



Positive Educational Actions and Healthy Sustainable Development.

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ABSTRACT

Up to the 21st century, school education is in a state of crisis as a sequence of globalization when the neoliberal model of development pushes to question the right to a good public education (Reid, 1998). The ideal of a public education defined about two centuries ago (Hamilton & Zufiaurre, 2014) is getting lost because of international pressures for competition and dominance of some against the majority. But, living as we are in a diverse world, the misunderstandings, misperceptions and mistakes, regarding the social and natural world we inhabit, are forced to evolve to a context of discursively, morally and socially, ecologically, materially and economically sustainable and socially and personally healthy. *Diversity as the curriculum organizer today* is opened to a world of multiple interactions, mixed identities and multiple senses of belonging. Students, teachers, families, communities, develop in a context of diversities. They can be pushed to share, participate, cooperate and socialize while learning together. Our research reflects on positive experiences developed with teachers, students, and families, in 25 Infant, Primary and Compulsory secondary schools in Navarra (Spain), around 260 teachers and diverse families, from 2012 to 2014 (two years), and it has been exemplified in how can we organize the teaching and learning of a natural phenomenon: “bees in extinction” to be worked out with 10 to 12 year old boys and girls in a constructive school atmosphere. A Pilot Study was performed to analyze how an online platform on *Positive psychology* and *Positive actions in education* helps teachers to develop socio-emotional skills, encourage to work interactively while at the time, stimulating wellbeing and self-esteem. *Positive psychology and Positive Pedagogical actions developed at school education* contribute to promote *good interaction, democratic participation and a healthy balanced sustainable atmosphere of work, turned into collaboration, engagement, inclusion and equality.*

Keywords: Architectures of inclusion / Ecologies of practice / Development of socio emotional skills / Education for healthy Community development / Equity and cultural identities / Participation and empowerment.

PUBLIC SCHOOLING UNDER NEO-LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL RULING

Schooling began to take its modern form in the 16th associated with specific regimes of power and authority and with a specific lexicon (Hamilton & Zufiaurre, 2014, p. 7). Its main aim was to increase and extend the production of schoolteachers, lawyers, merchants and others (of male gender), who would administer and re-shape politics and government. Under this aim, schooling began to play a particular role in the distribution of human experience. As such, schooling became the focus of ideas and policies relating to the allocation and the withholding of human resources and, all at the same time, became central to manage evolution either to manage equality and progress or the distribution of difference, unbalances in development and inequality.

In its origins, modern schooling had a public purpose, in the sense that it was intended to serve the general interests of a specific community. In fact early British schools as Eton (founded in 1440) and Harrow (founded in 1572) became known as public schools because they prepared learners (male) for public life and, consequently, for the exercise of power in local, civic, regional and national government. Schools were to nurture governing elites at a time when few men and fewer women had the authority to exert influence in the public sphere. Progressively, the restricted public sphere of the 16th, disappeared with the extension of suffrage and the creation of new forms of representation and new forms of institutional, local, national and international (in this order) politics. Adults were no longer the subjects of a superior authority but citizens who were expected to play an active part in the organization and regulation of a democratic society.

Public Schooling: Its Origins.

Evidently public and private school provision has been a recurrent theme in the History of schooling. This distinction, however, applies from early 19th onwards since the beginnings of state investment in schooling. If we consider a longer time – scale, the key ideas behind public schooling get to the classical thought. At that time, the sources of funding were to prepare human beings for participation in public activities (Hamilton & Zufiaurre, 2014, p. 56). If we look deeper in the past, Cicero in “*De Re Publica*” questioned about public matters, the concept of civil society (*societascivilis*): a good society in Roman times, and the maintenance of peace and order among its people(s) (Edwards, 2004, p. 6), were points to consider.

It is the ferment of the Enlightenment in the 19th what sustained the assumption that human beings were inherently rational, that humans could collectively shape society and that humans had the capacity to combine (voluntarily) the pursuit of peace and the pursuit of social order. By that time, notions of political freedom linked to the assumptions about national identity and national spirit, what means, national priorities over confessional concerns. Early 19th century, cross-national awareness was growing among educational policy makers. The beginnings of inquiries that launched the field of comparative education were sustained this way (Hamilton & Zufiaurre, 2014, p. 20). To reform the versions of schooling as elements of a defense system, is something that, in the wake of Napoleonic wars, found a space under the belief that schooling was essential for national renewal. Data on school teachers, school size, and school attendance, was subjected by then to statistical analysis. And what emerged from these reforms, were national curriculums, systems of teacher training, and models for the distribution of difference and inequality.

By the end of the 19th, discussions about educational administration and classroom organization were animated by the growth of mass schooling. It was a time of extensive commerce in educational ideas between Germany and other countries (Maynes, 1985, p. 134). Herbart’s instructional stages were exported, while ideas about common schooling underwent change mediating the call for a new education which was to perform social ideologies in the process of convergence of mass production and mass schooling. This new order and destiny for school education under the influence of German thinking on education, was altered as a consequence of 1st and 2nd world wars, and derives to ideas about school for (liberal) democracy coming from America (inspired in Dewey and others) plus its exportation through international organizations.

A new mirror for education under modern premises.

It is in the 19th that the original idea about the public, limited to the elite members of society, became eventually embroiled in discussions about the incorporation of all young people:

elementary education for all, the three “Rs”, as a condition for development. This move steered the transference of human destiny from Church to State. Later in the 20th, new ideas about collectivism and evolution were posed in place to overcome heritage natural rights individualism. This gave more content to the sense and the meaning of the public service, even when national and imperial priorities remained in place.

