

PEDAGOGICAL RENEWAL AND INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN SPAIN: THE HISTORY OF A MISMATCH?

Carles Serra , Eliseu Carbonell* 

Universitat de Girona (Spain)

carles.serra@udg.edu

*Corresponding author: eliseu.carbonell@udg.edu

Received December 2023

Accepted January 2024

Abstract

In this article, we examine the relationship established between what the history of education in Spain has identified as “pedagogical renewal” and the proposals, experiences, reflections, meetings and training spaces framed in what at the time was identified as “intercultural education”. This analysis stems from the apparent disappearance of everything generated around “intercultural education” throughout the 1990s from the historical account of pedagogical renewal. Faced with this apparent mismatch, the authors of the article argue that the main characteristics of the intercultural proposal (in terms of organisational forms, the global nature of its proposals and critical spirit questioning some of the basic pillars of the dominant educational system and model) would allow it to be identified with the movements, proposals and practices of pedagogical renewal. Additionally, the authors highlight the commitment and involvement of individuals, groups and journals aligned with the pedagogical renewal in the promotion and defence of intercultural education. Consequently, the authors finally propose some key insights that may help us understand why this presence and participation tends to be overlooked in the historiographical account of the renewal.

Keywords – Intercultural education, Pedagogical renewal, History of education, Tradition.

To cite this article:

Serra, C., & Carbonell, E. (2024). Pedagogical renewal and intercultural education in Spain: The history of a mismatch? *Journal of Technology and Science Education*, 14(3), 931-945. <https://doi.org/10.3926/jotse.2641>

1. Introduction

The starting point for this article was our interest in investigating what place is occupied by what some people commonly call “intercultural education” within the schools and experiences that can be identified with pedagogical renewal, as well as in the history that has been built around the contributions and evolution of pedagogical renewal from the early 20th century to the present day. This interest stemmed from an intuition that soon became a realisation: the realisation that there is a lack of recognition, of an absence.

As we will see, the reference to intercultural education had practically disappeared from the narratives used by the renewal centres we worked with and which they used to define their educational projects. Likewise, as soon as we proceeded to look for more information in the specialised literature, we also observed that the chronologies established by the researchers of pedagogical renewal ignored the period in which in Spain (at least in some significant areas such as Catalonia, Euskadi, Andalusia or Madrid) there was a surge of experiences, meetings, debates and promotion of projects and proposals for intercultural education (a process that developed throughout the 1990s).

Furthermore, in the periodisation of pedagogical renewal that some authors have ventured to establish (Pericacho, 2015, 2016; Carbonell, 2016; Besalú, 2019; Feu & Torrent, 2020; Martínez-Bonafé, 2021; Feu, Besalú & Palaudàrias, 2021; among others), the identification of three major stages of the rise of pedagogical renewal has been imposed. A first stage covers the period from the beginning of the 20th century until the outbreak of the Civil War; a second stage from the mid or late 1960s to the 1980s; and a third stage we are currently experiencing, which began around 2009, when several clearly innovative/renewal educational proposals were launched in Catalonia). Besalú (2019: pages 5-8) points to the emergence of the *Escola Nova 21*, *Xarxa d'Educació Lliure* and *Horitzó 2020* projects as indicators of the new emergence of pedagogical renewal in Catalonia. These proposals are of a very diverse nature, and each of them involves a large number of educational centres. In parallel, other initiatives for renewal are being implemented in Catalonia.

As we can see, these stages overlook the 1990s, the moment of effervescence of intercultural education in our country. It may well be considered that such effervescence was relative in a context in which pedagogical renewal was in decline. This decline is perfectly described by Sáenz del Castillo (1999), who explains how there is a reduction in the activities of the Movements for Pedagogical Renewal (MRP by its Spanish acronym), with some movements disappearing or diminishing and how the participation of teachers in summer schools decreases. However, Sáenz makes no reference whatsoever to everything that has been generated around the arrival of students of immigrant origin, nor to the development of intercultural education. As we shall see, this absence is widespread among many of the authors who contribute to the historiography of this period (the “decadent” 1990s as opposed to the heyday of the 1970s and 1980s). Therefore, the next question we asked ourselves was whether intercultural education (beyond the moment when it gained momentum in Spain) is recognised as a form or practice of pedagogical renewal and in what way it has been incorporated into the discourses and experiences of renewal.

For this reason, in the following pages we will first analyse the question of the development of intercultural education in Spain, the period during which the subject gained momentum and how it attracted the interest of both institutions and academia and of education professionals and the communities they serve. Subsequently, we will assess to what extent the characteristics it exhibited correspond to those attributed to the pedagogical renewal movements. Based on this analysis, we will then explore whether or not it makes sense to reinterpret this period and recognise it as a time of heightened renewal. We will examine the experiences developed in many schools, the training processes in which teachers were involved and the convening organisation of so many meetings dedicated to the exchange of experiences and debate on intercultural education as another of the “moments” of pedagogical renewal in Spain.

2. Methodology

The current discourses surrounding interculturality and pedagogical renewal analysed in this article stem from qualitative research carried out in seven early childhood and primary schools, which are identified as innovative and exhibit characteristics that most researchers attribute to schools aligned with pedagogical renewal. These schools are located in the Autonomous Communities of Andalusia, Madrid, Valencia and Catalonia. They are very diverse in their morphology and the context in which they are located, but share a commitment to pedagogical renewal.

In Andalusia, a publicly owned school located in a neighbourhood of Seville with a population of about 15,000 inhabitants was studied. In Madrid, a small private school located in a municipality of about 2,000 inhabitants located 50 km from the centre of Madrid was studied. In Valencia, research was conducted on a public school located in a coastal town in the province of Castellón, with a population of just over 10,000 inhabitants. In Catalonia, the remaining four schools were studied. Two of them are small schools, one public and one private, located in small rural towns in the province of Girona with less than 200 inhabitants. The third is a public school in the city of Figueres, with 47,000 inhabitants. Finally, a public school in Barcelona was studied. It was located in a district of the city with around 150,000 inhabitants.

