

ACTION RESEARCH AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY OF LEARNING AND PRACTICE: A DYNAMIC SYNERGY OF EDUCATORS EVEN DURING THE PANDEMIC

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Abstract— The following article presents an account of a refresher course for teachers which took place in Athens (Greece) within the 2019-2020 school-year and targeted the integration of refugee children into mainstream schools making the most of the methodology of action research. The first part presents the group of trainees and trainers and the process of its formation. It also outlines the theoretical background of the training approach. The second part presents the ways of organizing the training action, the pace gradually achieved and the retraining perspective that was adopted during the two phases, before and after the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown. Finally, the reflections of the participating teachers lead to an overall evaluation of the way in which the training process adopted led to the creation of a practice and learning community.

Keywords— Action Research, Training, Community of Learning and Practice, Refugees Education

1. INTRODUCTION

The following article presents an account of a refresher course for teachers which took place in Athens (Greece) within the 2019-2020 school-year and targeted the integration of refugee children into mainstream schools making the most of the methodology of action research. The first part presents the group of trainees and trainers and the process of its formation. It also outlines the theoretical background of the training approach. The second part presents the ways of organizing the training action, the pace gradually achieved and the retraining perspective that was adopted during the two phases, before and after the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown. Finally, the reflections of the participating teachers lead to an overall evaluation of the way in which the training process adopted led to the creation of a practice and learning community. The following text has been produced collectively by the whole group and is enriched with excerpts from the reflective texts of the trainees cited in text boxes. In this way the dynamic development of this group is illustrated.

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2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. HOW THIS TRAINING STARTED

The team was formed in October 2019 following an invitation addressed to the teachers who had participated in a seminar organized by NKUA¹. The seminar was organized and developed as a result of an invitation addressed by Unicef to all universities in the country in June 2018 concerning the retraining of teachers on issues related to the integration of refugee children into the mainstream educational system. A total of 210 teachers participated, mainly from secondary schools with an appreciable number of refugee and migrant students.

The main goal of the program was to raise awareness among teachers who have refugee and migrant children in their classrooms in order to actively contribute to the inclusion of socially vulnerable groups into the school reality of mainstream education. At the same time, the design of the course hinged heavily on the idea of non-fragmentary education in an effort to create functional links between cognitive subjects indispensable for teachers in mainstream education, such as psychoeducational management of multilingual and multicultural classes, teaching Greek as a second language. and the teaching of the natural sciences.

The planning of the course aimed on the one hand at getting participating teachers acquainted with the methodology and techniques of teaching Greek as a second language and on the other at getting them to delve into issues related to the psycho-pedagogical management of multilingual and multicultural classes. Although in Greece since the 1990s the presence of immigrants at school has already changed the landscape on the school map and the classes are already, at least in large urban centers, multicultural and heterogeneous, the value of homogeneity and the difficulty of handling differences remain at the cutting edge. The presence of refugees in the classroom has once again highlighted these issues and the adversities they cause especially in the field of secondary education. (Stergiou, Simopoulos 2018, Androusou 2020).

The two axes of the seminars were designed in such a way as to converse with each other and to connect the pedagogical dimension with the cognitive content. From 8/1/2019 to 28/1/2019 these courses were conducted by a mixed team of trainers: faculty members, scientists, teachers with experience in the field of integrating refugee and migrant children. The aim of the course was to overcome existing barriers between educational levels, specialties and field experience through the mixed makeup of the training teams but mainly also through the cooperative and without rank barriers operation of each team.

At the end of the seminars and after a reflective meeting of all the groups where the results of the evaluation were discussed, a request was made for the continuation and deepening of this kind of research. This led to the idea of creating a team that would continue to work on such issues organizing training courses based on the logic of action research.

2.2. WHY WE CHOOSE ACTION RESEARCH AS A KEY TRAINING TOOL

Educational action research proposes an alternative educational practice, which tries to go beyond the perception that educational practice can be guided by pure theory formed by academics outside all field experiences (Katsarou & Tsafos, 2003). By recognizing that educational practice, as a dynamically developing process, is not repeated mechanically and by considering the educational experience as a solid basis for

¹ It was a collaboration of three Departments of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, under the academic responsibility of: Maria Iakovou, Associate Professor of Linguistics, Department of Philology, Alexandra Androusou, Associate Professor of Teaching Methodology and Margarita Asimakopoulou, Associate Professor of Physics, Department of Physics.

professional knowledge, it attributes to the teacher the primary role in the educational process (Altrichter, 2005).

