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Editorial

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Editorial

Òscar Prieto-Flores & Laura E. Gómez
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Dear readers of The Multidisciplinary Journal of Educational Research, known by its Spanish acronym REMIE (*Revista Multidisciplinar de Investigación Educativa*),

We are pleased to introduce you to the Multidisciplinary Journal of Educational Research (REMIE). REMIE is an electronic journal, very unique in its kind, which publishes research outcomes with significant contributions to the understanding and improvement of educational processes. Although the field of education has a considerable number of high-quality journals, this scientific journal emerges from the need to find a response to the excessive compartmentalization of scientific knowledge that traditionally has existed in the educational research arena in Spain and Latin America, and its disconnection from Anglo-Saxon and other international contexts. Thus, it aims to be an international space for discussion and critique through the presentation of theoretical and empirical evidences that favour educational equity and the advancement of our societies, as well as the need to link Spanish and Latin America to other international contexts such as North America, Europe and Asia, among others.

REMIE intends to be a premiere journal for basic, applied, theoretical and empirical studies of educational processes, educational assessments and interventions, and relevant methodologies. In this sense, REMIE does not only collect research outcomes from different disciplines and methodological approaches, but also re-

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search carried out by interdisciplinary research teams. REMIE welcomes disciplinary and interdisciplinary works related to educational research, in areas such as education, sociology, psychology, anthropology, history, philosophy, economics, linguistics, geography or political science.

REMIE strongly promotes and encourages the publication of theoretical studies, and both quantitative and qualitative empirical studies. In other words, REMIE welcomes all kind of publications as long as they are based on evidences with relevance and quality. In the case of interventions to enhance any kind of outcomes in the educational field, not only will publications reporting relevant information that demonstrates an improvement over current interventions, assessments or practices be published, but also papers reporting negative results since its goal is to provide key agents in the educational field with responsible and balanced information in order to improve their practices.

Most of the articles published in our field report on interventions, assessments, practices or theoretical models with some kind of evidence of success. When authors finish a research project, they know perfectly well what is likely to be published based on their results: it is very unlikely that their results see the light of publication when these results are negative. However, REMIE's editors and editorial team are motivated and driven by Karl Popper's realization that science advances thanks to a process of conjectures and refutations. Therefore, this journal is pleased to issue those practices that –in spite of being well designed, theory-based and using methodologies with enough evidences of validity– result in controversial data or conclusions, if they help key agents to avoid making the same mistakes or lead them to make changes in order to solve the problems encountered.

All research articles in this quarterly journal undergo rigorous peer review, based on initial editor screening and anonymized refereeing by two anonymous referees. Furthermore, this is an entirely open-access electronic journal; in other words, all articles are available online without any payment required. It aims to be indexed and abstracted as soon as possible in national and international social sciences databases such as Journal Citation Reports (Social Sciences Edition, Thomson ISI), Latindex, In-RECS, ERIH, ERIC, the Social Science Citation Index, Current Contents (Thomson ISI), PsycINFO (American Psychological Association), Scopus, Elsevier Bibliographic Databases, ISOC (CINDOC, Con-

sejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas), Social Scisearch, and others.

The present issue represents the birth of the journal and we are proud to present four original articles and two reviews that are of interest for the academic, scientific and applied ambits of the educational field, with contributions from highly relevant authors from different parts of the world. This issue includes articles by scholars from different contexts (United States, Brazil and Spain), which have been peer-reviewed and recognized as excellent by the reviewers.

Michael Apple's (Educational policy and curriculum studies) work analyses how some conservative religious groups are trying to impose their worldviews on the rest of society by using new technologies, presenting themselves as the new oppressed groups, a new gendered labour and promoting the emergence of a new market of books, lessons and curricula. Through his analysis of the home-schooling social movement, Apple shows how ideology and economics are related to fit the needs of the religious home-schoolers.

Ramón Flecha and Henar Rodríguez (Sociology of Education and Pedagogy) describe a democratic turn that educational and social sciences are experiencing in Spain. Social change and science should go hand in hand, feeding each other. The dynamics of some scholars and universities have tried to condition social and scientific revolutions in the educational research arena. But the Spanish university sphere is demonstrating that more horizontal and democratic relationships are emerging, putting into question the academic establishment based on power and feudal relationships rather than contribution to science and serving the public good.

Francisca Constantino, Adriana Marigo & Raquel Moreira present a case study on how university research can have close connections with primary and adult schools promoting social and educational inclusion while serving the public good. The article explains how the concept of dialogic learning is put into practice.

Xènia Saubich and Moisès Esteban (Psychology of Education) present a new concept, "funds of identity", which could enrich all the previous work of "funds of knowledge" developed within the fields of linguistics and psychology. The authors present a project in which teachers go to families' homes in order to develop new strategies in schools, taking into account their cultural background and trying to reduce the discontinuities students find between their homes and the classroom.

In this first issue we present a book and a dissertation review. The first one is Paulo Freire's book - *La pedagogía del compromiso* (the pedagogy of commitment) and the second is a dissertation review highlighting the contributions of some specific programs working with students with disabilities in primary education.

This journal has come into being as a result of the inspiration and support given by a number of people and institutions. We sincerely wish to thank Hipatia Press for their support: a publishing company that has emerged from the intellectual will, non-commercial, to promote those contributions that, from the social and educational sciences, are showing scientific relevance in the debate and perspective of persons looking for improvements in their intellectual and scientific development. In the same way as Hipatia of Alexandria, the initiatives of this publisher and of this journal are aimed at being a transforming referent promoting intellectual debate to overcome barriers to scientific knowledge.



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Rightist Education and Godly Technology: Cultural Politics, Gender, and the Work of Home Schooling

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Rightist Education and Godly Technology: Cultural Politics, Gender, and the Work of Home Schooling

Michael W. Apple
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Abstract

The secularity of the state is seen by 'authoritarian populist' religious conservatives as imposing a world-view that is out of touch with the deep religious commitments that guide their lives. In the process, authoritarian populists have taken on subaltern identities and claimed that they are the last truly dispossessed groups. To demonstrate their increasing power in educational and social policy, I situate a specific set of technologies—the Internet—within the social context of its use in this community. I focus on the growing home-schooling movement and suggest that to understand the societal meaning and uses of these technologies, we need to examine the social movement that provides the context for their use. I also argue that we need to analyze critically the kind of labor that is required in home schooling, who is engaged in such labor, and how such labor is interpreted by the actors who perform it.

Keywords: Home Schooling; Gender; Religion; Internet; Social Movements.

In many nations of the world, the growing power of rightist movements and of their ideological positions is visible. Often xenophobic and committed to deeply problematic understandings of “national traditions,” “common cultures,” and gender roles and sexuality, (Apple, 1996, 2000), these movements have increasingly played a crucial role in altering the political and educational landscape nationally and internationally. Too often critical analyses of these movements do not understand how creative rightist movements actually are, and hence do not sufficiently appreciate how they work and many of the reasons why some people are drawn to them. Yet, ignoring the complex ways in which these movements function and the equally complex realities of the identity work that provides fertile soil for them makes it even harder for us to interrupt them.

In *Educating the “Right” Way* (Apple, 2010; see also Apple, 2006; Apple et al. 2003), I spend a good deal of time examining the ways in which the complicated forces of neoliberalism and neoconservatism are altering the terrain on which education operates both internally and globally. One of the key sets of actors that are currently supporting parts of the neoliberal and neoconservative agendas (the plural is important here) in the United States and increasingly in Latin America and elsewhere are what I have called “authoritarian populists.” In that book I spent a good deal of time detailing the world as seen through the eyes of “authoritarian populists,” those who want “the people” to decide policies and practices in the state and civil society but who also have a particular and very conservative vision of which groups actually count as “real people.” In the United States in particular, but not only there, authoritarian populist movements are largely constituted by conservative groups of religious fundamentalists and evangelicals whose voices in the debates over social and educational policies are now increasingly powerful.

I critically analyzed the ways in which they construct themselves as the “new oppressed,” as people whose identities and cultures are ignored by or attacked in schools and the media. The secularity of the state is seen by these groups as imposing a world view that is totally out of touch with the deep religious commitments that guide the lives of such

conservative populist populations. In the process, authoritarian populists have taken on subaltern identities (Apple & Buras, 2006) and have (very selectively) re-appropriated the discourses and practices of iconic anti-racist figures such as Dr. Martin Luther King to lay claim to the fact that they are the last truly dispossessed groups.

In this article, I examine the ways in which the claim to subaltern status has led to a partial withdrawal from state run institutions and to a practice of schooling that is meant to equip the children of authoritarian populist parents both with an armor to defend what these groups believe is their threatened culture and with a set of skills and values that will change the world so that it reflects the conservative religious commitments that are so central to their lives. I shall focus on the ways in which new technologies such as the Internet have become essential resources in what authoritarian populists see as a counter-hegemonic struggle against secular humanism and a world that no longer “listens to God’s word” (Apple, 2006). In fact, it is becoming increasingly clear that new technologies such as the Internet actually enable the formation and growth of such religious movements and enhance their ability to challenge secularity.

Much of my discussion will center around the place of gender in these movements, since conservative women are key actors here and have multiple identities within them--simultaneously able to claim subaltern status based on the history of dominant gender regimes and having dominant status given their positioning in relationship to other oppressed groups.

Technology and Social Movement Resources

In order to set the stage for my analysis, I need to say a number of things about the role of new technologies in global movements and about their place socially. There has been an explosion of analyses of the Internet in education, cultural studies, sociology, the social studies of technology and science, and elsewhere. Much of this material has been of considerable interest and has led to a good deal of discussion of the use, benefits, history, and status of such technologies (see, e.g., Bromley & Apple, 1998; Cuban, 2001; Godwin, 2003; Hakken, 1999; Jordan, 1999). However, much of this debate is carried on with limited reference to the contexts in which the Internet is actually used; or the context is mentioned

as an issue but remains relatively unexamined. As one of the more perceptive writers on the social uses and benefits of the Internet has said, “We can only understand the impact of the Internet on modern culture if we see that symbolic content and online interaction are embedded in social and historical contexts of various kinds” (Slevin, 2000, p. ix). As Manuel Castells reminds us, rather than having a unitary meaning and use, the new communications networks that are being created “are made of many cultures, many values, many projects, that cross through the minds and inform the strategies of the various participants” (Castells, 1996, p. 1999).

New technologies have both been stimulated by and have themselves stimulated three overlapping dynamics: the intensification of globalization; the de-traditionalizing of society; and the intensification of social reflexivity (Slevin, 2000, p. 5). In the process, technologies such as the Web have provided the basis for new forms of solidarity as groups of people seek to deal with the transformations brought about by these dynamics. Yet, the search for such forms of solidarity that would restore or defend “tradition” and authority can itself lead to the production of new forms of social disintegration at one and the same time (Slevin, 2000, pp. 5-6).

In this article, I examine a growing instance of this paradoxical process of solidarity and disintegration. By focusing on the social uses of the Internet by a new but increasingly powerful group of educational activists—conservative Christian evangelical home schoolers—I want to contribute both to our understanding of how populist conservative movements grow and support themselves ideologically and to the complex ways in which technological resources can serve a multitude of social agendas. I argue that only by placing these technologies back into the social and ideological context of their use by specific communities (and by specific people within these communities) can we understand the meaning and function of new technologies in society and in education. In order to accomplish this, I also focus on the labor of home schooling, on how it is organized, on new definitions of legitimate knowledge, and on how all this has been partly transformed by the ways in which technological markets are being created.

Technology and the Growth of Home Schooling

The connections between conservative evangelical forms and technologies are not new by any means. Elsewhere, I and others have written about the creative use of electronic ministries both nationally and internationally by the authoritarian populist religious right (see, e.g., Apple, 2006). Technological resources such as television and radio have been employed to expand the influence of conservative religious impulses and to make “the word of God” available to believers and “those who are yet to believe” alike.¹ While understanding the increasing range and impact of such efforts is crucial, here I am less interested in such things. I want to point to more mundane but growing uses of technologies such as the Internet in supporting evangelical efforts that are closer to home. And I do mean “home” literally.

Home schooling is growing rapidly. But it is not simply the result of additive forces. It is not simply an atomistic phenomenon in which, one by one, isolated parents decide to reject organized public schools and teach their children at home. Home schooling is a social movement. It is a collective project, one with a history and a set of organizational and material supports (Stevens, 2001, p. 4).

While many educators devote a good deal of their attention to reforms such as charter schools, and such schools have received a good deal of positive press, there are many fewer children in charter schools than there are being home schooled. In 1996, home school advocates estimated that there are approximately 1.3 million children being home schooled in the United States. While more current US government statistics place the figure at 1.1 million (Princiotta, Bielick, & Chapman, 2006), ascertaining the accuracy of data on home schooling is clearly difficult. Indeed, estimates by the National Home Education Research Institute put the figure even higher—1.7 to 2.1 million students being home schooled (Ray, 2006). Given the almost reverential and rather romantic coverage in national and local media of home schooling (with *The New York Times* (see Ellin, 2006; Gross, 2003) and *Time*, with a cover story in its August 27, 2001 issue, providing a large amount of very positive coverage, for example.), the numbers may in fact be much higher than this and the growth curve undoubtedly is increasing. At the very least, more than 2.2% of school age children in the United States

are home schooled (Sampson, 2005). Although government data are not fully available as yet, there is no doubt that home schooling is increasing each year and has increasingly crossed international boundaries.

The home schooling movement is not homogeneous. It includes people of a wide spectrum of political/ideological, religious, and educational beliefs. It cuts across racial and class lines (Sampson, 2005). As Stevens notes, there are in essence two general groupings within the home school movement, “Christian” and “inclusive.” There are some things that are shared across these fault lines, however: a sense that the standardized education offered by mainstream schooling interferes with their children’s potential; that there is a serious danger when the state intrudes into the life of the family; that experts and bureaucracies are apt to impose their beliefs and are unable to meet the needs of families and children (Stevens, 2001, p. 4). These worries tap currents that are widespread within American culture and they too cut across particular social and cultural divides.

Yet, it would be wrong to interpret the mistrust of experts by many home schoolers as simply a continuation of the current of “anti-intellectualism” that seems to run deep in parts of the history of the United States. The mistrust of science, government experts, and “rationality” became much more general as a result of the Vietnam War, when the attacks on scientists for their inhumanity, on government for lying, and on particular forms of instrumental rationality for their loss of values and ethics spread into the common-sense of society. This was often coupled with a mistrust of authority in general (Moore, 1999, p. 109). Home schoolers are not only not immune to such tendencies, but combine them in creative ways with other elements of popular consciousness concerning the importance of education in times of rapid change and economic, cultural, and moral threat.

Demographic information on home schoolers is limited, but in general home schoolers seem to be somewhat better educated, slightly more affluent, and considerably more likely to be white than the population in the state in which they reside (Stevens, 2001, p. 11). While it is important to recognize the diversity of the movement, it is just as crucial to understand that the largest group of people who home school have conservative religious commitments and are what I have called elsewhere “authoritarian populists” (Apple, 2006). Given the dominance of con-

servative Christians in the home schooling movement, this picture matches the overall demographic patterns of evangelical Christians in general (Smith, 1998).

Based on a belief that schooling itself is a very troubled institution (but often with widely divergent interpretations of what has caused these troubles), home schoolers have created mechanisms where “horror stories” about schools are shared, as are stories of successful home schooling practices. The metaphors that describe what goes on in public schools and the dangers associated with them, especially those used by many conservative evangelical home schoolers, are telling. Stevens puts it in the following way:

Invoking the rhetoric of illness (“cancer,” “contagion”) to describe the dangers of uncontrolled peer interaction, believers frame the child-world of school as a kind of jungle where parents send their kids only at risk of infection. The solution: keep them at home, away from that environment altogether (2001, p. 53).

Given these perceived dangers, through groups that have been formed at both regional and national levels, home schooling advocates press departments of education and legislatures to guarantee their rights to home school their children. They have established communicative networks—newsletters, magazines, and increasingly the Internet—to build and maintain a community of fellow believers, a community that is often supported by ministries that reinforce the “wisdom” (and very often godliness) of their choice. And as we shall see, increasingly as well the business community has begun to realize that this can be a lucrative market (Stevens, 2001, p. 4). Religious publishers, for profit publishing houses large and small, conservative colleges and universities, Internet entrepreneurs, and others have understood that a market in cultural goods—classroom materials, lesson plans, textbooks, religious material, CDs, and so forth—has been created. They have rushed to both respond to the expressed needs and to stimulate needs that are not yet recognized as needs themselves. But the market would not be there unless what created the opportunity for such a market—the successful identity work of the evangelical movement itself—had not provided the space in which such a market could operate.

Understanding Social Movements

Conservative Christian home schoolers are part of a larger evangelical movement that has been increasingly influential in education, politics, and in cultural institutions such as the media (Apple, 2006; Binder, 2002). Nationally, White evangelicals constitute approximately 25 percent of the adult population in the United States (Green, 2000, p. 2). The evangelical population is growing steadily (Smith, 1998, 2005) as it actively provides subject positions and new identities for people who feel unmoored in a world where, for them, “all that is sacred is profaned” and where the tensions and structures of feeling of advanced capitalism do not provide either a satisfying emotional or spiritual life. The search for a “return”—in the face of major threats to what they see as accepted relations of gender/sex, of authority and tradition, of nation and family—is the guiding impulse behind the growth of this increasingly powerful social movement (Apple, 2006).

Social movements often have multiple goals that may or may not be reached. Yet, it is also important to understand that they also can produce consequences that are much broader than their avowed goals and that are not always foreseen. Thus, social movements that aim at structural transformations in state policies may produce profound changes in the realms of culture, everyday life, and identity. The mobilizations around specific goals as well can strengthen internal solidarities, cement individual and collective identity shifts in place, create a new common-sense, and ultimately lead to perceptible shifts in public attitudes about a given issue (Giugni, 1999, pp. xxi-xxiii). They also create “innovative action repertoires” and have an influence on the practices and culture of mainstream organizations (Amenta & Young, 1999, p. 34). As we shall see, this is exactly what is happening both within the lives of home schoolers, but also in the ways in which organized public school systems have responded to the perceived threat to their financial well-being by a growing home school population.

A key to all this is something I mentioned above—the importance of identity politics. For social movements to prosper, they must provide identities that constantly revivify the reasons for participating in them. They must, hence, have an emotional economy in which the costs of being “different” are balanced by the intense meanings and satisfac-

tions of acting in opposition to dominant social norms and values. This doesn't happen all at once. People are changed by participating in oppositional movements such as home schooling. As social movements theorists have widely recognized, there are crucial biographical impacts of participating in movements. People become transformed in the process (see, e.g., McAdam, 1999). This point is clearly made by Meyer:

By engaging in the social life of a challenging movement, an individual's experience of the world is mediated by a shared vision of the way the world works and, importantly, the individual's position in it. By engaging in activism, an individual creates himself or herself as a subject, rather than simply an object, in history and . . . is unlikely to retreat to passive acceptance of the world as it is. (1999, p.186)

Home Schooling and the State

A large portion of social movement activity targets the state (Amenta & Young, 1999, p. 30), and this is especially the case with the home schooling movement. While there is often a fundamental mistrust of the state among many religiously conservative home schoolers, there are a considerable number of such people who are willing to compromise with the state. They employ state programs and funds for their own tactical advantage. One of the clearest examples of this is the growing home schooling charter school movement in states such as California. Even though many of the parents involved in such programs believe that they do not want their children to be "brainwashed by a group of educators" and do not want to "leave [their] children off somewhere like a classroom and have them influenced and taught by someone that I am not familiar with" (Huerta, 2000, p. 177), a growing number of Christian conservative parents have become quite adept at taking advantage of government resources for their own benefit. By taking advantage of home school charter programs that connect independent families through the use of the Internet and the web, they are able to use public funding to support schooling that they had previously had to pay for privately (Huerta, 2000, pp. 179-180).

But it is not only the conservative evangelical parents who are using

the home schooling charter possibilities for their own benefit. School districts themselves are actively strategizing, employing such technological connections to enhance their revenue flow but maintaining existing enrolments or by actively recruiting home school parents to join a home school charter.

For example, by creating a home school charter, one financially pressed small California school district was able to solve a good deal of its economic problems. Over the first two years of its operation, the charter school grew from 80 students to 750 (Huerta, 2000, p.180). The results were striking.

Along with the many new students came a surge of state revenue to the small district, increasing the district's budget by more than 300 percent. [The home schooling charter] garnered home school families by providing them with a wealth of materials and instructional support. In exchange for resources, families would mail monthly student learning records to the school. Learning records are the lifeline of the school and serve a dual purpose—outlining the academic content completed by students and serving also as an attendance roster from which [the charter school staff] can calculate average daily attendance. . . Thus, parents' self-reported enrollment data permit [the school district] to receive full capitation grants from the state. (Huerta, 2000, p. 180)

In this way, by complying with the minimal reporting requirements, conservative Christian parents are able to act on their desire to keep government and secular influences at a distance; and at the very same time, school districts are able to maintain that the children of these families are enrolled in public schooling and meeting the requirements of secular schooling.

Yet, we should be cautious of using the word “secular” here. It is clear from the learning records that the parents submit that there is a widespread use of religious materials in all of the content. Bible readings, devotional lessons, moral teachings directly from on-line vendors, and so on were widely integrated by the parents within the “secular” resources provided by the school. “Write and read Luke 1:37, memorize Luke 1:37, prayer journal” are among the many very non-secular parts of the sample learning records submitted by the parents (Huerta, 2002, p. 188).

