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05. Children and Youth at Risk and Urban Education

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Keywords: Justice, School, Resilience, Social Exclusion, Narrative

Affirmative pedagogies. Living and coexisting in a disadvantaged neighborhood (the case of Semi)

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In this presentation, I consider findings and methodological issues generated by a research called THE WINK OF THE POWER, THE SMILE OF THE CHANGE: Pedagogical study of resilience Identity in situations of social, cultural and legal disadvantage. The study draws upon narrative life history methods to understand the social experience of disadvantage and change. As an illustrative example, the paper will focus on Semi, a 32 years old man with a history of childhood and Youth difficulties as a drugs addiction, school absenteeism and failure, detention centre sentences and complex and hostile relationships. Semi now coordinates an unconventional rehab house in the hills of Malaga and acts as mediator to other social projects.

Theoretical framework is based on the concepts of social exclusion, education, resilience, experience and justice. The method developed in this project is the biographical one, where the narrative perspective situated the voice of the participant as the principal evidences to be considered; without which the research would not have the same impact. Therefore there is a clear point to be made: in order to look at this work with a critical eye we need to understand the perspective of the people who live in the neighbourhood and then we can share and develop the theories from the field.

Thus, in the complete report you can find the combination of the two voices – Semi's as the subject and main character of the research and mine as the researcher. Though in this report appear others voices in different phases. The report shows the interaction between different people about one subject. For this reason, it is not an issue of delimitation of voices; it is an issue of subjectivities and the convergence of them. Finally, the results are set up in some conceptual discussions and theories around the social and educative actions in order to understand how people live and can be change in difficult circumstances and how develop urban schools practices

Methodology, Methods, Research Instruments or Sources Used

In order to describe the strategies used in this project, it is important to consider the relation between the resources and decisions adopted and the narrative perspective in all the methodological stages developed. There are two key components in the development of the project: firstly the construction of a narrative ethnography, and secondly, the construction of a collaborative life history. Afterwards, the practical evidence is drawn from the stories and subsequently we work on a theoretical construction and its interpretations with all the data collected.

Into the narrative ethnography we find some relevant information in order to contextualize the Semi's Life History and to understand the cultural codes of the place we are working in, which we were for more than two years making observations, field notes, interviews... with more than 25 participants.

The construction of the Life History was made up of ten long interviews with Semi, several observations plus information obtained from informal conversations. The Semi's Story has been worked by both of us into a democratically way to analyze the data.

Conclusions, Expected Outcomes or Findings

The data collected in this research is not aimed at seeking definitive conclusions. The aim is to promote educational innovation from a democratic and participatory perspective, where the data collected are directly focused on the reflection and understanding of the practices and situation of their protagonists.

In this way, the results are set up in some conceptual discussions and theories around the social and educative actions in order to understand how people live and can be change in difficult circumstances and how develop urban schools practices

Nevertheless I am working in the development of different theories that emerge from the field in order to understand how people can live under the ideas of justice and dignity, how can be possible to change from disordered lives into empowered lives and why should be one of the most important challenges of a democratically society.

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Intent of Publication

The intention of publishing our work is necessary to view the environments in which we work and the way of presenting the results achieved. For this reason, some national and international educational journals are the focus of our publications, such as a first approach published in 2011 in the Spanish journal "Revista Interuniversitaria sobre discapacidad e Interculturalidad" or also part of this project was published in another journal edited by 'Freire Institute' called 'Quaderns d'Educació Continua'