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Initial Teacher Training, Practical Knowledge and Lesson Study, a perfect trio. Case Study.

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This research comes from interest in analysing the possibility of reconstructing practical knowledge by incorporating Lesson Study (LS) in the Practicum III and the Final Dissertation in initial training for infant school teachers at Málaga University, Spain.

The work involves five Practicum III and Final Dissertation students, focusing particularly on María's case study, the academic tutor (a university teacher who mentors the group and advises on the Lesson Study), and the professional tutor (a teacher responsible for the practice classroom).

Monitoring María's practical knowledge has allowed us to reveal the pedagogical potential identified in the Lesson Study and show how two key processes have allowed its reconstruction: theorisation of practice (Hagger & Hazel, 2006) and experimentation of theory (Korthagen, Loughran & Russell, 2006; Pérez Gómez, Soto & Serván, 2015).

First phase: Lesson Study objectives.

Diagnostic phase.

During the Practicum, María keeps a diary in which she reflects on her practical experience. The academic tutor is on hand to provide feedback and help her to observe and reflect in more detail.

In this phase we saw how María began to question certain practices of her professional tutor which prevented pupils from developing autonomy, cooperation and communication (key targets in the Spanish national curriculum). At the same time, she began to recognise her practical knowledge and became increasingly interested in research.

Seminar: tutored group work. Based on the diagnostic phase, students select the Lesson Study objectives in groups while individually choosing the focus of the Final Dissertation.

This contrast of observations, combined with support from her academic tutor, encouraged María to see childhood from a new perspective, choosing

personalised teaching as the area of research for her Final Dissertation while focusing the Lesson Study on developing autonomy, cooperation and communication. A true challenge for practical knowledge.

Second phase: designing the Lesson Study

Individual development of the theoretical framework of the Final Dissertation then begins, along with designing the Lesson Study.

This activated the theorisation of practice process in María, giving her ideas when designing the Lesson Study and also generating new teaching responses, all fully founded and cooperatively considered.

The cooperative design allowed her to go beyond the practice of her professional tutor, break away from the school socialisation process, and design an innovative pedagogical proposal.

Third phase: implementing the Lesson Study

María plays the role of teacher in the context of her practical training while a colleague observes her, and vice versa. Pedagogical Documentation is introduced as a resource for observation and analysis. La documentación pedagógica, es uno de los pilares del proyecto de Reggio que consiste en la recogida sistemática de los procesos que se viven en la escuela. Según Malaguzzi es una estrategia ética para dar voz al niño y compartir con la comunidad lo que se vive en las escuelas. La recogida de información se puede realizar fotográficamente, audiovisualmente o a modo de relato. En nuestro caso la recogida de información se realiza fotográficamente. Las alumnas de dicho grupo ya tienen experiencia en documentación pedagógica ya que en el Practicum II fue introducida por su tutora profesional .

This phase stimulated experimentation of theory and allowed her to focus her observations on pupils' learning processes, as related to the objectives and design of the Lesson Study.

The improved Lesson Study helped to continue with the construction of new informed habits.

Fourth and fifth phase: analysis, improvement and dissemination of the Lesson Study.

The power of the experience, together with the evidence collected and its comparison, brought about a simultaneous process of theorisation of practice and experimentation of theory in María, evincing her own practical knowledge and promoting its reconstruction.

Final Dissertation as the individual reconstruction of the experience and dissemination in an expanded context through a scientific poster.

We therefore believe that including Lesson Study in initial teacher training has enabled the reconstruction of María's practical knowledge through theorisation of practice and experimentation of theory.