EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE INTERCULTURAL INCLUSION AT A PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL IN BARCELONA

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ABSTRACT

This article presents a study carried out at a public secondary school in Barcelona, where 70% of student enrolment are migrant students. The study had the aim to find out what kind of teaching practices in the classroom work towards intercultural inclusion. The methodology process was carried out based on observations, individual interviews and group discussions. The results show an active collaborative work between students, teachers and the management team, consideration of the socio-educational and cultural difficulties that their students face and an active professional commitment. The results also show how the school may be reproducing the marginality of these migrant groups in society´s broader context.

Keyword: teaching practices, intercultural practices, interculturality, inclusive school, immigrant students, foreign students

STRATEGIE DI ISTRUZIONE PER PROMUOVERE L'INCLUSIONE INTERCULTURALE IN UNA SCUOLA SECONDARIA PUBBLICA DI BARCELLONA

SINTESI

L'articolo presenta uno studio svolto in una scuola secondaria pubblica di Barcellona dove il 70 per cento degli studenti iscritti sono migranti. L'obiettivo dello studio era di individuare le pratiche di insegnamento in classe che favoriscono l'inclusione interculturale. Il processo metodologico è stato condotto in base a osservazioni, interviste individuali e discussioni di gruppo. I risultati mostrano un attivo lavoro di collaborazione tra studenti, insegnanti e il team di gestione, considerazione delle difficoltà socio-educative e culturali degli studenti da parte degli insegnanti, e un impegno professionale attivo. I risultati dimostrano inoltre come la scuola possa riprodurre l'emarginazione che questi gruppi migranti vivono nel più ampio contesto sociale.

Parole chiave: pratiche di insegnamento, pratiche interculturali, interculturalità, scuola inclusiva, studenti immigrati, studenti stranieri

INTRODUCTION[1]

Migration is currently one of the most pressing matters on the political agenda of European countries. This is particularly the case in Spain as it is one of the gateways into Europe via the Mediterranean Sea. During the year 2000, a total of 923,879 foreigners resided in the Spanish territory; as of 2020, that number had risen to a total of 5,423,198 (IDESCAT, 2020). This explosive trend can also be seen in the Autonomous Community of Catalonia where the study in this article was developed. During 2000, foreigners there represented 2.9% (181,590) of the overall Catalonian population. As of 2019, that number rose to 16.2% (1,259,013 individuals) (IDESCAT, 2020). The total number of foreigners officially registered is 1,253,913. This means that 5,100 are undocumented immigrants.

In the face of such a scenario, which is characterised by a burgeoning cultural diversity, but also tainted by socioeconomic inequality, the need to rely on policies and initiatives that promote the integration of migrant populations is ever more urgent. Ever since the Tampere Programme (1999–2004)[2] this challenge has been understood as a "*process that works towards being an accepted part of society*" (Garcés-Mascareñas & Pennix, 2016, 14). Despite these efforts, a large proportion of the migrant population from non-EU countries is at risk of poverty, and children are one of the most affected groups. In most European states, education is seen as playing a crucial role in helping migrant and refugee children and youth settle in new countries (Lifelong Learning Platform, 2016). However, education systems tend to reproduce the structural inequalities of society, which is evinced by the fact that migrant children are disadvantaged in comparison to their local peers, as they "*represent a disproportionate amount among low academic achievement students, as well as among those who do not graduate from school*" (Essomba, 2014, 1).

It is within this context that the European MiCreate project[3] emerges with the objective of *identifying, understanding and analysing teaching practices that could contribute to intercultural inclusion at school* of migrant students through a child-centred approach (Due, Riggs & Augoustinos, 2016) that may favour their school integration.[4]

Although the field work has been carried out in six countries, the focus of this article is centred on Spain, and especially in the context of Catalonia, where the problem of school inclusion of migrant children is relevant (Murillo Torrecilla, Belavi & Pinilla Rodríguez, 2018). In Spain, fieldwork was conducted in five Catalonian public schools, but, in this article, we have selected one primary-secondary school located in a working-class neighbourhood on the outskirts of Barcelona, where more than 70% of students are of foreign origin.[5] We will present the results of fieldwork activities carried out at the secondary level during a five-month period to be able to identify in detail whether teachers' practices hinder or benefit intercultural work within the school.

The management of intercultural relations in Catalan schools has been studied in various ways. Part of the focus has been on dimensions such as: linguistic diversity and inclusion (González Riaño, Huguet & Chireac, 2013), school coexistence (Buendía et al., 2015) and policies for the inclusion of migrants (Etxeberria et al., 2018; Garreta-Bochara, Macia-Bordalba & Llevot-Calvet, 2020). However, there are not many studies in Catalonia that make an in-depth analysis of intercultural school contexts, and, particularly, inclusive teaching practices in the classroom. Recently Rosado (2019) and Garreta-Bochara & Torrelles-Montanuy (2020) have approached the issue, although their efforts have focused more on the analysis of inclusive and intercultural practices promoted from the schools' own educational projects.

