

Difficulties, tensions and risks in *child-centred approach* research and practice

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Abstract

In the frame of the European research project entitled Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe (MiCREATE) (HORIZON 2020 - 822664), we review the child centered approach concept and its Spanish and Catalan translation. According to a review and thematic analysis of a group of authors, we found the term child centered approach and its variants as concept 1) which guides the choice and conformation of research methods, perspectives, tools and practices; 2) which guides the implementation of teaching and learning practices, assessment techniques, therapies (medical, psychological), conflict mediation or interventions; and 3) as a reference within the specific field of creation and recommendations regarding public policies and/or reforms. From this perspective, we consider that it is interesting to problematize this perspective in 5 axes: 1) the historical, situational and transcultural construction of childhood, 2) the onto-epistemological and methodological implications of what it means to do research with children, 3) tensions and conflicts in professional practice centered on children, 4) the power-relation games and children's participation in daily politics and public policy, and 5) the relationship of the child centered approach concept and the inclusive approach.

Assessing the child centered approach encourages methodological reflection and deconstruction of adult-centred in research and intervention projects relating to integration and inclusion in migratory diversity contexts. It is an approach that encourages researchers to leave their comfort zone in order to risk proposing new practices and taking part in new ways of relationship to generate knowledge of interest and concern to children and young people. This proposal is related to this call specifically with the emerging approaches and methodologies to study and transform educational practices for the improvement of children and youth education of migrants.

The main outcomes we observe are 1) unresolved difficulties in the deconstruction of power-relation asymmetries in the field work with children, b) a potential danger in triggering temporary utilitarian affections with migrant children, c) limited institutional frameworks in university research and research settings (schools, reception institutions, etc.) establishing asymmetrical adult-centred relationships.

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