According to this proposal, the training procedures can be organized either at school level or on a larger scale in the various training centers or even in the University Institutions, but in direct cooperation with schools. The issues to be explored and discussed are defined in connection with actual training needs arising from developments in society itself that touch upon the field of education as well as the particular interests and needs of the teachers themselves. Thus, under the coordination of the trainers, through the proposals of the teachers and the parallel bibliographic research, action hypotheses are formulated as objects of the research process.

Through all these processes we escape the technocratic notion that specialist trainers or academics possess an indisputable “truth” which they reveal to the trainees. This alternative approach rejects the image of a teacher inadvertently following rules defined by tradition, administrative hierarchy and circumstantial conditions (Zeichner, 1999:8). It also differs significantly from the utilitarian perspective of teacher education, as it is shaped by the technocratic bureaucratic model through the application of specific teaching techniques and the development of specific classroom management skills (Darling-Hammond, 1996: 9).

The training process is organized according to the criteria and the personal proposals of the educational researchers, as a result of their experience and their personal educational theory and knowledge. This enables them to build a practical educational knowledge², which should perhaps be the basis for the development of educational theory. And the teachers themselves are finally getting acquainted with a more systematic way of understanding what is going on in their classroom, a practice that gives them a research orientation for teaching and perhaps for their entire further career (Fine, 2018). In such a perspective, which recognizes the need for professionals to understand their action and improve (Day, 2007), teachers by linking teaching and research think about their role, their professional identity, the CA, the teaching process and learning, their educational values and their practice in relation to them. Most of all, however, they realize the need to systematically study their educational activity, thus contributing to their development. Such a choice means that teachers accept that “*practice is based on specific interpretations of educational situations and that it cannot be improved unless these interpretations are first improved*” (Elliott, 1993: 17).

At the same time, as this understanding develops through concrete action aiming at improving it, it makes teaching a kind of “applied” science.

Of course, this contemplative approach, as it does not deal with the practice framed by socio-political conditions, is not limited to the educational context. By essentially recognizing the moral and political dimension of the educational act, it connects what is done in the school with all the parameters that affect not only the formation of the educational institution and the goals it is called to perform, but also the development of the educational act itself. Teachers, as active professionals (Sachs, 2000) perceive themselves as part of a wider socio-political development, a kind of process. In fact, as they understand the dynamic development of this process and its direct correlation with the educational practice, they can collectively claim, as groups of professionals, participation in decision-making through decentralization (Sachs, 2000: 77-78). This interventionist orientation presupposes collective professional action: organization and development of research programs by groups of teachers, which not only allow them to understand the educational practice, its epistemological bases and their perspective, but

² Clandinin defines as personal practical knowledge «*the convictions and meanings, conscious or unconscious, that have arisen from experience (intimate, social and traditional) and that are expressed in a person’s practices*» (Clandinin, 2010: 862).

also to gradually create a research culture, where professional learning through systematic research “*is an integral part of institutional and professional life*” (Sachs, 2000: 90).

3. METHODOLOGY

In October 2019, the teachers who participated in the first phase of the training were invited to declare their readiness to participate in an in-depth training group that would meet on a weekly basis with the ultimate goal that its members, through the action research methodology, should analyze their own educational context and devise interventions suitable for their own classes in their own school, always aiming at the integration of refugee children.

50 teachers responded out of 210. 30 remained active from October 2019 until March 2020, so long as the weekly meetings were live. From March to July 2020 the active participants in the online meetings dropped to 23.

The group of trainees included mainly secondary school teachers, fewer primary school teachers and 2 kindergarten teachers. This ratio corresponds to the composition of the initial training that was addressed mainly to secondary school teachers.

The composition was interesting because they were primarily teachers from 3 schools (Avlonas, Intercultural High School of Elliniko and the 41st Athens Lyceum, mainly philologists but also mathematicians, geologists, gymnasts, theatrical education teachers). These subgroups were very active throughout the seminar and enhanced the dynamics of the group as they worked very positively always giving precedence to the institutional framework, the idea of collectivity and the difficulties in their function as groups. The existence of these groups was not in the least divisive as they never assumed the role of an entrenched closed “clique”. The rest of the participants were teachers of different specialties, working in different types of schools (refugee camp kindergarten, evening high school, elementary school with a large presence of immigrant children).