Such content, and the lack of accountability over it, raises serious question about the use of public funding for overtly conservative religious purposes. It documents the power of Huerta's claim that "In an attempt to recast its authority in an era of fewer bureaucratic controls over schools, the state largely drops its pursuit of the common good as public authority is devolved to local families" (Huerta, 2000, p. 192). In the process, technologically linked homes are reconstituted as a "public" school, but a school in which the very meaning of public had been radically transformed so that it mirrors the needs of conservative religious form and content.

Gendered Labor

Even with the strategic use of state resources to assist their efforts, home schooling takes hard work. But to go further we need to ask an important question: Who does the labor? Much of this labor is hidden from view. Finding and organizing materials, teaching, charting progress, establishing and maintaining a "proper" environment, the emotional labor of caring for as well as instructing children—and the list goes on—all of this requires considerable effort. And most of this effort is done by women (Stevens, 2001, p. 15).

Because home schooling is largely women's work, it combines an extraordinary amount of physical, cultural, and emotional labor. This should not surprise us. As Stambach and David (2005) have powerfully argued, and as Andre-Bechely (2005) and Griffith and Smith (2005) have empirically demonstrated, assumptions about gender and about the ways in which mothers as "caretakers" are asked to take on such issues as educational choice, planning, and in the case we are discussing here actually doing the education itself underpin most of the realities surrounding education. But home schooling heightens this. It constitutes an intensification of women's work in the home, since it is added on to the already extensive responsibilities that women have within the home, and especially within conservative religious homes with their division of labor in which men may be active, but are seen as "helpers" of their wives who carry the primary responsibility within the domestic sphere. The demands of such intensified labor have consistently led women to engage in quite creative ways of dealing with their lives. New technologies, as

as labor saving devices, have played key roles in such creative responses (see Schwartz Cowan, 1983; Strasser, 1982).²

This labor and the meanings attached to it by women themselves need to be situated into a much longer history and a much larger context. A number of people have argued that many women see rightist religious and social positions and the groups that support them as providing a non-threatening, familiar framework of discourse and practice that centers directly upon what they perceive to be issues of vital and personal concern: immorality, social disorder, crime, the family, and schools. Yet, the feelings of personal connection are not sufficient. Rightist action in both the “public” and the “private” spheres (see Fraser, 1989, regarding how these concepts themselves are fully implicated in the history of gendered realities, differential power, and struggles), empowers them as women. Depending on the context, they are positioned as “respectable, selfless agents of change deemed necessary, or as independent rebels (Bacchetta & Power, 2002, p. 6).

Historically, right-wing women have consistently exalted the family. It is seen as a privileged site of women’s self-realization and power, but one that is threatened by a host of internal and external “Others.” It is “the” family that is the pillar of society, the foundation of a society’s security, order, and naturalized hierarchy that is given by God (Bacchetta & Power, 2002, p. 8).

Usually, fundamentalist and evangelical women are depicted as essentially dedicated to acting on and furthering the goals of religiously conservative men (Brasher, 1998, p. 3). This is much too simplistic. Rather, the message is more complex and compelling—and connected to a very clear understanding of the realities of many women’s lives. Women are to have not a passive but a very active engagement in their family life and the world that impinges on it. They can and must “shape their husband’s actions and alter disruptive family behaviors.” The latter tasks are becoming especially important since this is a time when all too many men are abdicating their family responsibilities, often impoverishing women and their dependent children (Brasher, 1998, p. 3). Further, only a strong woman could mediate the pressures and the often intensely competitive norms and values that men brought home with them from the “world of work.” Capitalism may be “God’s economy” (see Apple, 2006), but allowing its norms to dominate the home could be truly des-

tructive. Women, in concert with “responsible” men, could provide the alternative but complementary assemblage of values so necessary to keep the world at bay and to use the family as the foundation for both protecting core religious values and sending forth children armed against the dangers of a secular and profane world.

To conservative religious women, what from the outside may look like a restrictive life guided by patriarchal norms, feels very different on the inside. It provides an identity that is embraced precisely because it improves their ability to direct the course of their lives and empowers them in their relationships with others. Thus, intense religiosity is a source of considerable power for many women (Brasher, 1998, pp. 4-5).

Based on her extensive research on conservative Christian women, Brasher is very clear on this. As she puts it,

[Although such women] insistently claimed that the proper relationship between a woman and her husband is one of submission, they consistently declared that this submission is done out of obedience to God not men and is supposed to be mutual, a relational norm observed by both spouses rather than a capitulation of one to the other. . . Submission increases rather than decreases a woman’s power within the marital relationship. (1998, p. 6)

Divine creation has ordained that women and men are different types of beings. While they complement each other, each has distinctly different tasks to perform. Such sacred gender walls are experienced not as barriers, but as providing and legitimating a space for women’s action and power. Interfering with such action and power in this sphere is also interfering in God’s plan (Brasher, 1998, pp. 12-13).

Echoes of this can be found in other times and in other nations. Thus, an activist within the British Union of Fascists—an anti-Semitic and proto-Nazi group before World War II—looked back on her activity and said that her active membership demonstrated that she had always been “an independent, free thinking individual” (Gottlieb, 2002, p. 40). This vision of independence and of what might be called “counter-hegemonic thinking” is crucial not just then but now as well. It connects with today’s belief among conservative religiously motivated home schoolers that the world and the school have become too “PC” (“politically correct”).

Solving contradictions

One of the elements that keeps the Christian Right such a vital and growing social movement is the distinctive internal structure of evangelical Protestantism. Evangelicalism combines orthodox Christian beliefs with an intense individualism (Green, 2000, p. 2).

This is a key to understanding the ways in which what looks like never ending and intensified domestic labor from the outside is interpreted in very different ways from the point of view of conservative religious women who willingly take on the labor of home schooling and add it to their already considerable responsibilities in the domestic sphere. Such conservative ideological forms do see women as subservient to men and as having the primary responsibility of building and defending a vibrant godly “fortress-home” as part of “God’s plan” (Apple, 2006). Yet, it would be wrong to see women in rightist religious or ideological movements as only being called upon to submit to authority per se. Such “obedience” is also grounded in a call to act on their duty as women (Enders, 2002, p. 89). This is what might best be seen as activist selflessness, one in which the supposedly submerged self reemerges in the activist role of defender of one’s home, family, children, and God’s plan. Lives are made meaningful and satisfying—and identities supported—in the now reconstituted private and public sphere in this way.

There is an extremely long history in the United States and other nations of connecting religious activism and domesticity.³ This has consistently led to mobilizations that cut across political lines that bridge the public and private spheres. In Koven and Michel’s words:

Essential to this mobilization was the rise of domestic ideologies stressing women’s differences from men, humanitarian concerns for the conditions of child life and labor, and the emergence of activist interpretations of the gospel . . . [including] evangelicalism, Christian socialism, social Catholicism, and the social gospel. Women’s moral vision, compassion, and capacity to nurture came increasingly to be linked to motherliness. (1993, p. 10)

Often guided by a sense of moral superiority, when coupled with a strong element of political commitment, this became a powerful force. Maternalism could be both progressive and retrogressive, often at the same time.

While it is the conservative elements of this ideological construction that have come to the fore today, forms of maternalism also had a major impact on many of the progressive programs and legislation that currently exist (see, e.g., Kessler-Harris, 2001; Koven & Michel, 1993; Ladd-Taylor, 1994).

The restorative powers of domesticity and “female spirituality” could be combined with a strong commitment both to democratic principles and education and opportunities for women (Koven & Michel, 1993, p. 17; see also Apple, 2010). The key was and is how democracy—a sliding signifier—is defined.

Protecting and educating one’s children, caring for the intimate and increasingly fragile bonds of community and family life, worries about personal safety, and all of this in an exploitative and often disrespectful society—these themes are not only the province of the Right and should not be only the province of women. Yet, we have to ask how identifiable people are mobilized around and by these themes, and by whom.

The use of a kind of “maternalist” discourse and a focus on women’s role as “mother” and as someone whose primary responsibility is in the home and the domestic sphere does not necessarily prevent women from exercising power in the public sphere. In fact, it can serve as a powerful justification for such action and actually reconstitutes the public sphere. Educating one’s children at home so that they are given armor to equip them to transform their and others’ lives outside the home, establishes the home as a perfect model for religiously motivated ethical conduct for all sets of social institutions (see Apple, 2006). This tradition, what has been called “social housekeeping,” can then claim responsibility for non-familial social spaces and can extend the idealized mothering role of women well beyond the home. In Marijke du Toit’s words, it was and can still be used to forge “a new, more inclusive definition of the political” (2002, p. 67).

Such maternalism historically enabled women to argue for a measure of direct power in the redefined public arena. One could extol the virtues of domesticity and expand what counts as a home at the same time. Thus, the state and many institutions in the public sphere were “a household where women should exercise their . . . superior skills to create [both] order [and a better society]” (Du Toit, 2002, p. 67).⁴

All of this helps us make sense of why many of the most visible home

school advocates devote a good deal of their attention to “making sense of the social category of motherhood.” As a key part of “a larger script of idealized family relations, motherhood is a lead role in God’s plan” for authoritarian populist religious conservatives (Stevens, 2001, p. 76). Again in Stevens’ words, “One of the things that home schooling offers, then, is a renovated domesticity—a full-time motherhood made richer by the tasks of teaching, and [by] some of the status that goes along with those tasks” (Stevens, 2001, p. 83).

Yet it is not only the work internal to the home that is important here. Home schooling is outward looking as well in terms of women’s tasks. In many instances, home schooling is a collective project. It requires organizational skills to coordinate connections and cooperative activities (support groups, field trips, play groups, time off from the responsibilities that mothers have, etc.) and to keep the movement itself vibrant at local and regional levels. Here too, women do the largest amount of the work. This had led to other opportunities for women as advocates and entrepreneurs. Thus, the development and marketing of some of the most popular curriculum packages, management guides, self-help and devotional materials, and so on has been done by women. Indeed, the materials reflect the fact that home schooling is women’s work, with a considerable number of the pictures in the texts and promotional material showing mothers and children together (Stevens, 2001, pp. 83-96). A considerable number of the national advocates for evangelically-based home schooling are activist women as well.

Marketing God

Advocacy is one thing, being able to put the advocated policy into practice is quite another. In order to actually do home schooling a large array of plans, materials, advice, and even solace must be made available. “Godly schooling” creates a market. Even with the burgeoning market for all kinds of home schooling, it is clear that conservative evangelicals and fundamentalists have the most to choose from in terms of educational and religious (the separation is often fictional) curricula, lessons, books, and inspirational material (Stevens, 2001, p. 54). Such materials not only augment the lessons that home schooling parents develop, but increasingly they become the lessons in mathematics, literacy, science, social studies,

and all of the other subjects that are taught. This kind of material also usually includes homework assignments and tests as well as all of the actual instructional material. Thus, a complete “package” can be assembled or purchased whole in a way that enables committed parents to create an entire universe of educational experiences that is both rigorously sequenced and tightly controlled—and prevents unwanted “pollution” from the outside world.

The A Beka Book program provides a clear example. An offshoot of Pensacola Christian College, it markets material for nursery school up to the end of secondary school. It offers the home schooler a curriculum in which Christian teachings are woven into every aspect of knowledge. Little is left to chance. Preschool children learn through the use of Bible story flannelgraphs. At the age of five, they begin a complete “Bible Curriculum” and as they move up in age their texts include Bible Doctrines for Today and Managing Your Life Under God. The elementary level science textbooks, *God’s World*, are based in an inerrantist approach to the Bible and a literalist reading of Genesis and creation, one in which evolution is dismissed. The difference between right and wrong is seen as answerable only through reference to biblical teachings (Stevens, 2001, p. 55).

Easily ordered on the Web, similar kinds of material are made available by other religiously-based publishers—Bob Jones University Press, Christian Liberty Academy, Alpha Omega Publications, KONOS, the Weaver Curriculum Series, and a number of others. While there are pedagogic differences among these sets of materials, all of them are deeply committed to integrating biblical messages, values, and training throughout the entire curriculum. Most not only reproduce the particular biblically based worldviews of the parents, but they also create an educational environment that relies on a particular vision of “appropriate” schooling, one that is organized around highly sequenced formal lessons that have an expressly moral aim. Technological resources such as videos are marketed that both provide the home schooler with a model of how education should be done and the resources for actually carrying it out (Stevens, 2001, p. 56).

The organizational form that is produced here is very important. As I have argued elsewhere (Apple, 2006), since much of the religiously conservative home schooling movement has a sense of purity and danger

in which all elements of the world have a set place, such an organization of both knowledge and pedagogy embodies the ideological structure underlying the evangelical universe. As Bernstein (1977) reminds us, it is often in the form of the curriculum that the social cement that organizes our consciousness at its most basic level is reproduced.

While the form of the curriculum is clearly a collection code in key ways (Bernstein, 1977), the content is partly integrated. Project methods are also used in many conservative home schoolers' practices. For example, at the same time as parents may use the detailed sequential curriculum purchased from The Weaver Curriculum Series because it enables lessons to be related as well to a sequential reading of the Bible, these same parents also approve of the ways in which such curricular material includes creative ideas for student projects. Thus, one parent had her children engage in brick-making as part of the study of the Tower of Babel. She also used the genealogies of the Old Testament to stimulate her children's study of their family tree (Stevens, 2001, p. 58).

This kind of integration is found in nearly all of the widely used material. Stevens clearly describes a common situation.

By creative elaboration, curriculum authors spin out a wide range of lessons from biblical passages. Every word and phrase can be a metaphor for a revered character trait, a starting point for a science lesson. In this instance the first line of the first verse of the Sermon on the Mount, "Seeing the crowds, he went up the mountain," commences lessons on sight, light, and the biological structure of the eye, as well as character studies on the virtues of alertness. [The parent] noted that her children's "entire curriculum will be Matthew 5, 6, and 7. Through high school." Detailed lesson plans provide project descriptions and learning guides for children of various ages, so that the whole family can do the same lesson at once. "Our part in this," [the parent] explained, "is to read through the booklet." (Stevens, 2001, pp. 58-59)

This sense of the importance of structured educational experiences that are infused with strong moral messages is not surprising given the view of a secular world filled with possible sins, temptations, and dangers. The emphasis then on equipping children with an armor of strong belief supports a pedagogical belief that training is a crucial pedagogic act. While children's interests have to be considered, these are less important than preparing children for living in a world where God's word rules. This

commitment to giving an armor of “right beliefs” clearly “nourishes demands for school material” (Stevens, 2001, p. 60). A market for curriculum materials, workbooks, lesson plans, rewards for doing fine work such as merit badges, videotapes and CDs, and so many other things that make home schooling seem more doable is created not only out of a strategy of aggressive marketing and of using the Internet as a major mechanism for such marketing; but it is also created and stimulated because of the ideological and emotional elements that underpin the structures of feeling that help organize the conservative evangelical home schooler’s world (see Apple, 2006).

Technology and the Realities of Daily Life

Of course, parents are not puppets. While the parent may purchase or download material that is highly structured and inflexible, by the very nature of home schooling parents are constantly faced with the realities of their children’s lives, their boredom, their changing interests. Here, chat rooms and Internet resources become even more important. Advice manuals, prayers, suggestions for how one should deal with recalcitrant children, and biblically inspired inspirational messages about how important the hard work of parenting is and how one can develop the patience to keep doing it—all of this provides ways of dealing with the immense amount of educational and especially emotional labor that home schooling requires.

The technology enables women who may be rather isolated in the home due to the intense responsibilities of home schooling to have virtual but still intimate emotional connections. It also requires skill, something that ratifies the vision of self that often accompanies home schooling parents. We don’t need “experts”; with hard work and creative searching we can engage in a serious and disciplined education by ourselves. Thus, the technology provides for solace, acknowledging and praying for each other’s psychic wounds and tensions—and at the same time enhances one’s identity as someone who is intellectually worthy, who can wisely choose appropriate knowledge and values. What, hence, may seem like a form of anti-intellectualism is in many ways exactly the opposite. Its rejection of the secular expertise of the school and the state is instead based

on a vision of knowledgeable parents and especially mothers who have a kind of knowledge taken from the ultimate source—God.

Thus, one of the most popular of the evangelically oriented websites that markets products for home schoolers sells such things as “The Go-to-the-Ant Chart.” The wall chart contains pictures of common situations and biblical passages that speak to them. A list of the topics that the chart covers speaks to the realities that home schooling parents often face—serving God, gratefulness, honesty, perseverance, obedience, thoroughness, responsibility, initiative, consideration, and redeeming time. In language that not only home schooling parents will understand, it says:

This chart arms parents with Scripture for working with the easily distracted or “less than diligent” child. The chart covers every area of laziness we could think of, plus a Bible verse for each problem for easy reference when they are driving you crazy! Take your child to the chart, identify his slothful action or attitude, read what God says about it, and pray for His strength to obey.

It is important to note that the Internet is not only an effective tool for marketing and for movement building, and as I have just noted, for dealing with the emotional and intellectual labor home schooling requires. Just as importantly, it has become an extremely powerful tool for advocacy work and lobbying. Thus, the Home School Legal Defense Association has been at the forefront of not only home schooling, but in active and aggressive efforts to coordinate lobbyists inside and outside the Washington “Beltway.” The HSDLA’s Congressional Action Program has proven how powerful and responsive a tool such as the Internet can be in mobilizing for and against Congressional and state laws and in defending the interests of its conservative positions (Stevens, 2001, pp. 178-179).⁵ However, once again, such mobilizing about home schooling needs to be situated within its larger context if we are not to miss some crucial connections between conservative oriented home schooling and the more extensive authoritarian movement of which it is a key part. In this regard, it is worthwhile remembering what I noted earlier—that one of the most visible leaders of the home school movement nationally is Michael Farris. Farris has played a crucial leadership role in the HSDLA (Green, Rozell, & Wilcox, 2000) and for a period of time was the President of Patrick Henry College

(now a university). Patrick Henry is a university largely for religiously conservative home schooled students and it for a long period of time had one major—government. The principles that animate its educational activities are quite clear in the following description:

The Vision of Patrick Henry College is to aid in the transformation of American society by training Christian students to serve God and mankind with a passion for righteousness, justice and mercy, through careers of public service and cultural influence. The Distinctives of Patrick Henry College include practical apprenticeship methodology; a deliberate outreach to home schooled students; financial independence; a general education core based on the classical liberal arts; a dedication to mentoring and disciplining Christian students; and a community life that promotes virtue, leadership, and strong, life long commitments to God, family and society.

The Mission of the Department of Government is to promote practical application of biblical principles and the original intent of the founding documents of the American republic, while preparing students for lives of public service, advocacy and citizen leadership.

(<http://www.phc.edu/about/FundamentalStatements.asp>)

These aims are both laudable and yet worrisome. Create an environment where students learn to play active roles in reconstructing both their lives and the larger society. But make certain that the society they wish to build is based wholly on principles that themselves are not open to social criticism by non-believers. Only those anointed by their particular version of God and only a society built upon the vision held by the anointed is legitimate. All else is sinful.

One can get a sense of how close students with this vision are to the seat of power in the United States from the little known fact that interns from Patrick Henry worked in Karl Rove's office in the White House (Rosin, 2005). Rove was one of the most powerful and the controversial figures in the George W. Bush administration and was and still is at the center of a good deal of rightist strategy nationally. Thus, Patrick Henry is more than a little effective in its goal of placing students as apprentices to positions of authority in which they can indeed "promote practical ap-

plication of biblical principles and the original intent of the founding documents of the American republic, while preparing students for lives of public service, advocacy and citizen leadership.” This is related as well to the connections that have been made about education for both religion and public citizenship between the conservative leadership of major corporations such as Wal-Mart and conservative religious colleges and universities throughout the United States and Latin America (see Moreton, 2009).

Thus, for all of its creative uses of technology, its understanding of “market needs” and how to fill them, its personal sacrifices, the immense labor of the mostly women who are engaged in the work of actually doing it, and its rapid growth fostered by good press and creative mobilizing strategies, a good deal of home schooling speaks the language of authoritarian populism. There’s an inside and an outside. And for many authoritarian populists, the only way to protect the inside is to change the outside so that it mirrors the religious impulses and commitments of the inside. Doing this is hard political, educational, and emotional work. And new technologies clearly are playing a growing role in such personal and social labor.

Conclusion

In this article, I have taken a rapidly growing part of rightist mobilizations and examined a number of the complexities involved in the cultural and political efforts within this increasingly powerful movement that has claimed subaltern status. This has involved critically analyzing a set of technological resources—the Internet—and situating it within the social context of its use within a specific community and by specific people within that community. In so doing, I have suggested that in order to understand the social meaning and uses of these technologies, we need to examine the social movement that provides the context for their use and the identities that are being constructed within that social movement. I have also argued that we need to critically analyze the kind of labor that is required in home schooling, who is engaged in such labor, and how such labor is interpreted by the actors who perform it. Only in this way can we understand the lived problems such technologies actually solve. And I have pointed to how the space for production of such “solutions” is increasing-

ly occupied by ideological and/or commercial interests who have responded to and enlarged a market to “fill the needs” of religiously conservative home schoolers.