In all schools, a semi-structured interview was conducted with the administration team and three focus groups: one with teachers, one with students and one with families. All interviews and focus group discussions took place in the schools themselves and lasted between 90 and 120 minutes approximately. The interviews were recorded and transcribed, and subsequently coded for analysis using the ATLAS.ti analysis programme. A total of 70 informants participated in the interviews and focus group discussions, which took place between March 2022 and April 2023.

The interview with the administration team aimed to collect information on the following aspects: an understanding of the school's pedagogical references, its identifying and unique elements, an analysis of its democratic and participatory practices, to identify the school's relationship with its social environment, to detect the strengths and main limitations of each school in key issues such as the sustainability of the project, to analyse issues such as gender equality, climate change and the treatment of cultural diversity. The focus group discussions with teachers aimed to gather their opinions on certain critical aspects of education and society in general, as well as the relationships between teachers, students and families. The focus group discussions with families, consisting of groups of 4 to 8 people, aimed to analyse the role of the families in the school and their views on education and school in general. Finally, the focus group discussion with 5 or 6 students from different years of primary education was designed as a group for conversation and exchange of opinions on issues related to curricular learning, coexistence and the relationship with the teaching staff, as well as participation practices at the school.

The qualitative research was complemented by several sessions (between 3 and 5 sessions in each school) of ethnographic observation, during which aspects related to the following topics were recorded: architecture and spaces; school decoration and aesthetics; classroom furniture and equipment; specific didactic material; learning activities; playground and outdoor space. The observations obtained were transcribed and have also been subject to coding and analysis.

In parallel to this fieldwork, we proceeded with the review of academic literature that would allow us to analyze the place that specialists in pedagogical renewal (especially those who describe and analyze its evolution from the last quarter of the 20th century to the present day) have reserved for the experiences and contributions made around intercultural education. Finally, we also searched for references to pedagogical renewal in texts that stem from intercultural education and in their narrative link or identify it with the movements and tradition of renewal.

2.1. Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Education in Seven Renewal Schools

After analysing the data from the interviews and the focus group discussions conducted in the seven schools referred to in the previous section, it is surprising to note the limited number of occasions in which interculturality is mentioned as an important aspect in the current development of educational projects in the schools practising renewal. The results of the discourse analysis regarding issues such as cultural diversity, immigration and interculturality obtained in this research are presented below.

The realization of the marginal role occupied by intercultural discourse in contemporary pedagogical renewal could be summarised by the words of a member of the administration team of a renewal school located in the city of Madrid, who stated the following regarding interculturality:

“Before, we used to do a lot of things on interculturality and now we have stopped doing things because we don’t really see that latent need among the students. And the same goes for equality and coeducation. We do coeducation activities because they are part of the curriculum and are prescribed by the Regional Ministry, and they have to be done. And we are convinced that it is good to do them because, besides, hey, you see, we have not reached perfection. But it is true that we have noticed that here in the school, for example, with the issue of different races and different nationalities, there are no major problems”.

Therefore, it can be seen that it is a question of complying with a certain commitment to interculturality or coeducation without really recognising the need to do so. In another school in Barcelona, the administrative team conveyed a similar sentiment:

“Well, we don’t have much cultural diversity here”.

Finally, in a school in Seville, the administrative team expressed the view that intercultural education was no longer as relevant a factor as it was years ago:

“We at the beginning... because it is true that fewer and fewer immigrants are arriving, there is less and less influx of immigrants. Even though there are many, but, at the beginning, about eight to ten years ago, there were many more, there were many more immigrants arriving”.

In schools located in small towns, it does not seem that there is a need for an intercultural educational approach either, in the light of the teachers’ discourses. For example, in a school located in a rural town of 200 inhabitants, part of a larger municipality of just over 3,000 inhabitants in the province of Girona, the teachers of a small school characterized by a notably progressive stance favouring renewal, voiced concern during the discussion group that from outside they were seen as an elitist school:

“Elitist, too, because you often get the message: ‘But there are no immigrants there’. For me, this is a bit annoying internally because sometimes there are people who say this to me and I look at them and think: ‘And you, how many immigrant friends do you have?’”.

In another of the schools studied, also located in a rural town of 150 inhabitants, part of a municipality of about 1,000 inhabitants in the province of Girona, the teachers also assert that there are no students of migrant origin:

“We have a lot of heterogeneity of children, for example, with difficulties, we have had children with Down’s Syndrome, we have learning issues, but we don’t have different origins in this school, that is, we have this lack, right? That is to say, we work on the difference from another place, but not from... (cultural diversity). We have practically no families... (immigrants)”.

However, the discourse among families in the same school presents a completely different picture. Let’s examine an excerpt from the discussion in a focus group with mothers and fathers:

#1: It’s a small school and there are people from many countries, I mean, it’s like....

#2: This has also changed.

#3: There is a lot of diversity.

#1: To me, I was surprised, because you say: ‘It’s small compared to the big ones in the cities’, and wow, how many languages are spoken in this school.

#4: Yes, yes.

#3: A lot of mixed couples. There is a lot of diversity in this sense in this school.

#2: Yes.

#3: And many languages.

#1: So, of course, all of this is also integrated because in a class of seven children; in our case, Jana, her class, there are seven, which is mixed with the fourth, which is seven more. So there are fourteen. But there are already...

#2: Seven or eight, six or seven nationalities.

#3: Yes, look, Ecuadorians, Hondurans...

#1: Indian.

#3: Swedish, the... (can't understand the name), right? There are Italians.

#1: And Abderrahman.

#3: Abderrahman, who is Senegalese.

#2: And from very diverse origins, eh? I mean, I think they come from all continents.

#3: I mean in a small class, there is a lot of diversity, and that's there, and they live with it.

#1: Yes, yes.

#2: We have people from all continents. We have Australians, South Americans, Europeans, Africans, Asians...”.

Thus, firstly, we can conclude that in most of the schools studied, intercultural education is perceived as an issue linked to immigration and to the specific educational needs that the arrival of new students from other countries may entail. And secondly, the issue of intercultural education is no longer present in the discourse of some schools aligned with pedagogical renewal. In the following pages we will try to see to what extent this can be extrapolated to other schools and especially to other schools identified as practising renewal. Additionally, we will endeavour to analyse the place that intercultural education has occupied in relation to pedagogical renewal in general and to what extent it is recognised and incorporated as part of the tradition of renewal.