For this reason, we have put the spotlight on the teaching staff, and how they face the daily challenge of operating in classrooms of manifest cultural diversity. In this regard, the questions driving the present article are the following: What teaching practices work in favour of intercultural aspects within schools? What does it mean to work with the local community and the migrant community from the perspective of a double-sided approach[6]? What are the obstacles and advantages that teachers identify when working with this approach?

We consider, as a broad hypothesis, that taking on the responsibility (or not) of cultural diver-

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sity management and working efficiently in this new socio-educational context affects both staff members that work in these schools, as well as those in charge of formulating and assessing public policies.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

Migration, alongside strategies that enable educational and social integration of foreign populations in host societies, represents one of the most important challenges in the construction of today's societies. It is undoubtedly a multi-dimensional phenomenon that we will attempt to address below.

Inclusive education within the context of migrant population integration

When talking about inclusive education we must first take into account the World Declaration on Education for All (EFA, Education for All) (UNESCO, 1990) which aimed at universalising education rights around the world. This declaration places particular emphasis on those groups of children most exposed to discrimination and exclusion, particularly those who face poverty, disabilities, street workers, rural populations, ethnic minorities, and other groups (UNESCO, 1990). Accordingly, schools should develop and implement initiatives that contribute to the advancement of a society based on the universal values of justice and social inclusion (Murillo Torrecilla, Belavi & Pinilla Rodríguez, 2018) that go beyond particular educational needs (Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2006). In other words, this document recognises and appreciates the value of diversity by reducing social exclusion and discriminatory attitudes. The guidelines that stem from the concept of inclusion relate to the idea of non-discrimination, equal opportunities, and valuing differences within the framework of constructing more democratic and just societies (Simón & Echeita, 2016). Therefore, inclusive education aims to generate appropriate responses to the broad spectrum of student needs, not only in terms of learning but also in terms of affection and emotion (Tijoux, 2013), socialisation and connectivity. Moreover, it is expected that the values and knowledge produced and assimilated in curricular action will have an impact not only within the school, but also outside of it (Erstad, Gilje, & Arnseth, 2013).

Over the past years Spain's legal framework has been redefining the notion of cultural diversity, as has been stated by Bernabé (2012, 69):

Laws did not specify an explicit outline for what cultural diversity is. They merely merged immigrant children to those children (sic) with special educational needs (mental, physical and sensory disabilities), despite the fact that the LOCE[7] legally stipulates the inclusion of the former, as well as the separate consideration of their needs. The last decade of the 20th century was marked by educational legislation that defended the use of specific classrooms that could attend to the special educational needs stemming from migratory processes.

Therefore, as laws on inclusive education were enacted, it was necessary to separate those that focused on special educational needs from those focusing on working with cultural diversity derived from migration. In other words, it was necessary to arrive at a definition that could express the particularities of an inclusive system focused on intercultural contexts, and on how to respond to the educational and learning needs arising from this particular context.

In recent years, we may identify the social integration of migrant populations as an active phenomenon and so in recent years, it has played a crucial role in global political agendas. Garcés-Mascareñas & Pennix (2016) analyses the transformations undertaken by migratory processes and how they have had an impact on public policies and the social development of host societies. In his analysis, he draws attention towards a particular perspective in which a host society does not accept this burgeoning and new diversity, advocating instead for a forced process of assimilation of new arrivals into the society. This assimilation approach seeks to generate a cultural uniformity where the dominant culture imposes its forms and the minority cultural groups adopt the language, values, norms and identity of the territory to which they have arrived. This perspective – based on the concept of assimilation established by Warner & Srole (1945) – has been criticized due to its implicit idea that the receiving society is, in itself, a homogeneous society. This notion avoids the fact that all societies are heterogeneous with structural and socio-economic inequalities. Likewise, the criticism directed towards this notion of assimilation comes from the vast constellation of integration processes and the actors, with different approaches and opinions, who participate in it. Civil society does not have a single, uniform and homogeneous view on the receiving population (Garcés-Mascareñas & Pennix, 2016).

Thus, as migratory processes increase, the approach in regard to assimilation is also transformed towards a different perspective, evincing a so-called two-way process. For Garcés-Mascareñas (2020), this means that insofar as the arriving community is accepted with its own ways and values, it simultaneously adapts to the community of origin. This is what could be understood

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7   LOCE, Ley Orgánica de Calidad de la Educación de España (National Organic Law on Education Quality). Retrieved from: https://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-2002-25037 (last access: 21. 11. 2020).