A good deal of my focus has been on the work of mothers, of “Godly women” who have actively created new identities for themselves (and their children and husbands)⁶ and have found in new technologies solutions to a huge array of difficult personal and political problems in their daily lives. Such Godly women are not that much different from any of us. But they are “dedicated to securing for themselves and their families a thoroughly religious and conservative life” (Brasher, 1998, p. 29). And they do this with uncommon sacrifice and creativity.

The picture I have presented is complicated; but then so too is reality. On the one hand, one of the dynamics we are seeing is social disintegration, that is the loss of legitimacy of a dominant institution that supposedly bound us together—the common school. Yet, and very importantly, what we are also witnessing is the use of the Internet not to “de-traditionalize” society, but in the cases I have examined here, to re-traditionalize parts of it. However, to call this phenomenon simply re-traditionalization is to miss the ways in which such technologies are also embedded not only in traditional values and structures of feeling. They are also participating in a more “modern” project, one in which self-actualized individualism intersects with the history of social maternalism, which itself intersects with the reconstitution of masculinities as well.

But such maternalism needs to be seen as both positive and negative, and not only in its partial revivification of elements of patriarchal relations—although obviously this set of issues must not be ignored in any way. We need to respect the labor and the significant sacrifices of home schooling mothers (and the fathers as well since the question of altered masculinities in home schooling families is an important topic that needs to be focused upon in a way that complements what I have done here). This sensitivity to the complexities and contradictions that are so deeply involved in what these religiously motivated parents are attempting is perhaps best seen in the words of Jean Hardisty when she reflects on populist rightist movements in general.

. . . I continue to believe that, within that movement, there are people who are decent and capable of great caring, who are creating community and finding coping strategies that are enabling

them to lead functional lives in a cruel and uncaring late capitalist environment. (Haristy, 1999, pp. 2-3)

However, recognizing such caring, labor, and sacrifice—and the creative uses of technologies that accompany them—should not make us lose sight of what this labor and these sacrifices also produce. Godly technologies, godly schooling, and godly identities can be personally satisfying and make life personally meaningful in a world in which traditions are either destroyed or commodified. But at what cost to those who don't share the ideological vision that seems so certain in the minds of those who produce it?

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Notes

This article is based on a briefer treatment in Michael W. Apple, *Educating the "Right" Way: Markets, Standards, God, and Inequality*, 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2006.

¹ The Right has been in the forefront of the use of the Internet, not only in creating linkages among existing members on key issues of concern. In understanding that youth are among the heaviest users of the Internet, conservative organizations have creatively employed such technology to build sophisticated websites whose form and content appeal to youth (Hardisty, 1999, p. 46).

² Actually, many of these technologies in fact were not labor saving ultimately. See Schwarz Cowan (1983) and Strasser (1982).

³ Much of this literature, however, draws upon the experiences of White women. The meaning of domesticity and the discourses of motherhood among Black women cannot be understood from the standpoint of dominant groups. For more on this crucial point, see Boris (1993). Since the vast majority of right-wing home schoolers are indeed White, I have drawn upon a literature that is based in their experiences. For a portrait of one "minority" family, see Kunzman (2009). Of course, the issue of race itself is of crucial importance in understanding conservative agendas in educational policy, especially the commitment to choice plans, marketization, privatization, and similar things. See Apple (2006) for further discussion of this. See also Gillborn (2008) and Apple, Au, & Gandin (2009).

⁴ I would like to thank Rima D. Apple for her helpful comments on this section.

⁵ One of the most powerful figures in HSLDA is Michael Farris. He acts as both a public spokesperson for conservative home schoolers and as a legal advocate in court cases around the country. Farris has a long history of rightist activism. He ran for Lieutenant Governor of Virginia in 1993 on a strikingly conservative platform. Interestingly enough, he did not receive the endorsement of a number of other conservative Christian groups and national figures who believed that his public positions might alienate swing voters and actually harm the rightist cause. See Rozell and Wilcox (1996).

⁶ I am not assuming the normative heterosexual family here. There is no literature on gay and lesbian home schoolers. Given the ideological position that the vast majority of conservative evangelicals take on the question of sexuality, I am simply reflecting their own assumptions.

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The Scientific & Democratic Revolution in Education

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The Scientific & Democratic Revolution in Education

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Abstract

The main issue dealt with in this theoretical paper is the explanation of the starting scientific and democratic revolution both in the educative field and in the educative research. In addition, evidence-based arguments are included to provide validity of some affirmations. The first section argues that the social sciences are the daughters and an essential part of democracy. A few historical arguments about the way in which the dominant classes have slowed down the scientific progress and the development of people that make it possible. In the second section, it is analyzed the opposition of feudal universities to this unstoppable beginning of what could be called the scientific and democratic revolution. At the same time, we deal with its ambivalent character requiring to be supported and to be criticized so that it can be improved. In the third section, we expound the way in which this progress has provide some conditions that makes it possible to overcome the strong gender-based violence happening in our institutions of higher education and makes it also possible that women who were persecuted are now transforming our universities. Influences and criticism to our university feudalism, made by social movements such as the named 'Spanish Revolution', appear in the fourth section. In the fifth and last section, we offer a proposal to promote the scientific, democratic, and revolutionary approach of the university.

Keywords: Scientific revolution, democracy, university, science, social change.

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La Revolución Científica y Democrática en Educación

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Resumen

La idea central desarrollada en este artículo teórico se basa en la explicación de cómo se ha iniciado una revolución científica y democrática tanto en el ámbito de la educación como en el de la investigación educativa. Se incluyen además, argumentos respaldados por evidencias empíricas que clarifican la validez de algunas de las afirmaciones. El primer apartado argumenta que las propias ciencias sociales son hijas y parte imprescindible de la democracia. Se aportan argumentos históricos acerca del freno que las clases dominantes han supuesto para el avance científico y para muchas de las personas que lo desarrollan. En segundo lugar, se analiza la oposición de las universidades feudales a este imparable inicio de lo que podemos llamar como revolución científica y democrática. A su vez se profundiza en el carácter ambivalente, que exige al mismo tiempo, que se la apoye y se la critique para mejorarla. Se expone en tercer lugar como este avance ha creado condiciones para superar la enorme violencia de género que hay en nuestras instituciones de educación superior, logrando, que quienes antes eran perseguidas en el sistema feudal, estén ahora transformando nuestras universidades. La cuarta sección recoge la influencia y la crítica a nuestro feudalismo universitario manifestada por los últimos movimientos sociales, ejemplificados en la denominada "Spanish Revolution. En quinto y último lugar, se ofrece una propuesta que promueve el enfoque científico, democrático y revolucionario de la universidad.

Palabras clave: Revolución científica, democracia, universidad, ciencia, cambio social.

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Las ciencias sociales son hijas de la democracia. Con la revolución estadounidense, y luego la francesa, la ciudadanía decidió autogobernarse según normas democráticamente elaboradas sustituyendo a las impuestas por un soberano, por un rey que se suponía recibía la soberanía de Dios. Para autogobernarse, necesitaban autoconocerse, tarea para la que se crearon y se siguen desarrollando las diferentes ciencias sociales. El derecho universal a la educación y la construcción de sistemas educativos para hacerlo realidad son también creaciones de las mismas revoluciones. Los enemigos de la democracia siempre lo han sido también de las ciencias sociales y del sistema escolar, atacándolos frontalmente, deconstruyéndolos, resaltando sus efectos negativos reales o inventados, o bien subordinándolos a unos límites establecidos por los poderes fácticos.

Desde el genial giro copernicano de 1543, las revoluciones científicas han tenido como principal enemigo los poderes feudales y las instituciones estamentales que temían el renacimiento, la reforma, la ciencia y todo aquello que menoscabara su tradicional autoridad. Quienes inician la persecución contra Galileo fueron sus propios colegas de las instituciones académicas estamentales, cuando no vieron otra forma de frenar los contundentes argumentos copernicanos que destruir a sus máximos representantes y concretamente a Galileo.

Una estrategia de los poderes feudales “laicos” es difundir la falsedad de que el enemigo de la revolución copernicana fue la religión, exculpando así a las instituciones estamentales no propiamente religiosas. Si eso fuera verdad, Copérnico sería un ateo o, al menos, un agnóstico; sin embargo, era un clérigo y llegó a administrar la iglesia de un territorio. Son muchas las personas de ciencia que han sido religiosas e incluso que han encontrado en la religión una motivación extra para su dedicación científica. Newton llegó a poner en peligro su propio ojo con experimentos destinados a demostrar una teoría sobre la luz que impulsara su intensa opción religiosa frente a Descartes, y escribió mucho más sobre religión que sobre ciencia. Quien se opuso a Galileo no fue pues la religión sino la Iglesia Católica como institución estamental, uniéndose así a la persecución que ya habían iniciado las instituciones estamentales académicas.

Igual que en el siglo XVI, las universidades feudales de la actualidad siguen atacando a la ciencia y a sus representantes, cuando ésta va en contra de sus intereses corporativos. Una estrategia muy común de los señores feudales que ahora dominan esas universidades es presentar la ciencia como una ideología de las clases dominantes para legitimar la explotación, mientras que las ocurrencias de los señores feudales son presentadas como aportaciones de gran valor intelectual y tan críticas que todo el mundo debe seguirlas. La realidad siempre ha sido y sigue siendo justo lo contrario, tanto en la Edad Media como ahora. A Hipatia de Alejandría no la mataron por atacar la ciencia sino por defenderla; en la hoguera de la Inquisición no se quemaba a quienes atacaban la ciencia y sí se quemaba a quienes la defendían. Las clases dominantes siempre se han resistido a los avances científicos que cuestionaban sus no legítimos poderes y lo siguen haciendo ahora, por ejemplo, cuando combaten por ejemplo los datos sobre el calentamiento global del planeta o cuando presentan el creacionismo como una concepción alternativa a la evolución.

Chomsky dice que la tarea de todo intelectual y de toda persona decente es buscar y decir la verdad (Chomsky, 2006). Paulo Freire decía que necesitamos ciencia e ilusión, ambas imprescindibles para contribuir a la mejora de la educación para todas y todos (Freire 1970). Ferrer y Guardia promovía los conocimientos científicos frente a las ideologías dominantes (Ferrer y Guardia, 1976). Todas las personas que han hecho contribuciones significativas a la mejora de la educación han sido grandes defensoras de las ciencias; en general, han criticado el status quo de esas ciencias, pero precisamente siempre ha sido para hacerlas más científicas y más libres de las limitaciones que las imponen los poderes establecidos. Quienes se han posicionado en contra de las ciencias son quienes han estado a favor de los peores poderes dominantes que temen que busquemos y digamos la verdad.

La ambivalencia del actual proceso revolucionario en nuestras universidades

Como ya demostró Kuhn en 1962, para que el giro copernicano y, en general, toda revolución científica avance se necesita no sólo argumentos sino también cambios institucionales y sociales. Nuestras universidades han tenido hasta ahora estructuras feudales que han atacado los avances

científicos en educación y perseguido a las nuevas y nuevos hipatias y copérnicos. Millones de niñas y niños han sido enviados al fracaso escolar y a la exclusión social debido a la sustitución de esos avances científicos por las ocurrencias con que algunos catedráticos españoles ganaban inmerecidamente poder, prestigio y dinero.

Por fin, ha llegado el momento de realizar la revolución científica democrática en las universidades españolas y en el conjunto de la educación. La presión de la Unión Europea, de los movimientos sociales y de la ciudadanía han creado el contexto adecuado para que investigadores e investigadoras de calidad científica y humana inicien ese gran avance que ya está mejorando y va a mejorar todavía mucho más los resultados educativos de todas las niñas y niños, que va a lograr dar un paso importantísimo hacia la realización del derecho a la educación de todas y todos.

La ciudadanía exige cada vez con más contundencia que quienes trabajamos y recibimos nuestro sueldo en instituciones académicas creemos conocimientos científicos que les sirvan para mejorar su situación, en nuestro caso, sus resultados educativos. Recientemente, se hizo una presentación pública de tres investigaciones sobre el pueblo gitano. Todas y todos los representantes de este pueblo expresaban su rabia contra dos de esas investigaciones y exigían a las administraciones que no volvieran a gastarse impuestos de las ciudadanas y ciudadanos en estudios que sólo benefician a quienes los realizan. En concreto, decían por ejemplo, que estaban hartos de que se gastara dinero en diagnósticos que les decían en qué situación se encontraban. Una gitana decía: “lo sabemos mucho mejor que vosotros, si servís para algo darnos soluciones y, si no, dedicaros a otra cosa”. En el mismo encuentro, se aplaudió intensamente al tercer estudio que daba evidencias sobre soluciones a sus problemáticas. Existe cada vez más un mayor debate ciudadano y exigencia social no sólo relacionado con las ciencias experimentales y naturales (con qué fines queremos que se investigue la energía nuclear o otras fuentes energéticas) sino también en el terreno de la educación y de las ciencias sociales. Relacionado con la racionalidad reflexiva y la racionalidad comunicativa (Habermas 1981, 1987; Beck 1996; Burawoy 2007) la sociedad cada vez más, exige a los científicos y científicas para qué fines llevan a cabo sus investigaciones y para quiénes va dirigida. Un ejemplo de ello, lo encontramos en un

congreso sobre “la ciencia contra la pobreza” celebrado en La Granja (Segovia) con motivo de la presidencia española de la Comisión Europea. Mayor Zaragoza resumió muy bien las conclusiones diciendo que ya nunca más iba a volver a un congreso donde se volviera a hacer un nuevo diagnóstico sobre la pobreza. Dijo que ya sabía que se le respondería que siempre conviene ampliar y actualizar los diagnósticos, pero que él respondería que el mejor diagnóstico es la autopsia y llega demasiado tarde. Afirmó que ya solo iría a congresos donde se aportaran evidencias de nuevas y más eficaces soluciones que las que ya se conocían.

Ahora hay una gran preocupación en Europa por el abandono escolar temprano y España tenía en el año 2010 una cifra altísima, un 28,4%¹. Hay quien desde la academia echa gran parte de culpa al pueblo gitano diciendo que sacan a sus hijas de la escuela a los doce años y no las llevan al instituto. En los años ochenta, las niñas y niños iban a la misma escuela hasta los catorce, en la EGB. Un catedrático ganó mucho prestigio y dinero con la ocurrencia de que era mejor cambiarles de centro educativo a los doce años. Muchas personas y colectivos gitanos se opusieron a esa ocurrencia y advirtieron que eso supondría un mayor abandono que si las niñas y niños se mantenían en el mismo centro hasta los catorce o más años. La comunidad científica internacional también afirmaba que si bien aquellos centros públicos situados en los barrios más desaventajados suelen tener una mayor tasa de fracaso escolar (Balfanz y Legters 2001, Frankenberg y Orfield 2007), también se destaca que una solución a dicha situación es la promoción de escuelas imán (magnet schools) en dichos barrios (Orfield y Lee 2007) y así mantener a las niñas y niños el máximo número de años en el mismo centro (Eurodice, 2005). De esta manera, también el centro se abre a la comunidad, favoreciendo la sociabilidad, las redes sociales y confianza entre vecinos (Carnoy 2001). Sin embargo, los ocurrentes que dominaban las diferentes áreas de conocimiento de la universidad feudal española lograron imponerse frente a la ciencia y a la democracia, frente a la comunidad científica internacional y a las voces gitanas.

Las familias y la ciudadanía se oponen cada vez más a estar pagando de sus impuestos miles de salarios para instituciones académicas estamentales que no divulgan la ciencia existente a nivel internacional y no aportan a ella nuevos conocimientos válidos. Exigen una revolución

científica y democrática de nuestras universidades. La Unión Europea, haciéndose eco de ese clamor ciudadano, ha presionado para que en España se haga una reforma meritocrática que, de momento, se ha concretado en organismos de acreditación externa como la ANECA que en gran parte ha sustituido al “dedo” de los catedráticos.

La LRU de 1983 consolidó la estructura feudal de las universidades españolas heredada del franquismo creando las áreas de conocimiento como feudos de algunos catedráticos que dominaban los tribunales. Igual que los siervos quedaban encerrados en su feudo y sometidos a sus señores, las profesoras y profesores universitarios quedaban encerrados dentro de su área de conocimiento y sometidos a sus señores. Las revoluciones democráticas rompieron las fronteras de los feudos y convirtieron a los habitantes en ciudadanos de sus estados con posibilidad incluso de emigrar a otros lugares. Las revoluciones científicas fueron desde el principio universales, más allá incluso de las fronteras de los estados. Por fin, ha llegado la revolución democrática y la revolución científica a nuestras universidades. Estamos ya cruzando todo tipo de fronteras, participando en la comunidad científica internacional, trabajando juntas y juntos profesorado de diferentes áreas de conocimiento sin necesidad de pedir permiso a los señores.

Con todas sus imperfecciones, el sistema meritocrático está representando un gran avance científico y democrático frente al anterior “dedo feudal”. Con LRU pronto se aprendía que la forma de llegar a ser funcionario en la universidad española era someterse al catedrático que tuviera más poder en tu departamento y/o área de conocimiento. Él (o ella) tenía el “dedo” que determinaría si una persona se llegaba a ser catedrático de universidad o tenía que irse fuera de la universidad. No había que publicar en las mejores universidades, revistas y editoriales de la comunidad científica internacional, si no hacer tesis doctorales basadas en nuestros catedráticos feudales y llenas de citas a sus obras. Tener un título de doctora por Harvard o ser suficientemente inteligente para publicar en la revista de educación de la primera universidad del mundo era un peligro que te llevaba a la expulsión por parte del catedrático feudal que parecía haberse creado una imagen de reconocimiento académico en España, pero que no había realizado ninguna aportación a la comunidad científica internacional.

Este sistema es no sólo ambivalente por los sesgos con los que se

está definiendo y aplicando, sino porque todos los procedimientos meritocráticos, por perfectos que sean tienen aspectos positivos y negativos. Los aspectos negativos son de sobra conocidos; por ejemplo, hay personas a quienes les ha entrado la obsesión por escalar en la jerarquía meritocrática sin colaborar con otras personas incluso aprovechándose de su trabajo. Por otro lado, hay personas muy trabajadoras y entregadas a la universidad cuyas tareas no se ven reconocidas por los criterios meritocráticos.

Sin embargo, en comparación con el sistema feudal anterior, estos procedimientos meritocráticos están ya mejorando muchísimo la presencia de las universidades españolas en la comunidad científica internacional y también las aportaciones que desde aquí se están haciendo a esa comunidad. Las relaciones de poder en los departamentos y universidades están cambiando muy rápidamente. Para lograr una contratación estable no tienes que someterte a ningún catedrático, sino que lo que tienes que hacer es crear conocimiento suficientemente válido para ser publicado en las principales revistas del mundo. Cada vez más profesorado precario está liberándose de las cadenas y participando plenamente en la construcción de conocimiento científico internacional.

La LRU de 1983 colocó en los vértices superiores de las pirámides que eran las diferentes áreas de conocimiento a algún español afín a los poderes establecidos que se convirtió en el señor de su área. Eso representó un “Santiago y cierra España”, a quienes había obligación de citar eran muy famosos aquí, pero nadie les conocía más allá de los Pirineos. Las referencias que tenían obligatoriamente que citar las personas doctorandas o precarias eran esos señores y no las mejores aportaciones de la comunidad científica internacional. Y los ocurrentes llamaban a eso rigurosidad e incluso ciencia. El franquismo también decía que era una democracia orgánica, una democracia mucho mejor que la que trataban de imponernos los países occidentales. Ahora a esos señores que están perdiendo su poder les pone tan nerviosos la expresión comunidad científica internacional como a los franquistas les ponía que les dijeran que la democracia estándar europea era mucho mejor que lo que ellos llamaban democracia orgánica.

La superación de la violencia de género en las universidades españolas

La comunidad internacional se escandaliza ante las enormes cifras de la violencia de género existente en las universidades españolas y de que la ley del silencio que se impuso frente a quienes quisieron denunciar y superar este problema es mucho más férrea que en países como Francia o Marruecos. Safo, el grupo de mujeres investigadoras que se atrevió a romper aquí con esa ley del silencio sufrió una terrible persecución no sólo por el lobby de acosadores de su universidad sino también por muchos catedráticos y catedráticas que no querían ver cuestionado el sistema feudal que era la única base de su poder.

Fue Safo el grupo que realizó la primera investigación I+D sobre la violencia de género en las universidades españolas (Valls, 2005). Los resultados de la investigación demuestran que un 52% de las personas encuestadas afirman haber sufrido o conocer a alguien que haya sufrido situaciones internacionalmente identificadas como violencia de género en el ámbito universitario. Además el 85% de los y las estudiantes encuestadas creen necesaria la creación de un servicio específico en la universidad donde se pueda acudir en caso de sufrir una situación de violencia de género en el contexto universitario.

También fue Safo el grupo que realizó la primera investigación I+D sobre el grado de cumplimiento por parte de las universidades españolas de la ley que les obligaba a formar al profesorado en este tema. Esta investigación presentó públicamente suficientes evidencias de que las universidades españolas no cumplían la ley. El año 2004 se aprobó la Ley orgánica 1/2004 de 28 de diciembre, de Medidas de Protección Integral contra la violencia de género, que en su artículo 7 hace referencia a la formación inicial y permanente del profesorado estableciendo que en los planes de formación inicial y permanente del profesorado, las Administraciones Educativas deben adoptar las medidas necesarias con una formación específica en igualdad. En el mismo sentido, en Catalunya, la Ley 5/2008 de 24 de abril, del derecho a las mujeres a erradicar la violencia machista, establece en el artículo 15 (punto 1) que el departamento competente debe incluir en los planes de formación iniciales y permanentes del profesorado herramientas metodológicas de actuación frente situaciones concretas de violencia machista.