2.2. The 1990s in Spain: Decline of Pedagogical Renewal and Development of Intercultural Education?

The 1980s and 1990s were years of ideological crisis. Neoliberalism spread as the dominant ideology, driven internationally by the governments of Margaret Thatcher (1979-1990) in the United Kingdom and Ronald Reagan (1981-1989) in the United States, with a progressive penetration of policies aimed at dismantling the Welfare State in parties historically identified with the left, such as the British Labour Party or the French Socialist Party (Harvey, 2007). In 1989 the Berlin Wall fell and two years later we witnessed the collapse and dissolution of the Soviet Union. During the same period, the process of industrial reconversion began in Spain (1984), leading to a period of strikes and trade union protests that were harshly repressed despite the fact that the Spanish government was in the hands of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE). In 1986, Spain joined the EU, just as it had joined NATO seven years earlier, and in the 1990s, the Socialists lost power to the conservative Popular Party, which governed from 1996 to 2004, proceeding to privatise the major state-owned companies and services and explicitly promoting neoliberalism in all areas and policies of the state (Navarro, 2015).

Undoubtedly this background of disenchantment, ideological collapse and political and social defeat of the left can help us to understand the decline of a pedagogical renewal “committed and engaged in social issues”, according to Martínez-Bonafé (2021: page 96), who continues: “And from this social commitment, the organisational will, the will to be together, the creation of social movement”. A project that is certainly difficult to develop in times of defeat and ideological and organisational recomposition. However, Spain's entry into the EU opened the door to proposals and discourses that had hardly been developed in Spain. Among them was that of interculturality and its incorporation into the educational sphere. In Europe, these discourses were already on the table. In 1977 the Council of the European Communities already established a “Directive on the education of the children of migrant workers” (77/486/EEC) which required member states to promote the teaching of mother tongues and “cultures of the countries of origin” of the children of migrant workers, and to make all necessary arrangements to guarantee an education adapted to the specific needs of the children of migrants. Thus, in the mid-1980s, numerous so-called intercultural projects were developed, especially in Scandinavian countries and Great Britain (Tarozzi, 2012), and even works critical of the intercultural model were already appearing, denouncing its limitations and advocating for its transformation to make way for an anti-racist education (see, for example: Mullard, 1984; Brandt, 1986).

These concerns, initiatives and reflections did not reach Spain until the late 1980s. Ramos-Ramos (2023) points out the *Seminar on Interculturalism and Education* organised by the Ministry of Education in 1987, the *VIII Inter-University Seminar of Educational Theory on Multicultural Education in a State of Autonomies* in 1989 and the *X National Congress of Pedagogy* in 1992, which adopted the motto “Interculturalism and Education from the European perspective”, as indicators and introducers of this theme, proposals and perspective. According to Ramos-Ramos (2023: page 294), “These meetings helped to address the lack of research in intercultural education -except for the work carried out on the Roma people- that existed in our country”.

In 1993, the meeting of the Confederation of Pedagogical Renewal Movements also created a specific table on intercultural education. We see, then, that the emergence of the treatment of cultural diversity in education began to develop around this time in different parts of Spain. This was also the case in Catalonia, as we shall see below.

However, throughout the 1990s, other changes occurred that help us to understand the decline of the formally constituted renewal movements as such. Some of the leading authors who have researched the evolution of pedagogical renewal in Spain argue that the negotiation, approval and deployment of the LOGSE contributed to consolidating the decline and demobilisation of pedagogical renewal movements (Martínez-Bonafé 2021: pages 93-94). For example, Pérez-Gómez (1997), Roguero-Anaya (2010) and Martínez-Bonafé (2021) among many others insist on this common theme in the historiography of pedagogical renewal in Spain as a whole. However, other authors focusing on the analysis of the development of intercultural education point out that with the enactment of the LOGSE, some of the objectives, principles and values of intercultural education were established. Ramos-Ramos (2023: pages 296-299) cites as an example that some sections of its articles establish tolerance, and respect for linguistic and cultural plurality (in Spain), that the treatment of cultural diversity and democratic values is explicitly established in the curriculum, and that the decrees implementing the LOGSE insist on the approach that lays the foundations for intercultural education: rejection of any form of discrimination, valuing customs, traditions and cultural forms, whether one's own or those of others. Thus, the LOGSE, beyond the demobilising and disaffecting effect it had on teachers and pedagogical renewal movements, opened the door to addressing the new challenges that the LOGSE and the new political and social reality posed to the education system.

However, the changes did not only occur in political and legal frameworks as the 1990s were years in which Spain underwent a radical transformation in migratory dynamics. Between 1990 and 2005, Spain was one of the world's leading immigration-receiving countries, alongside countries with a much longer tradition of receiving migratory flows, such as the United States and Germany (Moreno-Fuentes & Bruquetas-Callejo, 2011). If in 1991 the percentage of foreign population registered in the Spanish census was 0.9%, in 2000 it reached 2.3% and in 2010, 12.2% (National Statistics Institute, INE data). This migratory change also reached schools and institutes which began to consistently receive students linked to migratory processes. This fact led to a significant number of teachers becoming aware of the need to train and promote changes to improve the educational attention given to these students and to introduce changes in content, objectives and dynamics of schools, to promote educational equity and social cohesion, foster positive interactions between all students and enable them to live together in a pluralistic society, and work against racism and any other form of discrimination or exclusion. In short, to promote intercultural education.

Initially, the objective was to attend to the specific needs of newly arrived students, but the mobilisation generated around the issue was soon oriented towards establishing the intercultural model as the approach to be promoted and working to ensure that this model was recognised as being directed towards, necessary and appropriate for all students. Even so, it was in those areas where the percentage of students of foreign origin was higher that most interest was aroused in the subject and where meetings and exchange and training dynamics were generated that we can easily identify with those being characteristic of the pedagogical renewal movements. Hence the criticisms of intercultural education for singling out “immigrant” students for being “culturally different”, is a terrible starting point for working towards social

equality and rights (Delgado, 2001). Criticisms that will spread among the supporters of the anti-racist model, who consider it goes beyond culturalism and lacking transformative capacity of the intercultural model (Labelle, 2015; Serra & Shaimi, 2020; Shaimi, 2024).