In the second half of the 20th, globalization questions cross-national awareness what comes into conflict with post-national awareness. It is by 1958, that the Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (I.E.A.) was founded. The I.E.A. began as independent ‘Association of National Institutions and Agencies interested in measuring students’ performance. In a way, the I.E.A. continued lines of inquiry initiated in the wake of Napoleonic wars 150 years earlier. Its purpose was to establish whether participatory educational policies had positive, or negative, effects on learning. The I.E.A. is followed by the OECD, and the OECD, and its Program for International Student Assessment (PISA, founded in 1997), attracts more publicity for its global rankings. Since, PISA evaluations prefigure that while national Agencies scrutinize results related to their own populations, international attention focusses on league tables. But the dual scrutiny (national and international), arouses tension between educationists who wish to revise National Curriculum and the subsequent PISA investigations.

It is under this limited frame that cross-national analysis in the field of education is often superficial, once politicians rummage across national boundaries claiming for practices and keynote indicators. The aspiration is to get access to higher ratings, but manipulation of isolated practices does not stand along embedded as it is within and linked to other infrastructural aspects of National schooling. And in the absence of systemic reviews of schooling, piece-meal reforms (Fullan, 2001, a, b) serve as little more than rhetorical, public relations strategies, or facades, which fail to appreciate the absence of economic, material, political and educational foundations.

ORGANIZATIONAL PREMISES: A MIRROR FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION.

While international regulations fix the new educational order, or what to do about school education, the global and glocal context we live pushes for a new social balance. And this is so in times when the social organization, the life styles and the systems of beliefs, have changed. Today, people migrate from one side to the other in the world and inside the countries, to re-shape a new environment, and to reorganize new times and spaces where it is easier to promote and to grow personally and socially (Bruner, 1999). Times to validate disciplined doctrinaire school, marginalization and exclusion, are over. Today it is the time of social constructivist approaches, and from this lens, the space for education and schooling to promote positive evolution is opened.

Today the site of the personal and the social pushes *diversity, not homogeneity, as the new curriculum organizer*. And it is here that students, teachers, families, and communities, interact at the different levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), and at all referenced architectures (Kemmis, Grootenboer, 2008), to grow emotionally, to socialize positively, to learn together, to participate, to share, to engage, to collaborate, to flow, to feel the wellbeing, to become aware, conscious and mindful, from inclusive perspectives and under democratic premises. School contents are always important, but information is wide open. All kind of social agents do have access to it, not only schools, the web, libraries and others. School is important for social interaction and to develop the emotional, social values and others, not anymore to learn subjects. The global determines, but we are cosmopolitan citizens and we live in an open world in which all particularities have a space at the glocal.

School education: an investment in social capital.

Modern school has grown in time and in all geographies. More population is today educated, but school education has not grown so much in their aspirations for social quality, or opening to guarantee new rights for citizenship promotion. Participatory criteria of quality, and social efficiency, are interpreted today outside the educational systems. They are de-contextualized, something which Habermas (2003, 2006) interprets as under functional representation of rationality, not under evolutionary rational criteria. Looking at school education today, globalization has pushed curricular adoption (Fullan, 2001, a). "Top-down" representation relegates school education from its classical journey. That is why, if humans future and the same future of evolution, worldwide, depends on an optimal development of human capital, we have to think in terms of preparing a "social capital" (Putnam, 2000) in a new active and dynamic teaching and learning atmosphere (Fullan, 2001, a, b).

According to Fullan (1992), those professions organized hierarchically, fit in a model of corporate professionalism, just ready to develop individual tasks under no other compromises. As a result, educational orthodoxy is represented through standards, indicators and attainment targets. Modern schooling moves today in such a scenario. Curricular prescriptions give detail of all what under-classed and discredited teachers are to do while the politics of education are delegated: governance not governing (Ball, 2007, 2012). Politicians are just ready to control school education and to reduce costs, while the real meaning of quality education and the content of comparative measurement defined as long ago as two centuries (Hamilton & Zufiaurre, 2014, p. 54) is questioned. The historic meaning of educational professionalization, the public function of schooling, and social and educational inclusion, got lost in the way, once dynamism had moved from the social to economy, from quality of development to auditing (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010) and domination of the capital. Neoliberal politics and new management strategies, have altered the logical interrelations between educational practices and metapractices, while educational administration and policy legislation are intervened. And what underlies, are obscure interests of differentiation.

It is at this point important, the underlying implicits in the network of architectures which define modern school factory, and this is to be urgently done (Kemmis, Wilkinson, Hardy, Edwards-Groves, 2009) at all levels: cultural discursive, social, political, economic... We humans, share the effects of homogenization through globalization and we are forced to share the same language and similar positive references. But in order to prepare the future we also have to share similar practices for the best of our sake. And we can find the light to guide us in positive psychology approaches to educating (Zufiaurre, Albertín, Belletich, 2014), as follows.

Bronfenbrenner inter-related organizational levels.

According to Landsberg, Kruger and Nel (2005, p. 9), the challenge of the education system is to understand the complexity of the influences, interactions and interrelationships, between the individual learner and the numerous other systems connected to the learner. An ecological systems theory, following Bronfenbrenner (1979, p. 21), involves the scientific study of the progressive and mutual accommodation between an active growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives. This process is affected by relations between the settings and by the larger context in which the settings are embedded.

The ecological perspective demonstrates how the overlapping micro-, meso-, exo-, chrono- and macro- systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), are present when educating, and how and in which way the connections of all interactive systems are of significance in explaining the experiences,

attitudes, frustrations, motivation, and others, when being schooled. A *micro-system*, for example, the home, is interwoven with the *meso-system*, such as the school and the school staff, as well as the wider society: *exo-system* as the space for regulations and norms and the *chrono-system* when it is to take account of the external conditionings involved, and of course the *macro-system* which is related to external social, politic and economic values.