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as a two-way process. According to Garcés-Mascareñas & Pennix (2016), this process is based on the reciprocity of rights and obligations of third-country nationals and host societies. Integration, therefore, is seen as a balance of rights and obligations. Policies have been taking on a holistic approach that includes economic, social and cultural rights and the acceptance of religious diversity, advocating for active citizenship and civic participation (Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016). In 2004, the Council of the European Union established the Common Basic Principles, which set the framework for the subsequent development of integration policies. It understands integration as the process of acceptance by society, as a process that goes well-beyond language learning, which must necessarily include social, cultural, economic, and political integration as well.

Interculturalism. The evolution of an inclusive concept

In many cases, the terms intercultural and multicultural seem to be interchanged, regardless of the fact that they actually represent different genealogies and traditions when it comes to "*the negotiation of cultural difference within the context of liberal democracies*" (Levey, 2012, 217). "Multiculturalism" means different things depending on the context. When one crosses the border between the United States and Canada, for example, this concept suddenly bears different connotations and institutional ramifications. The same is the case for the meaning of "interculturalism." For Levey (2012) at the beginning of the XXI century, "*interculturalism, as was employed in continental Europe, tended to focus on the interactions between citizens and civil society groups, rather than on the relationship of the state with its cultural minorities, which was possibly the predominant concern of multiculturalism*" (Levey, 2012, 218).

Interculturalism is a concept that originated in France in the 1970s as the result of administrative management of cultural diversity which emerged in schools due to the increase of foreign students, especially African, as a result of growing migration (Essomba, 2006). Its spirit resides in the deep ideological roots of French republicanism, where the idea of equality is placed above the idea of freedom, unlike the Anglo-Saxon tradition which prioritizes freedom (Levey, 2012).

Essomba (2008) claims that what we find within the notion of interculturalism is the idea of creating spaces where exchange, enrichment and understanding can take place. It is with this framework in mind that three great principles can be identified as conditions of interculturalism: a) equal opportunities for all people simultaneously sharing and coexisting within the same space b) respecting diversity c) the creation of social environments that enable exchange and mutual enrichment between individuals of different ethnic or cultural backgrounds (Essomba, 2006).

In general, in Spain, there is no clear definition on what kind of cultural diversity management is institutionally employed, which is why some authors such as Hidalgo (2005), Essomba (2008), Díaz-Aguado (2004), Bernabé (2012) remark on intercultural experiences, while others (Bartolomé, 1997) emphasize multicultural experiences.

In this study, cultural diversity management was approached from the perspective of interculturalism, since cultural interactions, and cultural management were analysed taking into account the values of respect, equal opportunities and cultural exchange that take place within the school and between teacher-student bonds.

Teaching practices towards school coexistence

In regard to the domain of teaching practices, although composed by particular individual actions, it also represents a broader social behaviour insofar as they are forms of collective reproduction upheld within a determined social space. Fardella & Carvajal (2018) understand teaching practices as:

> a concept that exceeds the idea of repeated action (routine) or a set of activities. (…) In order to further this concept we may describe its main components: sense, competence and materiality. […] There is a common challenge to make practice visible as a central study unit which may enable us to address or access the social realm (Fardella & Carvajal, 2018, 4).

By analysing the teaching practices taken into account in this study, we will be able to identify in detail if these practices hinder or benefit intercultural relations within the school. Moreover, one of the fundamental elements in which teaching practices bear impact is the mediation of conflict, insofar teaching professionals play an essential role by "*incorporating a participatory and peaceful system with the goal of facilitating school coexistence, empowering the educational community and promoting a culture of peace and social wellbeing*" (Iglesias & Ortuño, 2018, 382). Classroom environments emerge from the interaction between rules, habits, daily life and the specific relationship between teachers and their students (Manota & Melendro, 2016), the result of which is coexistence.

Emotional support is necessary for all children, however, it could be more relevant for migrant children. According to Belhad, Koglin & Peterman (2014), most migrant children within the European schooling context demand emotional support from their schools. Responding to this need is an aspect that, according to these authors, can affect their personal development and being connected with possible adaptations problems in the classroom.

The situation in Spain and the field work context

With the increasing arrival of the migrant population and refugees since the beginning of 2015, and in consideration of the subsequent challenge in the integration of schoolchildren, Decree 187/2015[8] was enacted in Spain. This decree establishes a teaching standard in secondary education and guarantees equal opportunities among students for the development of individual, social, intellectual, artistic, cultural and emotional capabilities[9]. The decree specifies fostering democratic, critical and committed education by promoting attitudes that favour coexistence within today's complex and diverse society.