Frecuentemente, representantes del feminismo internacional y de las mejores universidades del mundo nos preguntan a qué se debe esa especial intensidad de este problema y, en algún caso, se nos interroga si es debido al ancestral machismo español. La causa hay que buscarla en otro lado, porque si fuera ese supuesto machismo especial también en nuestras empresas o familias habría más violencia de género y más ley del silencio que en las de Francia o Marruecos. La causa de esa “sorprendente” intensidad está en la estructura feudal y estamental que las universidades españolas han mantenido hasta hace poco.

El sometimiento a los poderes feudales ha llevado a muchos profesores y profesoras a ponerse de parte de los acosadores y en contra de las mujeres que han roto el silencio. Todavía han sido muchos y muchas más quienes han hecho gala de su posición neutral ante este problema. Así se ha escrito la página más triste de la historia de las universidades españolas; otras páginas muy tristes se escribieron en contextos de victorias políticas; en este caso, la página ha sido escrita autónomamente por las universidades españolas.

La disculpa de quienes se proclamaban neutrales culpabilizaba frecuentemente a las víctimas diciendo que eran ellas las que tenían que presentar denuncias. De esa forma se obviaba que la culpa de cada acoso particular la tiene el agresor, pero la responsabilidad de que haya unas instituciones que promuevan el acoso en lugar de su superación es de las propias universidades. Incluso profesoras que escriben sobre coeducación se pusieron de parte de los acosadores o se mantuvieron “neutrales”. Tuvo que venir la Inspección de Trabajo a dejar claro que las instituciones pueden fomentar el acoso o su superación.

El expediente abierto por la Inspección de Trabajo, que podría derivar en una sanción, pretende determinar si la Universidad cuenta con los mecanismos necesarios para prevenir casos de acoso sexual o si, por el contrario, su modelo organizativo favorece las conductas abusivas contra trabajadores y estudiantes. (El País 5/6/2009, Agencia EFE 18/4/2010).

Todavía queda mucho por hacer. Los equipos rectorales, decanales e incluso las juntas de Facultad de algunas universidades están nombrando como miembros de esas comisiones de igualdad a conocidos miembros de los lobbies de acosadores. Pero hay cada vez más personas de esas comisiones de igualdad que se están comprometiendo cada vez con más

intensidad para traer a nuestras universidades los criterios de prevención de la violencia de género que están ya hace tiempo en las mejores universidades del mundo como Harvard y Wisconsin.

Las mujeres de Safo (el Grupo de Mujeres de CREA) y otras muchas mujeres de universidades españolas que han colaborado en esa tarea han sufrido mucho para lograrlo; sólo lo han conseguido gracias al decidido apoyo que han tenido de personas de universidades como Harvard, del Lobby Europeo de Mujeres, del feminismo internacional y de algunas personas de universidades españolas. Por ejemplo, Sarah Rankin, Director Office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Harvard University escribió a Lidia Puigvert, coordinadora / representatne de Safo, una carta en la que decía:

Me siento afortunada de que muchas de las leyes federales que rigen los campus universitarios aborden el tema de la violencia de género en los Estados Unidos, que surgieron a partir de reivindicaciones de mujeres y hombres antes que yo. He tenido el lujo de construir sobre sus éxitos. Los esfuerzos de CREA para establecer estos fundamentos para romper el silencio que envuelve la violencia de género es estimulante. Las futuras generaciones de estudiantes y profesorado, sin duda, tendrán una experiencia de clase muy diferente a causa de vuestro trabajo. Me siento especialmente en deuda con Lidia Puigvert... Sólo tienes que pasar unos pocos minutos con Lidia para saber que está profundamente apasionada cuando se trata de mejorar las vidas de las mujeres. Ella representa todo lo que me hace sentir orgullosa de ser feminista y me siento afortunada de haber tenido la oportunidad de conocerla y de ser testimonio de primera mano del trabajo riguroso que hace CREA².

La ruptura del silencio por parte de Safo y el decidido apoyo a nivel internacional han logrado que hoy todas las universidades españolas estén obligadas a tener comisiones de igualdad y que un número creciente de ellas ya estén definiendo procedimientos de prevención y superación de la violencia de género.

La “Spanish Revolution” y sus críticas al feudalismo universitario español

El 15 de Mayo del 2011 se desencadenó en España lo que el Washington Post (Block, 2011) bautizó como The Spanish Revolution. Algunos de sus lemas: “Ahora es el pueblo el que habla”, “Estamos empezando a cambiar las cosas”. Este movimiento nació con una alta dosis de protesta y su propuesta se basa en la crítica al sistema antidemocrático y capitalista. Los efectos han calado no sólo en las conciencias de muchas personas, sino en las dinámicas que empiezan a impregnarse en los funcionamientos de diversos contextos.

La Universidad, como institución en la que pivotan las reacciones sociales y con un potencial transformador dormido últimamente, se ha visto partícipe de esta oleada revolucionaria. Son muchas y muchos los jóvenes que se han organizado en comisiones y han debatido de un modo dialógico ejemplar las decisiones que estaba afectando en el contexto universitario. ¿Qué paralelismos encontramos entre este movimiento y el funcionamiento universitario? ¿Cuáles son las demandas para nuestra Universidad y que a la vez promueven la excelencia científica?

- Representación real de todos los miembros de la universidad: Cuando hablan de representación no sólo estamos refiriéndonos al porcentaje de colectivos universitarios que representan los diferentes estamentos en los órganos de gobierno, exigiendo una radical democracia en la toma de decisiones, sino a considerar como principal fuente de riqueza a todos los integrantes que conforman la comunidad universitaria. Esto conlleva una concepción implícita de lo que es la Universidad; que tiene más que ver con una Comunidad de Aprendizaje, donde la sociedad está presente (Padrós, García, de Mello & Molina, 2011; Valls & Padrós, 2011; Oliver & Gatt, 2010; García, Mircea & Duque, 2010), que a centros regidos por la conservación de los intereses de un cuerpo de funcionarios del Estado.

- Promoción de investigaciones que promuevan realmente el cambio social y las necesidades ciudadanas: Entienden por transformación en la investigación todas aquellas aportaciones que pretenden revestir a las personas de aquellos valores que el consenso de la sociedad ha considerado como benefactores del colectivo humano (Rodríguez Rojo, Palomero Pescador & Teruel Melero, 2006) y es aquí donde la Univer-

sidad se pone al servicio de la Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo, del mismo modo que lo admiten la ONU, la UNESCO, el PENUD, así como la Declaración de los ocho Objetivos del Milenio y de todas las ONGs que colaboran con los contextos universitarios.

En este sentido la excelencia científica se pone al servicio de la comunidad, siendo la ciencia, la transformación social y la democracia pilares de un mismo edificio. Las mejores universidades como la de Harvard o la de Wisconsin, dan por sentado la transformación social como parte de sus investigaciones científicas, a través de la formación y promoción de investigadores con resultados que ofrezcan una clara mejora de su contexto social. Otro ejemplo que nos evidencia el creciente interés por la promoción de la transformación social a través de la educación, es el congreso inaugural del 2007, que se celebró en Hong Kong, a través de la Asociación Mundial para “el estudio de la enseñanza”, por el creciente interés internacional en la transformación social y educativa. También lo es el congreso de 2012 de la American Educational Research Association que lleva por lema “Non Satis Scire” To Know is Not Enough. El debate gira entorno al papel de contribución social y el deber de investigar para mejorar la educación y servir al público de los investigadores e investigadoras sociales.

- Funcionamiento democrático dentro de la Universidad: Son muchos los autores los que han reflexionado sobre el proceso de mejora y transformación universitaria sufrida en el último decenio. Hemos oído hablar de mejora de la docencia (Robertson 2006), de calidad en los procesos de aprendizaje del alumnado (Harvey & Green, 1993; Palomero & Torrego Egidio, 2004), de un diferente papel del profesor centrado en la gestión de conocimientos y no sólo en la transmisión (William & Tierney, 2003), en una organización de la formación orientada a la consecución de competencias genéricas (De la Calle Velasco, 2004), en los cambios de organización de los aprendizajes centrados en la coordinación, continuidad y progresividad (Smith-Maddox, & Solórzano, 2002; Rué Domingo, 2004), entre el equilibrio de las exigencias profesionales y las académicas (William & Tierney, 2003), de evaluación y de la formación a lo largo de la vida o Lifelong learning (Schauwer & Geert, 2011; López Pastor, 2006; Taibo, 2006).

Y siendo todos estos temas básicos para la transformación interna,

ninguno de ellos tendría sentido si no es bajo el paraguas del funcionamiento democrático que rompa con las viejas estructuras feudales universitarias con las que hemos funcionado hasta ahora. Como bien explica Henry Giroux (1990), el currículum oculto tiene mucho más poder que el conocimiento objetivo y fáctico y, por ello, se hace inminente un funcionamiento universitario democrático real como el que proclama el 15M en sus manifestaciones, para que bajo esa cobertura se hagan reales las medidas curriculares y concretas realizadas en la Universidad.

- Funcionamiento y puesta en marcha de mecanismos de diálogo político orientado hacia la construcción de una estructura de funcionamiento igualitario: Otra consigna clara tanto que el movimiento del 15M, que está empezando a introducirse en nuestras universidades, es la necesidad del diálogo. Para que éste sea efectivo, se necesita establecer un funcionamiento interdisciplinar, donde se rompa con la vieja estructura y monopolios de las áreas de conocimiento y se trabaje como lo vienen haciendo desde hace años ya, las propuestas y convocatorias de los proyectos europeos. El trabajo interdisciplinar dirigido hacia la mejora científica y transformación social, permitirá regular las jerarquías y las dependencias que van enquistándose entre los profesionales de diferentes rangos académicos. Se trabajará así al servicio del progreso y no de la deuda al catedrático.

En los últimos años, el proceso de construcción del Espacio Europeo Superior se ha convertido en un cruce de lógicas y de discursos que han generado un fuerte debate sobre el rumbo de la universidad. Muchos estudios han analizado y ofrecido propuestas hacia donde podrían dirigirse estas transformaciones que la economía y la cultura globalizada han impuesto en nuestros contextos universitarios. Dentro de este contexto, la Universidad se ha visto impulsada a crear su espacio y es aquí donde la llamada al profesorado revolucionario adquiere sentido y donde la comunidad científica internacional puede aportarnos algunas trayectorias que mejoren nuestro entorno. Algunas de ellas las hemos mencionado en los párrafos anteriores.

Y todo esto empieza a vislumbrarse en nuestras universidades. Si antes recorría un fantasma por Europa, ahora la comunidad científica internacional está pisando tan fuerte que puede lograr equilibrar las injusticias producidas antes los grandes feudos catedralicios. Son claros ejemplos

de este funcionamiento la Universidad de Harvard o la de Wisconsin, en las cuales, se exige un porcentaje distribuido de profesores y profesoras en función del género, raza y en dónde antes de empezar a dar clases tiene que cursar los cursos de igualdad y diversidad organizados por la oficina de Igualdad y Diversidad de la propia Universidad.

Generar conocimiento autónomo, libre y de calidad y equiparnos en los rankings de otras universidades internacionales tendrá que pasar por dismantlar el sistema feudal y abrirse de forma dialógica a la comunidad científica internacional. Al igual que la revolución francesa supuso avances notables en la humanidad, la transformación universitaria generará conocimiento de calidad, al deshacerse de funcionamientos caciques y anacrónicos que perjudican la producción de conocimiento científico.

Desde este movimiento democrático se han realizado duras críticas al actual feudalismo universitario español que resumimos a continuación. Son muchos los casos representados en toda nuestra geografía con los que nos hemos encontrado en los últimos años y cuyas consecuencias nos han demostrado que están coexistiendo distintas formas de funcionar y conceptualizar la universidad. Una de ellas está en función del servilismo hacia los catedráticos que conquistaron sus feudos años pasados, generando jerarquías y dependencias entre los diferentes profesionales e impidiendo el libre pensamiento. Y otra, que empieza a instaurarse de forma cada vez más potente y que está al servicio de la meritocracia y de la excelencia científica internacional, cuyos logros a pesar, de tener sus limitaciones, están logrando derrumbar muchas de las conquistas injustas que tanto han retrasado el conocimiento en nuestro país.

Podemos sintetizar en varios epígrafes algunas de las características fundamentales que han dibujado el panorama de las universidades españolas y que seguro son fácilmente identificadas por los lectores.

- Subjetividad y oscurantismo en las baremaciones: Se da la paradoja de tener dos baremaciones diferentes accediendo a la misma plaza con el mismo currículum. ¿Hacia dónde dirigen sus esfuerzos los jóvenes docentes e investigadores, si no saben exactamente el puntaje con el que van a ser valorados?

- Falta de libertad de expresión: Son muchas y muchos quienes han sufrido acoso por los catedráticos del área; en sus pensamientos más internos, ¿no dudaron en las consecuencias que la denuncia podría tener para su continuidad y proyección universitaria? Con frecuencia, persisten en sus intentos de promoción sin denunciar porque no se atreven o no les interesa. También han sido muchas y muchos quienes han mirado hacia otro lado por no perjudicar su trayectoria, en vez de apoyar a sus compañeros y compañeras.

- Difamación a través de complicidades corporativas: En muchas ocasiones, las complicidades corporativas se crean como medidas de presión para intercambiarse favores, sean justos o no. Se aplica la ley del: “hoy por ti, mañana por mí”, pero siempre ocupado por las altas jerarquías, sin tener en cuenta a la base.

- Generar falsas esperanzas: Son muchas las veces en las que se oyen o se escuchan promesas de estabilidad en las plazas hacia los precarios a cambio de que realicen ahora trabajos para mejorar los tramos de investigación de quienes realizan esas promesas a otros profesionales.

- La deuda o fidelidad eterna: ¿Cuántos son los profesionales que por haber sido ayudados por “sus” catedráticos a conseguir sus plazas permanecen hipotecados el resto de sus trayectorias profesionales, sin atreverse a generar conocimiento de forma autónoma?

¿Pretenden estas formas de hacer, reproducir modelos en las nuevas generaciones, para perpetuar el funcionamiento feudal universitario a largo plazo? Es decir, ¿se pretende que se sigan debiendo favores, generando dependencias, diferenciado en jerarquías para que la rueda siga funcionando del mismo modo? Si queremos calidad y excelencia científica, se deben romper con estas inercias que tanto están perjudicando al panorama universitario. Un país cuando se autoconsume en batallas políticas internas, se vuelve irrelevante (Rodríguez Rojo, Palomero Pescador y Teruel Melero, 2006: 24). ¿Acaso no son los grupos investigadores más democráticos, los que más calidad científica están demostrando en los últimos años? Las universidades, al igual que las empresas u organizaciones laborales más eficientes son aquellas que mejor funcionamiento interno y

democrático tienen. Y es que un nuevo momento se está cristalizando en nuestra sociedad.

De los congresos feudales a los congresos científicos y democráticos

Esta revolución es imparable, pero será más rápida y las represalias de los señores serán menores con un desarrollo institucional que de fuerza a esos principios democráticos y científicos que nos unen a personas de muy diferentes opciones ante ideologías, religiones, etc. Esto es ahora posible porque el profesorado precario se ha visto liberado de su obligación anterior a acudir a los congresos de su área de conocimiento donde los protagonistas eran los catedráticos feudales. Cuando éstos tenían el “dedo” de esa participación dependía que pudieran llegar a tener algún día un contrato estable. Hoy esa existencia supone gastar un dinero y un tiempo que se necesita para acudir a congresos internacionales y donde se aprenda a hacer publicaciones reconocidas por la comunidad científica internacional.

Esta liberación no se dará de repente y de forma simultánea igualitaria en todos los casos. Los catedráticos feudales todavía se aferran al poco poder que les va quedando, por ejemplo tratando de controlar quién será la persona contratada, entre las varias ya acreditadas que pueden presentarse a un concurso. Este poder dará un miedo lógico a profesorado precario de ver vetada su continuidad en ese departamento. Además, no hemos de olvidar que parte de esos catedráticos también participan como evaluadores de las acreditaciones.

No obstante, la principal necesidad de todo profesor y profesora precaria es acreditarse. Para lograrlo, lo mejor que se puede hacer es acudir a congresos orientados a producir conocimiento con suficiente calidad como para ser publicado en las revistas que exigen esas acreditaciones. La reciente creación de la Asociación Multidisciplinar de Investigación Educativa (AMIE) es una gran noticia en esa perspectiva tanto para la investigación educativa española como para su presencia en la investigación educativa mundial y para la mejora de nuestra educación.

Como señalábamos al principio de este artículo, la revolución es al mismo tiempo científica y democrática. El congreso convocado por AMIE (CIMIE) está organizado de forma totalmente democrática y transparente. AMIE y CIMIE proveen el contexto institucional necesario para que las energías de las investigadoras e investigadores españoles en educación

vayan dirigidas a la creación de calidad científica que mejore la situación de todas las niñas y niños. Se acabaron las jerarquías feudales, sus privilegios estamentales y sus “derechos de pernada”. Las universidades españolas inician una nueva época en este campo que, como decía Sara Ranking, hará que las y los estudiantes tengan una mejor vida en sus aulas.

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Notes

¹<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tsisc060&plugin=1> (Consultado el 9 de octubre de 2011).

²<http://creaub.info/cat/2010/03/25/els-esforços-de-crea-en-establir-les-bases-per-trencar-el-silenci-al-voltant-de-la-violència-de-gènere-son-encoratjadors/>

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Dialogic Learning: Basis for Education & Transformation in Brasil

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Dialogic Learning: The Basis for Education & Social Transformation in Brasil

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Abstract

The present paper aims to introduce the Nucleus of Investigation and Social and Educational Action (NIASE), which is an academic nucleus in Brazil whose practices are based on the concept of dialogic learning (Flecha, 1997) as well as on the communicative action theory by Jürgen Habermas and on the concept of dialogicity by Paulo Freire. Dialogic learning is the result of dialogue directed to the overcoming of social and educational challenges which can be achieved through seven articulated principles: egalitarian dialogue, cultural intelligence, transformation, instrumental dimension, creation of meaning, sympathy and equality of differences. NIASE, which was founded in Brazil in 2002 with the purpose of working with education, research and extension, has found in dialogic learning the support for the democratic organization of schooling and non-schooling educational environments, whose participants decide on seeking learning qualification and the social respect from the involved groups. As a result of such actions, the concept of dialogic learning has made an impact on education and academic production in Brazil, therefore contributing to consolidate the social commitment and the dialogue between the scientific community and the broader context in which it is involved.

Keywords: University, Knowledge, Communicative Action, Dialogicity.

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Aprendizagem Dialógica: Base para Educação e a Transformação Social no Brasil

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Resumo

Este trabalho visa apresentar o Núcleo de Investigação e Ação Social e Educativa (NIASE), núcleo acadêmico do Brasil, cujas práticas se apoiam no conceito de aprendizagem dialógica (Flecha, 1997), com fundamentação na teoria da ação comunicativa, de Jürgen Habermas e no conceito de dialogicidade de Paulo Freire. A aprendizagem dialógica é produto do diálogo orientado à superação de desafios sociais e educativos, cuja concretização está proposta a partir de sete princípios articulados: diálogo igualitário, inteligência cultural, transformação, dimensão instrumental, criação de sentido, solidariedade e igualdade de diferenças. Criado no Brasil, em 2002, para atuar em ensino, pesquisa e extensão, o NIASE recorre ao conceito de aprendizagem dialógica para apoiar a organização democrática de espaços formativos escolares e não escolares, cujos participantes decidem buscar a qualificação da aprendizagem e o respeito social dos coletivos envolvidos. Como resultados dessas ações, o conceito de aprendizagem dialógica apresenta impactos sobre a escolarização e a produção acadêmica do Brasil, contribuindo para consolidar o compromisso social e o diálogo entre a comunidade científica e o contexto mais amplo que a envolve.

Palavras-chave: Universidade, conhecimento, ação comunicativa, dialogicidade.

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Desde as últimas décadas do século XX, a educação vem sendo apresentada como direito institucionalizado em todo o mundo. No Brasil, a democratização da educação vem demandando essas ações concretas para a superação de desafios historicamente estabelecidos. Nesse cenário, as universidades são chamadas a participar junto à comunidade, contribuindo para alicerçar conhecimentos e práticas que efetivamente contribuam para a educação de todas as pessoas e em diferentes âmbitos formativos.

Com a pretensão de destacar o papel fundamental dessas instituições nos processos de garantia de direitos e de melhorias das condições de vida das populações, neste trabalho, pretendemos apresentar o Núcleo de Investigação e Ação Social e Educativa da Universidade Federal de São Carlos (NIASE), do Brasil. Esse núcleo acadêmico toma, para suas práticas, o conceito de aprendizagem dialógica (Flecha, 1997), elaborado pelo Centro Especial de Investigação em Teorias e Práticas Superadoras de Desigualdades da Universidade de Barcelona/Espanha (CREA), com base na teoria da ação comunicativa, de Jürgen Habermas (1981/2001)¹ e no conceito de dialogicidade, de Paulo Freire (1995/2005).

Para desenvolvermos este texto, quatro apartados serão apresentados. Examinaremos primeiramente o conceito de aprendizagem dialógica, tendo em vista compreender suas contribuições para o cenário social e educacional em que nos encontramos. Faremos isso, destacando os conceitos de “ação comunicativa” e de “dialogicidade” como bases fundamentais para as práticas sociais e acadêmicas relacionadas à educação.