Let us take as an example what happened in the province of Girona, which in the 1990s emerged as a focus and reference point for intercultural education, attracting professionals and specialists from Catalonia and the rest of Spain.

2.3. The Mobilisation Around Intercultural Education in the Province of Girona

Besalú (2001) places the emergence of interest in immigration and interculturality in the field of education in Catalonia between 1989 and 1993, with intense activity developing throughout the 1990s, leading to Besalú's assessment in 2001 in which he notes the great progress that has been made in this field. One of the events that he considers foundational for intercultural education in Catalonia (clearly in the tradition of pedagogical renewal) was the creation in 1989 of a seminar on didactics and training of foreign workers, centred on the African adult school Samba Kubally. The seminar was set up with the aim of creating a documentation and resource centre on the training of foreign workers and cultural minorities; to develop concrete, specific teaching materials and organise a summer school on interculturality.

Likewise, in 1990, a *European Conference on Intercultural Research and Education* was held in Sant Feliu de Guíxols (Girona). The *15th International Seminar on Education and Languages* was held in Sitges, with the motto "School and Migration in the Europe of the 1990s". In December of the same year, the School Council of Catalonia initiated the annual "Reflection Days", proposing *Four challenges for our school*, one of which was "Pluriculturalism" (and seven years later the theme would be "Diversity at School" (Besalú, 2001).

The benchmark activity in intercultural education in Girona was the aforementioned "Summer schools on interculturality". The first one was organised in 1990 and was promoted by the "Trama Programme" which brought together the *Associació d'Educació de Persones Adultes* (Adult Education Association), the GRAMC association (Group for Research and Action with Cultural Minorities and Foreign Workers), the Regional Adult School "Miquel Martí i Pol", the Torelló adult education centre, the ESICO Foundation (studies and cooperation), the Ser.Gi Foundation (Girona social pedagogy service) and the *Fundació Serveis de Cultura Popular* (People's culture service). These summer schools were held annually until 2010 and brought together teachers and educators from all fields interested in intercultural education and immigration issues. The proceedings of the first six editions are published by Carbonell (1992b, 1994, 1996). The area that was less covered was secondary education, so in 1997 the first symposium on language, education and immigration was organised (Aznar, Buesa & Terradellas, 1998), in this case, organised by a team from the University of Girona, which included some of the promoters of the Summer School, who were also members of Ser.Gi, GRAMC and other entities, as well as a team from the University of Barcelona. Ten editions were held, the last one in 2016. In this case, the impulse for these meetings came mainly from the university sphere, but the participants were always overwhelmingly secondary education teachers and the work dynamics of the symposium also gave a great deal of allowance for the active participation of teachers (an attractive aspect of the symposium was the presentation of experiences promoted by many schools in relation to the themes of each edition).

Other initiatives promoted at the beginning of the decade were of a political and social nature and were aligned with the transformative will of many proposals and movements for pedagogical renewal. An example of this was the drafting of the document *L'Informe de Girona: cinquanta propostes sobre immigració* (Comissió d'Associacions i Organitzacions No Governamentals de les Comarques de Girona, 1993). The document (which was really revolutionary at the time) was drawn up by a commission of associations and non-governmental organisations from the regions of Girona, including educators with a Freirean tradition and commitment. Along the same lines, we can find documents and proposals drawn up by Francesc Carbonell when he was at the helm of the Ser.GI Foundation, promoting initiatives to foster interculturality and address the needs of the immigrant population (see, for example, Carbonell, 1992a).

In parallel with these initiatives, in 1988, the Intitute of Education of the Autonomous University of Barcelona launched the Intercultural Education Programme. The programme was created to meet the demand generated in this area: teachers, schools and groups requested training and tools (didactic and organisational strategies) to deal with the new social reality present in schools. Also, conceptual tools: should the school redefine its objectives? Do we maintain the assimilationist model? Should we advocate for a multicultural model? Are there alternative models? The Intercultural Education Programme was intended to help respond to these concerns, based on the programme's own initiatives (reflection documents, guides, research) and on the requests for training that began to abound at that time (many Catalan schools asked for sessions on the reception of immigrant students, dealing with diversity in the classroom, intercultural education, anti-racism and other specific topics). The research led by Alegret, Serra and Moreras (1991) also led to many training sessions in schools throughout the 1990s, and the same was true for anyone who was working on these issues.

Concern was widespread among teachers and generated a great deal of interest in subjects on which no training had hitherto been given in universities or other initial teacher training centres. It was pedagogical renewal in the deepest sense of the term. At least in the sense that Carbonell (2015) identifies with the “critical pedagogies” of more or less Freirean inspiration, or the “pedagogies of inclusion and cooperation”, which work for the inclusion of all students and for them to be welcomed, respected and supported in the development of their abilities.

With regard to Jaume Carbonell, who for many years was the editor of *Cuadernos de Pedagogía* (a highly regarded journal in education, which welcomed and contributed to the dissemination of the contributions and debates of pedagogical renewal groups and movements), during those years he published many articles on cultural diversity in the classroom, interculturalism and experiences of reception and work with students of foreign origin, including two monographs devoted entirely to these subjects (1997, 264 “Towards a Multicultural Education”; 2002, 315 “Interculturalism and Citizenship”, –all the original names in catalan–). The same is true of the journal *Perspectiva Escolar*, published by the Rosa Sensat Teachers Association, a reference point for pedagogical renewal in Catalonia (1990, 147, dossier “Plurality of cultures at school”; 1993, 176, dossier “No to racism. Educate for solidarity and cooperation” 1997, 219, dossier “Africa, so near and yet so far” 2002, 266, dossier “Reception of foreign students and linguistic diversity”, –all the original names in catalan–). The publication of books was also intense in this field during the 1990s. Examples include Alegret (1987), Feroso (1992), Jordán (1992, 1994, 1996), Juliano (1993), Creus (1994), Carbonell (1997, 2000), Besalú, Campani & Paludàrias (1998), Essomba (1999), Marquès (2001) and Fullana, Besalú & Vilà (2003), among many others.