In the Catalonian context, the Department of Education is working through different initiatives, such as didactic materials, teaching resources and adjustments in the laws, to promote school integration and an intercultural inclusion of children.[10] Each school is encouraged to develop the procedures it deems most appropriate when implementing the provisions of this legislation. Along these lines, in 2017, the Catalonian Department of Education (2017) decreed resolution ENS585/2017[11] which establishes that all schools must design and implement a School Conviviality Project in accordance with the Schooling Educational Project. Its purpose is to meet standards that promote equity and respect for the diversity of students, promote school mediation, a culture of dialogue as a basic tool in managing conflict, and a culture of peace and non-violence.[12]

If we take into account the figures pertaining to the Catalonian public-school system, we notice that in 2000 a total of 16,577 students with a nationality other than Spanish were enrolled, whereas in 2018 this figure increased to 151,887 (INDESCAT, 2020). In the face of this new reality, schools have had to incorporate different initiatives to meet the challenge of their social and educational inclusion.

Such is the situation of the school in which we focus this article on. It is located in the Bon Pastor district, which was established three years ago as a primary-secondary school and belongs to the Sant Andreu district of Barcelona. The neighbourhood's social reality is defined by a complex mosaic of historical, geographical and cultural aspects (Viñas, 2018). Like other neighbourhoods with high levels of social segregation, the resident population is mainly composed of low-income, working-class and a large migrant and Roma community, who still lag behind the native population in terms of literacy, schooling and training (Tarabini, Curran & Fontdevila, 2017; Murillo Torrecilla, Belavi & Pinilla Rodríguez, 2018; Bonal, Zancajo & Scandurra, 2019). The nationalities present at the school include countries from Central and South America, North Africa, Eastern Europe, Asia, as well as the Spanish Roma population. Together they make up for approximately 70% of total enrolment (Viñas, 2018).

At the present (2020), the teaching staff in secondary level is composed of 15 teachers, 3 members of the managerial board and 4 administrative staff. The primary level, initially with the name of Bernat de Boil, has existed since the 1940s. In the last ten years, an educational project focused around the values of care and inclusion has been developed. It has only been three years since secondary education was incorporated, to give a continued attention to students. Its educational project is constantly changing and reinventing itself due to the need to improve educational practice and respond to daily teaching demands. Since 2017 the school has been considered a High Complexity School by the Department of Education, which means receiving more human resources, incorporating professionals in Reception Classrooms, a psychologist, a social educator, a cultural promoter, a social worker, social integration technicians and the possibility of having two teachers per classroom.

METHODOLOGY

This study has been undertaken to employ a comprehensive-interpretative approach to describe the routines and practices of teachers' daily work (Fardella & Carvajal, 2018) and the way that they contribute to the creation of social and educational environments through interactive processes (Flick, 2002). It was carried out over the course of four months in 2020 within the framework of the MiCREATE project in an immersive attempt to understand the culture of the school. An ethnographic approach has been followed by using ethnographic

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8 All resources may be read at: https://dogc.gencat.cat/ca/pdogc_canals_interns/pdogc_resultats_fitxa/?action=fitxa&mode=single&documentId=701354&language=ca_ES (last access: 21. 11. 2020).

9 Law Resolution ENS585/2017. See more at: http://cido.diba.cat/legislacio/6924309/resolucio-ens5852017-de-17-de-marc-per-la-qual-sestableix-lelaboracio-i-la-implementacio-del-projecte-de-convivencia-en-els-centres-educatius-dins-el-marc-del-projecte-educatiu-de-centre-departament-densenyament (last access: 21. 11. 2020).

10 Available at: http://xtec.gencat.cat/ca/projectes/intercultural/ (last access: 21. 11. 2020).

11 Available at: http://cido.diba.cat/legislacio/6924309/resolucio-ens5852017-de-17-de-marc-per-la-qual-sestableix-lelaboracio-i-la-implementacio-del-projecte-de-convivencia-en-els-centres-educatius-dins-el-marc-del-projecte-educatiu-de-centre-departament-densenyament (last access: 21. 11. 2020).

12 Ibid. Law Resolution ENS585/2017.

Table 1: A summary of information-gathering methods

	Method		
	Observations	**Interviews**	**Discussion groups**
Amount	31	4	1
Space in which it was employed	Secondary classrooms	Digital software, synchronic	Secondary teachers' room
Participants	Tutors, students and subject teachers (Music, English, Maths, History, ApS, Projects, Biology, Catalan, Physics and a recreational trip to the neighbourhood's Recycling Yard).	Teacher tutor, first grade of secondary level Teacher tutor, second grade of secondary level Teacher tutor, third grade of ESO Primary-Secondary School Headteacher	13 secondary school teachers

methods (interviews, participative observation, and discussion groups) that may allow for a report on teacher-student interactions relative to experiences of intercultural inclusion.

Information-gathering strategies

The first strategy employed as a means of obtaining information was through 'participant observation' (Angrosino, 2012) focused on students' and teachers' interactions in this lower secondary school.

Secondly, discussion groups were held with the participation of all secondary school teachers (13). This method stimulates the emergence of collective concepts and meanings (Barbour, 2013), and constitutes a source of reliable raw material for the analysis and interpretation of the results.

