Tell-tale stories about a dissertation: teaching and research as human activities

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This thesis is dedicated to my Mother

Rosario Talavera Ávila

Abstract

This dissertation is about two processes of construction. The construction of a method of research that tells how writing can become a method for investigation; and the construction of teaching as a dialogical, ethical and political process. The dissertation introduces the ideas of teaching and researching as human activities; as "ways of being" more than simply methods and techniques; as personal and collective processes of transformation; and as ethical processes. It also presents an example of teaching as one that assumes that we learn more than content, where we learn to relate, to express, to be and to dialogue together. And finally, it presents forms of research in which one talks about possibilities; truths as ways of being; and truths that are invitations to doubt, to enjoy and appreciate life.

The document is divided in five chapters. The first is about the context of this particular research. It introduces the researcher as knower and writer, the participants, and programmes and places. The second is a narrative about the crafting process of a research method. The third chapter is an extensive description of the teaching process. The fourth includes a new perspective about the teaching process from both theory and participants' experiences. The fifth is the introduction to a philosophy of life for teaching and research.

Content

Chapter 1

Context for a Creative Process

Introduction – Multiple Forms of Knowing

As human beings, we have many forms of knowing: very sensorial ones such as tasting, touching, smelling, hearing; others are more emotional and intuitive such as feelings of disconfirmation, security, excitement, anticipation; others are more rational, deducting and inducting through analysing different situations and comparing them. All of these forms of knowing can be more or less systematic or fortuitous.

Often, however, rational and systematic forms of knowing may be privileged in professional and scientific contexts. In many ways, these contexts may assume that generating good and valid knowledge requires special and controlled conditions. Despite the important differences between diverse rational, and systematic procedures, phenomenological and positivistic forms of research as examples, they tend to share the idea that research design provides a framework that allows the knower to create specific conditions in order to generate knowledge.

From this perspective, planning and designing the research process gives us a structure and a group of steps by which to proceed. At the same time, this structure often tells us how we must see and what we must do when we investigate.

This dissertation is a kind of bridge, among sensorial, emotional and rational ways of knowing. Sensorial, influenced by voices and inner conversations, smells of places, sight of landscapes and rooms. Emotional, my research is guided by my intuition, comfort

feelings and agreement with myself and others during my writing. Rational, along the process of reflection of students' writings I develop a systematic process, without a predetermined steps or sequence of analysis but at the end of the day, is a way of systematise.

In this chapter, I describe the context of what I refer to as a "creative process". I introduce some aspects that include circumstances, interests, preferences, and assumptions that are important to contextualize and frame the creative process that is described in chapter 2.

Contextualizing the creative process that emerged in my research means that I must do my best to include most of the things that are "relevant" during the process, omitting many of the things that are present but could look "excessively irrelevant" like moments during the writing when I comb my hair or polish my nails, and during the classes when students ask for permission to leave class, and when there are incidental interruptions and whispering. The "relevant" things include: myself as knower and writer, the context of teaching, the importance of studying a PhD, the writing process, the philosophical context, everyday life as something extraordinary, where I teach and who are the participants, among other aspects.

Contextualizing

Myself as a knower, researcher and writer. My conditions, situations and experiences of life open possibilities to see and to live life in a certain way. Through my experiences, I can see, appreciate, value and love many things. At the same time, I cannot see, appreciate, value and love many others. Those are part of my bias and preferences, and my dots of blindness about realities, world and life.

As a human being, my conditions of life change day by day, month by month, year by year, and along with these changes come changes in my dreams, plans, wishes, loves, passions, ideas and problems. That means I am alive, as my relations are interactions and responses to life. My teaching reality as part of this life shares preferences and blindnesses in a very dynamic interaction. Unfortunately, this writing could never include all aspects completely.

I want to think and act starting with the idea that research-creating knowledge is a human activity, that researcher-knowers are people who breath, eat, cry and love. All these and more are present during life and research. Emphasizing these (apparently) irrelevant and trivial everyday events is my way to contextualize, humanise and personalise this writing. I am attempting to underline how they are part of the construction of reality and knowledge in my research. I think that it is a way to describe research as a multifaceted process influenced by life rather than (in the traditional sense) a pure, clean and free-of-influence one.

This document, developed in an academic context, is part of a professional activity. It has institutional support and is a formal work, thus implying that it is not only the

result of a whim, but it is also part of a genuine interest to learn. It is based on my teaching

practice which I do not yet understand, and of which I would like to have a kind of

understanding in order to act more appropriately towards it, as well as to contribute with

some reflections and ideas about teaching and methodology to the field.