3. Conclusions: Intercultural Education, Inside or Outside the Proposals for Renewal?

As seen in the previous section, it seems evident that the emergence of intercultural education occurs in a manner that many would consider characteristic of movements and proposals for pedagogical renewal. The changes in the education system proposed from the intercultural approach (and here we are talking about proposals rather than achievements) are also of a scope that is in line with what many consider to be or should be pedagogical renewal, as opposed to mere technical or didactic innovations. However, many authors neither identify nor refer to the principles, themes or proposals of intercultural education as principles, themes or proposals as being part of renewal. In fact, only a minority of authors explicitly recognize the tradition of intercultural education as part of the tradition of pedagogical renewal. By way of a conclusion, we will review this trend.

Firstly, the need to recognise that *the way* in which intercultural education developed in the 1990s, at least in some areas of Spain, has the characteristics of the movements and initiatives of pedagogical renewal seems evident to us. We have taken what occurred in the regions of Girona as an example to work with. Firstly, summer schools and the creation of spaces for contrast and exchange. The establishment of “bottom-up” dynamics is also an outstanding characteristic of renewal. Renewal as “autonomy”, “agency”, “willingness to be a subject”, born of the “need to share knowledge born of experimentation” (Martínez-Bonafé, 2021: pages 95-96) also link pedagogical renewal with the way in which intercultural education

emerged and was promoted: with encounters where the exchange of practical experiences, proposals and reflections among teachers had a very important place and role.

Secondly, the existence of shared points of reference and, with them, some ideals seem evident to us. Earlier we referred to the Freirean foundations of some initiatives and the Freirean training and inspiration of some of the key figures in the development of intercultural education in Girona. Also, the modes of action and participation of many of the protagonists of those early moments of intercultural education were deeply influenced by Freirean principles: understanding education as politics and political action as part of the commitment of educators. Wasn't that what was done with the fifty proposals on immigration of the Girona Declaration? A commitment to social reality, which also links the development of intercultural education with the Freirean-inspired pedagogical renewal (Rodríguez-Izquierdo, 2004; Davila-Balsera, 2005; Hernández-Díaz, 2018). The same is true in other areas: José Emiliano Ibáñez, one of the few, very few, who incorporates intercultural education in his narrative of pedagogical renewal, expressly cites Freire in the writings where he discusses it (Ibáñez 2001). The promoters of the learning communities (which incorporate discourses and proposals emanating from the intercultural project) also count Freire as one of their main points of reference, model and foundation of their educational proposal (Flecha, 2004).

Thirdly, if we identify pedagogical renewal by its capacity to question the prevailing educational models, as do Pericacho (2015, 2016), Torrent and Feu (2020) or Díez-Gutiérrez, Horcas-López, Arregui-Murguiondo and Simó-Gil (2023), to name a few, we cannot hesitate to include intercultural education in the tradition of pedagogical renewal in Spain insofar as it questions the assimilationist mission that for decades has been disciplinarily assumed by the traditional school and a good part of its teaching staff. Similarly, Díez-Gutiérrez and the rest of the team (Díez-Gutiérrez et al., 2023: page 42) understand that both pedagogical renewal and intercultural education imply a commitment to an integral, critical and emancipatory education.

This comprehensiveness, the global character, is identified by other authors as a characteristic of pedagogical renewal projects (Feu & Torrent, 2020). Proposals that aim to “transform the teaching model in all its aspects and linked to the construction of social relations based on equality and diversity” and that “seek to modify attitudes, ideas, cultures, contents, pedagogical models and practices (...) and another way of organising and managing the curriculum, the school and the dynamics of the classroom”. Both quotations are statements from teachers in renewal schools who were asked by Díez-Gutiérrez et al (2023: page 42) to define what, according to them, renewal consisted of. Most of the promoters and disseminators of intercultural education in Spain agree with this idea, which has become a common ground already put forward by Isabel del Arco, in her 1999 thesis, and reiterated by López and Tuts (2012) to criticise those who identify it with the devices of “attention to immigrants” and the folklorising displays and culturalist clichés:

“It is obvious to remember that interculturality does not mean the presence of foreign students in the classroom or the celebration of Peace Day or a traditional display of gastronomy. It means a global school (and classroom) project that focuses on the development of people as individuals with rights and duties in the construction of a common space of coexistence, and the future exercise of their responsibilities as citizens” (López & Tuts, 2012: page 16).

However, as we pointed out at the beginning of the article, among those authors who choose to establish the history of pedagogical renewal, it is more difficult to find authors who incorporate the legacy, experiences and practices linked to the promotion and development of intercultural education.

Some authors involved in the development of intercultural education identify themselves as members of the pedagogical renewal movements and consider that the first project is developed within the framework of renewal. This is the case of López and Tuts (2012) who, in the introduction to their book, do not hesitate to point out that the commitment to intercultural education is a commitment to equitable education. Also, Besalú (2001) who, in relation to Lluch's book (1999), highlights the work of the

pedagogical renewal movements in the Valencian region, which, in an adverse political context, continue to work producing materials and essays that give impetus and rigour to intercultural proposals.

However, there are fewer authors who establish this link from the tradition of pedagogical renewal. Just the following authors: the aforementioned Llach (1999), also from Valencia, Beltrán Llavador and the rest of the writers of the *Framework for Educational Innovation* of the Valencian Government (Beltrán-Llavador, Martínez-Morales & Gabaldón-Estevan, 2021), who place the pillars of the intercultural approach at the centre of their (renewal) proposal for educational innovation, as did Rogero-Anaya (2003) placing the intercultural content in “the ideological framework of the LOCE and the MRPs”. In those years, José Emliano Ibáñez was also very active. In 2001 he published 3 articles in which he established the basic lines of what should be the approach to cultural diversity from the standpoint of pedagogical renewal. And more recently we have Borrero (2012: page 333) who in her advocacy for learning communities argues that intercultural education should be a driver of pedagogical renewal, or the *Federation of Pedagogical Renewal Movements* which in its assessment of a century of renewal highlights “education in ethics and values, interculturality, education for peace, environmentalism, coeducation, amongst others.” (Balsells & Surroca, 2014: pages 25-26).