As a third strategy, we used the active semi-structured individual interview (Valles, 2000; Holsten & Gubrium, 2016). This strategy was undertaken with the participation of each of the teachers responsible for the first three years of high school, in addition to the headteacher.

The observations were collected during school classes and tutorials time. These spaces were fundamentally relevant, insofar as our goal was to analyse a heterogeneous and diverse group (Denzin, 2012). During tutorial hours, teachers proposed introspective work and group coexistence dynamics. The school headteacher was generally present at these meetings. During class time, they worked according to a pre-established schedule of subject matters and inquiry projects. The school meets twice a week for optional study sessions from the Service-Learning project[13].

A summary of the observations, interviews and discussion groups is reflected in table 1.

In total, 4 active interviews (Holstein & Gubrium, 2016) and 1 focus group were carried out with school management teams and teachers. In order to validate the instruments, the interview guidelines were reviewed by peer experts on the subject. Along with this, the authors made 31 observations at the educational centre and analysed relevant documents for the cases (Shah, 2017). Each interview was recorded and transcribed, and notes were taken during participant observations. To maintain confidentiality, the name of the centre and the participants who were included in the article are not mentioned.

Regarding the analysis, the total corpus of the transcripts and field notes were coded according to the thematic areas initially proposed in the guidelines and with the categories that emerged in the empirical work itself. In this way, patterns of meaning units were generated that could respond to the objectives of the research. The analysis was carried out by systematically reading the codes, patterns and themes, looking for contrasts, paradoxes and irregularities (Denzin, 2003). Subsequently, the codes were grouped and regrouped until they made sense, generating three emerging categories where we have grouped the evidence and developed the discourse (Erstad, Miño & Rivera-Vargas, 2021) that we present in the following part.

RESULTS

The results of the field work developed from the grouping of evidence into the three identified emerging categories: intercultural inclusion teaching practices; advantages in intercultural inclusion work; and obstacles that hinder the processes of coexistence, learning and intercultural interaction.

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13   Service-Learning is a methodology that combines the academic curriculum with community service.

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Intercultural inclusion teaching practices

With regard to this category, we have identified three subcategories that are stressed by teacher's due to their importance: first, the curricular framework that guides their teaching; second, the pedagogical strategies employed; and third, mechanisms that foster coexistence and schooling developed within the classroom context.

With respect to the *curricular framework*, one of the main components that teachers remark upon is the flexibility they have at their disposal in order to work properly in their respective areas. In this regard, one of the teachers interviewed explained:

It's about the flexibility you are allowed to work with. If today we didn't advance as much as we needed to go along with the educational curriculum, it's okay because we're going to work on many other things along the way. […] We are not afraid to do different and new things. We venture trying many different things (sic) with the kids. As it is not a big and rigid institution, it encourages plenty of learning and possibilities. We are all learning; they are, we are. It is extraordinarily positive. [Secondary school teacher, 1st grade ESO]

Curricular flexibility also generates intra-school spaces that go beyond the classroom itself. Some of them are pedagogical activities such as Peace Day, "Open-Door Days" or the Commemoration of the Holocaust, an activity that places special emphasis on the atrocities endured by the Roma population.

With respect to *pedagogical strategies*, there are several relevant elements that demonstrate a thought-out and articulated methodology working to benefit the students. On the one hand, the secondary school endorses and follows a collaborative approach, constantly encouraging help and assistance between peers. Teachers work with methodologies that allow the merging of classes during elective subjects and Service-Learning activities. During the 'reading project' activities, they draw from diverse cultural heritages and encourage the learning of the Catalan language not through direct translation, but by explaining in Catalan the meaning of words when students do not know them. In addition, they strive to bridge life experiences pertaining to the countries of origin of the students and the curricular content (even if at times the students seem uninterested, it becomes an encouraging challenge for teachers). The following is what one of the teachers participating in the discussion group expressed:

I thought to myself: I am going to benefit from the fact that half the class comes from different countries. So, I asked some of them to explain things about the countries they came from and I could see that, in general, there was no greater interest coming from them or their classmates. For example, in one case I thought of something that would be super interesting, I asked F. (student), who speaks 4 languages, to talk a little bit about her culture, about Pakistan, but you could see that there was such a great apathy about it at all! [Secondary school teacher, discussion group]

It is a challenge that can also be taken as an opportunity, as one of the interviewed teachers expressed:

We have to benefit from everything that happens when people that come from different cultures interact with one another. That is to say, I must make the most out of the interaction between L., Honduran and Catholic and I., Moroccan and Muslim. Everything that emerges in this interplay, the way they behave and relate, is what we must seize in order to learn new ways of interaction. We benefit from and integrate everything that happens between people of different cultures. I. (student) would not be the same person if she had stayed in her village in Morocco, without this space of interaction with (the student) L. […] in my opinion, here lies the worth of interculturalism. It comes from the union of these cultures and what emerges from that union. [Secondary school teacher, 1st grade of ESO]

Concerning the subcategory that seeks to *foster coexistence and learning*, we identify 'conflict mediation' as the key to coexistence. Each teacher understands the importance of working on conflicts by talking to those involved, establishing a dialogue with the students and making rules for coexistence in the classroom.