All these interrelated systems are important in determining the level of comfort and contentment human beings experience as they go about their lives. The ecological perspective can help to explain differences in the individual's knowledge, skills and abilities, and the contribution of support systems when they take their deal. See at this respect: Bronfenbrenner (1979) / DikelediMahlo (2011) / KaliinashoHaihambo (2010), Swart & Pettipher (2005. p. 11), Donald et al. (2009, p. 42).

The Architectures of Educational Practices.

Organizations, institutions and settings, and the people in them, create practices which have content and a meaning. To change education, involves changing the architectures and the mediating preconditions which prefigure educational practice at one and another level and sequence and at the different stages which shape the educational processes (Schatzki, 2002, p. 18). In the agenda: to orchestrate dynamic connections through participation, and to give form to new ways of working and sharing a professional ethos of making actions *flow, collaboration, awareness, engagement, emotional regulation, mindfulness and wellbeing*.

People within a school: teachers and students, families and principals, construct their practices around particular units of work, and people outside the school: curriculum developers, policy makers, text book writers..., play their roles in shaping the units of work, the pedagogy, and the relationships. From another point of view, educational design is a task which requires knowledge, skills, wisdom, a capacity for analysis and critical reflection. This is how the learning architectures and the practice architectures related to schooling enable and / or constrain the work and the lives of students' and teachers' inside and outside schools.

Practice architectures of schooling refer to the "*social, material and discursive structures that enable and constrain educational practices*" when it is to draw attention to the reality of the teaching and learning practices. Better educational practices require better educators, better schools, better resources, better funding, better supports... And to analyze everything through the lens of *practice architectures*, helps to elicit how everything works, allows clarifying all interrelated perspectives of educational analysis, and contributes to better consciousness.

See at this respect the research developed, from 2006 onwards, by the *Pedagogy, Education & Praxis Group* headed by Kemmis et al. in Charles Sturt University (Australia), working together with professionals of the Universities of Goteborg, Stockholm, Abo Academy, Utrecht, Sheffield, Tromso, National of Bogotá, and the Public University of Navarra; and also: Kemmis (1989); Kemmis&Grootenboer (2008); Kemmis et al. (2009); Schatzki (2002).

The Ecological interrelations in the realm of Practices.

When developing educational processes, the sayings, the doings (Schatzki, 2002), and the relatings (Kemmis&Grootenboer, 2008), compose a particular kind of actions which hang together to give a sense of purpose about how practices work as human social projects of a particular kind. That is, the practices embedded in *practice architectures*, cluster together in relationships with other practices to give a form to "metapractices". In the field of education, following Kemmis, et al (2009, pp. 2-3), these "metapractices" resume to:

- The academic and social practices.
- The innovatory educational practices.
- The metapractices on Initial and Continuing Teacher Education.
- The metapractices of educational policy and administration.
- The metapractices of educational research and evaluation.

To connect practices and metapractices as living things organized in interconnected “ecologies of practices”, traces an *ecological flow* of a *learning community open to collaboration, engagement, awareness, emotional regulation, mindfulness and wellbeing*, all *positive psychological approaches related to how to educate and to what to consider when educating*.

The principles of ecology, sustainability, community..., reference living systems (Capra, 2005, p. 23). Educational practices and ecologies of practices build as such: *connections around networks and nested systems; sustain relations of interdependence; get opened to integrate diversities; are cyclically organised under flows of energy which maintain a dynamic balance, and they both favour and push development for better*. See at this respect the work of Capra (2005), Schatzki (2002), Kemmis, et al (2009).

THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF NATURAL PHENOMENA

If we follow Bronfenbrenner (1979) we have to think and reflect on five interconnected systems: *micro, meso, exochrono and macro*, to inter-relate the organization of school education in their different social scales. But getting immersed into natural phenomena, when it is to reference the organism as a “little whole” to refer to the individual: teacher or student, the *autosystem* can also be considered.

Thinking on educational goals from an evolutionary perspective, it is clear that a part of the system influences the way other parts are interrelated. When it is to find a balance and get equilibrium in a system searching for self-support, distribution and integration are key processes. Socialization is an experience that lasts a lifetime. But educating can be a conservative process, a kind of defense mechanism, if the aim is to adapt children to the social (dominant) system. However, when supplemented by more specific socializing experiences which children can share, social control is not as important as participation, engagement, flow, cooperation, mindfulness ..., and this is something *Positive Psychology* teaches us. If the systems are opened, they tolerate some deviation, and doing so, they provide role opportunities to express, and to figure out, conscious and critical humans while the integrity of the system is not threatened.

Educating in Ecological Contexts.

Parsons (1937) illustrates us about this point. He himself, working on self-regulation, insisted in the interconnections between elements such as: values, goals, functions, and others. He developed the theory of structural functionalism to connect the sufficiency of a society, as a whole, taken into account the basic needs: preservation of the social order, the supply of goods and services, education, socialization and child protection... For Parsons (ibid), these aspects can be called functional prerequisites, and/or requirements of the social system in the sense that they are compatible with other systems, are the support of other systems, have a space of significance, encourage participation, and exercise a form of control over potentially disintegrating behaviors.

To explain how the social systems work (Parsons, 1937) insists on four functional imperatives, or four subsystems: AGIL. The acronyms correspond to what Parsons considered functional imperatives necessary in any system, and these are:

- **A:** Adaptation, subsystem related to behavioral agency. It is to cover all external situations in order to adapt the environment to the real needs.
- **G:** Goal attainment, subsystem related to personality. This deals with the ability to achieve goals
- **I:** Integration, subsystem of the social. It is to regulate the interplay between different components and to monitor the relationships between the other functional requirements: A, G & L
- **L:** Latency, subsystem of the cultural pattern maintenance. A system must provide, maintain and renew the motivation of individuals and the cultural patterns involved.