On the other hand, the in-depth team was coordinated by two academics who have been collaborating for years at Early Childhood Education Department and have extensive experience in the field of teacher training³. Alexandra Androussou had the academic responsibility in the previous training as well as deep knowledge of the refugee field through a long-term intervention in the field in the form of action research. Vassilis Tsafos has extensive action research experience in many fields of teacher education, as well as in curriculum research. Both have been collaborating for years at TEAPI at undergraduate and postgraduate level, organizing teacher training courses and utilizing action research methodology in both research programs and teacher training. The idea was from the beginning to organize this group to deepen the logic of action research and to animate the weekly training sessions with an interactive and exploratory perspective.

The aim was to create a community of learning and practice that through individual research activities would produce new scientific knowledge based on their school experience and its systematic investigation. Participation, empirical perception and dialogue were basic pedagogical principles, with which the trainees had already been familiarized during the previous phase of the training. In going deeper the goal from the beginning was to create a collaborative, exploratory atmosphere so as to lay the foundations for the emancipation and empowerment of teachers within a group of professionals who were inspired by a common vision. The collaborative and participatory orientation of the training activity and especially the friendly atmosphere that was formed

³ Indicative of their collaboration are the common publications (Androussou & Tsafos 2013, Androussou & Tsafos, 2018), the co-editing of a collective volume, product of their collaboration in teaching at the University of Athens, (Androussou & Tsafos, 2020) and their participation in research projects.

from the beginning is reflected in the naming of the group after a proposal of the trainees: Bolek and Lolek⁴ in action.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. DEVELOPMENT STAGES OF THE TRAINING

The training lasted one school year, from October 2019 to July 2020 on a weekly basis. From October 2019 to February 2020 it was conducted live and from March to July 2020 online using the Zoom app.

It was based in principle on the same central ideas and goals of the previous phase and was treated as a continuation and in-depth analysis. We kept the education of refugee children and the basic pedagogical principles of educational intervention as a central theme.

We would never have got to the point of searching for a topic for action research in our schools, nor would we know exactly how and why we would handle such a process if we had not been immersed in the "Teach4Integration" training two years ago. Original teaching practices, teaching methods presented in an experiential way, new versions of teachers' approach to students from different cultural backgrounds were opened before us. Knowledge that existed in a cloudy landscape in our minds and now took shape and found its direction.

The expectations created from the first year of our training as well as the familiarity with the faces of the teams and the trainers from the first phase of the training, the sense of equality, the common visions on education, the personal motivations for getting to know and consolidating ways for the approach and integration of refugee students in the educational process gave us the impetus to continue this journey. The "Teach4Integration" training was the thread that united us in this new venture. It was the reason for starting, engaging and fully participating in a practically unknown process.

Gymnasium Team

Taking into account the objectives of the training and the methodology adopted, the training action was organized based on the following axes: shaping a collective collaborative and participatory climate/orientation, recognizing the situation, i.e. the educational context, stochastic discussion on the conceptual (social and political) parameters, problem identification & intervention design, individual & collective reflection, redesign. A key point of the educational action was considered by all of us the disarray caused by the closure of schools due to the pandemic and the need for adjustment through online intervention and communication.

Reflecting a posteriori on the course we followed, we can split it in the following phases:

- creating a climate of cooperation and collective investigation of classroom difficulties
- introduction to the logic of action research in practice: selection of topics, formation of subgroups according to the level and the interests,

⁴ Polish cartoon characters.

- recording questions based on each educational context, working in subgroups according to the level of education, setting questions, difficulties in focusing on a specific topic
- first research attempts and discussion of difficulties within the group,
- March 2020 lockdown due to the pandemic and cessation of research interventions in the classrooms. Collective decision to continue the training,
- discussions on the difficulties of online education and reflections on the role of education and teachers in crisis situations. Analysis of examples from all levels, Tracing inequalities and increased difficulties for refugee children.
- Awareness of the community building process. Sharing our reflections and new dynamics through participation in university seminars.

4.2. THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Now we will focus on some points that we collectively consider to be important turning points which characterize the course of the team.