"Let's review the rules we made when we get to our class," says one of the teachers. They reflect and realize that nobody respects them and that everything continues in a bad environment. Teachers and students talk about respect. They are quiet at last. There, one of the students says "but teachers, although we talk about it, this is not going to change!" what solutions do you propose? says the teacher. Student makes a gesture of not knowing what to do. [Fieldwork observation]

Despite observing the difficulties surrounding the establishment of collective rules, teachers encourage students to maintain a permanent dialogue in the school. This is why despite not finding an obvious solution at hand, the dialogue continues to be intentional.

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Another strategy observed that works towards co-existence and learning is student-teacher negotiation regarding class management and planning. There is a quest for a greater articulation of the contents of the subject matters with the learning of coexistence. A first-grade teacher mentions: "*I draw heavily from the curricular content so that they learn to organize themselves, to structure their knowledge and to co-live together. Everything is linked. There is no academic learning if there is no learning in our common and shared space*" [Secondary school teacher, 1st grade ESO].

In this quotation, we observe the curriculum is part of the strategy for working on life and coexistence content, as the teachers themselves call it.

Advantages in intercultural inclusion work

The process of identifying advantages, especially for teachers, is directly linked to the specific context in which they develop their educational work. Thus, at the level of infrastructure, having access to computers with an Internet connection for students and teachers, access to a projector and audio equipment (in most classrooms), and access to a colour printer and air-conditioned classrooms are elements that teachers consider as contributing to this process.

Additionally, teachers describe advantages related to pedagogical work, such as having two teachers per classroom; the support of a Moroccan intercultural mediator (an adult referent with whom students could communicate in Arabic), flexibility and autonomy given in their pedagogical activity providing them the possibility to bond with students; and the development of affective ties among groups of students that go beyond their differences. Finally, teachers identify that working in a primary-secondary-school is an advantage, since most public education is divided into separate primary and secondary schools:

With this about being a "New Creation Institute," we have a new trait (being a primary-secondary school). We are able to attend students in a much better way. It happens that this student body is many times not that very well taken care of by adults. In some contexts, the relationship between children and adults is very much unstructured, estranged. Who do I look at as an adult referent; who do I look at as an example to follow? And here, as bonds become narrower, we can develop a level of trust that allows us to open doors for them. Even more so during their adolescence, at a time when they begin to define who they wish to be. [Secondary school teacher, 1st grade ESO].

The school is considered a "primary-secondary school," where they have the chance to get to know the students in a deeper way and with more continuity. Thus, it allows them to establish important bonds of trust that open up other ways of dealing with conflicts or disrespectful situations.

Obstacles that hinder the processes of coexistence, learning and intercultural interaction

These obstacles are very much connected with the aforementioned context of the school, as well as the different situations in which new students are integrated (which practically happens throughout the entire school year and becomes very demanding). Additionally, in each class group, we find different learning rhythms, asymmetries in basic knowledge and difficulties in starting the same "*there are some girls in 3rd grade of secondary level who do not know how to add yet. The same happens with basic grammar. So, all this makes it very difficult when it comes to planning daily classes*" [Secondary school teacher, discussion group]. It often happens that they are disruptive students with changing moods in the span of a single class, which leads to a loss of class rhythm and tends to be exhausting for teachers.

Therefore, we identify that the main obstacle relates to the fact that teachers are constantly faced with the challenge of finding a balance between pedagogical action and group management. Being able to deal with conflicts without losing the thread of teaching, as the following teacher expresses:

It is a complex context, not in a negative sense, but in the sense that it is multi-faceted. In the classroom work of a teacher one must take into account many more things and many more dimensions of education. That which relates to coexistence or to a social aspect, which perhaps in other schools is simpler […] here it comes down to improvising, because everything is extreme, of taking into account the cultural aspect, the aspect of immigration, the cohesion between them, coexistence, social boundaries. It's like having many open fronts and it becomes not so difficult, but complex, like a job that tends to be very elaborate [Secondary school teacher, discussion group].

Moreover, it is essential to remark that some of the conflicts generated within the classroom could be connected to young people's relationships with limits and roles, not only by young migrants and the behaviour they reproduce from what they experience in their family and social environments.