However, with the exception of the aforementioned works, the bulk of educational historiography overlooks these contributions. By way of a sample, we can cite some excellent works on pedagogical renewal and its historical evolution that, nonetheless, do not mention intercultural or multicultural education, cultural diversity, the presence of students linked to the migrations of the late 20th century and the early 21st century, nor do they mention racism or anti-racism. See: Sáez del Castillo (1999); Llorente (2003); Davila-Balsera (2005); Carbonell (2016); Esteban-Frades (2016); Tort and Costa (2016); Díez (2018); Hernández-Díaz (2018); Pericacho and Andrés-Candelas (2018); Villanueva (2018). Most studies do not contain any reference to the topic. They describe the characteristics of pedagogical renewal and its historical evolution, although they do not dedicate specific attention to any of the aforementioned topics, nor to the proposals that were generated to address those new educational and social challenges.

How can these absences be explained? We can only propose a few hypotheses we consider worth investigating. The first is that the historiography of pedagogical renewal works based on a poorly defined concept, which is sometimes used rather arbitrarily. Frequently, the way one defines what is to be investigated (in this case, renewal) predetermines what can be said about the object of research. And many times concepts have been used that refer more to a socio-economic ideology (poverty, social classes, social inequality) than to that of the diversity associated with immigration (from the hackneyed concept of cultural diversity - an empty concept - to racism - an unresolved issue, yet to be explored). Even critical pedagogy(s) have focused on “class” inequalities, focusing on those of the “social majority”. From this starting point, it is easy to see that what concerns “minority” students requires a “specialised” approach (a matter of things being integrated into a “part”, not in the “whole”). Talking about foreign populations, religious diversity or identities, does not fit in well with the more traditional European left-wing perspectives.

The second point, closely linked to the first, concerns references to tradition. We have mentioned Freire and Freinet. We cannot think of many other references with historical depth that allow us to link migrations, interculturality, minority populations and education or pedagogical renewal. In a field with such a fondness for historical references, this can undoubtedly be a problem. As we have shown in another work (Carbonell, 2023), the precursors of pedagogical renewal in Spain at the beginning of the 20th century, such as Ferrer and his Modern School, had a very pejorative view of non-Western inhabitants and cultures, which they considered savage, irrational and lost in the darkness of a time without history.

These two hypotheses invite us to review the criteria with which the historiography has been constructed and help explain why much has been done on intercultural education since the pedagogical renewal, but

there is little recognition when it comes to incorporating it into the tradition (in the wake of the baggage of the renewal). We can look elsewhere for explanations.

For example, by acknowledging that the work that is ostensibly carried out to cater for students with a migrant background or to cohere society (with such students) is not particularly attractive to the rest of the “educational community”, which is more concerned with securing schools with higher-value labels in the school market.

In this sense, we must also acknowledge that after almost four decades of discourse on interculturality and intercultural education, it does not seem that these years have been particularly productive, nor that the discourses have taken hold either in education professionals or in society. Simply revisiting some of the comments obtained in the schools where the work was conducted that led to this exploration confirms this.

In the interviews and focus groups with administration teams and groups of teachers in the aforementioned schools, the issue of cultural diversity was limited to superficial aspects, such as food or clothing, neglecting more profound issues, such as linguistic or religious diversity. These are presented as if they were a permanent source of conflict rather than an opportunity for intercultural relations. For example, in order to attract local residents from the neighbourhood to the school, in one school “intercultural meals and snacks were organised”, in another “the mothers came, they made a Moroccan snack, we did activities, they brought us typical costumes”, in a third, the teachers acknowledged that “when they open the lunch boxes, it is cultural diversity”. Finally, in another of the schools studied, the teachers explain that on the last day of the school year, all the families bring dishes from their country to share and have “an intercultural meal”. In the discourses of those in charge of the schools practising renewal, cultural diversity is presented as if it were an issue that had been overcome, an issue of the past. It is an issue limited to the migratory phenomenon, which is expressed by the arrival of migrant populations, whose numbers have decreased in recent years. It is an urgency that has faded away and has ceased to be a priority to address. The migrant population continues to exist, and cultural diversity is present in the classrooms, but it is no longer attended to as it was years ago. In the Madrid school, the administration team stated the following:

“For a long time we had an intercultural mediator, who was paid by projects, those of the Junta and so on, and we have lost her because there were no longer funds for that, although Europe is injecting a lot of funds, but, well, we have lost that mediator. So, what we do, for example, when new students arrive at the school, whether they come from one culture or another, I mean, whichever culture they come from, we do have a protocol for welcoming these students, which includes the family and the student. It lasts two, three, four days or a week, right? A series of adaptations that we make with the student and the family”.

In conclusion, we can assert that cultural diversity is perceived by the teaching teams of today’s schools practising renewal as an issue exclusively linked to immigration and to the specific educational needs that the arrival of new students from other countries may entail. As we have seen, schools continue to present a rich cultural mosaic, but the issue of interculturality is not present in educational discourse. We can therefore conclude that the educational practice of the schools practising renewal today does not, in general, consider intercultural education as one of its priorities.

We are still anchored in clichés and commonplaces and perhaps it is time to give way to new approaches such as anti-racist education, which has already emerged in our country (Díez-Gutiérrez et al., 2023). This aims to displace culturalism from the intercultural approach and to focus and act on issues such as educational equity and radical equality, questioning the dynamics of segregation and institutional action, as well as the real protagonists of discrimination and segregation who are not the victims, but those who generate and benefit from them. As these approaches move forward, it will be interesting to see how the renewal movements position themselves and how their defence of democratic principles, public schools and the common good diminishes. And how an educational community responds when, rather than

working for the integration of others, it is the community itself that must adapt if it truly wishes to foster coherence in society.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The two authors of the article declare that they have no conflict of interest in relation to the topics covered in the article, nor in relation to any of the authors, institutions, movements or associations mentioned in the article.

Funding

This research is part of the R&D Project entitled. El cuarto impulso de renovación pedagógica en España” funded by the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities. Ref. PID2019-108138RB-C21.