4.2.1. THE FORMATION OF THE TEAM: The starting point of any such type of collective action and a key point for its development is the formation of the group and the co-shaping of its operating conditions. The members of this group were connected through our common action as well as through the common learning that resulted from our commitment to this collective action (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006: 3). And it is characteristic that the coexistence of the levels (primary, secondary, tertiary) was a key trigger for dialogue and mobilization as it highlighted the deeper problems of educational practice and our attitudes towards it.

If anything was new in the formation and operation of this group, this was the unprecedented coexistence of all levels of education and the dialogue among them on the basis of equality. In other words, we were called to be inspired, to reflect, to exchange ideas on our action plans bearing in mind that despite the different problems faced by each level and the ensuing special needs, the pedagogical basis of the discussion and the pedagogical principles should be shared. This is why we all considered this process very fruitful, especially the High School Team as it is a sad reality that in the secondary school the status of a coach is much more prevalent than that of an educator.

Lyceum team

A common frame of reference for our group was what we were able to produce together through this action, and to collectively reach the knowledge that “belongs” to the practice (Wenger, 1998: 5), but is a product of toil and collective thinking as it has emerged from the methodical and systematic individual and collective investigation into it (Stoll & Louis, 2007: 7).

The participation in the previous seminar led to the creation of a new group with the aim of deepening and implementing action research. The reasons that finally bound the group together were mainly the shared belief that in our schools there are problems that cannot be addressed using the traditional methods that prevail today, either because they are ineffective or because they had been conceived for a totally different environment than the one currently prevalent in Greek schools.

Gymnasium Team

4.2.2. FAMILIARIZATION WITH ACTION RESEARCH: Through our participation in the training action as trainees we collaborated in investigating the interventions we planned trying to understand the educational condition based on specific elements of the educational context. Our goal was to improve the educational practice and the wider school life. In other words, by researching something that concerned our professional activity, that is ourselves as professionals, we sought to diagnose problems, to understand them by associating them with the various social and political parameters, to seek prospects for improvement of both our professional action and our professional self- image and the conditions in which our students live, learn and develop. We thus become familiar with the action-research methodology, as well as with the perspective that it reflects.

The training in the second year concerned the implementation of action research in our schools. At the same time it was made clear by the trainers and then accepted by all of us that the view of reality and therefore education is not neutral and boneless but has a historical, social and political dimension. Therefore, our research should lead to a change of attitude of both teachers and students in order to overturn, to challenge, to reject the traditional perception of the world, since we were looking for an alternative way of teaching. This was the difficulty in going deeper, as the second training cycle was called.

Gymnasium Team

A common element in our initial attempts was the difficulty of focusing on some aspect of the problems we became aware of and the transition from generalities to specific questions. A difficulty that enabled us to understand the value of the systematic approach, taking detailed notes and discussing, methods that formed the basis of all the reflective processes that followed.

In the context of the implementation of action research, the first and main difficulty of the groups was to focus on a specific problem. As a rule, as teachers, when we identify a difficulty we usually look for all its ramifications since our role is multiple. So focusing on just one aspect of the problem was difficult. The intervention of the group coordinators helped in this by presenting the theory of action research in one of the first live meetings. The division of the group into smaller ones, based on the purpose of intervention, and the exchange of views also contributed accordingly. Through this management it seemed easier for everyone to identify and focus on the problem we had decided to tackle.

Gymnasium Team

On the contrary, practice has shown that in fact with this targeting we gain in depth and this automatically brings to the surface other parameters that we had not initially seen as potential problems. As a result, the intervention becomes much wider than we had anticipated.

Primary School Team

In terms of conducting action research, only within the group were we able to realize how difficult it is to focus on a specific issue/problem and to methodically devise steps and ways of intervention. Because we all faced almost the same difficulty. [...] Action research, as a method of research and at the same time intervention in the educational work, helped us first of all in grappling with the above weakness. We have learned to identify and focus on one problem at a time, to ask questions about it and to provide solutions. In other words, we have learned to set smaller goals that are realistic and achievable. Both the theoretical acquaintance with the method of action research and the support of the Bolek & Lolek team led us to this transformation. The discussion and exchange of ideas between us, the expressions of personal opinions in the group and the feedback proved to be valuable processes.

