

Children, cross-culturalism and belongingness

A fifth-grade class and their stories on managing multiple senses of belonging

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Abstract

This thesis, based on the encounters with 20 fifth-grade-students class from a cultural heterogeneous primary school, explores the senses of belonging to both their current environment (their class, school and, consequently, Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain) and to their origin country origin (or their parents'). The need to find my own sense of belonging to Barcelona, led to the interest guiding this research: to understand how these students' identities and subjectivities influence and are influenced by their cross-culturalism. Following the ethnographical methodology – balancing between field observation and participation and supported by informal interviews and a life-chronology mapping made by the students in class – my intention was to center my research onto these students' evidences of specific cultural patterns and practices. Besides that, I intended to understand its connection to their culturally heterogeneous networks originated through the entanglements of their realities inside and outside school. The unpredictability an ethnographical experience like this brings along was embraced and actually accounted to assure the possible imprecision of the analysis made. With that in mind, a new definition was originated and the borders and places of belonging separating the two realities (cultures) moved further away from its physical characteristics. This thesis came to its (provisory) end with the acknowledgment of the strong (direct and indirect) contribution the overlapped and entangled realities, particularly generational networks, have on these students' ever-changing ways of seeing the world and be seen by it.

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