Following Parsons (1937) argumentation, what characterizes regulated systems, is the order and the interdependence. Both tend towards a balance. Systems can be static and/or enter an ordered process of change. Natural phenomena, when approached in situations of teaching and learning are evolutionary, and evolution, is to be considered a function. Students in learning situations have their own perceptions about natural phenomena (more or less real), and this is to be taken into account when educating. As such, questioning is to be opened in the school processes, and *problem* and *project based teaching and learning* are options to get on forward. Say for example: Why is it like this?; How do you perceive it?; What implications does it have?; What is this related to?; How it fits in what we have to do?; Which developmental premises are involved?; With which consequences?, and so on.

The “Butterfly Effect” when Educating.

Parsons (1937) theory of *structural functionalism*, states that when individuals pursue their own interest, they are serving both, the general and the particular interests. In the field of *Positive Psychology*, this can be understood since the more emotional control an individual has over his/her personal and professional life, the greatest positive impact the society and him, or herself, receives. This idea has a lot to do with the “Butterfly effect”: *a small change can generate a huge change*. This applied to many areas of life, and specifically to education and environmental sciences, opens an evolutionary road to development. The “Butterfly effect”, is linked to mathematical “Chaos theory” and leaves clear that “the slightest variation in the initial conditions of a system leaves not easy prediction about the evolution of the system.”

The “Butterfly Effect”, named after the idea of meteorologist Edward Lorenz (2005), presupposes that, given initial conditions for a given system, the slightest variation in them could cause the system to evolve in completely different ways. Lorenz (ibid), noted that small differences in the input data, something as seemingly simple as using 3 or 6 decimals, carried large differences in the modelling of predictions. Any small disturbance, or error, in the initial conditions of a system can have a large influence in the final result. The so-called “Butterfly effect”, is also a derivation of “*quantum physics*” when teaching us that everything is related to everything and that we are all inter-retro-dependent. The Butterfly Effect, which was identified in 1960 by making weather forecasts, settles clear that systems are dominated by the unpredictability. And once small changes can lead to big changes, behavior cannot be easily predicted. Say as allegorical example that if a butterfly flaps its wings in Hong Kong, it may cause a storm in New York. The “Butterfly effect”, therefore, does not only have a physical interpretation. Learning goes further, and a small gesture of each contributing to knowledge serves to educate and raise concerns which reach many more people. Say that when we are open to develop *Positive Psychology* techniques at school education we have to envisage these techniques and their implications at the different organizational levels to make it work.

Analogies between organizing School Education and Bees Natural habitat.

For the integration of the social system, a set of rules and values are to be internalized in the individuals by the means of which an effective internalization process is to become part of the consciousness as the actors perform it.

If we move from Bronfenbrenner's (1979), Schatzki's (2002), Capra's (2005) and Kemmis et al. (2009) points of view, to the field of ecological interrelations in a closer nature scenario, we could establish an analogy between the different levels of organization in human societies, and the complex social and hierarchical structure of social insects, in which the *case of honeybees*, to take as an example, is very representative. If we consider *the "autosystem"* as the smallest part of a society which has impact on it, we would be referring to a person (student, or teacher) when dealing with school education and/or a single bee in natural contexts. And if the analogy mentioned above works, it is at this level: "the autosystem" when *Positive Psychology* practices could be recommended once *Positive Psychological* practices permeate other systems, and the environment as a whole, around the individual, while magnifying its effect on other individuals. *The Microsystem*, Bronfenbrenner (ibid), quoted as the immediate environment, would be the home of students. And here, the most proximal interactions would take place. This looked from the point of view of our *bees* would represent the cell of the hive, which is used as breeding habitat for workers and drones. At the level of *the Mesosystem*, Bronfenbrenner (ibid), the interrelated systems would correspond to the school, school staff and school context. In the ecological context, getting back to our *bees*, it would be the space of the honeycomb, which is a structure consisting of wax cells, which share common walls built by honeybees to contain their larvae and to couple honey and pollen within the hive. The next level, *the Exosystem*, Bronfenbrenner (ibid), extends to the systems not directly related which draft the norms, space and regulations. This keeps similarities to the rules existing in a beehive where *colonies of bees* live. The colony, as a *group of bees*, interact by exchanging food and other substances necessary for life while performing different activities (defense colony, feeding, breeding, foraging, etc.). Their tasks are distributed among the different stages through which bees pass. Children and youngsters identically, when sharing the teaching and learning processes, perform different activities while framing real contexts of life.

Due to the characteristics of natural mating a *bee colony* is a super family (with a common mother queen). A *bee colony* consists of several subfamilies (with the parent in common and each of the drones mate with the queen). Thus, at one time, there are individuals within the colony (workers) with different degrees of kinship and different work specialization. *The Chronosystem*, Bronfenbrenner (ibid), is subject to the influences of external conditionings which social contexts and school education of course, have to confront. In the ecological analogy with *our bees*, it would correspond to external and uncontrollable situations *bees* suffer, such as in which way the use of neonicotinoids, as synthetic pesticides, do alter the center of the nervous system of insects. When the *worker bees* go out of their hive to collect nectar, the *bees* come into contact with these harmful pesticides and their nervous system is impaired, disorienting the bees and getting to die away from their hive (Polidori and Berruso, 2012). Other possible external influences could be the proliferation of parasitic diseases such as varroa (*Varroa destructor*), or plant diversity around the hive as *bees* produce honey with a flavor depending on the particular type of vegetation *bees* have access to. Another problem that can affect the bee population is the proliferation of Asian predatory wasps (*Vespa velutina*) which is a species of hornet indigenous to South East Asia that has spread to Europe becoming an invasive pest species which settles down in bee colonies or apiaries and specializes in honey bees as their prey (Monceau, Bonnard and Thiéry, 2014). The last but not least system described by Bronfenbrenner (1979), is *the Macrosystem* which includes key socio-economic

structures, values, beliefs and practices, and represents the dominant political rules which exert an influence. The actions taken at this level determine the future of hives and *bees*. If neonicotinoids use does not decrease, and how to combat varroais not investigated, bee numbers will diminish and therefore hives will decrease dramatically.