Em seguida, apresentaremos o NIASE, cuja proposta recorre ao conceito de aprendizagem dialógica para se voltar ao ensino, à pesquisa e à extensão. Dessa forma, pretendemos retomar brevemente as circunstâncias de sua criação e fundamentar as práticas e as ações originalmente desenvolvidas pelo núcleo.

No terceiro apartado, focalizaremos a configuração atual desse núcleo e os principais resultados de sua proposta pautada na busca pela concretização do conceito de aprendizagem dialógica, nas relações entre o contexto acadêmico e o social. Com isso, pretendemos destacar seus impactos sobre a produção do conhecimento e a realidade educacional brasileira.

O conceito de Aprendizagem Dialógica como base para práticas educacionais

Nas últimas duas décadas do século XX, assistimos a grandes mudanças, tanto no campo socioeconômico e político quanto no da cultura, da ciência e da tecnologia.

Segundo Castells (1999), durante a década de 1970, houve uma mudança de paradigma em nossas relações sociais, econômicas e políticas. A sociedade industrial foi superada por um novo tipo de sociedade, gerada ao redor das novas tecnologias da informação. Esta “nova” sociedade, segundo Elboj, Puigdemívol, Soler & Valls (2002), recebeu diferentes denominações: sociedade da informação, sociedade do conhecimento e sociedade cognitiva, posto que todas essas ideias remetem-nos às capacidades intelectuais e aos recursos tecnológicos de tratamento da informação, diferentemente da sociedade industrial, cujo foco estava centrado na produção como fonte de riqueza, como fatores-chave da economia.

Ao passo que, na sociedade industrial, o foco estava centrado na produção como fonte de riqueza, na sociedade da informação, o foco recai na informação que se pode gerar sobre um produto para que tenha êxito no mercado, de maneira que a força produtiva passa a se concentrar mais nas capacidades reflexivas do que nas reprodutivas do intelecto. Enquanto que a informação e os recursos intelectuais passam a ser a matéria prima do mercado econômico, o êxito das organizações econômicas e sociais reside na capacidade de gerenciar informações e conhecimento, demandando pessoas com capacidades para se adaptar aos requerimentos do entorno em constante transformação. Sendo assim, o sucesso das organizações econômicas e sociais reside na capacidade de demonstrar que, para gerar informação e conhecimento, é necessário que haja pessoas com capacidades para se adaptar às demandas de um contexto em constante mudança.

Os novos processos de industrialização e de expansão dos mercados em várias regiões do mundo ampliaram o alcance e a escala da economia global, estabelecendo uma base multicultural de interdependência econômica. As redes de capital, trabalho, informação e mercados entrelaçam, mediante a tecnologia, as pessoas e as localidades mais desenvolvidas do mundo, ao passo que desconectam as redes com aquelas

populações e territórios desprovidos de valor e interesse para a dinâmica do capitalismo globalizante (Castells, 1999). Nesse sentido, enquanto que o conhecimento, a informação e a tecnologia se convertem em fontes diretas de movimentação social, poucas pessoas estão suficientemente preparadas para ocupar os postos de trabalho recentes. Por outro lado, Flecha, Gómez e Puigvert (2001) afirmam que, nessa nova lógica, a importância dada ao capital humano favorece a construção de vias para superar velhas desigualdades entre ricos e pobres, o que não se torna possível se os segmentos mais desfavorecidos forem impedidos de acesso a uma educação de qualidade. Diante disso, de maneira sem precedentes, a educação escolar adquire o crucial papel de facilitar a aprendizagem daqueles conhecimentos e técnicas que socialmente são considerados básicos e cuja falta de domínio aprofunda a desigualdade social, em uma sociedade caracterizada por aceleradas mudanças, sob a ação do desenvolvimento da ciência e da tecnologia. Como vimos, há que se considerar que a formação requerida, neste momento, deixa de ser especializada e excessivamente técnica e passa a ser polivalente e flexível.

Ademais, sob a ação da globalização em todos os âmbitos da vida, a sociedade da informação cria, por um lado, novos parâmetros de risco e perigo, e, por outro, possibilidades benéficas para a humanidade e para a convivência entre diferentes culturas. Com caráter multicultural, as demandas reflexivas dessa sociedade transcendem os limites das atividades produtivas e se estendem também aos âmbitos cotidianos de vida. Juntamente com as transformações que levam alguns teóricos (Flecha, Gómez e Puigvert, 2001) a denominarem o atual contexto como o da “sociedade da informação”, acontecem importantes mudanças nas relações sociais e, inclusive, na forma como se gera conhecimento científico e na política internacional.

Essa tendência mostra que, cada vez mais, as pessoas querem que tudo que esteja ligado às suas vidas, suas escolhas e decisões, sejam resolvidas por meio do diálogo e não de forças coercitivas. Evidentemente, isso não significa que as relações de poder tenham desaparecido por completo, mas sim que haja uma crescente tendência em se resolver os conflitos por meio do diálogo. Flecha, Gómez e Puigvert (2001) destacam que, no contexto atual, as pessoas têm se empenhado por decidirem por si próprias os rumos de suas existências, exercendo a agência

humana a despeito das difíceis condições que possam permear suas vidas. Trata-se de um “giro dialógico” nas relações humanas, reconhecido pelas ciências sociais contemporâneas, com reflexos no cotidiano das pessoas como também nas instituições sociais.

Nesse giro dialógico, as pessoas indicam que antigos padrões e normas, os quais costumavam guiar nossas vidas na sociedade industrial, perderam sua legitimidade na atual sociedade, buscando a comunicação e o diálogo para tomar suas decisões neste mundo com múltiplas opções, produzidas em meio aos valores, às normas sociais e aos intercâmbios culturais. Porém, segundo Aubert et al. (2008), nem todas as interações conduzem a máximos níveis de aprendizagem e nem contribuem para a superação de desigualdades educativas. Ao encontro de uma perspectiva mais comunicativa e dialógica, temos o conceito de aprendizagem dialógica, apresentado por Flecha (1997), a partir das contribuições da teoria da ação comunicativa de Habermas (1981/2001) e do conceito de dialogicidade de Paulo Freire (1995/2005).

Em sua teoria da ação comunicativa, Jürgen Habermas (1981/2001) discute o conceito de racionalidade sob a ótica da sociologia, explicando-nos que as ações sociais transformadoras são racionalmente apoiadas na comunicação, quando os sujeitos superam seus pontos de vista subjetivos, por serem capazes de linguagem e de ação. Na prática comunicativa, as pessoas podem estabelecer acordos entre si, ao compartilharem socialmente um saber de fundo, que lhes permita usar sua linguagem como meio de entendimento.

De acordo com Habermas (1981/2001),

o conceito de entendimento remete a um acordo racionalmente motivado alcançado entre os participantes, que se mede por pretensões de validade suscetíveis de crítica. As pretensões de validade (verdade proposicional, retidão normativa e veracidade expressiva) caracterizam diversas categorias de um saber que se encarna em manifestações ou emissões simbólicas. (Habermas, 1981/2001, p. 110)

Sendo assim, a linguagem tem papel central para o entendimento entre as pessoas do coletivo, quando se comunicam de maneira a coordenarem suas ações para alcançarem objetivos comuns. Por sua vez, as ações devem ser coordenadas de maneira que os ouvintes possam entender o significado do que foi dito. Logo, a ação comunicativa compreende uma

que se concretiza por meio da linguagem, mas que nela não se encerra, pois carrega significados a serem validados pela reflexão e pela análise intersubjetiva.

Assim, na perspectiva da aprendizagem dialógica, a situação comunicativa ideal é aquela em que as pessoas se debruçam, a partir de suas diferentes óticas, em torno de objetos da realidade, para compreendê-la melhor e promover ações coletivas pautadas na força dos argumentos aportados e não em argumentos coercitivos relacionados às posições de poder ocupadas por seus participantes. Aqui brevemente expostas, as ideias apresentadas pela teoria da ação comunicativa (1981/2001) se encontram com o conceito de dialogicidade, concebido por Paulo Freire (1995/2005), no conceito de aprendizagem dialógica. No diálogo freireano, as pessoas se encontram para “dizer o mundo” e transformá-lo. Ao relacionar democracia, conhecimento e diálogo, Freire (1995/2005) afirma que

os regimes autoritários são inimigos da curiosidade. Punem os cidadãos por ela. O poder autoritário é bisbilhoteiro e não curioso, indagador. Já a dialogicidade é cheia de curiosidade, de inquietação. De respeito mútuo entre os sujeitos que dialogam. A dialogicidade supõe maturidade, aventura do espírito, segurança ao perguntar, seriedade na resposta. No clima da dialogicidade, o sujeito que pergunta sabe a razão por que o faz. Não pergunta por puro perguntar ou para dar a impressão, a quem ouve, de que está vivo (Freire, 1995/2005, p. 80, grifos do autor).

Assim, na concepção de educação de Paulo Freire, o diálogo não é apenas um método ou uma teoria pedagógica, mas uma práxis que vincula ação humana e comunicação. Para esse educador, homens e mulheres são sujeitos sociais quando estabelecem relações entre si, com o mundo e com o contexto de realidade que os condiciona geográfica, histórica e culturalmente.

Ao mesmo tempo, Freire enfatiza a impossibilidade de dicotomizar “leitura-do-mundo” e “leitura-da-palavra” (Freire & Macedo, 2006). Sendo assim, o conteúdo do diálogo se converte em objeto educativo, quando homens e mulheres igualmente se posicionam em torno de um objeto de conhecimento para apreendê-lo e, ao compartilharem suas compreensões, poderem buscar novas formas de existência. Esses processos de ensino e aprendizagem são considerados como descoberta

criadora para educandas e educandos, educadoras e educadores, com abertura ao risco e a aventura do ser, pois ensinando se aprende e aprendendo se ensina (Freire, 2006).

A partir dessas considerações, fundamentalmente alicerçadas em Habermas (1981/2001) e em Freire (1995/2005), o conceito de aprendizagem dialógica é apresentado como produto do diálogo orientado à superação de desafios interpostos nos coletivos sociais, cuja concretização está proposta em sete princípios: diálogo igualitário, inteligência cultural, transformação, dimensão instrumental, criação de sentido, solidariedade e igualdade de diferenças. Articulados entre si, esses princípios orientam a busca por práticas mais igualitárias, visando à superação de desigualdades sociais e educativas, conforme assinalado por Flecha (1997).

No primeiro princípio, diálogo igualitário, entende-se que nenhuma idéia vale mais que outra, simplesmente pela posição de poder que o falante ocupa. Todas as ideias são respeitadas para possibilitar uma compreensão mais ampla em torno do desafio que se apresenta pelo coletivo. Nessa perspectiva, as relações se dão de maneira horizontal, de maneira que todas as pessoas tenham as mesmas condições e oportunidades de falar. Assim, um diálogo é igualitário, quando todos os apontamentos são valorizados em função da validade dos argumentos que se expõem (Elboj et al., 2002).

Nessa consideração, o princípio de inteligência cultural propõe que todas as pessoas possuem as mesmas capacidades para dialogar, mesmo que reportadas a contextos diferenciados de formação. Segundo Flecha (1997), existem barreiras “antidialógicas” que devem ser superadas, como as barreiras culturais, sociais e pessoais (de cunho subjetivo). Para superar essas barreiras, não basta vencer as discriminações sexistas, racistas, classistas e “edistas”, mas também há de se superar timidez e inseguranças geradas nas interações sexistas, racistas, classistas e “edistas” dominantes em nossa sociedade. Ao reconhecermos a inteligência cultural das pessoas, torna-se possível superar a hierarquização entre conhecimentos, contemplando tanto a inteligência desenvolvida a partir das instituições acadêmicas como também nas práticas sociais, evidenciando, dessa forma, as habilidades comunicativas e as cooperativas.

Nesse entendimento, a aprendizagem ocorre ao longo de toda a existência. Essa condição é enfatizada no princípio da transformação,

partir do qual se torna possível entender que, em situações de diálogo, as pessoas aprofundam suas compreensões sobre si próprias e a realidade em que vivem, reconhecendo-se como sujeitos que podem atuar coletivamente e promover transformações históricas e éticas. Assim, podem transformar o sentido de sua existência, superando situações de marginalização social e promovendo ações culturais, com impactos sobre suas relações familiares, trabalhistas e pessoais.

Essa transformação se faz necessária, diante das demandas sociais e educativas que caracterizam o contexto atual, evidenciando o princípio da dimensão instrumental. Nesse entendimento, estão incluídos os conhecimentos e as habilidades que devem ser aprendidas, para que indivíduos e grupos possam orientar sua existência, nos contextos culturais em que se formam.

Defendendo o princípio de criação de sentido, Flecha (1997) afirma que todos podem dar sentido à sua existência e sonhar com novos caminhos em direção a uma vida melhor. Para tanto, é preciso considerar que os contextos educativos devem ser espaços para falar e não para calar, pois o compartilhar de palavras num grupo ajuda a criar continuamente o sentido global das vidas ali implicadas.

Pelo princípio da solidariedade, entendemos a base social para as práticas educativas igualitárias, considerando que as posições de poder, muitas vezes, condicionam as relações humanas e acarretam a exclusão em âmbito social, econômico ou cultural. Diante disso, o respeito e o apoio ao outro para a superação de suas dificuldades, assim como as pequenas ações de solidariedade, possibilitam que seja tecida uma grande rede para que sejam ampliadas as transformações sociais.

Apesar de que a ideia de igualdade esteja proposta na educação contemporânea, podemos identificar que a diversidade humana é também frequentemente utilizada para justificar as desigualdades educativas, a partir do argumento de que a diferença gera de certa forma desigualdade. Entretanto, de acordo com Aubert, Flecha, Garcia, Flecha & Racionero (2008), na perspectiva dialógica, as diferenças culturais devem estar afirmadas como direito a uma educação igualitária, deduzindo-se daí o princípio das igualdade de diferenças. Ao demonstrar que todas as pessoas têm o mesmo direito de ser e de viver de diferentes formas, as diferenças não são consideradas como obstáculo, mas possibilitam maior e melhor conhecimento.

Enfim, tomamos o conceito de aprendizagem dialógica, elaborado pelo CREA, como a base para buscar mudanças sociais e educativas, considerando que, no atual contexto globalizado, as aprendizagens podem ser potencializadas, a partir da conexão entre os conhecimentos que perpassam a vida humana, em contextos cotidianos e acadêmicos. Ao tomarmos brevemente o conceito de aprendizagem dialógica, vislumbramos respostas às exigências sociais e educacionais desse contexto, possibilitando o envolvimento nos processos de decisão, de criação de conhecimentos e de ação no mundo, por parte de todas as pessoas de maneira democrática e respeitosa.

A partir dessas considerações, na próxima seção, trataremos mais especificamente do NIASE, núcleo acadêmico que busca inspiração no conceito de aprendizagem dialógica para todos os trabalhos que desenvolve. Desse modo, poderemos compreender como o conceito de aprendizagem dialógica se concretiza no contexto brasileiro.

A busca pela superação das desigualdades sociais por meio do ensino, da pesquisa e da extensão

Diante das demandas apresentadas neste século XXI, vimos que o conceito de aprendizagem dialógica, desenvolvido pelo CREA, nos traz importantes elementos para a proposta de democratizar o conhecimento no cenário brasileiro. Nesta seção, pretendemos descrever o NIASE, núcleo acadêmico com proposta de ensino, pesquisa e extensão fundamentada nesse conceito. Para isso, retomaremos brevemente as circunstâncias de sua criação e suas ações originalmente desenvolvidas para compreendermos a concretização do conceito de aprendizagem dialógica no contexto brasileiro.

Partindo da consideração de que teoria e prática devem estar articuladas, as atividades do NIASE não estão restritas à produção do conhecimento teórico, mas também estão articuladas às práticas educativas e sociais. Assim, volta-se para o sentido de comunicação e de diálogo apresentados no conceito de aprendizagem dialógica, implicando a presença do outro para a aprendizagem e a existência humana e considerando que a produção do saber não diz respeito apenas ao conhecimento acadêmico, mas se amplia em suas profundas relações com o conhecimento prático elaborado na vida cotidiana.

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Essa proposta encontra apoio na consolidação da extensão universitária como atividade indissociável do ensino e da pesquisa, nos termos da Constituição Federal Brasileira de 1988 (Mello, 2008). Com tal base constitucional, a Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional 9.394/96 foi promulgada em meio às demandas de democratização do acesso aos sistemas educacionais brasileiros, em diferentes níveis de ensino. Desde então, a integração entre as atividades de ensino, pesquisa e extensão vem sendo realizada, em meio ao debate sobre o papel da universidade brasileira na produção e na difusão do conhecimento científico.

O NIASE foi criado em 2002, a partir do sonho de se criar no Brasil um grupo de pesquisa e extensão com consistência teórica, relações solidárias e compromisso de transformação social. Tendo encontrado o conceito de aprendizagem dialógica, pesquisadoras e pesquisadores, bem como estudantes concretizaram tal sonho. Esse núcleo se orienta com o objetivo fundamental de desenvolver experiências dialógicas, articulando redes de solidariedade e de conhecimento para gerar possibilidades de superação da exclusão em solo brasileiro.

Assim, o NIASE se propõe a estabelecer o diálogo igualitário, considerando que as ações coletivas podem ser racionalmente encaminhadas

com base na força dos argumentos apresentados por seus participantes e não sob a ação coercitiva de pessoas socialmente ocupantes de posição hierárquica superior. Pressupõe que as pessoas se solidarizam quando compartilham um objetivo comum, neste caso, relacionado à busca por promover maior aprendizagem e por diminuir as condições marginais de existência de algumas pessoas e/ou de alguns grupos. Portanto, a transformação do contexto de aprendizagem é vista como uma possibilidade a ser alcançada, ampliando-se também a dimensão instrumental dos conteúdos escolares e dos sociais.

Todas as ações propostas pelo núcleo estão pautadas no conceito da aprendizagem dialógica. Dessa forma, reconhece as contribuições da teoria da ação comunicativa (Habermas, 1981/2001), propondo-se a compreender as ações socialmente orientadas pela comunicação entre sujeitos, bem como as contribuições do conceito de dialogicidade (Freire, 1995/2005) e buscando o diálogo como eixo orientador para as práticas sociais e educativas. Ao emergirem da articulação entre essas teorias, além de outras contribuições que também dão base para a compreensão e a transformação social, os princípios da aprendizagem dialógica se convertem em eixo orientador para as relações internas e externas ao NIASE, com o propósito de buscar a coerência entre as palavras e as ações no âmbito da comunidade acadêmico-científica, como também em outros âmbitos sociais.

Considerando sua busca por esta coerência, o núcleo pauta suas ações em um Código Ético e um Estatuto, ambos elaborados com base em acordos coletivos em torno das relações sociais internas e com as parcerias envolvidas. O núcleo se organiza por eixos temáticos, a partir dos quais as ações são planejadas conforme a demanda dos coletivos. Além disso, reúne-se mensalmente para tratar das questões relacionadas às ações de ensino, pesquisa e extensão e quinzenalmente para estudar as referências teórico-metodológicas que embasam suas práticas.

O NIASE é formado por uma coordenação geral que organiza os estudos e as ações desenvolvidas pelo núcleo e por coordenações específicas, que apoiam os encaminhamentos relacionados com cada uma das atividades. Também são realizadas reuniões operacionais para as decisões coletivas, levando em consideração a ação-reflexão sobre o trabalho, bem como a coerência entre o discurso teórico e as práticas desenvolvidas. Para se vincularem ao grupo, professorado, profissionais

e estudantes da graduação e da pós-graduação passam por um estágio de seis meses, período em que vivenciam práticas numa das atividades junto aos coletivos envolvidos, bem como se aprofundam conhecimentos sobre o referencial teórico-metodológico em que o núcleo se apoia. Ao término do estágio, a pessoa opta por se efetivar como membro, a partir do acompanhamento de sua participação pelas coordenações.

É na diversidade interna que o NIASE também busca ampliar e enriquecer seus conhecimentos, na relação com o outro e com os seus parceiros. Trata-se da presença de mulheres e homens de diferentes níveis de ensino, idades, origens regionais, classe social, que se encontram na busca comum pela concretização de uma História como possibilidade para superar as desigualdades sociais, em que cada pessoa possa contar, recontar e criar a sua própria história. Assim, afirma-se a partir do conceito de “unidade na diversidade”, recorrendo aos aportes do educador Paulo Freire (1995/2005) para embasar suas práticas acadêmicas e sociais.

Quando digo unidade na diversidade é porque, mesmo reconhecendo que as diferenças entre pessoas, grupos, etnias, possam dificultar um trabalho em unidade, ela é possível. Mais: é necessária, considerando-se a coincidência dos objetivos por que os diferentes lutam. A igualdade nos e dos objetivos pode viabilizar a unidade na diferença. A falta de unidade entre os diferentes conciliáveis ajuda a hegemonia do diferente antagônico. O importante é a luta contra o inimigo principal (Freire, 1995/2005, p.68, grifos do autor).