In the words of the teachers:

There are times when you say, I can't let this conflict slide, because they often have no limits. And the school is one of the few places where they actually have limits. They always play at pushing those limits. And [as a team] we are very conscious of working on that. […] You have to explain to them why certain things are not allowed. Not only imposing a prohibition on something that should not be said, for example, sexist comments and such... because they have very much normalized that! [Secondary school teacher, 3rd grade of ESO]

In the above quotation, we see a reflection of the difficulties that teachers often face. At the same time, we notice that knowing how to face this challenge is a fundamental characteristic of the professional profile required to work in such environments. In spite of having to face difficulties in interactions among students and teachers, the analysis of the interviews shows that the bond between teachers and students fosters an evident change and improvement in students' behaviour.

DISCUSSION

The field work undertaken at the school has allowed us to give answers to the questions that are proposed in the introduction of this article. In the following section, we present them according to the three categories identified in the previous section.

In regard to *Intercultural Inclusion Teaching Practices* identified at the school:

In this study, we have looked closely at the meanings, skills and materiality related to how teaching practices were carried out in a secondary level in this school. Thus, fieldwork activities showed that, in general terms, teaching practices encourage respect for diversity and positive ways of relating to their environment among students. Moreover, along the lines of Erstad, Gilje, & Arnseth (2013) and Fardella & Carvajal (2018), and in the form of the voices of the teachers, these practices have an impact not only within the school context, but also on their families, neighbours, and on everything that surrounds their daily life outside school.

Bearing in mind what Tijoux (2013) and Belhad, Koglin & Peterman (2014) have proposed, another common denominator identified during fieldwork relates to the fact that all kinds of intercultural practice developed at the school are channelled through intense emotional and affective bonds between teachers and students, which in turn also go beyond school space. Following Iglesias & Ortuño (2018), teachers, aside from and beyond curricular content, place special emphasis on generating a space where students can feel safe and emotionally restrained, given the complexity of their particular family realities which they have to face on a daily basis. School, therefore, is the space for care and behavioural learning.

In regard to the *Advantages of intercultural inclusion work* that takes place within the specific space of the school, the following aspects are recognised:

The first advantage relates to the school's own context. It is a space where various nationalities converge. The majority comes from Central and South America, North Africa, Eastern Europe, and Asia (Viñas, 2018). In addition, there is a large Spanish Roma population; generally speaking, family profiles are also varied. All this creates a day-to-day context of cultural diversity and heterogeneity at the school (Essomba, 2006), alongside the educational challenge of inclusion that teachers must face (Bernabé, 2012; Levy, 2012). Their purpose is to generate an environment that fosters opportunities and the acknowledgement of value in the diversity of each classroom.

The second advantage relates to the domain of teaching practices. Fieldwork has led us to recognise a favourable context that allows teachers to assimilate and generate intercultural practices emerging in each of the spaces and situations of schoolwork. This is a great step towards reaching the overall objectives of creating a plural and democratic society. Therefore, we find coherence between what the Department of Education (2017) proposes regarding the role of the school as a place that should favour the social integration of migrant populations and what Essomba (2006, 2008) suggests in relation to certain teaching practices and skills in contexts of high cultural diversity.

The third identified advantage is in line with what García-Mascareñas (2016) has said regarding the social integration of migrants and the role of the educational system within that process. First off, we have observed that school regulations and teacher profiles are formulated and adapted year after year in order to favour the educational and social integration of students and their families. Secondly, the school promotes a double-sided integration approach by acknowledging the value of cultural practices and the experiences of migrant students (ensuring they do not become invisible), as well as through a connection with the cultural and identity practices of the territory of reception (language, festivals, calendar, etc.).

The fourth advantage relates to the permanent effort and dedication of teachers to working within classroom spaces in order to resolve conflictive situations that may arise, employing a long-term working approach and tools for societal inclusion. This allows them to resolve conflicts at the level of confrontation between peers, disruptive situations, the need to attract continuous attention or working around

conflictive situations resulting from students' cultural diversity.

The fifth advantage derives from the fact that the school constitutes a safe zone and a space of emotional support for the majority of students who attend. It is the space where all this collective diversity can emerge and where students can live together on the basis of respect and tolerance (Tijoux, 2013).

In relation to the *obstacles that hinder the processes of coexistence, learning and intercultural interaction* within the school:

- The first obstacle is placed by the very same two-way process referred to by Garcés-Mascareñas (2016). At the school we could observe certain behaviours and attitudes of both the student body and the teaching staff which play on the limit between what is negotiable and what is not. In any given activity it often happens that students activate a defence response, perhaps unconsciously or automatically, of the values and practices pertaining to their communities, which then become strained with those of Western European society to which the school abides. Although cultural diversity is present, teachers tend to contain certain attitudes or expressions, such as those linked to sexism or racism, that in their criteria should not be allowed to come from any member of the school and that, in the long run, do not favour their integration into Spanish and Catalan society. Others, linked to certain religious practices, or even to the expectations of social inclusion with which some students view their future, generate certain situations of conflict, which at times are challenging to manage.