Likewise, if we continue with monoculture, plant diversity will disappear and also the variety of honey flavors that exist today. Depending on administrative or political decisions, the future of *bees* can be in danger and human food resources which depend on crop diversity will also diminish. This ecological analogy shows how the interactions between the systems quoted by Bronfenbrenner (ibid) happen in nature in one and another complex social structure. *Bees* and every living creature and its closer systems are interconnected and depend on each other. This ecological analogy gives information enough to revise our paths to development related both to natural phenomena and to educating for better.

Schatzki (2002), explores the interrelations between the *Sayings, Doings and Relatings* that shape the actions in every society. When it comes to a global ecological problem such as the loss of crop diversity that causes less pollination and fewer bees (Polidori, 2012), we can reflect on the ecological analogy and compare the cultural discursive (*Sayings*) with the information we get from researchers who have discovered the relationship between the loss of crop diversity and the decrease of the number of bees; the material-economic (*Doings*), with the resources used to solve the problem (limit the crop monoculture and limit the use of neonicotinoids...); the social-political (*Relatings*) with the political and administrative decisions taken to alleviate the situation and solve a serious problem that can lead to the decline of bees, and therefore, pollination decrease and diminishing crop diversity what has a big impact on human food resources.

Continuing with our ecological analogy, Capra's (2005) *Networks and Nested systems* would be consistent with *the Microsystems* Bronfenbrenner (ibid) refers to. The *Microsystems* contain the cells of the beehive which are connected and the becombs. The *Interdependence and Diversity* have a parallel to the *Mesosystem* Bronfenbrenner (ibid), the regulated number of natural hives existing in a natural environment and the interdependence among them, and not less, the diversity of work specialization existing in the hive: queen, drones, workers, some of which are in charge of taking care of the larvae, some of which are in charge of searching for and collecting nectar. The *Cycles and Flows* mentioned by Capra, could be represented by Bronfenbrenner's (ibid) *Exosystem*, and here, we can find explanations of different cycles in nature. For various reasons: varroa, pesticides, monoculture..., the number of insects may get reduced in a time. But there also are *flows or trends*, and when nature regulates itself, the situation may improve, and the number of insects may increase due to other factors.

Capra's *Development* can be explained as a *Chronosystem* (Bronfenbrenner, ibid), which indicates that there may be a chain of animals depending on the number of bees (human beings, bears...) to consume honey. And in economic terms, if there are less bees, there is less honey, and therefore, honey increases its prize. Finally, Capra's *Dynamic Balance* can simulate Bronfenbrenner's (ibid) *Macrosystem*, and it agrees with the fact that nature has evidently the ability to self-regulate. Depending on which circumstances, the meaning changes after some time. This represents that the number of hives may be balanced due to various natural or artificial factors, such as external socio-political and economical decisions, which allow the continuity of a life cycle. The natural environment is a powerful system which *includes all the subsystems* which are explained and related to one another (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), all stages covered by Capra (2005), the interrelations between the *sayings-doings-relatings* Schatzky

(2002) refers to, and Parsons' (1937) four subsystems. But above all, the natural environment and natural phenomena are like mirrors in which educating and developing best practices should be reflected for survival and to find proper ways for self-balance.

POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND POSITIVE PEDAGOGICAL ACTIONS.

Positive Psychology (1) is a discipline concerned about what constitutes the substance for healthy development and welfare. From positive psychological perspectives, at the time of educational intervention welfare and happiness are to be cared. Consequently, what contributes to the development of human beings is to be studied and opportunely balanced. From positive psychological perspectives, the time to deepen on handicaps is over. Strengths and optimal development are to be worked out, and this includes: socio-emotional skills, wellbeing and self-esteem, mindfulness, engagement, good interaction, growth and self-regulation, open participation and a healthy atmosphere of work.

According to Positive Psychology positioning's, we human beings have freedom to grow. And, in our growing processes, we search for our particular orders of life. When we are born, we are equipped with stimulus and are impelled to be active, we are forced to fight for survival and to grow, we have to gain as much useful information as possible, and we are to control our destinies. It is activity what makes us feel alive.

Around positive pedagogic developmental strategies we are to care about: **The order of our body*, what displays when we experience our physic welfare, positive emotions, good health, satisfaction and wellbeing; **The order of understanding*, when we are to reference the world of positive sensations which relate to our perception about what the world is, what life is, what our self-image is, quietness, security, trust, expectancies, are important aspects to consider; **the order of keeping attention* to experience attractive, instructive, and satisfactory things, that is, when we humans *flow* (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993), we trust, we comprehend, we share and enjoy; **the social order*, to experience contexts opened to positive social relations: to have friends and a family, to enjoy and share, to feel good and with a sense of belonging; **the life existential order*, which expands to a context in which our actions have a meaning which makes us experience a sense and feeling of life as a stream of social connections; **the order of success* to transcend our expectations, which is a consequence of the five former orders. It is success what mobilizes optimism to confront the future.

It is easy at this point to search for connections with the five levels of interaction in the realm of metapractices as mentioned by Kemmis et al (2009) and following the logical order as referred in point 2.4, to say: academic, innovatory, professional training, policy and administration, research and evaluation.