Baseando-se no que afirma Freire (1995/2005), o NIASE parte do princípio de que a “estrutura condiciona a vida dos sujeitos, mas não a determina e nem ao seu comportamento, já que homens e mulheres são capazes de ação, de escolha, de comunicação, de diálogo” (Mello, 2008, p.22). Portanto, homens e mulheres podem intervir na realidade em que se encontram, pois possuem habilidades para ensinar e aprender. Ao entendermos que as aprendizagens ocorrem nas situações de interação social e que não há priorização da inteligência acadêmica sobre a prática, acentua-se a necessidade de promover situações comunicativas em que todas as pessoas tenham o igual direito de serem diferentes e de terem suas diferenças respeitadas. Assim, as diferenças não são focalizadas como dificuldades para as interações, mas como possibilidades para a elabo-

de um conhecimento mais amplo sobre si mesmo e o mundo físico e social em que vivemos.

Visando potencializar o acesso e a participação democrática na sociedade da informação, o NIASE busca parceria com órgãos públicos que atuam junto à educação escolar e não escolar, focalizando as pessoas que mais precisam de apoio para a superação das barreiras que as colocam à margem dos âmbitos sociais e econômicos. Nesse sentido, o núcleo trabalha com coletivos em situação de vulnerabilidade pessoal e social, por meio de diferentes ações que possam favorecer a mobilidade dentro da rede de relações postas em nossa sociedade.

Nessas suas ações, o Núcleo evidencia a concepção de “educação ao longo da vida”, conforme destaca Torres (2006, apud Mello, 2007), tendo em vista as transformações aceleradas da sociedade neste início do século XXI. Ao passo que a vida humana demanda formação permanente para que as pessoas se mantenham alinhadas à contemporaneidade e aos seus desafios, a dimensão instrumental ganha fundamental importância, pois os conhecimentos escolares são requisitados para a inserção e a movimentação social, notadamente os do mundo do trabalho e os da cultura letrada.

Entretanto, no contexto brasileiro, mais de 65 milhões de pessoas, com idade acima dos quinze anos, não tiveram acesso ou não permaneceram no sistema formal de ensino, conforme prescreve a legislação educacional (Galvão & Di Pierro, 2007). A escolarização das pessoas jovens e adultas brasileiras possui uma história marcada pela descontinuidade e pela marginalização no âmbito das políticas públicas. Diante disso, o NIASE optou por iniciar a busca pela concretização do conceito de aprendizagem dialógica no Brasil, na educação mais ampla desse segmento populacional, mais desfavorecido socialmente, para em seguida também se voltar à educação escolar de crianças e de adolescentes, situada em áreas mais periféricas da cidade.

Voltando-se à educação de pessoas adultas e contando com a parceria da Fundação Educacional São Carlos (FESC), no município de São Carlos, interior do estado de São Paulo/Brasil, o NIASE iniciou suas atividades em 2002, com o desenvolvimento da Tertúlia Literária Dialógica, elaborada por educandos e educadores progressistas, no contexto da Escola de La Verneda de Sant-Martí, em Barcelona (Flecha & Mello, 2005). Essa atividade se dá a partir de um encontro de pessoas interessadas em

ler um clássico da literatura nacional e internacional, tendo por base a aprendizagem dialógica. Trata-se de uma atividade social, educativa e cultural, aberta à participação de todas as pessoas que tenham interesse e disposição para compartilhar e ampliar suas aprendizagens em torno de diferentes conteúdos, concomitantemente com a possibilidade de se formar nas bases ideais de igualdade e de solidariedade.

Nessa prática, as pessoas participantes escolhem conjuntamente um livro, dentre os clássicos da literatura, combinam trechos a serem lidos e reúnem-se para compartilharem suas leituras. Suas falas são reportadas aos âmbitos de vida dos quais provêm e, por isso, devem ser respeitadas, de maneira que seja garantido o respeito à inteligência cultural de cada pessoa e potencializado o ambiente de aprendizagem intersubjetiva. Para tanto, faz-se fundamental a presença de uma pessoa moderadora e outra que a apóie, a fim de se garantir o espaço de fala de todas as pessoas participantes, com base na aprendizagem dialógica. Na prática, as pessoas participantes fazem suas inscrições para apresentarem as compreensões e/ou argumentos em torno do texto, cabendo à pessoa moderadora organizar a sequência das falas, priorizando quem falou menos, as pessoas que socialmente tem menos espaço para falar, em função de suas condições de raça², gênero, classe social, escolaridade e idade. Na dinâmica, ocorre também o registro das falas das pessoas participantes, revelando os conhecimentos compartilhados no encontro e garantindo as memórias daquele grupo. Diante disso, cabe ainda à pessoa moderadora e/ou a uma pessoa de apoio, a realização de tais anotações e a leitura da síntese no final do encontro, para que todas as pessoas possam validar a sistematização de suas aprendizagens.

Enfim, cabe enfatizar que a metodologia adotada nas tertúlias literárias dialógicas, aqui rapidamente apresentada e que concretiza a aprendizagem dialógica, torna-se inspiradora para regular todas as relações interna e externas desenvolvidas pelo NIASE, desde suas reuniões operacionais e seus grupos de estudos até as atividades de ensino, pesquisa e extensão realizadas no âmbito das comunidades acadêmicas e com as parcerias envolvidas. Depois de destacarmos a realização das primeiras tertúlias literárias dialógicas no Brasil, passamos a descrever a proposta relacionada à educação escolar de crianças e adolescentes, situada em áreas mais periféricas da cidade, como outra decisão subsequente do núcleo para buscar a concretização do conceito de aprendizagem dialógica em

São Carlos.

Vislumbrando a organização de uma instituição escolar que garanta a educação de quem nela participa, o Núcleo passa a se debruçar também sobre a divulgação de outra experiência dialógica com escolas municipais da cidade de São Carlos – SP/Brasil. Tal desafio foi concretizado por meio da parceria estabelecida com a Secretaria de Educação do município, viabilizando, em 2003, a apresentação da proposta político-pedagógica de “Comunidades de Aprendizagem”, elaborada pelo CREA, pautada no diálogo entre escolas e comunidade de entorno. Tal proposta visa uma transformação social e cultural da escola e do seu entorno, cuja implementação ocorre em duas grandes etapas. Primeiramente, temos a adesão à proposta, a qual compreende as fases de sensibilização, de tomada de decisão, de sonhos, de seleção de prioridades e de planejamento. Em seguida, o processo de consolidação, o qual implica investigação, formação e avaliação permanente. De maneira geral, as Comunidades de Aprendizagem buscam vivenciar os princípios da aprendizagem dialógica tanto nas suas relações internas quanto externas, bem como nas atividades escolares, com vistas à concretização de uma gestão mais democrática e participativa, a partir da compreensão de que a transformação não é resultado de um trabalho solitário, mas que se faz no caminho aberto pelo diálogo relacionado com as ações coletivas.

Diante da apresentação dessa proposta à rede pública municipal de ensino básico, ocorreu, em 2003, a primeira decisão de uma das escolas por passar por um processo de sensibilização, com o envolvimento de professorado, alunado, direção, funcionários e funcionárias, estudantes da universidade, familiares e pessoas da comunidade. Após conhecerem tal proposta com maior profundidade, a grande maioria dessas pessoas decidiu, em assembleia coletiva, adotar os princípios da aprendizagem dialógica para buscarem, coletivamente, práticas mais efetivas e mais dialógicas, visando uma aprendizagem maior e melhor e um convívio respeitoso nas relações internas à instituição e entre esta e a comunidade. Concomitantemente a esse processo, o NIASE também buscou interlocutores envolvidos com a educação de pessoas jovens e adultas, a fim de potencializar tal modalidade de ensino, a partir do marco teórico-metodológico adotado. Para tanto, contou com o apoio financeiro do programa de extensão da universidade de sua vinculação para iniciar, a partir de 2003, o projeto “Alfabetização de Jovens e Adultos e Inclusão Digital”,

com o objetivo central de garantir às pessoas educadoras e educandas jovens e adultas o acesso a computadores e à rede internet e de potencializar o processo de ensino e de aprendizagem da leitura e da escrita nessa modalidade de ensino (Mello et al., 2004). Por esse projeto, passaram cerca de 600 estudantes naquele ano.

Ainda em 2003, o NIASE também realizou o I Congresso Regional de Educação de Pessoas Adultas, com o objetivo principal de articular os esforços que já aconteciam no município e na região para o desenvolvimento de iniciativas nesse campo. Foram reunidas pessoas e entidades que desenvolvem trabalho nessa área, possibilitando o debate e a expansão do atendimento às necessidades e aos interesses da população adulta, em condições socialmente desfavoráveis de existência.

Ao lado das preocupações com as questões sociais e educacionais brasileiras, o NIASE também começou a buscar elementos para a produção do conhecimento acadêmico-científico na base comunicativo-crítica. Desenvolvida também pelo CREA, onde fora gerado o conceito de aprendizagem dialógica, essa metodologia propõe eliminar o desnível epistemológico entre sujeitos diante do conhecimento. Assim, os procedimentos metodológicos do NIASE para a produção científica também passaram a ser referenciados pela intersubjetividade e pela reflexão coletiva, possibilitando ampliar a compreensão em torno de objetos de conhecimento, quando submetida a diferentes perspectivas de análise.

A partir desses primeiros passos, o sonho começara a se tornar realidade, enquanto esse grupo acadêmico se configurava e se voltava não apenas à pesquisa, mas também ao compromisso com os coletivos parceiros. Rejeitava, dessa forma, o sentido de extensão tradicionalmente associado ao assistencialismo para com a comunidade, adotando o sentido de comunicação com os parceiros para, junto com mulheres, homens e crianças, pensar e empreender ações para transformar-se e transformar a própria realidade de cada pessoa envolvida, pois “não podemos pensar pelos outros nem para os outros nem sem os outros” (Freire, 1992, p.117). Assume a proposta de ação dialógica, de estar com o outro no mundo, para ensinar e aprender coletivamente, respeitando a inteligência de cada uma das pessoas com as quais se envolve e considerando-as como sujeitos de ação e de comunicação.

Desde então, as ações do NIASE vêm sendo ampliadas, com atividades atualmente distribuídas nos eixos de Comunidades de Aprendizagem e de

Educação de Pessoas Adultas, em âmbitos escolares e não escolares: formação de educadores, feminismo dialógico, tertúlia literária dialógica, alfabetização, aprendizagem dialógica. Em suma, ao longo de sua história, o NIASE também vem se transformando, enquanto se envolve com os coletivos para compartilhar conhecimentos e compreender melhor a realidade, intervindo com eles em ações que favoreçam a superação das desigualdades sociais e uma educação de qualidade para todas as pessoas. Após essa breve apresentação do NIASE e de sua articulação com o ensino, pesquisa e extensão, na próxima seção, trataremos de sua configuração atual e de alguns dos resultados decorrentes de tais atividades, no contexto acadêmico e no social.

A concretização do diálogo no contexto acadêmico e no social

Como vimos, a democratização da educação brasileira vem demandando estudos e ações concretas para a superação de desafios historicamente estabelecidos. Nesse cenário, as universidades são chamadas a participar junto à comunidade, contribuindo para alicerçar conhecimentos e práticas que efetivamente contribuam para a educação de todas as pessoas e em diferentes âmbitos formativos. Após apresentarmos a criação e o envolvimento do NIASE com ações de ensino, pesquisa e extensão, focalizaremos sua configuração atual e os principais resultados dessa proposta, pautada na busca pela concretização do conceito de aprendizagem dialógica (Flecha, 1997; Elboj et al., 2002; Aubert et al., 2009) no contexto acadêmico e no social.

Desde a primeira experiência brasileira com tertúlias literárias dialógicas, muitos espaços foram abertos por instituições da comunidade, em regiões centrais ou periféricas para a leitura de clássicos universais, entre os quais *D. Quixote de Miguel de Cervantes* e *O Discurso sobre a servidão voluntária de Etie de La Botie*, até clássicos brasileiros, como *Vida Secas de Graciliano Ramos* e *O quinze de Raquel de Queiroz*. Ao compartilharem suas leituras, as pessoas também recorrem a outras fontes de informação, tais como dicionários, atlas e enciclopédias, visando ampliar sua compreensão sobre os temas. A partir do crescente domínio da leitura e dos outros instrumentos da cultura letrada, torna-se evidente que as pessoas vão se fortalecendo para participarem em outros âmbitos coletivos, inclusive os escolarizados. No segundo semestre de 2011, os

bro do NIASE vêm participando em duas tertúlias da comunidade que são configuradas como atividades de projeto de extensão, as quais se convertem em espaços de formação prática nos princípios da aprendizagem dialógica para favorecer a reflexão coletiva na realidade externa à universidade.

Enquanto a proposta de aprendizagem dialógica se expandia, foram estabelecidas parcerias em outros âmbitos não escolares, como um centro de referência da comunidade, no qual um grupo de mulheres se reúne para dialogar em torno das preocupações emergidas de seu cotidiano. Ali, a inserção no mundo do trabalho e a geração de renda, a violência de gênero, as preocupações com a educação das novas gerações são problematizadas, de maneira que tais mulheres compartilham suas formas para superarem as dificuldades de seu contexto e para viabilizarem uma existência digna para si e para suas crianças e jovens. Com a participação nesse diálogo, as mulheres se fortalecem para afirmarem seus direitos, enquanto seres humanos.

Outras formas de divulgação dessa proposta também foram realizadas no âmbito da universidade. Destacamos a realização do II Congresso Regional de Educação de Pessoas Adultas e do I Congresso de Participantes de Educação de Pessoas Jovens e Adultas em 2005, com a presença de 80 educadores e mais de 350 educandos de educação de pessoas jovens e adultas reunidos por três dias em diferentes atividades com pesquisadores, formadores, lideranças de base, estudantes da universidade, dirigentes de governos. Ao final, foi produzido um documento de reivindicação de elementos necessários à melhoria da modalidade educativa, tal documento foi encaminhado ao conselho de educação do município de São Carlos SP/Brasil.

Também se faz notória a realização dos Seminários Relações de Gênero e Transformação Social, realizados em 2008, 2009, 2010, com a proposta de ampliar o diálogo público acerca das desigualdades de gênero e de teorias e práticas que ajudam a superá-las. Esses seminários contaram com a participação de estudantes e professoras da universidade, como também de docentes do ensino básico, líderes comunitárias vinculadas a sindicatos, cooperativas e setores da administração pública.

Quanto ao campo da Educação de Jovens e Adultos (EJA), destacamos uma atividade de extensão relacionada à Formação Inicial e Continuada em um dos programas do Governo Federal voltados ao aumento dos

índices brasileiros de alfabetização. Na implantação desse Programa, em 2003, o NIASE se mostrou pioneiro no Brasil, quando se dispôs a acompanhar essas ações no município em que está localizado, apresentando para isso sua proposta teórico-metodológica.

Em 2010, seu âmbito de ação foi ampliado para outro município do interior brasileiro, cuja população com mais de 15 anos de idade apresenta índice de analfabetismo de 11,7%, conforme o Instituto Brasileiro de Pesquisas Geográficas (IBGE, 2000). Ao participarem dessa proposta formativa, ao final do segundo ano dessa realização, as pessoas da gestão e as alfabetizadoras vêm mostrando como os recursos de sua realidade podem favorecer situações educativas e materiais didáticos e estimular a continuidade dos estudos escolares desta faixa da população brasileira, desde os momentos iniciais da alfabetização. Assim, também manifestam sua pretensão de compartilhar experiências com outras realidades, por meio da construção de um portal colaborativo e da participação em eventos acadêmicos e sociais nessa região do País. Em suma, ao promoverem o diálogo como potencialmente favorável ao ensino e à aprendizagem, o foco na formação docente impulsiona para a reflexão coletiva, para a elaboração e a socialização de práticas bem sucedidas, cujos reflexos se ampliam para outros contextos da escolarização brasileira.

Em relação à decisão das escolas de São Carlos por apoiar no diálogo sua proposta político-pedagógica, três escolas foram apoiadas pelo NIASE para passarem pelo processo de transformação em Comunidades de Aprendizagem. Entre as fases de sensibilização e de consolidação desse processo, destacamos as ações relacionadas à formação e à avaliação permanente no interior dessas escolas, possibilitando que as pessoas envolvidas se eduquem nos princípios da aprendizagem dialógica. Em 2006, 2008 e 2010, houve a realização de encontros para fortalecer essas escolas, ampliar a divulgação da proposta e aprofundar a compreensão sobre as práticas de aprendizagem dialógica. Nesses eventos, esteve presente um grande número de pessoas das escolas, ao lado de estudantes e docentes da universidade.

Desde 2010, a gestão pública do município incorporou a proposta como política educacional. Nesse ano, o segmento de EJA de uma quarta escola municipal também manifestou adesão a essa ideia, após sua equipe ter passado por um processo de sensibilização que mobilizou grande número de pessoas da comunidade.

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Em seu décimo semestre de realização, a proposta se abre em agosto de 2011 para os estudantes da Licenciatura em Pedagogia a distância, contribuindo para ampliar a divulgação do conceito de aprendizagem dialógica e viabilizar sua concretização na educação escolar de crianças, adolescentes e pessoas adultas. Vinculados a um programa do governo federal, criado em 2005 com o objetivo de ampliar as oportunidades de acesso à educação superior por meio dos recursos da internet, esses estudantes contam com uma equipe de tutores para acompanharem seus estudos, desenvolverem atividades virtuais e aprofundarem sua compreensão no sentido de comunicação e de diálogo, aqui proposto. Mensalmente, é realizada uma web conferência para promover o encontro entre participantes das Atividades Complementares Integradas de Ensino, Pesquisa e Extensão e estudantes do curso a distância, sob a coordenação da docente responsável por esse trabalho.

Com vinculação ao espaço virtual do curso de Licenciatura em Pedagogia, ainda destacamos a disciplina Práticas de Ensino: a escola como espaço de análise, pesquisa e intervenção, compondo, desde 2010, a grade formativa inicial obrigatória de estudantes da Licenciatura em Pedagogia a distância. No curso presencial, a disciplina Feminismo Dialógico também vem sendo oferecida em caráter optativo, desde 2009, abrindo-se à participação presencial de estudantes dos diferentes cursos de gradu-

e de pós-graduação da universidade brasileira. Apesar da especificidade dos temas e dos âmbitos em que são desenvolvidas, ambas propõem caminhos para o diálogo e a superação de dificuldades relacionadas à educação, pautando-se para isso no conceito de aprendizagem dialógica.

No tocante à formação inicial e continuada de educadoras e educadores de pessoas jovens e adultas, destacamos um curso de especialização em educação de jovens e adultos (CEEJA), gratuito, integralmente financiado pelo Ministério da Educação do Brasil, outra atividade de extensão desenvolvida desde novembro de 2009. Conta com a participação de docentes que atuam do Ensino Fundamental ao Ensino Superior e de gestoras(es) de sistemas escolares e de outros setores que administram as políticas públicas para a educação e para a inclusão social em outros âmbitos, como os voltados para a proteção às mulheres e para a economia solidária. Além de participantes do município, podem também ser encontrados representantes da região geográfica circunvizinha, ampliando-se as temáticas estudadas no curso e contando-se com elementos extraídos das realidades desse campo educacional.

Com atenção às especificidades dos contextos de atuação de seus participantes, após 360 horas de duração, o curso vem sendo arrematado com trabalhos acadêmico-científicos que articulam estudos e experiências de atuação. Mesmo com o final desse curso, seu alcance ainda se prolongará, em face da previsão da publicação desses trabalhos em livros e periódicos da área educacional, contribuindo para aprofundar a compreensão e as ações desenvolvidas com pessoas jovens e adultas. Ao mesmo tempo, a partir dos estudos realizados nesse curso, seus participantes se convertem em agentes de comunicação em seus diferentes âmbitos e locais de atuação.

Como resultados acadêmicos do trabalho desenvolvido pelo NIASE, pode ainda mencionar as várias formações em outras universidades brasileiras, além da produção de grande número de artigos científicos, apresentações em congressos de educação e de trabalhos de iniciação científica, de dissertações de mestrado e teses de doutorado defendidas. Destacamos que, além de recursos para as atividades de extensão, o NIASE recebeu financiamentos de agências brasileiras para fomentar a pesquisa em torno do conceito de aprendizagem dialógica, contando com a participação de uma grande equipe composta por pesquisadores da universidade, como também de sujeitos das escolas pesquisadas. Entre 2007

e 2009, foi financiada uma grande pesquisa com o objetivo geral de identificar os aspectos transformadores e os obstáculos para as práticas dialógicas das Comunidades de Aprendizagem. Tais recursos possibilitaram a distribuição de bolsas de estudo e a aquisição de equipamentos para a coleta dos dados.

No segundo semestre de 2011, o NIASE conta com 36 membros com diferentes formações acadêmicas, como pedagogia, psicologia, engenharias e biologia. São estudantes e docentes de graduação e de pós-graduação de diferentes cursos da universidade local e de outras regiões, além de profissionais envolvidas com a escolarização básica do município e de cidades da região circunvizinha. Há, também, participação de docentes e pesquisadoras do Núcleo em outras universidades brasileiras e em país do continente africano, o que vem abrindo espaço para a criação de novos núcleos e a expansão de novas ações acadêmicas e sociais no eixo sul-sul.