- The second obstacle refers to the tension of the context itself. Although teachers recognise that working in this school represents a genuine and motivating professional challenge, it also implies dedication and involvement, which often exceeds professional practice, generating personal stress and frustration. They are dealing with a complex student body, with disruptive behaviours and changing moods, which, following the observations made by Manota & Melendro (2016), lead the teaching staff to a permanent quest for balance between pedagogical action and the exercise of emotional support for the student and class group. This has even led some teachers to situations of depression and leave of absence and left the school facing a constant rotation of teachers.

- The third obstacle refers to the social and economic situation of the student body and their respective families. The school is located in a neighbourhood on the outskirts of Barcelona, with high levels of social segregation. There

are working-class families with a low socio-economic level alongside an abundant migrant population, who, in line with what Murillo Torrecilla, Belavi & Pinilla Rodríguez (2018) have pointed out, have less opportunities than the local population in terms of literacy, schooling and training in general. For Tarabini, Curran & Fontdevilla (2016), schools located in these environments, as we have referred to in this study, have a high degree of social stigmatisation that is often internalised by the educational community working in these schools, affecting the possibilities of fostering the social mobility of their students.

CONCLUSIONS

The main objective of this article has been to identify and analyse teaching practices that work towards intercultural inclusion. To this end, three key questions have been raised in the introduction, to which we will now attempt to give answers based on the background information that has been consulted and the evidence gathered.

As regard to the first question: What teaching practices work in favour of intercultural aspects within schools? We may assert that a successful experience currently exists as regards working towards intercultural inclusion on behalf of the management team, the commitment assumed by teachers and the approach of a constant review of the dynamics and methodologies with which this school works. Additionally, they have successfully created conditions that favour emotional containment and affection (Tijoux, 2013). In this regard, based on the results of this study, and along the lines of what Essomba (2006) stated, these would be some of the skills and characteristics of the teaching profile which become necessary when working in an environment of manifest cultural diversity: fostering and facilitating dialogue; favouring conflict resolution; guiding academic work; seeking strategies that favour emotional commitment with students, and possessing the necessary skills in emotional education.

As regards the second question: What does it mean to work with the local community and the migrant community from the perspective of a double-sided approach? This is visualised in pedagogical spaces that depend on pedagogical elements that span from spatial planning (order of the tables, patio spaces, etc.) to ways of managing conflict. We also observed how this approach permeates the beliefs, actions and commitment of teachers and the way it leads towards the societal adaptation and acceptance of the students who attend in secondary level in this primary-secondary school (Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016).

Finally, with respect to the third question: what are the obstacles and advantages that teachers identify when working through this approach? The management of cultural diversity and the fortification of the learning environment in which pedagogical action takes place were positively assessed, identifying as advantages the curricular freedom and closeness to the students that the school promotes. However, a question remains unanswered regarding the formative future of the school's students.

Although teachers show a consensus with regard to coexistence and the social insertion of students - identifying academic education as a secondary objective - a question arises with respect to what extent the school is reproducing the marginality of these migrant groups in the broader context of the Catalonian society (Bonal, Zancajo & Scandurra, 2019).

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IZOBRAŽEVALNE STRATEGIJE ZA SPODBUJANJE MEDKULTURNEGA VKLJUČEVANJA NA JAVNI SREDNJI ŠOLI V BARCELONI

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POVZETEK

Šolanje otrok priseljencev je eden najpomembnejših izzivov pri vključevanju v družbo in izobraževanje tako v Španiji kot v Evropi nasploh. V članku predstavljamo raziskavo, opravljeno na javni srednji šoli v Barceloni, kjer je priseljencev 70 odstotkov vseh vpisanih dijakov. Namen raziskave je bil ugotoviti, kakšne didaktične prakse v razredu pripomorejo k medkulturnemu vključevanju. Metodologija je temeljila na opazovanju, intervjujih s posamezniki in skupinskih razpravah. Opravljena analiza je dala pozitivne rezultate glede tega, kako učiteljski zbor obvladuje kulturno raznolikost, kar lahko pripišemo (a) aktivnemu sodelovanju med dijaki, učitelji in vodstvom šole, (b) izjemni in predani občutljivosti za družbene in učne ter kulturne težave, s katerimi se srečujejo dijaki, (c) aktivni profesionalni zavezanosti izboljševanju kakovosti življenja dijakov. V analizi se je izluščilo tudi še neodgovorjeno vprašanje: v kolikšni meri morda šole reproducirajo marginalizirani položaj teh priseljenskih skupin v širšem družbenem kontekstu? Članek dokazuje, kaj je mogoče doseči, kadar šole prevzamejo odgovornost za obvladovanje kulturne raznolikosti in si prizadevajo za uspešno medkulturno vključevanje.

Ključne besede: didaktične prakse, medkulturne prakse, medkulturnost, vključujoča šola, dijaki priseljenci, tuji dijaki

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