of the different projects had to do with the DBR cycles themselves. A first analysis of the results is carried out on an ongoing basis, questioning the immediate results and the adjustment to goals, serving as feedback to guide changes in the design itself. Four years after the beginning of our project, we have gained a broad perspective of these changes and identified as key factors the multivoiced nature, the legitimization of voices and the negotiation processes, which lead to greater agency of the various groups of participants. The project no longer "belongs" to the research team, beginning its drift from a canonical model to an idiosyncratic model of the center. Two moments of contradiction are identified in activities that required a central and unconstrained participation of the students. This suggests that, although the 5D model and the Fdl have allowed us to address issues such as racism, sexism or mental health from places and temporalities that usually remain on the margins of school practice (legitimizing their knowledge and sustaining and accompanying debates over time), we have some challenges ahead: to ensure sustainable and healthy forms of relationship and learning spaces for the students most vulnerabilized by the system.

Conclusions

These contradictions present us with lines to continue working within the framework of school-university collaboration. On the one hand, to examine into what kind of educational and organizational changes are necessary for these educational practices to allow the authentic and genuine involvement of migrant and/or racialized youth within schools and how we can carry them out. On the other hand, to delve into the contradictions that are generated in the development of educational proposals from a critical intercultural, anti-racist and decolonial perspective in the system itself. In short, the school-university collaboration and the project developed is part of the set of actions that are carried out daily from the center, with the involvement and commitment of the management team, teachers, other professionals, families, young people and neighborhood organizations. Therefore, the changes that have taken place must be understood as part of this ecosystem as a whole and not as the unique consequence of what has been presented. With this contribution we want to value the open, flexible and participatory contexts of activity that 5D and the Fdl allow us to create in order to collectively reimagine new educational scenarios that are more sustainable with the ethnic-racial, cultural, linguistic and spiritual reality. For this reimagining exercise to become real, greater commitments from the political and academic sphere will be necessary, where racial, social and educational justice are at the basis of all action for and by the right to education and learning opportunities.

Keywords: cultural-historical approach, design-based research, interculturality, school segregation

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