Diante desse breve relato sobre os resultados das ações de ensino, pesquisa e extensão desenvolvidas pelo NIASE, podemos compreender sua integração à comunidade científica internacional e sua adesão às tendências que estão apresentando maior êxito para superar o fracasso escolar e melhorar o convívio humano. Assim, com inspiração na teoria de ação comunicativa, apresentada por Habermas (1981/2001) e no conceito de dialogicidade, apresentado por Freire (1995/2005), entre outras autoras e autores, o conceito de aprendizagem dialógica (Flecha, 1997) concretiza-se no Brasil, apresentando seus impactos sobre a escolarização e a produção acadêmica brasileira e consolidando o compromisso social e político

Conclusões

Ao focalizarmos a configuração do NIASE e os principais resultados de sua proposta educativa, pudemos evidenciar que o conceito de aprendizagem dialógica (Flecha, 1997) se mostra relevante e atualizado para enfrentar os desafios apresentados pelo contexto de aceleradas transformações que caracterizam a primeira década do século XXI, no mundo e no Brasil, já que articula de maneira efetiva o global ao local, necessidade do atual contexto.

A partir do panorama educacional brasileiro, observamos que as desigualdades sociais se estendem às desigualdades de acesso ao conheci-

mento escolarizado. Embora alguns avanços sejam nítidos, percebemos que ainda há um grande caminho a percorrer no sentido de democratização do conhecimento e da escolaridade (tanto na sua produção articulando-se diferentes fontes, como na sua difusão). Assim, as propostas educativas pautadas na ação comunicativa (Habermas, 1981/2001) e na dialogicidade (Freire, 1995/2005), articuladas em torno do conceito de aprendizagem dialógica (Flecha, 1997) se mostram coerentes com os ideais de dignidade da existência humana, amplamente veiculados em nossa época.

Em meio a esses ideais, a comunidade científica ocupa importante papel, como produtora e difusora de conhecimento. Ao apresentarmos o NIASE, cuja proposta de atuação se apoia no conceito de aprendizagem dialógica (Flecha, 1997), revelamos que o reconhecimento da dignidade humana pode ser concretizado na articulação entre ensino, pesquisa e extensão. Assim, os resultados de uma proposta gerada no âmbito acadêmico são ampliados para a sociedade, quando se reconhece que todas as pessoas são portadoras de conhecimento, sujeitos que se transformam enquanto transformam a realidade em que vivem.

Enfim, destacamos que o impacto da produção do conhecimento se torna possível quando pautado no compromisso social e no diálogo entre a comunidade científica e o contexto mais amplo que a envolve.

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Notes

¹ Ao nos referirmos a essas obras fundamentais de Habermas e de Freire, indicaremos a data de publicação original, seguida da data da edição da obra usada neste artigo.

² Utilizaremos o termo *raça*, visualizando tal nomenclatura como um conceito construído socialmente e não como um dado biológico. O uso desse termo abrange toda a complexidade existente nas relações entre negros e brancos no Brasil, não nos referindo, de forma alguma, ao conceito biológico de raças humanas usado em contextos de dominação, como foi o caso do nazismo de Hitler, na Alemanha. Ao contrário, o utilizamos com a nova interpretação que se baseia na dimensão social e política do referido termo, construído a partir da análise do tipo de racismo que existe no contexto brasileiro e considerando a dimensão histórica e cultural a que este nos remete.

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Bringing Funds of Family Knowledge to School. The *Living Morocco* Project (“برغملا شي عل”).

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Bringing Funds of Family Knowledge to school. The Living Morocco Project (“برغملا شي علّا”)

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Abstract

The purpose of the study, grounded in sociocultural theory, is to describe the funds of knowledge of a Moroccan family living in Catalonia (Spain) in order to document how teachers can use these funds of knowledge to make direct links between students' lives and classroom teaching. The funds of knowledge approach is based on a simple premise: regardless of any socio-economical and sociocultural “deficit” that people may or may not have all families accumulate bodies of beliefs, ideas, skills and abilities based on their experiences (in areas such as their occupation or their religion). The challenge consists in connecting these bodies of educational resources with teaching practice in order to connect the curriculum with students' lives. In doing so, qualitative research can be carried out using several techniques such as self portraits, self-definition tasks, assessment of family artefacts, documenting routines through photographs, or the analysis of a person's significant circle. The results in terms of teaching practices illustrate the variety of ways teachers can make connections between home and school in ways that assist learners in their academic development. In this article, we propose using the term funds of identity to complement the concept of funds of knowledge.

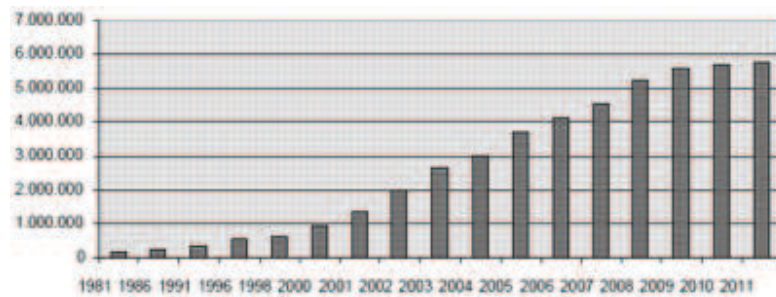
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The population of Spain is rapidly becoming more ethnically and culturally diverse. According to the INE (Spanish Institute of National Statistics), there were 5.7 million foreign residents in possession of a residence permit in Spain in 2011. Of these, 864, 278 (15.1%) were Romanians and 769, 920 (13.4%) were Moroccan. Other important foreign communities include the British (6.8%), Ecuadorian (6.3%), and Colombian (4.7%) communities (INE, 2011).

Figure 1. Evolution of foreign population in Spain from 1980 to 2011



Source: INE, First demographic estimates 2011.

Since 2000, Spain has experienced high population growth as a result of immigration flows, despite a birth rate that is only half of the replacement level. In 2005, a regularization program led to an increase of 700,000 people in the legal immigrant population. In that year Spain had the second highest immigration rates within the European Union - just behind Cyprus - and the second highest absolute net migration in the World (after the USA) (EUROSTAT, 2006). This can be explained by a number of factors including its geographical position, the porosity of its borders, the large size of its underground economy and the strength of agricultural and construction sectors that require more low-cost labour than can be found among the national workforce. In fact, during its economic boom, Spain was Europe's largest absorber of migrants from

2002 to 2007, with its immigrant population more than doubling as 2.5 million people arrived. Although the number of immigrants in Spain is, officially, smaller than that of other countries in the European Union, it is certainly large enough to be taken into consideration.

This abrupt and continuing influx of immigrants, particularly those arriving clandestinely by sea, has resulted in notable social and educational challenges because, at the same time in Spanish schools, the numbers of white, middle-class teachers (who, incidentally, are predominantly female) has remained stable. This mismatch between children's home cultures and the cultures of schools has an adverse affect on student achievement. According to the Program for International Student Assessment (OECD, 2007), a disproportionately high number of children from ethnic minorities and immigrant populations, from isolated and poor communities, perform consistently lower academically than indigenous, middle-class students. The question is: Why do children from such poor communities fail more often in school?

Obviously, there is no single and easy answer. Complex issues need complex answers. However, some researchers have detected certain discontinuities between school and family (Ballenger, 1999; Ogbu, 1982; Tharp & Gallimore, 1993). Moreover, several studies have shown how minority and working-class children can succeed in school if classrooms are reorganized in such a way as to give them the same advantages that middle-class children always seemed to have had. In other words, when educators recognize the knowledge, abilities and experiences of immigrant children and place these attributes at the heart of their schooling, these students are better motivated and obtain better results (González, Moll & Amanti, 2005; McIntyre, Rosebery & González, 2001; Moll, 2011; Moll & González, 2004). To quote Vélez-Ibáñez & Greenberg (1992), children from different home and cultural backgrounds learn different "funds of knowledge". The problem is that, usually, the various different funds of knowledge are not treated equally in school.

Bringing families' culture into school. The Funds of Knowledge project

The concept of funds of knowledge as a sociocultural framework has been used by educational researchers to better understand the educational experiences of immigrant students and their families (González, Moll &

Amanti, 2005; McIntyre, Kyle & Rightmyer, 2005; Moll, 2011). This concept was first introduced by Vélez-Ibañez and Greenberg (1992) when attempting to understand how U.S. Mexican children constructed their cultural identity. According to these researchers, one of the easiest ways to understand this concept is to think about the multiple funds that households must simultaneously acquire, make use of and manage, in order to maintain the household and individual well-being. These may be, for example, social, such as funds of friendship, or monetary, such as funds of rent (i.e., housing). As argued by Moll, Amanti, Neff and González (1992), the concept of funds of knowledge is based on the premise that people are competent and have knowledge - and that their life experiences have given them that knowledge. By “funds of knowledge” they mean: “those historically -accumulated and culturally-developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being” (Moll, Amanti, Neff & González, 1992, p. 133). In other words: “we are using the phrase funds of knowledge broadly, to mean the various social and linguistic practices and the historically -accumulated bodies of knowledge that are essential to students’ homes and communities” (McIntyre, Rosebery & González, 2001, p. 2).

In particular, in Arizona (USA), the conceptual framework of funds of knowledge has successfully documented the existence of a wealth of knowledge, skills and strategic and cultural resources and artefacts that Latino families or households contain. For example, household knowledge may include information about religion, associated with particular practices; about farming and animal management, associated with households’ rural origins, or knowledge in the field of construction, related to urban occupations. Numerous studies have used this theoretical approach to argue that when funds of knowledge are incorporated into the curriculum and teaching, they facilitate teachers’ recognition and use of family and community resources that are key sources of rigorous academic content (González, Moll & Amanti, 2005; McIntyre, Rosebery & González, 2001; McIntyre, Kyle & Rightmyer, 2005; Moll & Greenberg, 1990).

In other words, the central idea is that families, regardless of social class, ethnicity, linguistic condition or economic standing, can be characterized by the practices they have developed and the knowledge they

have acquired in living their lives. This knowledge and these skills and abilities can be treated pedagogically as cultural resources for teaching and learning in schools. Families, as educational resources, possess valuable tools for children's education (Acosta-Irqui & Esteban, 2010). Teachers have to establish contact with the family funds of knowledge in order to incorporate them and to connect curricula to students' lives (McIntyre, Rosebery, & González, 2001). To accomplish this goal, teachers are trained in qualitative strategies in order to understand households and classrooms qualitatively. In this way, teachers can then utilize a combination of ethnographic observations, open-ended interviewing strategies, life stories and case studies to analyze the complex functions of households within their socio-historical contexts and the funds of family knowledge accumulated (Moll, Amanti, Neff & González, 1992).

To connect school culture and practices and family backgrounds through funds of knowledge is a strategy for developing innovations in teaching that draw upon the knowledge and skills found in local households. In particular, the ethnographic analysis of household dynamics, the examination of classroom practices and the development of after-school study groups with teachers are qualitative strategies for connecting classroom practices and family funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff & González, 1992).

In our view, the concept of funds of knowledge is connected with the concept of routines or forms of life. The "form of life" is a term used by Wittgenstein (1953). It connotes the sociological, historical, linguistic, physiological, and psychological determinants that comprise the matrix within which a given language has meaning. "So you are saying that human agreement decides what is true and what is false? – It is what human beings say that is true and false; and they agree in the language they use. That is not agreement in opinions but in form of life" (Wittgenstein, 1953, p. 120). Human activity takes place in a particular form of life, a social and cultural matrix, which determines the customs, habits and the uses of any language. In our view, the form of life is the everyday context, usage and cultural function of any artefact involved in human activity. For example, an artefact like a computer is used in a particular everyday context; it has a function, following particular rules and it is used to accomplish a specific goal. It is not possible to consider meaning, identity and funds of knowledge independently of their context,

and sociocultural milieu (Vygotsky, 1978; Moll, 2002; in press). All families have their particular routines and it is from these forms of life that the funds of knowledge and the identity of the members are forged. Thus, to understand their identity and their funds of knowledge we need to know their routines, daily activities and forms of life.

In this sense, we suggest the term funds of identity to refer to the culture-bound stories, technologies, documents and discourses that people internalize and construct in order to make sense of the events in their lives; funds of identity which allow them to reach a self-understanding and to communicate that understanding to others (Bruner, 2001; Esteban, 2010; Esteban & Bastiani, 2011; Esteban & Vila, 2010; Esteban, Nadal & Vila, 2008; 2010; McAdams, 2003). In this theory of identity, we argue that identity takes the form of a story originated by and distributed to family members, which involves community life and shared artefacts, such as television, the Internet, books, flags or cultural beliefs. In this way, identity can be understood as a cultural and social process; a product of family and community socialization. Hence, when a teacher is studying the funds of family knowledge, he/she is studying their funds of identity as well. That is to say, those historically-developed and accumulated technologies of the self (Foucault, 1988) (beliefs, ideas, practices, abilities and skills) that are essential in providing some modicum of psychosocial unity and purpose. In other words, the corpus of family and community knowledge (the funds of knowledge) are essential in the creation of the story of who and what we are, what has happened, and why we are doing what we are doing.

The main objective of this paper is to illustrate the creation of specific curriculum units based on specific funds of knowledge that were identified beforehand. We also describe the quantitative and qualitative strategies that were used to identify the funds of knowledge, forms of life and funds of identity of a Moroccan family who live in Girona (Spain).

Methodology

Participants

The family we studied was made up of nine people: the mother, the father, their four daughters (aged six, eight, twelve and sixteen) and three sons. Three of the girls attend primary school and the other is in secon-

dary school. One of the boys, (who is, in fact, the twin brother of the eight-year-old daughter) attends primary school, one goes to secondary school and the oldest boy works with his father as a labourer. The patriarch of this family came to Spain nine years previously, and the rest of the family had been with him for seven years, which means all the children were born in Morocco. The twelve-year-old girl became a focus of the study because she could act as a link between the school and the family as she was able to speak both Moroccan and Catalan very well.

Instruments

Several research strategies (qualitative and quantitative techniques) were used in order to identify the participants' identity, their funds of family knowledge and their forms of life. In this section, we describe briefly the research strategies employed.

Self portrait. This is an arts-based projective technique designed by Bagnoli (2004; 2009) in the context of a project on young people and their identities with the aim of encouraging participants' reflexivity and getting them to think holistically about their identities and lives. We used a variation of this task (Esteban & Vila, 2010; Gifre, Monreal, & Esteban, 2011) which consists of presenting the participants with paper and felt tip pens and asking them to show who they are at that moment in their lives: "I would like you to show me on this paper who you are at this moment in your life... You can add, if you want, the people, activities, artefacts, institutions and things that are important to you at this moment in life").

Self-definition task. We encouraged participants to answer the question: "Could you define yourself? Could you answer the question: Who are you?". Furthermore, we invited them to fill out a reduced version of the Twenty Statement Test -TST- (Hartley, 1970). The TST is a method of generating spontaneous self-descriptions. In particular, it helps identify those self-designations which may be due more to our "roles" than who we really are or could be. Participants have to answer the question "Who am I?" twenty times – reduced to ten in our version. The instruction was: "There are ten numbered blanks on the page below. Please write ten

numbered blanks on the page below. Please write ten answers to the simple question “Who am I?” in these blanks. Just give ten different answers to this question; answer as if you were giving the answers to yourself - not someone else”. After writing the ten self-definitions, the participants were asked to place them in order of importance: “What is the most important self-definition? Could you order your answers according to their importance in defining your identity?”

Assessment of the family artefacts. In terms of cultural psychology (Cole, 1996; Esteban, 2008; 2010; Esteban & Ratner, 2010), culture consists of material and symbolic tools (artefacts) which accumulate through time and are passed on through social interaction, providing resources for people’s development. In this sense, cultural tools, including physical objects, abstract knowledge, beliefs, values and observable patterns of behaviour such as family routines and social practices, provide resources for people’s development. Thus, in order to understand people (their identities, routines and funds of knowledge) we need to know the artefacts they use. González-Patiño (2011) used a simple and easy task to assess the artefacts that families use in their daily life. It consists of a table with three columns: artefact, use, place. The aim is to record the most relevant artefacts people use in their day-to-day lives. For example, for a particular person, the television might be an important artefact in their life. Thus, we can record the television as an artefact, along with how and where it is used, for example: television – enjoyment & entertainment – in the bedroom.

Routines and educational routines through pictures. Poveda, Casla, Messina, Morgade, Rujas, Pulido & Cuevas (2007) used photographs of participant’s daily lives to study their weekly routines. In particular, the children and families who agreed to participate in the study by Poveda et al. (2007) were given a disposable camera, or used their own digital camera if they preferred to do so. The instruction was: “We are interested in people’s daily lives. We would like to know your routines. To this end, could you take photographs of your daily activities for one week?” There were no instructions as to the minimum or maximum number of photographs that should be taken, nor were there precise instructions regarding who should “take care” of the camera or take the photographs. Once the

week is over, the photographs were collected and printed out in order to discuss them. That is to say, the researchers ask particular questions about the pictures and, in general, the participants' daily routines. Some variation of this task is provided by González-Patiño (2011) who asked participants to "take at least 5 pictures per day of any activities, places, and events which are relevant or important to you." For our purposes, we included an extension of this task in order to focus on educational family routines. In this case, the instruction we used was: "I am studying the educational routines of people. In order to do this, I would like you to collect, by taking some pictures every day for one week, the moments that you think are educational events, for example, when you are showing something to your son or daughter." The aim is to provide some information about educational family acts, for example, when mother and son are reading a book. Another objective is to find out the beliefs that underline educational family practices: What do the parents think of as education? How they are involved in educational practices?

Significant circle. We designed a kind of relational map along the lines of Bagnoli (2009) and Roseneil (2006). Participants were asked to draw a big circle to represent themselves, within which they could then draw important people (inside little circles) and important objects, institutions, activities (inside little squares). If circles and squares are in the middle of the big circle, it means they are more important or relevant to the individual. Thus, the distance from the centre should reflect the presence of significant others and objects within the participant's inner world. As in the Roseneil (2006) relational map, participants were asked to place people in order of importance within a set of concentric circles, with the closest relationships being in the inner circles and the others further out. Moreover, we asked them to add important activities, artefacts, institutions that were relevant in the life of the participant.

Family APGAR. This is a family therapy rating system designed by Smilkstein (1978). APGAR stands for Adaptability, Partnership, Growth, Affection and Resolve, which make up the five categories of the questionnaire. The participants indicate a degree of satisfaction in each of the five categories on a scale of 0 to 2.

Questionnaire on perceived environmental quality. Designed by López-Torrecilla (2009). This consists of 33 self-report scale items with regard to participants' experience of various public spaces: parks, squares, street and school.

Sense of community questionnaire. This consists of 18 self-report scale items on sense of community designed by Sánchez-Vidal (2001) and was administrated in order to find out about the relationship between the participants and their surroundings (community). Sense of community is a concept in community psychology and social psychology which focuses on the experience of community rather than its structure, formation, setting or any other feature. This questionnaire investigates people's perceptions, understanding, attitudes and feelings about their community and their relationship to it and to others' participation. According to Sarason (1974), the sense of community is the conceptual centre for the psychology of community and one of the major bases for self-definition.

Procedure

We visited the family on four different occasions. During the first meeting, in which two interviews were carried out, we were met very cordially by the mother and three of her daughters, aged sixteen, twelve and eight. (The eight-year-old girl has a twin brother.) We were invited to sit down on the couch and have some tea (a very typical custom in Morocco).

The first interview involved one of the daughters, beginning with the first task: Self-portrait. The 12-year-old daughter, who is in her 6th year at primary school, was chosen to carry out the task. The result was very curious because she drew herself very large in the centre of the paper, with the women in her family, her mother and her three sisters, to her left—all the females, including herself, were wearing the veil. She drew the male members of the family, her father, with a beard, and her three brothers on the right.

Figure 2. Sixth grade student's self-portrait



For the second interview, we carried out the “Self-definition task” which was completed by the oldest sister who attends secondary school and is sixteen years of age. She defined herself as being a joker, who was fun and outgoing, who likes music, dancing and singing, and who became sad when it rained.

On the second visit, two more research strategies were carried out, the first being the “Assessment of the family artefacts”. The following artefacts were noted down: computers, televisions, mobile phone, landline, the Qur’an, and other textbooks. Most of these are kept at home except the mobile phone which the father uses to call the family, work or school. The devices are typically used by the entire family, and tend to be located in the dining room or the older brother’s room (see Table 1). The “Questionnaire on perceived environmental quality” designed by López-Torrecilla (2009) was administrated as well and was answered by the mother of the family. She seemed quite sincere in answering some questions but needed the help of one of her older daughters to respond and, indeed, to understand most of the questions that were asked.

The final research strategy used was the “Family APGAR”, to give us an idea of how the function of the family is perceived. The result was surprising and went against the preconceived ideas we sometimes have about cultures different from our own. Those who answered the questionnaire were very positive about the family and in general felt very important within it.

Once we completed this work, a final project was carried out by pupils at the school that the family’s children attended. The aim was to explain the project through the various photographs and texts taken throughout this experience. There was an exposition of the project that provided explanations to the other pupils from the school using “routines and educational routines through pictures”.

Results

Funds of knowledge identified

After the application of the research strategies indicated above, several funds of knowledge were identified. These are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. A sample of household funds of knowledge

Geographical location	The importance given to the mother having to travel to be with her husband (one of the main and essential in life). This information was taken using “routines through pictures”.
Politics, society and religious beliefs:	It detects the great importance the family to King Mohamed VI, and His truth. The family that in terms of society, women must be accompanied her husband on the market, in his absence; his elder sons accompany him and their young daughters. Is frowned upon women to go alone to the sites. It is said that the people there are very lively and often play music in the street. As for religious beliefs, their culture, knowledge and education are based on the Koran. Once in life have to pilgrimage to Mecca. This information was taken using “Self-definition task”, “significant circle”, “assessment of the family artifacts”.