However, instead of looking this way, when welfare is to be measured we humans mostly take account of weaknesses and handicaps. There is an overall agreement that what is important is to work on the basis of strengths, but our modern heritage order insists mainly on the basis of deficit. Say for example, at school education, the school climate and atmosphere of work comes to be mostly analyzed from negative perspectives: school failure, difficulties in coordination, multiple tasks to be done, not easy interaction, no cooperation with the families, students' character and lack of cooperation, poor resources, etc. Unluckily, this is something which internationally defined league tables and control based exercises of power in education potentiate.

Positive Psychology can help to define educational intervention.

When thinking on Positive Psychology applications, we aim to promote positive pedagogical actions through positive educational practices, that is to say: *intervene in school improvement, *implicate in developing positive experiences on inclusion, *contribute to the promotion of good interaction, democratic participation and a sustainable atmosphere of work, *develop collective shared aims. From Positive Psychology perspectives, how actions **flow**, under which conditions can flowing be positive, how one another **engage** in a common educational project, are two main aspects to consider in Positive Psychology as architectural premises to guarantee wellbeing, consciousness, emotional regulation, mindfulness, wellbeing, motivation ... in Positive institutions.

An educational cared atmosphere can contribute to: **individual wellbeing* of the teachers, the students and families (especially in small schools where the context is more reliable); helps to create and to strengthen a **positive institutional atmosphere* in which each one trusts the other and in which cooperation is a shared strategy; and being well in a positive space for school work creates better conditions to promote **quality of education*.

If we look at this when we move to the realm of educational practices, how they *seem to work*, how they *really work*, and which *kind of relations* move here and around, theorising and practicing under architectural premises, as defined by Kemmis&Grootenboer (2008): “*practice architectures*” built by humans in and out the organizations, the options which open are that educational practices are to be cared:

* at the *cultural – discursive level*, that is, what is referred by our “*sayings*” in what we mean we feel well because we are in a well-cared atmosphere which makes us feel (in a subjective way) well;

* at the *material & economic level*, that is, what transferred through our “*doings*”, through our actions, or put it another way, through how things work in a positively developing atmosphere in which we all cooperate: teachers, students, families;

**social and political level*, that is, what involves the different gears: “*relatings*” of our practices and metapractices which involve not less than the five interrelations previously mentioned in “point 2.4.”: academic, innovatory, professional training, policy and administration and evaluation levels.

Positive Psychology can help to re-frame the infrastructures to improve education.

From another point of view, if we look at educational intervention from *organizational premises*, following Bronfenbrenner (1979), what it is clear is that to make institutions work positively we have to consider five different stages of interactions at the levels of: *what said, done, and related*. To say: *micro-systems* to reference proximal interactions (peers & class level); *meso-systems* related to an interactive school context (school atmosphere of work); *exo-systems* related to school organization conditionings (what to do and under which inner staff organization); *chrono-systems* related to external conditionings for school organization (in what refers for example to differentiated private and public school conditionings, resources, allocation and others); and *macro-systems* related to school organization under the dominant socio – economic structure, values and beliefs, power and economic regulations.

These five levels interact at the *three architectural gears* from “*bottom-up*”, that is, from the students` to the teachers, staff and families, heads, principals, educational administration ..., and in the opposite direction: “*top-down*” from administration to the students`, and evidently, at the levels of: *what said, done and related*. Of course they can also be referred as *premises of*

Positive Psychology: flow a good strategy, engagement of a condition, mindfulness as a good technique to improve practices, and all at the same time: improve attention, develop consciousness and social abilities, share, motivate, cooperate... Getting to school life and dealing with school practices, these analyses can have a parallel with:

<> Five different aspects which characterize *wellbeing* as we say: *educational aims are to engage to get to compromises for wellbeing. To develop *balance and harmony we have to care about *how to work with satisfaction in a context of positive emotions, *how to promote engagement and developing competences, *how to get sense and meaning to motivation and positive values, and *how to develop positive social relations.*

<> Five different aspects which characterize *positive institutions* at the levels of the *doings: the actions, *to guarantee wellbeing as a goal in education commitment is necessary, and this is related to: *how does teacher training and support work; *how teaching and learning styles are manufactured; *how monitoring and assessment need to work; and *which strengths and values are to be promoted.*

<> Five different aspects which give content to *quality of education*. And this is referenced: **in the cognitive, emotional, physic and relational orders, and is related to *situations in which the students are healthy and motivated, to *processes dependent on confident teachers and active pedagogies, to *relevant selections of curriculum contents, to *contexts supported on evidenced strengths and values.*

At all these levels, *theorizing, acting and referencing* match together, the *architectures* of educational actions interrelate at *the individual, the interpersonal and the social*, linking as such *Positive Psychology to Positive Pedagogies* around teaching and learning positive styles, sharing experiences, engaging, pushing cooperative work forward, developing strategies to experience the emotional, our self-esteem, our strengths, passions...

HOW CAN TEACHERS VALIDATE A POSITIVE SCHOOL ATMOSPHERE.

What can teachers do to organize a scientific approach to work with natural knowledge (2).

When planning school actions, teachers can opt for two different journeys to knowledge acquisition.

The Traditional way:

Which expands from educational regulations and pre-defined text books for teachers to instruct the children, or youngsters. According to this frame, knowledge is something static. *Our bees* will be a part of a school lesson, an effect, or a curious consequence of pollution, or possibly a necessary sequence of evolution. The *macrosystem*, will be quoted under premises of human progress. Nature has the ability to self-regulate and there will be a way to find a new balance.. The *chronosystem* will be justified on scientific reasoning as simple as development. There will always be options to re-orient our trends or paths to development for better in a more profitable way. The *exosystem* will be justified as life cycles for more productivity flowing towards opening spaces for improving quality of life for humans, more profitability and others.

