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Work, Professional Development And Teaching Commitment: Deconstructing Meanings

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The paper we present is part of the research project "The professional identity of teacher studies", that we are development for last 3 years. The third phase of this research put the focus on the experience of job placement of novel teachers, graduated no more than 5 years. We work with focal groups and professional experience and teacher education accounts of teachers implied in this research. Also, for any teachers, we do biographical interviews to deepen on processes of construction of professional identity. In this paper we present the Ana Belen History, a female teacher of pre-school education with an experience of 4 years in school, working in a urban school with students in risk of exclusion. This school have a educative project, commitment with the neighbourhood, joint with the community and other social groups.

Ana Belen story, from professional perspective, is linked with the social politic and educational commitment of this school. Our interest is focused in the comprehension of professional identity that Ana Belen has gone forging along her personal story and how her education and job placement has contributed for it. Also we are interested in knowing how early professional experiences have influenced in her professional development as teacher. Specifically we ask ourselves about what influence have for her professional identity, that her career starts in this particular school. In consequence, this paper leads us to question the current teacher education model. In particular we are interested on the kind of professional experience that have place and, so, the kinds of commitments that enables. We understand that frameworks in which professional education and experience have place are relevant to enable more or less transformer understandings about teaching.

From conceptual perspective this paper adopts a socio-critical point of view (Gergen, 1985; Kincheloe, 2001; Wenger, 1988, etc.). We understand that teaching has to be analysing according work contexts and personal stories of teachers, because we face processes historical and collective building. Teaching is the result of action of their actors, over time, and in specific stage. So, with this research we intend to break with the old gap between pre and in-service education. We think that both of them are part of the same process and are formed according similar logical; although scenes change. We understand that they are part of a continuous process in which is giving sense to different and complex settings where teaching profession is built, but they are not differenced and independent stages. The teacher work, so, is subject to particular conditions, generated from such different fields as institutional, corporative, cultural, social, political, moral, etc. It displays a kaleidoscopic view on space, time, context, ... These are the axis in which the teaching is formed, from the complexity and heterogeneity.

How this complexity is articulated results in different ways to face the teacher work, according different personal and professional stories. The teacher acts with subjects in instituted contexts from relationships he has with them, which gives a situated and contingent character. But, these contexts are strongly structured and ruled according centralized and generalized positions; which is, at the very least, paradoxical. Possibly, from our point of view, some of the crisis of teaching have to explain from this paradoxical perspective and the conflict, which characterize this job (Rivas, Leite y Cortés, 2011)

Methodology, Methods, Research Instruments or Sources Used

The methodology is based on the perspective of narrative-biographical research and participatory research, through school experiences accounts. The voices of the teacher students and novice teachers, through their stories and in-depth interviews are the main component of data collection. We understand that the subjects have knowledge of the school reality and the social, cultural and political meanings through the stories that compose their experience. This methodological point of view, therefore, is part of the constructivist approach to understand knowledge construction. It is centered on subjects and on the ways they build, collectively, their view of the world and its reality. In this project and phase case, this perspective focuses on its unique perspective on schools, educational processes, training and the teaching profession.

From a global perspective, in this research project we work with teachers and teacher students in autobiographical accounts in three phases: 1) Educational accounts of Teacher Freshmen Students; 2) Accounts about their college experience, along their education process for 4 years; 3) Their professional experience once inserted in the school system; we call it 'professional initiation stories'. In the paper we will focus on the third phase. These stories are collected from their written stories about their experience. We collect these stories in the context of a focal group, where they were discussing and analyzing along 4 meetings. Lastly, we proceeded to interview in particular, some of the involved teachers. One of them is Ana Belén, the main character of this paper. We hold in-depth interviews with her from the basis of written account.

In the end, the analysis and interpretation of the stories collected in the mentioned three phases of the research will be working in discussion groups with members of the university academic community (authorities, teachers and students), with system education community (authorities, representatives of professional groups, teachers, etc.) and the subjects of the research. Our aim is to have a comprehensive view of the type of training that is being given to our future teachers, and how this training is affecting their work and their future vision of the profession, as well as the dimensions involved: learning, teaching, knowledge, students, school curriculum, etc.

Conclusions, Expected Outcomes or Findings

The results of this paper came from the analysis of professional biography of Ana Belen, both her written account as the biographical interviews. Four meaning nuclei arise from these sources.

- The first focus on the worth and sense of studying for going forward in the life; to be "someone". This idea becomes a stamp and requirement for all her life. Studying a college degree is not only a personal success but also familiar.

- The second refers to experiences and memories of significant teachers, which constitute early referents for her professional trajectory. In these teachers, some traits are highlighted to imitate, because they are valuable for profession.

- The third is related with images, reflections and sense of training period in college. This education is valuable regarding professional examinations, because other learning emerges, which seems not have been presents or not have been perceived as important.

- The fourth shows the entry in the school and the tasks to do, taking account the models of relationship, learning, routines, etc. lived in it. These can be felt and perceived as more or less related with what she would like being and doing.

These focus allow us think critically about settings in which teacher education occurs. In Ana Belen account, joint with the accounts of other teachers implied in the research, is evidenced a continuous educative experience, from Nursery School until her job placement: the persistence of a strongly academic schooling model and centred on curriculum content. The experience in the Education College doesn't show a different model. How it is possible to generate a innovate perspective of teaching profession, in strongly conservative settings? We think, from Ana Belén story, that a different teacher education system is necessary, in which the relation between academic and professional perspective must to change.

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