Morocco's animals	It refers to the jackal, the rabbit, the cobra, which mounted shows in markets-the gazelle, the macaques. The camels are sometimes used as transport animals, especially for tourism. The family places special emphasis on the Arabs is forbidden to eat pork. This information was taken using "questionnaire on perceived environmental quality".
Climate and vegetation	Reference is made there is much the largest desert of the Sahara Desert, and sometimes water (oases), there are also areas, forests of oaks, firs, pines, Argan, gins, cedar. One of the most important mountains is the Atlas. This information was taken using the "questionary on perceived environmental".
The market and the food	Cooking with many species that would buy the market: they usually go shopping at the market where various craft objects made from clay. At the same time cure buying various species kitchen (pickup) and make tea, very typical for receiving guests at home. This information was taken using the "assessment of the family artifacts", "questionary on perceived environmental", "quality sense of community questionnaire".
Body art ("henna")	The "henna" also is bought on the factories to make carpets, and different dresses. The "Henna" is used mainly to decorate the hands and the rest of the body, especially when there are celebrations. This information was taken using "Self portrait" and "self-definition task".

As noted, central to this project is the qualitative study of households. This approach involves understanding the social history of the households, their origins and development and, most prominently, the labour history of the families, which reveals the accumulated bodies of knowledge of the households. With our sample, this knowledge is broad and diverse, as shown in abbreviated form in Table 2. Notice that household knowledge includes information about geography, associated with the households' transnational experiences, knowledge about policy, society and religion, related to their life style and socialization, as well as knowledge about many other matters, such as animals, climate, vegetation, food or art ("Henna").

In particular, the quantitative and qualitative techniques used informed us about the family's knowledge of geography, policy, religion, Morocco's animals, climate and vegetation, food and art. According to the assessment of artefacts valued by the family (see Table 1), for example, we identified knowledge on religion because the Qur'an is an important artefact involved in many family activities. With regard to knowledge on geography, the pictures captured by family members showed the transnational character of the family. By "transnational, we mean the movement of people, goods, information, ideas and resources among nation states. In particular, the mother travels between Spain and Morocco to visit her relatives and her husband's relatives all of whom are represented in her significant circle (see Figure 3). Policy, society and religious beliefs are reported through the self-definition task and significant circle. The mother expressed a deep understanding of Moroccan culture, its customs, laws and sociocultural practices. For example, in Morocco women must be accompanied by their husbands or elder sons and daughters when going to the market. In particular, religious precepts are pervasive throughout family life. By analysing routines and educational routines through pictures, self-portrait techniques or assessment of family artefacts, we documented the importance of religion in the family's beliefs and behaviour. Other funds of knowledge that were identified included Moroccan fauna, climate and vegetation, Moroccan markets and food and the flowering plant known as henna and how it is used to dye skin, hair, fingernails, leather and wool. Notice that not all techniques administered provide information about specific skills or knowledge. The APGAR technique, for instance, gives us an understanding of the participants' own

assessment of their family's functioning in the areas of adaptation, partnership, growth, affection and resolve.

Teaching activities developed through the funds of knowledge

A total of six teaching units were created and put into practice in sessions of one hour. They were largely based on the funds of knowledge that were identified in the various interviews with the family.

The first teaching unit consisted of three sessions over a period of one week. The aim was to show pupils the location of Morocco, the distances between Morocco and their own home in Catalonia and help them understand the physical distance between the two places. The objectives to be achieved were: to locate Catalonia on the world map, to locate Morocco on the world map, to learn what the capital of Morocco is called and to identify the name and the colours of the Moroccan flag. The teaching activities developed through the funds of knowledge were:

1. Observing and locating Catalonia on a world map using a computer.
2. Observing and locating Morocco on a world map using a computer. (Oral).
3. Locating the continents to which Catalonia and Morocco belong.
4. Locating and painting on a handout where Morocco is and where Catalonia is and drawing a line to indicate the routes back and forth between Catalonia to Morocco.
5. Using a handout with a map of Morocco to work on distances in kilometres.
6. Using a handout to paint the flag of Morocco.

The second teaching unit involved a series of four sessions over 10 days. The aim of this unit was to present the cities, houses and people of Morocco and to learn a traditional Moroccan song to be sung on the final day of the project. The objectives to be achieved were: to learn that Morocco is divided into 16 regions; to learn the name of King Mohamed VI; to learn about and play with Moroccan Dirham coins; to study the typical Moroccan houses and do a painting of one; to learn to sing a traditional Moroccan song and to learn about typical Moroccan street names. The teaching activities developed through the funds of knowledge were:

1. Children's educational video of the typical houses of Morocco for subsequent discussion.
2. Talking about the video they have viewed;
3. Talking about typical Moroccan objects brought in voluntarily.
4. The basic political organisation of Moroccan society. After listening to the teacher read out information on this topic and students then complete a handout with pictures on the theme, filling in relevant information they hear.

The third teaching unit involved a total of six sessions over 12 days. The aim was to observe, in photographs, the main animals of Morocco, especially the animals typically used to transport both foreign and national tourists. The objectives to be achieved were: to identify the typical animals of Morocco, such as the jackal, rabbit, the cobra, the gazelle and the monkey and to identify the main features of one of its most distinctive animals, the camel. The teaching activities developed through the funds of knowledge were:

1. Presentation of different pictures of animals, with subsequent oral discussion.
2. Using a handout with a layout of each animal, several students read aloud a description of the animal and their partners cut and paste the features onto their pictures accordingly.
3. Using the handout and having heard the description of the camel, each student will have a written description of the camel and can then answer some questions about it and then draw and paint a camel.
4. Completing a handout with questions on describing a camel.

The fourth teaching unit consisted of a total of six sessions over 11 days. In this unit, we analyzed the terrain of Morocco, especially the Sahara Desert. We also analysed typical Moroccan fruit and trees. The objectives to be achieved were: to describe the desert landscape and its main features, such as oases, as well as describing the most important fruits in Morocco, the trees and the fruits and they yield. The teaching activities developed through funds of knowledge were:

1. All students make a model of the Sahara Desert and an oasis. They subsequently exhibit and present this model in the final cooperative project.
2. The students made a description of the relief of Morocco using a handout.
3. Using a handout, the students labelled the most important features of typical trees in Morocco and the fruits and vegetables and then drew them.
4. By listening to different pieces of information, they completed information on the subject they had worked on.

The fifth teaching unit consisted of a total of four sessions over 9 days. In this unit the pupils studied and got to know Moroccan food and where to buy it. They also tried cooking typical Moroccan dishes. The objectives to be achieved were: to analyze Moroccan dishes, make lunch with Moroccan ingredients and cook traditional Moroccan dishes and to take part in a traditional Moroccan lunch. The teaching activities developed through the funds of knowledge were:

1. Search for information related to traditional Moroccan food.
2. Carefully read the information handout for subsequent exploitation.
3. The students completed a form with relevant information from the information handout.
4. Using all the processes they had studied, they then all made a collective lunch for all the students in the class.
5. They read all information on file and discussed the most important information .

The sixth and final teaching unit consisted of a total of six sessions over 10 days. In this last unit, the students had to attempt to analyze some typical customs and traditions of Morocco. Finally, they prepared a script for the exhibition of a collaborative project. The objectives to be achieved were: to study and analyze some typical Moroccan customs: afternoon tea; to paint hand decorations with henna; to analyze the ritual of the meal; to listen carefully to two Moroccan stories and answer a few questions orally and to produce a final presentation of the project for an exhibition. The teaching activities developed through the funds of knowledge were:

1. Dictation of the main features of the customs and traditions of Morocco, which the students then had to correct from the blackboard. The teacher then reviewed their corrections.
2. Answer questions on a handout covering the most important information given previously.
3. Do their own hand decorations using henna.
4. Listening to two stories (The Moroccan Wolf and The Coalminer's Daughter) and then responding to oral questions about them:
5. The students prepared a final presentation of this project, "Living Morocco" to be exhibited to all the students of the school.

Figure 4. Final report of “Living Morocco” project conducted by pupils



Conclusion

We have presented a specific experience of a broader research project based on, and inspired by, The Funds of Knowledge Project (González, Moll & Amanti, 2005; Moll, 2011; Moll & Greenberg, 1990; Moll & González, 2004; Moll & Cammarota, 2010). The main goal is to train teachers as co-researchers so that they can study the funds of knowledge in the households of their students and can draw on this knowledge to develop innovative teaching activities in schools. This involves teachers making visits to households in which they assume the role of the learner (Moll, Amanti, Neff & González, 1992) and establish new relationships with the parents of the students based on an assumption of mutual trust, which is re-established or confirmed with each exchange between the two educational settings, i.e., family and school. It leads to the development of long-term relationships which can become the basis for the exchange of knowledge on family or school matters, reducing the various discontinuities that children from diverse backgrounds can experience between the worlds they know at home and the world of school. Children from immigrant communities can experience much less discontinuity when teachers recognize their cultural heritage and their family background.

The concept of Funds of knowledge (González, Moll & Amanti, 2005; McIntyre, Rosebery & González, 2001; Moll & Greenberg, 1990; Moll & González, 2004; Vélez-Ibáñez & Greenberg, 1992) is more precise than the concept of culture or culture-sensitive curriculum because of its emphasis on precisely-situated and specific bodies of strategic knowledge, skills and beliefs that are essential to the functioning of any household. Moreover, it recognizes the educational relevance of any family, regardless of their economic, social or cultural condition.

In this paper, we suggest adopting the concept of funds of identity in order to connect the ideas of funds of knowledge and the identity making process. In our view, funds of knowledge involve the material and resources that people internalize and use to construct meaning. Identity is embedded in tangible, historical cultural factors such as social institutions, artefacts and cultural beliefs (Esteban, 2011a, 2011b; Esteban & Bastiani, 2011; Esteban & Ratner, 2011). In this sense, identity embodies funds of knowledge; it objectifies experience in cultural terms and is stimulated and socialized by funds of knowledge. Funds of knowledge and the iden-

tities of individuals are mutually constitutive and interdependent: two forms of the same distinctive human order. Identity - any lived experience - energizes funds of knowledge and dialectically acquires their cultural features. Nevertheless, the funds of knowledge are dominant. They are the impetus behind identity formation. They organize the form and content of identity phenomena. In other words, the funds of identity are the result of the socially-distributed funds of knowledge. However, identity is not a passive element of society. It is active. People assimilate specific funds of knowledge but they also reject others. Further research is needed to develop this idea and come to a more precise idea of what funds of identity are, how to identify them and how to use them to connect school curricula to students lives. At present, we merely suggest the term as a useful concept.

The research strategies are indispensable in this scenario. We suggest, beyond the standard interview techniques, the use of arts-based methods and graphic elicitation such as pictures, self-portrait, relational maps and other research techniques that we have used in the study described in this article. The aim is to build an empirical understanding of the life experiences of students in order to link teaching to their lives. From a Vygotskian point of view (Esteban, 2011a; Moll, 2002, 2011, in press), education creates human development and we need to design better cultural settings in order to improve school outcomes. Putting family competences and skills into schools is a way of doing that. The challenge is to put the students' knowledge and experiences (their funds of knowledge and their funds of identity) at the heart of teaching.

In summary, in recent decades the cultural diversity of school populations in Spain and other industrialized countries has rapidly increased along with other processes of globalization. However, schooling is currently ineffective for large number of students because the context in schools does not recognize the cultural legacy of these students. In general, the culture of schools expresses the dominant, monolingual, standard ideology. The idea of *funds of knowledge* aims to improve education for minority students who speak, for example, in the United States of America, vernacular varieties of US English or non-English languages. The overall aim is to recognize the linguistic and cultural resources students bring into the schools in order to explore ways in which these resources (funds of knowledge and funds of identity) can be used to ex-

tend the sociolinguistic repertoires - including academic language - of all students. In other words, school practice and teaching has to be based upon - and built upon - the sociolinguistic and cultural resources students bring into the school. The Living Moroccan project is an example of how to go about doing this in the Catalan context. Further research is needed to incorporate other educational activities and to explore the funds of knowledge of multilingual and multicultural families. In our view, it appears crucially important that schools acknowledge the cultural and intellectual backgrounds of minority and marginalized groups if the objective is to provide all students with an education of quality. The *funds of knowledge* approach to identify the knowledge, skills, abilities, ideas, beliefs and identity resources of Moroccan families in Catalonia has been successful in breaking down the deficit thinking that is so often applied when it comes to Moroccan students and families. The project described in this article puts the emphasis on what a particular Moroccan family have rather than on what they lack. We also provide specific methods through which teachers can incorporate such funds of knowledge and identity into their teaching in order to improve the education of minority and Moroccan immigrant children in mainstream Spanish schools.

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Pedagogía del compromiso

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Reviews (I)

Freire, P. (2010) *Pedagogía del compromiso*. Barcelona: Hipatia, 131pp. ISBN: 978-84-936743-7-3.

La siempre actual obra de Paulo Freire nos trae en este libro un recopilatorio de seis textos organizados en cinco apartados, dos de ellos transcritos de seminarios y tres entrevistas realizadas en diferentes países de América Latina; y un manifiesto elaborado por el autor como conmemoración a los 10 años de la Revolución Sandinista en 1989.

En esta obra, en palabras de su mujer Nita, se muestra la latinoamericanidad de Freire que contribuye a entender mejor la visión crítica del autor sobre la necesidad de una unión de los diferentes países latinoamericanos que contribuya a ofrecer una imagen de fortaleza frente a las injusticias y desigualdades que aún imperan en estos. Una postura extrapolable a nuestras sociedades europeas, y especialmente en España, donde se requiere de un importante trabajo científico y comprometido para cambiar el panorama educativo actual.

La primera parte del libro es fruto de la transcripción de un seminario realizado en Brasil dirigido a trabajadores y trabajadoras latinoamericanas en el Instituto Cajamar. Un instituto creado a partir del sueño del movimiento sindical del país, de tener un espacio de formación y debate que ofrezca herramientas a los obreros y obreras para luchar por una sociedad más democrática. En este seminario Freire destaca especialmente la importancia de disminuir hasta eliminar la distancia existente entre lo que se dice y se hace, uniendo así discurso y práctica, siendo la coherencia la única vía para conseguir la educación y la sociedad que queremos. Otra de las ideas relevantes que conecta con las propuestas educativas actuales de mayor éxito es que una propuesta de educación solidaria debe ir acompañada del aprendizaje instrumental, como comenta el autor, no desligar el aprendizaje de las matemáticas del discurso político, ambas cosas se alimentan y son necesarias.

La segunda y quinta parte del libro, las engloban las tres entrevistas realizadas al autor en Chile y Uruguay. Freire, a través de las preguntas que le realizan, habla de la vigencia de su gran obra Pedagogía del Oprimido, relacionando la tarea educativa y de liberación como un proceso permanente en el que no debemos dejar de trabajar. A la vez que exige a las instituciones políticas la necesidad de que tomen una postura activa y comprometida para enfrentarse al analfabetismo de las personas adultas y adolescentes a la vez que se rescata la dignidad de la escuela pública.

En la tercera parte del libro, encontramos el manifiesto elaborado por Freire como conmemoración de los 10 años de la Revolución Sandinista en el que destaca la Cruzada Nacional de Alfabetización que más allá de aumentar las estadísticas de personas alfabetizadas fue el germen de sentir que era posible transformar la realidad nicaraguense. Una revolución que también rompió con las interpretaciones dogmáticas del marxismo que excluía a los cristianos de la lucha revolucionaria. Siendo un reflejo del sentir y actuar de Freire en el que era posible un trabajo con objetivos conjuntos independientemente de opciones e ideologías.

La cuarta parte corresponde a un seminario realizado en Paraguay y organizado por diferentes instituciones relacionadas con la Educación de personas adultas, centrado en la temática de educación popular. Una educación que, como Freire muestra, implica siempre objetivos, finalidades y sobre todo, sueños a perseguir. Los educadores y educadoras debemos perseguir utopías que tengamos muy claras en nuestro camino para que nuestra rigurosidad y ética nos conduzca a su consecución. Un camino en el que debemos trabajar constantemente para que esto sea posible.

La actualidad y utilidad de la obra de Freire, no sólo se muestra por ser uno de los autores más citados de educación por la comunidad científica internacional si no, y seguramente por eso uno de los más reconocidos, uno de los más comprometidos con la transformación social.

*Porque es con todo mi cuerpo que voy a la lucha por la transformación,
es con mi pasión, con mi deseo, con mi frustración, con mis miedos,
etc., pero también con mi saber (Freire 2010, 67).*

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Cambio de actitudes hacia la discapacidad en escolares de educación primaria

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Reviews (II)

González, R. (2011) *Cambio de actitudes hacia la discapacidad en escolares de educación primaria*. Tesis doctoral defendida en la Universidad de Oviedo en junio de 2011.

El estudio de los programas de cambio de actitudes hacia la discapacidad y la elaboración y puesta en marcha de programas específicos, constituye un interés preferente para el equipo de investigación en el que se gesta esta tesis doctoral. Los estudios centrados en esta temática, dada su relevancia social y aplicada, y su importancia en la integración de este colectivo de personas con discapacidad, constituyen una línea de investigación consolidada desde hace más de una década (Aguado, Alcedo y Arias, 2008; Aguado, Alcedo y Flórez, 2003, 2004; Flórez, 1999; Flórez, Aguado y Alcedo, 2009), y representan el punto de partida y el andamiaje teórico y práctico sobre el que se sustenta el actual trabajo que a continuación presentamos.

Los datos recogidos en la bibliografía confirman que las actitudes hacia las personas con discapacidad van mejorando paulatinamente, pero aún persisten muchos prejuicios y estereotipos que favorecen el rechazo y la marginación. Sin embargo, y pese a que se dispone de apoyo empírico acerca de la posibilidad de modificar y mejorar estas actitudes, siguen siendo muy pocos los estudios centrados en la implementación de estos programas y en la valoración de su eficacia. No obstante, el hecho de que las actitudes negativas tengan consecuencias tan importantes para estas personas con discapacidad justifica la necesidad de un cambio y la puesta en marcha de intervenciones encaminadas a dicho objetivo. Ya hace tiempo que se señalan una concatenación de razones decisivas que justifican la realización de estos programas de cambio de actitudes en el entorno escolar. Por un lado, el hecho de que en el proceso de inclusión escolar aparecen actitudes poco favorables, tanto por parte de compañeros como del profesorado. Los resultados de este proceso de inclusión educativa de los niños con discapacidad no están siendo todo lo positivos que en un principio se postulaban. Y parece que las actitudes no son ajenas a estos resultados. Finalmente, el hecho constatado empíricamente de que a través de programas

adecuados tales actitudes puedan cambiarse, mejorarse, atenuarse o adquirir un matiz menos peyorativo a partir de la manipulación de uno o más de los componentes actitudinales (cognitivo, afectivo y comportamental), lo que redundaría en un incremento de las oportunidades de integración escolar y social de estas personas con discapacidad.

En los estudios previos desarrollados por este equipo de investigación los resultados apoyan la implementación de estos programas. Las técnicas combinadas de contacto estructurado e información resultan eficaces ya que las actitudes de los grupos de recepción mejoran y se vuelven más positivas. Además, estos cambios se mantienen a lo largo del seguimiento, en concreto tres años después de finalizado el programa. Sin embargo, en estos programas previos los cambios van decayendo, es decir, la efectividad del programa va perdiendo significación estadística con el paso del tiempo, aunque en ningún caso las puntuaciones medias de los sujetos decaen hasta su puntuación inicial. El siguiente paso en la investigación requeriría comprobar qué estrategia potenciaría una mejor consolidación de estos cambios. También interesaba verificar si los efectos de estos programas se consolidan de forma similar en escolares de edades inferiores. La intervención a edades más tempranas puede ser más eficaz pues las actitudes no están tan consolidadas y contamos con una mayor plasticidad en los niños a la hora de intervenir para modificar. Además, y dado que la integración escolar de los niños con discapacidad se realiza desde los primeros niveles de la escolarización, y que la gestación y consolidación de las actitudes también aparece en estas etapas, cuanto más pronto se intervenga menor dificultad entrañará su modificación.

En base a estos planteamientos se ha diseñado y puesto en marcha un programa estructurado de cambio de actitudes en entorno escolar, en una muestra de 100 niños de 3º y 4º de Educación Primaria, de edades comprendidas entre 7 y 10 años. Se utiliza un diseño cuasi-experimental de grupo control no equivalente con medidas pre y posttratamiento. Las técnicas de cambio de actitudes utilizadas combinaron la información directa e indirecta sobre las personas con discapacidad, la información y experiencia sobre las ayudas técnicas, el contacto directo con personas con distintos tipos de discapacidad y la simulación de discapacidades. Durante el período de seguimiento, que ha durado tres años, se utilizaron sesiones de apoyo, o sesiones recordatorio, con un intervalo de tres meses entre cada una de ellas, para así favorecer el recuerdo. Los resultados indican que las actitudes de los niños que conforman el grupo experimental mejoran tras participar en el programa y son más positivas que las de sus pares del grupo control. Estos niños muestran mayor sensibilidad, tolerancia y aceptación de las personas con discapacidad, y el análisis del mantenimiento temporal de estas mejoras indica que las actividades recordatorio consolidan y mantienen el cambio obtenido.

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