Lyceum Team

Through our involvement in these reflective processes we realized that problems are not instances of a generalized theory but unique cases. We understood that we were not looking for rules and techniques to apply but mainly for ways to classify the problems by exploring the values and norms to which we gave priority, as well as the possibility of alternative actions. Through the exchange of our perspectives and the collective reflection we were setting under public control purposes and means and we were conversing essentially with the educational condition in all its dimensions. Through the contemplative conversation we recharged our reflection on the prospect of improving the situation. And that was what really empowered us.

Besides, only the collective intelligence of the team managed to promote action, to offer encouragement and enhance self-confidence through the critical eye of a friend, through feedback and dialogue in an atmosphere of trust and security. Communication on social networks, free access to everyone's work, critical comments on Facebook but also the hearts and the likes of support were factors that inspired, stressed, troubled, guided. It was also a workshop of ideas and experimentation that since it was carried out by Maria, Lucia or Georgia, why not by us? If it succeeded elsewhere, it is most definitely feasible. This awareness has been the most effective vaccine against the frustration we teachers often experience.

Lyceum Team

As our reflective texts show, the educational action research acquainted us with the systematic recording and the intellectual investigation of our work: either individually or collectively we systematically collected data from our work, analyzed them and it was through them that problems arose, questions were asked and conclusions drawn in the form of action hypotheses. This allowed us, on the one hand, to proceed with redesigns and, on the other hand, to seriously consider the prospect of deepening our knowledge of our professional activity. It is in this sense that our participation in the retraining action can be seen as an activity of continuous learning and essential professional development.

The need for cooperation led us to seeking and creating a pedagogical collective without divisions between teachers and with collaboration and interaction on an equal basis. That is we became aware of “the education spider web”. The variety of ideas is important, as our team consists of members who not only have different starting points and experiences but also happen to be in different phases of their educational path: at the beginning, in the middle, near the end. This fact enriches our pedagogical being and at the same time composes the multifaceted dimension of the educational process.

Primary School Team

Finally, teachers participating in an action research, which is an open and dynamic process, try, learn, collaborate as members of a wider group and subgroups, realize their constantly evolving educational role, reflect and revise individually and destabilize the established ways of viewing the educational reality while they “deepen” mentally and emotionally and evolve uninterruptedly as individual and collective entities. This collectivity has given us the opportunity to see education as a perpetual journey, where the route is important and not the destination.

Gymnasium Team

4.2.3. THE SETBACK

While the process began to bear fruit, the first interventions had already taken place and we had formulated a common code, the sudden pandemic problem interrupted the original planning and posed the dilemma: cancellation or redesign? There were two parameters that led almost effortlessly to the second option. First the familiarization with action research, which treats the problem as a trigger for reflection, redesign and active intervention. In addition, the new conditions were particularly challenging. The conversion of the seminar into an online one and the new conditions that prevailed formed a common framework of discussion and reflection. Both academics and teachers needed to find ways to access all three levels of education. The core subject of the training no longer concerned only refugee pupils and their integration but the inclusion of all pupils.

All this was brought to a standstill abruptly and without warning by the lockdown. And we, like everyone else, were completely unprepared for that. At first there was a general numbness. Soon, however, this inaction was followed by anxiety and action. We tried to restore contact with our students by using the social media. We tried to maintain the dynamics of the groups we had formed by organizing groups on Viber, Messenger and the like. We set new goals related to the new unprecedented situation we were experiencing. The main goal for us now was to keep as many of our students as possible in touch with the school and the learning process. At the same time, we wanted to see if it was possible to continue the action research interventions we had planned, utilizing the social media and the necessary tools for synchronous and asynchronous education.

Gymnasium Team

The quarantine period was crucial for the operation of the group. It could have disbanded it but in fact it helped transform it into something else. In this difficult phase for all of us, the B&L team changed. We started discussing other topics besides action research, which obviously interested us all. It ceased to be a group with a specific purpose and became a group of teachers with common worries and concerns on a broader level. A place where each one of us felt comfortable to submit thoughts and opinions. To share concerns, anxieties and fears. The quarantine period confirmed the sense of equality between members of all levels since even for university colleagues this was an unprecedented situation that tested the endurance and certainties of all of us. We had to adapt to this new situation and decided to take this difficult path together. Within the limits of compulsory confinement it was a window to the Other and strengthened the bonds of its members. It made loneliness more bearable and reduced the feeling of weakness. It transferred the weight of the conversation to the social and political, in the proper sense of the terms, almost effortlessly and unconsciously at first, and then much more consciously.