References

- Alegret, J.L. (1987). Preface. In Hannoun, H. *Els ghetos de l'escola. Per una educació intercultural* (9-12). Vic: Eumo.
- Alegret, J.L., Serra, C., & Moreras, J. (1991). *Cómo se enseña y cómo se aprende a ver al otro: las bases cognitivas del racismo, la xenofobia y el etnocentrismo en los libros de texto de EGB, BUP y FP*. Barcelona: Ajuntament de Barcelona.
- Aznar, S., Buesa, M.S., & Terradellas, M.R. (Coord.) (1998). *Primer simposi: llengua, educació i immigració*. Girona: Universitat de Girona.
- Balsells, M., & Surroca, J. (Coord.) (2014). *1914-2014, 100 anys d'escola d'estiu*. Federació de Moviments de Renovació Pedagògica.
- Beltrán-Llavador, J., Martínez-Morales, I., & Gabaldón-Estevan, D. (2021). *Marc d'Innovació educativa*. València: Generalitat Valenciana.
- Besalú, X. (2001). Educació i immigració: de la ingenuïtat social Al compromís pedagògic. *Inaugural lecture of the 2001-2002 course of the Societat Catalana de Pedagogia*. Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans.
- Besalú, X. (2019). *La renovació pedagògica a la Catalunya del segle XXI*. Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans.
- Besalú, X., Campani, G., & Plaudàrias, J.M. (Comp.) (1998). *La educación intercultural en Europa. Un enfoque curricular*. Barcelona: Pomares-Corredor.
- Borrero, R. (2012). Educación para todos y todas. Análisis del modelo educativo-social para una Educación Intercultural. *Educatio Siglo XXI*, 30 (2), 333-364.
- Brandt, G.L. (1986). *The Realisation of Anti-Racist Teaching*. London: Falmer Press.
- Carbonell, E. (2023). Tradition and Anti-Tradition in Catalan Schools at the Start of the Twentieth Century. *Traditiones*, 52(1), 63-81. <https://doi.org/10.3986/Traditio2023520104>
- Carbonell, F. (1992a). *La formació de treballadors estrangers africans i de les seves famílies. Consideracions generals i propostes a curt terme*. Girona: Fundació Ser.Gi.
- Carbonell, F. (Coord.) (1992b). *Sobre interculturalitat. Documents de treball de la primera i segona Escola d'Estiu sobre Interculturalitat*. Girona: Ser.Gi Foundation and Trama Programme.
- Carbonell, F. (Coord.) (1994). *Sobre interculturalitat. Documents de treball de la tercera i quarta Escola d'Estiu sobre Interculturalitat*. Girona: Ser.Gi Foundation and Trama Programme.
- Carbonell, F. (Coord.) (1996). *Sobre interculturalitat. Documents de treball de la cinquena i sisena Escola d'Estiu sobre Interculturalitat*. Girona: Ser.Gi Foundation and Trama Programme.

- Carbonell, F. (1997). *Immigrants estrangers a l'escola. Desigualtat social i diversitat cultural en l'educació*. Barcelona: Alta Fulla i Fundació serveis de Cultura Popular.
- Carbonell, F. (Coord.) (2000). *Educació i immigració. Els reptes educatius de la diversitat cultural i l'exclusió social*. Barcelona: Mediterrània i Fundació Jaume Bofill,
- Carbonell, J. (2015). *Pedagogías del siglo XXI: Alternativas para la innovación educativa*. Barcelona: Octaedro.
- Carbonell, J. (2016). Les tres primaveres pedagògiques. *El diari de l'educació*. Available at: <https://diarieducacio.cat/les-tres-primaveres-pedagogiques/> (Accessed: October 2023).
- Comissió d'Associacions i Organitzacions No Governamentals de les Comarques de Girona (1993). *L'Informe de Girona: cinquanta propostes sobre immigració*. Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya, Departament de Benestar Social.
- Creus, J. (1994). *Vers una educació intercultural*. Barcelona: Barcanova.
- Davila-Balsera, P. (2005). La renovación pedagógica en el País Vasco (segunda mitad del siglo XX). *Sarmiento*, 9, 85-103.
- Delgado, M. (2001). Diferencia y desigualdad en la escuela. *El País*, 14.
- Díez, X. (2018). Breu història de la renovació pedagògica. *Docència*, 41,15-34. <https://doi.org/10.51698/aloma.2016.34.1.15-21>
- Díez-Gutiérrez, E.J., Horcas-López, V., Arregui-Murguiondo, X., & Simó-Gil, N. (2023). La Renovación Pedagógica Hoy: Transformación y Defensa de lo Público y el Bien Común. *REICE. Revista Iberoamericana sobre Calidad, Eficacia y Cambio en Educación*, 21(2), 31-49. <https://doi.org/10.15366/reice2023.21.2.002>
- Essomba, M.A. (Coord.) (1999). *Construir la escuela intercultural. Reflexiones y propuestas para trabajar la diversidad étnica y cultural*. Barcelona: Graó.
- Esteban-Frades, S. (2016). La renovación pedagógica en España. Un movimiento social más allá del didactismo. *Tendencias Pedagógicas*, 27, 259-284. <https://doi.org/10.15366/tp2016.27.012>
- Fermoso, P. (Ed.) (1992). *Educación intercultural: la Europa sin fronteras*. Madrid: Narcea.
- Feu, J., & Torrent, A. (2020). Aproximació al tercer impuls de la renovació pedagògica, entre l'adaptació inevitable i la resistència transformadora. *Temps d'Educació*, 59, 237-254.
- Feu, J., Besalú, X., & Paludàrias, J.M. (Coords.) (2021). *La renovación pedagógica en España. Una mirada crítica y actual*. Barcelona: Morata.
- Flecha, R. (2004). La Pedagogía de la Autonomía de Freire y la Educación Democrática de personas adultas. *Revista Interuniversitaria de Formación del Profesorado*, 18(2), 27-43.
- Fullana, J., Besalú, X., & Vilà, M. (2003). *Alumnes d'origen africà a l'escola*. Girona: CCG.
- Harvey, D. (2007). *Breve historia del Neoliberalismo*. Madrid: Akal.
- Hernández-Díaz, J.M. (2018). Los movimientos de renovación pedagógica (MRP) en la España de la transición educativa (1970-1985). *Historia de la Educación, Universidad de Salamanca*, 37, 257-284. <https://doi.org/10.14201/hedu201837257284>
- Ibáñez, J.E. (2001). Igualdad con diversidad la apuesta de los movimientos de renovación pedagógica. *Aula de Innovación Educativa*, 99, 37-41.
- Jordán, J.A. (1992). *L'educació multicultural*. Barcelona: CEAC.