The *mesosystem*, will be justified on the basis of the necessary interdependence of cause and effect laws, when diversity and the diverse adapt to new circumstances. Nature and natural habits cannot condition modern ways to development, and development is guaranteed form intensive and extensive production (say f. ex. with chicken or pigs). If *bees* cannot survive,

there will always be a chemical, or other way, to re-balance the situations, and natural reserves, can always keep diversity protected. The microsystem will be justified as a system of networks, or as inter-related nested systems to keep boys and girls curiosity opened. But it can be done through illustrations, organized exhibitions and museums, visiting natural parks and natural protected spaces, video tapes or CDs on National Geographic and/or Cousteau programs. At the *autosystem* (Parsons, 1937), teachers and students will directly interact through logic conversations and explanations: How it is and how nature is to be controlled for human's benefit? *Whatsaid and sustained* would be justified under this logic, what *done* to work with knowledge identically. It is the only way; we are living better than our ancestors. And *what related*, will be justified on the name of progress and improvement. As humans, we are urbanized.

The social constructivist approach to developing knowledge:

Which is sustained on building up chains to know where we are and how the paths to development have been built, and in which circumstances, all along human history. This journey to knowledge is not based on packaged texts supported on a scientifically biased pre-defined order of evolution. Students, have to find their way to think about where we are and where we go and why. Students have heard about how things are and they are in search for answers to understand better. Things are not lineal, true or not. Things are not just a simple result of proved evidence. Evidence is conditioned by the circumstances of developing. Depending on where we are, in which conditions we live, the interpretations of the facts and evidences can change.

Educating resumes to give answers to children and youngsters questioning, to motivate the search for knowledge what and why, to awaken curiosity, to let things flow to engage, to share, to make efforts for good, to get to compromises, cooperate, collaborate and work together... Children know things and have their interpretations of the facts, perhaps not in the most appropriated scientific version. Children have curiosity and want to know more. They are to wake up to reality as they are to know enough to progress personally and socially in life. And what teachers have to do is to prepare the school scenery to give answers to children's questioning. Teachers are to plan their school actions widely, they have to pre-program what to do clarifying their school and educational projects and aspirations listening to what the students demand, taking account of what is important to be taught at one specific school stage, say Primary, or College, in *our bees* exemplification, considering the information and knowledge they can work with, the resources they have, the information they both, teachers and students, have access to, cooperating with their colleagues to share one or another project. *Project and Problem based teaching and learning*, Zufiaurre&Albertin (2006), Zufiaurre&Albertin (2010) do help us plan school actions interactively.

At the "*autosystem*" (Parsons, 1937), teachers and learners cooperate and interrelate. They both construct their personal and social paths to knowledge. At the "*microsystem*" the interrelated nested systems will build networks of different and shared interpretations. Students will question and discuss openly, they will find information on their own, and the teachers are to frame cooperative paths to get on. Why are bees disappearing?, What happens with pesticides?, What are the effects of diseases such as varroa?, Why is plant and animal diversity so important?, will be some of the queries and questions opened to negotiate joint of different interpretations which will come from the opportune school approaches.

At the "*mesosystem*", the interdependence and diversity of natural phenomena will be analyzed. Students will converge into and will work together in small groups to look for implications of

what is going to be analyzed: *bees disappearing* as a consequence of human intervention in nature, use of pesticides to increase productivity and for economic benefit: what for and for whom, the loose of our natural balance... Students will document, and the teachers are to organize and rule the process of enquire looking for answers and situating the information according to different interpretations better than unifying close answers.

At the “*exosystem*”, the flows and cycles of information will be organized to find explanations. The information prepared at the “*meso*” level, will be at this stage organized to find consequences, to appraise changes in our habitats, to balance risks, to analyze why evolution is being driven in such a way and which can be the trends to improvement, what happens with monoculture, diseases, absence of regulations if there is... Is there a way to change?, or are we entering another cycle of life?. At the “*chronosystem*”, students can be pushed to find answers about what development is, and what it depends from or is related to... There are *no bees*, why?. How does it affect us, or affect to the natural habitat? And the causes and consequences are to be clarified once the cycles of information at the “*exo-level*” have been valued. It is the time for positioning, pros and contra debates, panels with experts to clarify...

At the “*macrosystem*”, pesticides, pollution, and their consequences, are to be settled into the right point and new dynamics for change and for better if possible. And once reached to the point where we are, is it possible to fit things otherwise? Monocultures, pesticides, diseases, contravene what the journey to evolution should be? Can all subsystems be integrated another way: bees and food, cells, beehives and becombs, the process of collecting nectar and the role of bees: queen, drones, workers, and the cyclical organization of the whole, possibilities of self-regulation? Which politic and economic reasoning is on the back stage of the point where we are today? From a *social constructivist* way of raising knowledge as it is, what said and sustained follows a logic of reasoning and balancing positions to confront life; what done is construction, something made together and organized together, and what related is to be analyzed at the light of evidence.

Teachersfeedbackwhen working on a positive frame to illustrate our goals(3).

Teachers thinking about what conditions a positive school work.

For a positive school work, what to care is: * school inner organization, *the adequate provision and distribution of resources, *support services and actions, *inner and out communication at all levels, *appropriated leadership and appropriated school ratios... But teachers are prepared in academic subjects, and not especially ready to consider the emotional and social sides related to the situations of teaching and learning. It is difficult for them to mediate in (specific) situations in which values are involved. To share and participate in social situations, and to flow and get into compromises, is not in the agenda of the teaching profession. They feel that at school real situations, there are not enough appropriated measures for positive intervention.