Gymnasium Team

In fact, the familiarity with the logic of action research as well as the results that had begun to appear both in the team and in each trainee worked in a strengthening way. The team began to transform. The meetings were supportive of this new setup. Reflection broadened and dealt with the wider context and its socio-political parameters.

It has also contributed to the upkeep of a constant reflection on the role of education in times of crisis, which has rekindled class and socio-cultural issues. It brought to light new fields of marginalization, primarily the digital one, through which the social and educational exclusion among students and teachers alike became evident.

Primary School Team

5. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

5.1. ESTABLISHING A LEARNING COMMUNITY

The training team as a whole, trainers and trainees, was gradually transformed into a professional community of learning and practice, as was the goal from the beginning. They essentially met all three conditions that define such a community (Wenger, 1998: 2): The members of the group developed and constantly negotiated a common orientation. They were committed to each other as a social collective entity. They also shared and collectively developed a common repertoire as well as sources (practices, materials, vocabulary, style...).

In other words, they gradually became a group of professionals, who share and critically explore their practice in a continuum of reflection, cooperation and redefinition, aiming at learning as well as developing both the professional process and themselves as participants in it (Stoll *et al.*, 2006: 223). The aim of their action was to collectively reflect on their practice, to study data that link their practice with actual student achievements and with the conditions that affect them with all their parameters in order to “*design changes that will improve teaching and learning for the specific students in their classrooms*”(McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006: 4).

They realized that learning, thoughtfully negotiating meaning, belonging and acting are not separate processes. “*Everything we learn, who we are and what we do go together*

into an engaging experience" (Wenger, 1998: 15). Therefore, they deepened their understanding of their practice and of themselves through processes of interaction. They finally understood that action and contemplation could not be distinguished. In other words, they became a professional learning community which, through reflective and exploratory processes, gradually formed the feeling of belonging and committed itself to joint action and change within a framework of cooperation between academics and teachers.

In this way it was possible to develop a symmetrical communication between the school and the university, between teachers and academics (Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 2005: 414-417). This group of teachers experienced in practice that their voice was strengthened but also that the validity of their knowledge based on experience within this professional community as it arises from the collective stochastic investigation of the practice and of the latent or conscious theory that lies behind it. Thus, an equal communication between teachers and academics was developed, essentially creating a channel of continuous exchange of ideas.

After all, the views that link teacher education with their professional development are completely in line with the new approach to teacher education. Teachers, both as candidates and as professionals, transfer, like all learners, previous knowledge and experiences to the new learning conditions. An active learning process must, on the one hand, lead to the creation of opportunities for the correlation of previous knowledge and new understandings (Cohran-Smith & Demers, 2008: 1011) and, on the other hand, provide opportunities for gradual construction and revision through actions that promote criticism and retrospective reflection. It is also required by teaching itself, which is now considered a complex and demanding decision-making process in a specific educational context (Schnellert *et al.*, 2008: 726; Zeichner & Liu, 2010: 68).

6. CONCLUSION

Any community of learning and practice that is created as part of a training process, in a difficult phase like that of the pandemic, risks being consumed in an internal process without perspective. In our case, the next step was the participation of the team twice (in April and September 2020) in two postgraduate seminars.

In the first case, the trainees gave interviews to postgraduate students of the seminar of V. Tsafos related to the qualitative approach and the educational action research. In the second case, they participated in the interdisciplinary seminar organized by A. Androusou within the framework of the MPS "Education and Human Rights", entitled "*Crisis, crises in education and society: challenges and dilemmas in research and practice*", in which the Team collectively presented the course and how the action research contributed to the investigation of issues concerning equal opportunities in education for both individuals and communities.

These two "meetings" with postgraduate students connected the team with the academic process and strengthened the learning and practice community by enabling it to be reflected and expanded at the same time. The transition from the role of trainee to the role of trainer is a new experience that strengthens the new knowledge produced in vivo. Stochastic dialogue creates new perspectives and strengthens the bonds of this community in times of crisis – the pandemic is far from over – and creates the conditions for a new beginning, just as action research does. So, the process is obviously not closed. It has an open path ahead of it and an interesting sequel... To be continued.

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