- Jordán, J.A. (1994). *La escuela multicultural. Un reto para el profesorado*. Barcelona: Paidós.
- Jordán, J.A. (1996). *Propuestas de educación intercultural para profesores*. Barcelona: CEAC
- Juliano, D. (1993). *Educación intercultural. Escuela y minorías étnicas*. Madrid: Eudema.
- Labelle, M. (2015). Multiculturalisme, interculturalisme, antiracisme: Le traitement de l'altérité. *Revue Européenne des Migrations Internationales*, 31(2). <https://doi.org/10.4000/remi.7255>
- Lluch, X. (1999). *Plural: Educació Intercultural 12/16*. València: Tàndem.
- López, B., & Tuts, M. (2012). Introducción. La educación intercultural y los nuevos escenarios educativo. In *Liga Española de la Educación y la Cultura Popular, Orientaciones para la práctica de la educación intercultural*. Madrid: Wolters Kluwer.
- Llorente, M.A. (2003). Los movimientos de renovación pedagógica y la lucha contra la mundialización neoliberal. *Tabanque. Revista Pedagógica*, 17, 71-86.
- Marquès, S. (Ed.) (2001). *Societats pluriculturals i educació: la interculturalitat com a resposta*. Girona: Ajuntament de Girona and Universitat de Girona.
- Martínez-Bonafé, J. (2021). Los movimientos de renovación pedagógica en España. De la ley general de educación hasta nuestros días. In Feu, J., Besalú, X., & Palaudàrias, J.M. (Coords.), *La renovación pedagógica en España. A critical and current look* (85-108). Barcelona: Morata.
- Moreno-Fuentes, F.J., & Bruquetas-Callejo, M. (2011). *Inmigración y Estado de bienestar en España*. Barcelona: Obra Social “La Caixa”.
- Mullard, C. (1984). *Antiracist Education: The Three O's*. Aberdeen: National Association for Multi-Racial Education.
- Navarro, V. (2015). *Bienestar insuficiente, democracia incompleta. Sobre lo que no se habla en nuestro país*. Madrid: Anagrama.
- Pérez-Gómez, A.I. (1997). *Historia de una reforma educativa: estudio múltiple de casos sobre la reforma experimental del tercer ciclo de E.G.B. en Andalucía*. Sevilla: Diada.
- Pericacho, F.J. (2015). *Actualidad de la renovación pedagógica en la Comunidad de Madrid: un estudio a través de escuelas emblemáticas. Evolución y experiencias actuales ante los retos socioeducativos de la sociedad del siglo XXI*. Doctoral thesis. Madrid: Complutense University. Available at: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14352/25822> (Accessed: July 2023).
- Pericacho, F.J. (2016). *Actualidad de la Renovación Pedagógica*. Madrid: Experiencias Pedagógicas.
- Pericacho, F.J., & Andrés-Candelas, M. (2018). Actualidad de la renovación pedagógica en Madrid: un estudio a través de centros escolares representativos. *Educação e Pesquisa: Revista da Faculdade de Educação da Universidade de São Paulo*, 44, e174543. <https://doi.org/10.1590/s1678-4634201844174543>
- Ramos-Ramos, P. (2023). Educación intercultural en España: Del asimilacionismo franquista a la década de 1990. *Historia y Memoria de la Educación*, (18), 283-310. <https://doi.org/10.5944/hme.18.2023.34015>
- Rodríguez-Izquierdo, R.M. (2004). La atención a la diversidad cultural: el reto de las organizaciones escolares. *Tendencias Pedagógicas*, 9, 189-202. Available at: <https://revistas.uam.es/tendenciaspedagogicas/article/view/1846> (Accessed: July 2023).
- Rogero-Anaya, J. (2003). El marco ideológico de la LOCE y los MRPs. *Tabanque*, 17, 33-50.
- Rogero-Anaya, J. (2010). Movimientos de renovación pedagógica y profesionalización docente. *Revista Latinoamericana de Educación Inclusiva*, 4(1), 141-166.

- Sáenz del Castillo, A. (1999). El (o)caso de los movimientos de renovación pedagógica (MRP's). *Revista Electrónica Interuniversitaria Interuniversitaria de Formación del Profesorado*, 2(1), 785-796. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/11162/148664> (Accessed: July 2023).
- Serra, C., & Shaimi, M. (2020). Formació antiracista per als professionals de l'acció social. Pedagogia i Treball Social. *Revista de Ciències Socials Aplicades*, 9(2), 133-144. https://doi.org/10.33115/udg_bib/pts.v9i2.22549
- Shaimi, M. (2024). Superar l'interculturalisme. In Iglesias, E., & Zhang, C. (Eds.). *Combatre el racisme des de l'escola. Quan aprendre és un dret*. Barcelona: Rosa Sensat.
- Tarozzi, M. (2012). Intercultural or multicultural education in Europe and the United States. In Della-Chiesa, B., Scott, J., & Hinton, C. (Eds.), *Languages in a Global World: Learning for Better Cultural Understanding*. Paris: OECD.
- Torrent, A., & Feu, J. (2020). Educational change in Spain: Between committed renewal and innocuous innovation. *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*, 18(1), 253-295.
- Tort, A., & Costa, A. (2016). Entrevista a Jaume Carbonell Sebarroja. *Historia y Memoria de la Educación*, 3, 321-354. <https://doi.org/10.5944/hme.3.2016.15893>
- Villanueva, J. (2018). La renovació pedagògica a Catalunya. *Eines*, 33, 6-15.

Published by OmniaScience (www.omniascience.com)

Journal of Technology and Science Education, 2024 (www.jotse.org)



Article's contents are provided on an Attribution-Non Commercial 4.0 Creative commons International License. Readers are allowed to copy, distribute and communicate article's contents, provided the author's and JOTSE journal's names are included. It must not be used for commercial purposes. To see the complete licence contents, please visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>.