For the teachers, the students’ implication and participation in learning activities, are not what expected. The students can be ready to participate and can be motivated to work. They engage and share, but they do not find much meaning to what they do. Their perception about the work to be done at school, and their expectations about school work, are not properly balanced. School is not much cared, nor supervised, at the social, at sharing, cooperating, stimulating.

Teachers thinking about the Educational contexts.

Teachers consider that they are pushed progressively to more and different requirements: new Educational regulations, curricular revisions, changes in the organizational levels, changes in the support services, changes in school programs, new materials, new priorities, new projects, more evaluation requirements, fulfilling forms and being required once and again with additional burden of new tasks ...

From the point of view of the teachers, to improve quality as and externally valued dimension is important. For Educational authorities, it is not so much to promote equity, school participation and improvement. In a context of distances between teachers and students, teachers and families, teachers and authorities, school inspectors just control the organization and the resources, while school Principals and Heads try to keep distance from educational authorities and school inspectors and also from the demands of the teachers.

Teachers thinking when aiming to promote a meaningful educational atmosphere.

A good atmosphere of work for the teachers, deals with cooperation while letting people work to make things easy managing flow. Teachers feel external pressures are stressing, and educational management in such a way as disengaging professionals because of extra requirements and pressures. But teachers are motivated and have illusion to cooperate. Teachers trust one another when the work atmosphere is calm, when situations are shared, when there is mutual confidence and reliance.

Frustration emerges when there is pressure for new demands, limitations of space, time and resources, not finding meaning to what is to be done, when there are deficiencies in management and leadership structures while too many pressures towards developing student's competences and skills because of educational requirements, etc. for the teachers, to promote a positive meaningful educational atmosphere presupposes to find a balance between positive emotions, flow, engagement, consciousness, motivation... Emotions make professional experience enjoyable. Working positively and developing relations and wellbeing can match if experience flows to build the journey to awareness, consciousness, collaboration and autonomy.

Teachers' thinking when taking care of the students and their learning processes.

It is the definition of learning goals, self-monitoring, and self-reflection, what provides a sense to what teachers are to do at the different school levels and to attend to the different stimulus. For the teachers, learning and practicing get together with finding a meaning to what teachers do in a context in which they are pushed to share, engage and interact with one another. To care about emotional regulations, motivation, attention, awareness... in teaching and learning situations is positive by itself

For the teachers, students' participation finds a sense, when *it is the case of a *traditional school model* in which the teachers take their deal in developing school activities and actions while taking account of disciplinary contents and evaluation requirements; or when *it is the case of a *constructivist approach version* in which students take their decisions, give a meaning to what they do, discover and question about school and life situations. When caring the conditions of teaching and the atmosphere for a positive work, both models: traditional and constructivist can fit as different styles of doing if shared. The *constructivist approach* to teaching and learning fits in a positive atmosphere of work. And this represents, sharing school projects, developing joint actions, working together, implicating families, caring about a physic, mental, nutritional, environmental development, are important at both: * the *side of the*

cognitive through attention and mindfulness, and * the *side of the emotional* through productive activities and managing a proper balance between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Teachers' thinking about school as a space for interactions and quality development.

Interactions among the students can be empathic and trustworthy at all levels but better in open school areas. Interactions among teachers at interpersonal levels are also empathetic. Teachers trust and like to exchange, better in open schools and better in Infant and Primary levels than at Secondary levels. When confronting the work to be done, and when coordinating, moving to dialogue and compromise, conflicts can emerge however. They are not much satisfied with the situation they live today in a context of scarcity and liberalization which affects welfare, social services, education and teachers work. But when there is academic interaction, emotionally and socially cared, they organize better in affinity groups.

Referencing interaction with the families, there is certain ambivalence. At work levels, interactions are not functional. Teachers feel that families push for more demands and consider the teachers are responsible of everything which is not good enough. The inner levels of organization: Heads, Principals, and others, and the pre-defined institutional level(Educational authorities, and others), seem not to be responsible of the difficulties, the mistakes and the problems. For the teachers, the institutional level, the structural and organizational deficiencies, the shortage of time, bureaucracy..., is what fails most. However, when it is the case that education improves, teachers are forgotten and institutions appear as having done their best.

When getting into quality requirements, different initiatives develop in the different schools. But there are not systematic open programs to deal with the emotional development of the students` and the teachers`, and teachers feel there is a need of new tools to deal with the social and the emotional aspects. Academic organization, work tasks and duties..., push teachers to stressful situations, to be tired and anxious. The lack of times and spaces, the lack of human and material resources, the scarcity of support for positive actions at schools, is something teachers accuse and would like to improve. And the demand, specific training on positive psychology and emotional regulation to promote development.

NOTES

- 1) The POSITIVITIES E.U. Project: **APPLIED POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY FOR EUROPEAN SCHOOLS**. Comenius Multilateral Project 2012 / 527545-LLP-1-2012-1-ES-COMENIUS-CMP ,after two years of development, has allowed us to intervene in school improvement. The partners of the *PositivitiES Project*: E. U. Project: the Public University of Navarra, the University of Aarhus, the University DegliStudi di Milano, and Fluir Foundation, the twenty five *Infant, Primary, and Compulsory Secondary schools involved*, and more than 260 teachers participating in Navarra in the PositivitiES Project along the academic years: 2012–2013 and 2013-2014, have given us enough feedback about how to work in education for better.
- 2) These experiences have been worked out as a sample with students from 10 to 12 years.
- 3) From our **PositivitiES** experience what becomes clear, is that teachers do really desire to build a healthy school atmosphere, want to share a positive context for work, want to cooperate, and are enthusiastic about positive actions at school, while families and students cooperate. That is why we want to expand positive experiences for educators to think about.

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