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Teachers' Narratives for the Liberation of the Identity of the Oppressor Teacher

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The study we are presenting shows an experience in which the teacher shares with the students a class diary that is mostly composed of personal reflective processes that happen during the subject. The context in which this experience takes place is in the subject Educational Organisation, in the second year of the degree in pedagogy at the University of Malaga, in the first semester of the academic year 2022-2023. In this experience, 60 students and the four people who signed this paper participated, three of them being teachers of this subject, and the remaining person teaches the same group, but in another subject.

The main objective is to show students the role of the teacher in a more humanised and closer way in order to create a relationship of trust between teachers and students. Paraphrasing bell hooks (2022), in order to create an atmosphere of trust in the classroom it has been necessary to take the teacher out of his or her safety zone, this has been done by not being afraid to show and recognise his or her mistakes, insecurities and even feelings of vulnerability with respect to some topics and situations that arise in class. Following the idea of the same work by bell hooks, conflict situations are used as opportunities to create spaces for debate and critical thinking instead of treating conflicts as taboo situations that are ignored to avoid frustration.

The teacher, in this case, shares feelings of satisfaction, frustration, concerns, challenges, and even acknowledges mistakes in the approach to activities that turn out to be contrary to expectations. This generates class discussions in which a process of evolution in classroom interactions can be appreciated. The results of this experience, as well as its consequences, will be shared in the conclusions of this work.

Throughout the whole process, the role of authoritarian and oppressive power that teachers tend to have, and which is culturally acquired and promoted by both teachers and students, is taken into account, trying to generate a context where students are able to liberate themselves and to liberate the oppressors (Freire, 1970).

In order to face the transformation of this roll, in addition to trust, conflict and other bell hooks ideas mentioned above, we have taken into account the principles of dialogic learning of Ramón Flecha (2002), seeking in this way a democratisation of relationships as well as a context of debate that generates the construction of collective learning in an egalitarian way.

Another idea that has been important throughout the classroom process, as well as during the research, is the use of the biographical-narrative perspective. Speaking at this point only of the teaching-learning process (we will return to the biographical-narrative perspective in the section on research methods), first of all, students were asked to write an individual account of their educational experience until they reached university, and then this account was shared in small groups, creating a representation of their experiences that would then be shared with the whole class. Another activity carried out is a learning story with self-assessment, which consists of writing about their time in the subject, and reasoning what mark they deserve and why they deserve it. Perhaps it goes without saying that the diary itself is another activity based on the biographical-narrative perspective. In this way we use the biographical-narrative perspective as a space for the construction, reflection and analysis of previous and present experiences in order to build individual and collective learning during our passage through the subject (Rivas y Leite, 2013).

Methodology, Methods, Research Instruments or Sources Used

The aims of the inquiry are to find out whether this type of activity can really create a confidence that rebuilds the role of the teacher as a figure far removed from roles of power that have classically involved some kind of oppression, and to analyze the possible learning that this activity generates, directly or indirectly.

This is qualitative research, as it is a situated activity that situates the observer in the world (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008: 4). We adopted a narrative perspective whose specific object of study are the narratives of people participating in theoretical-practical and contextualised think tanks on ways of acting and making sense of the world (Clandinin, Pushor and Orr, 2007; Corona and Kaltmeier, 2012; Chase, 2015; Denzin and Lincoln, 2015).

Instruments used were:

- Researcher and teacher diary: this tool was used from September to December, providing a space for the collection of information, but also for ongoing reflection throughout the process. It was also a means of communication between teachers and students.

- Focus group: we held two focus groups, one in December and one in January. Sixty people participated, including the authors of this paper. During the course we had some comments on the diary, but in these discussion groups we focused entirely on the subject of the diary.

- Students' accounts of their experiences: As mentioned before, right after the end of the lessons, and as the end of the course, students have to hand in a learning story with self-assessment. In the following, we have the opportunity to analyse the narratives of this experience.

The analysis of the information has been carried out in a process of dialogic coding in three moments: 1st Open Coding, the text is read reflectively to identify themes. 2nd Axial coding, the themes are related and interconnected. 3rd Selective Coding, a core or central category links all the other themes together to form a story that relates the categories and themes (Gibbs, 2012).

As classes end on 18 January 2023, the course ends on 6 February 2023, and the ECER submissions ends on 31 January. In this paper we will share preliminary results drawn from the focus groups, from the stories processed until 31 January and from the analysis of the teacher's diary. If this paper is accepted, we will share the full results by August 2023 at the ECER conference at the University of Glasgow.

Conclusions, Expected Outcomes or Findings

Preliminary results:

Most of the students highlight that the use of the diary has helped them to reinforce and better understand what was given in class, and as a record of information for when they did not understand something or could not attend class.

Some students appreciated knowing what goes through the teachers' minds, seeing it as an example for when they become a teacher.

A student speaking on behalf of the class, says that at the beginning, when there was no trust, it was shocking to know the teachers' feelings, especially when there was some frustration because they took them as an attack on the students, but then when trust was built up they understood that these were feelings that could also be felt and expressed by the students and would not mean anything bad. Continuing with the theme of trust, the class commented in the focus group that they had achieved a greater degree of trust with the teacher who shared the diary than with other teachers of other subjects, the close language of the diary and the teacher's display of feelings helped to achieve this.

In the absence of processing the learning story with self-assessment, the teacher who wrote the diary commented that confidence had been built up, which helped the class to develop, but that as the marking period approached, students became increasingly nervous and insecure, and confidence was maintained, but in a hostile way. Pupils used it to complain or make excuses for their mistakes, feeling that the pupils were once again reconstructing the teacher as a figure of authoritarian power, as they once again perceived the teacher's advice and corrections as attacks on the pupils, even after having insisted that they were only recommendations for improvement that had no influence on the mark.

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