# Working on critical cultural literacy through ethics-in-practice: tensions and possibilities between schools and researchers while 'entering the field'

Authors: Fernando Hernández, Aurelio Castro Varela,  Gabriela Espinosa, Silvia de Riba Mayoral and Patricia del Razo.
Presenter: Gabriela Espinosa

**EXPECT_Art**

EXPLORING AND EDUCATING
CULTURAL LITERACY
THROUGH ART

UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA

Funded by
the European Union

Context:

**Expect_Art Project**
**Entering the field: two schools in Barcelona**

Collaborative Ethnographic methodology:

**Collaborative field notes diary**
**Collaborative reflexivity through conversation**
**Collaborative writing**

Two Schools: two different contexts
Many relationships through research practice
(observation + participation + collaboration)
Different tensions among relationships
Emerging tensions that put our ethic(s) in practice

Research involving human participants starts from a position of ethical tension.

It is within the dimension of "ethics in practice" that the researcher's ethical competence comes to the fore.

"Ethically important moments" in doing research - the difficult, often subtle, and usually unpredictable situations that arise in the practice of doing research.

Reflexivity seen from an ethical notion and as a potential tool for ethical research practice.

Reflexive researcher does not merely report the "facts" of the research but also actively constructs interpretations ("What do I know?"), while at the same time questioning how those interpretations came about ("How do I know what I know?") (Hertz, 1997).

Reflexivity in research is not a single or universal entity but a process—an active, ongoing process that saturates every stage of the research.

a) to give the negotiation a sense of transparency and mutual recognition;

b) to try to question hierarchies and proceed horizontally;

c) to assume the process of inquiry from shared decisions and not from imposition;

d) to incorporate the framework of action proposed by the schools into the research;

f) to adapt the research proposal to the needs and demands of the teaching staff;

g) to share periodically the tensions, advances and adaptations; to adjust the research movements to teachers, students and families situations and changes.

- **How do we position ourselves - without being intrusive - in pupil-teacher relations?**

Moment(s):
- Teacher leaving the classroom to get a class material and asking us to be "in charge". Students not positioning us as an "authority", but rather a space of freedom.
- Disrespectful comments or attitudes among peers and towards teachers. ¿Researcher intervenes?
- ¿Where are you from rather that what are you doing here?
- There are two many adults in the classroom, it agobiates me.

- **How do we face the dilemmas posed by intervening, suggesting, or remaining in suspense in the processes we observe in the classroom and the school?**

Moment(s):
- Conversation with teachers about the curriculum of the school, posing questions about art tools: fluidity and constraints.
- Conversations and entering as a mode of interruption.
- "Oh, how scary", when wanting to give feedback to the school.

- **How to face, through collaboration, the tensions between the school project and the expected art project regarding the conception of art education, pedagogical relations, the role of bodies, and the possible meanings of teaching and learning?**

Moment(s):
- Decoloniality conceptualization as a colonial approach of what and how curriculum has to be done.
-

- **How to deal with the tensions between the expectations of teachers and researchers and, in this case, the art mediators/educators?**

  Moment(s):
  - Teacher that suits us in a corner to observe.
  - Teacher that questions our ethnographic practices.
  - Teachers that expect continuity and more presence of same faces.
  - Teachers that ask for advice, or teachers that feel exposed , vulnerable or evaluated by our presence.
  - Teachers ask the researchers to explain or evaluate the "artistic" work of students.

- **How can we intervene without colonising, and how can we collaborate without the researchers defining the collaboration?**


Moment(s):
- From water to the body.
- The teacher should have… The teacher is not…
- Adding our actions to the curriculum but deviating it through art practices.

**- How do we deal with the institutional limits of collaboration related to the use of time, the curriculum, and the internal dynamics of schools?**

Moment(s):
- ¿Time as a limitation to other kind of relationships that could allow collaboration in a more reciprocal way?
- ¿What means to collaborate? To move beyond simplistic and naïve ways of understanding relationships in research, recognizing the multiple forms of action that emerge in research encounters and embracing the dynamic nature of collaboration (de Riba Mayoral, 2024).

Discuss and breathe and embrace the tensions without erasing it, but allowing these to make us understand more about the context and how to relate to it without antagonism.

This led us to realize that there were no taken-for-granted or assumed ways of approaching classroom environments; rather, we had to continuously negotiate and reflect on our position in each situation. The relationship and the place we were using in the classroom was an everyday construction that unfolded in relation to what had and is happening.

In each school we perform diverse roles and positions that relate to the performativity of others.

Gradual introduction of vibrational-critical concepts.

Install the discussion of how we observe, how are we relating and what importance do we give to the "ethics in practice".

Try to think with them together in order to make some movements under a similar framework. Find the moments to share our shifts.

Every decision we make as researchers directly impacts the fieldwork and the participants with whom we collaborate.

Practices that are based on care, flexibility and adaptation:

Mutual Listening to construct trust

Reciprocity

Recognizing

Habiting tensions when being in a participatory design

Response-Ability

Ethics in the educational research practice refers to the ability to be affected by the learning environment and allowing that affectivity to mediate interpersonal relationships within the classroom.

Ethics discussions need to be documented (European Union).