As a human activity, this writing is being created wherever I go. Some places are

part of my everyday life like my home and university offices. Some are part of academic or

work trips (Las Palapas Hotel in Playa del Carmen and Hacienda la Noria Hotel in Oaxaca)

and some more are places where I intentionally organize a retreat to work on my

dissertation (Valladolid and Uxmal Maya Resort Hotel). Why is it important to say this? It

is important to mention it because research is not only a product of someone working in a

laboratory or an office and, of course, you are a more inspired writer when you can smell

the sea, feel the breeze or when you can see the Mayan Archaeological sites like Uxmal in

the landscape.

I take seriously the idea of research as an everyday life activity. To me, this means it

is part of the other things I do. I am a teenager's mother, the third sister of seven, a teacher,

a therapist, among others. I organize my daily activities among home, university, friends

and family. Since September 2011, this Ph.D. dissertation has also been an everyday life

occurrence that demands time, attention and intellectual, economical and physical effort. I

have not stopped my daily life to do my dissertation. I made it part of my daily life. It is

about my teaching practices. Although the topic or topics of each course are important, they

are not the focus of this research. My main interest is about dialogical, transformational,

ethical and political processes immersed into my relationship with my students when we

are together.

Paraphrasing Brinkman (2012), the researcher's experience of something ordinary or strange is interesting. Although, her everyday life might not be interesting to everyone, as it is to her, given her personal background and experiences, and also her theoretical readings that have sensitised her to certain phenomena rather than others. However, to me this means that I do not have to invent a project of research. I do not have to necessarily move to another space or reality or environment to have something to investigate. I just have to be aware about the interesting occurrences in my everyday teaching and make the most of it to explore, to learn and maybe to have some understanding. Perhaps I can use this new understanding to act differently. Whether this research is published or not, it could be of interest to others and, hopefully, I could use my reflections to try to change my ways of teaching, researching and living.

Enacted and social reality. First, I am going to refer to enacted reality as Mol (2002, 2008) suggests: "Subjects and objects are frame as part of events that occur and plays that are staged. If an object is real, this is because it is part of a practice". From her idea, enactment is a continuing practice of crafting. Law (2004), quoting Latour and Woolgar, implies that the continuing crafting is made by people, and more often in a combination of people, techniques, texts, architectural arrangements, and natural phenomena, which are themselves being enacted and re-enacted. Law adds that if we attend to practice and to objects, we may find that no objects are ever routinized into a reified solidity. And if things seem solid, prior, independent, definite and single, then perhaps it is because they are being enacted and re-enacted, and re-enacted in practices (practices that continue and practices that are also multiple).

On the other hand, there is a very extensive discussion about what is 'social' (Latour, B. 2005; Law, J. 2004; Brinkmann, S. 2012; Jacobsen, M. 2009; Strum, S. and Latour, B. 1987; Searle, J. 1995). I use 'social' as Latour (2005, 46-47) describes it: "We simply mean that we are dealing with a routine state of affairs whose binding together is the crucial aspect", emphasising that "we are not alone in the world; when we act, someone else act, and many agents are also present; action is not done under the full control of consciousness; action should rather be felt as a conglomerate of many surprising sets of agencies". Nevertheless, in terms of research, it can help us to make the choices and actions more visible.

When I say 'enacted and social reality', I refer to a way to denote everyday life in the classroom. It is all the things that happen every day in my relation with students when we are together, depending on our expectations, interests and personal agendas; all the objectives that we need to achieve according to the academic programmes and the specific topics; the different types of conversations that can be created, generated by issues, actions and contributions of all the participants; the spontaneous and unpredictable responses of all participants; the very active reflecting process in which we always participate; and the institutional requirements that the students and I have to follow. All these practices are part of my own learning process and work as a professional.

Given that teaching as a piece of everyday life involves many things, as I describe above, it is clear that I have to choose what is relevant and what is irrelevant for this document. In spite of all this complexity, I only consider some aspects of these topics. For now, it is important to say that I select and emphasize aspects related mainly with expectations, interests and personal agendas of participants, and some kind of interactions

and participants' contributions. I leave aside all the parts related with institutional requirements and academic programmes; spontaneous and unpredictable interactions and social discourses.

What is remaining? I could say a fake version of my teaching. Saying this in another way, it could be a "purified" and "reinvented" version of this experience of teaching that I share in a specific time with specific people, and I am sure it is not repeatable.

The description presented forward is full of omissions, which make it looks as something clear, organized, continuous; that is, without any interruptions or any kind of unexpected occurrences - totally planned and controlled.

My desire to study a doctorate. My interest in the doctorate in social science is a very important aspect of this context. For me, it is the best motive for thinking and reflecting on my teaching, constructing a new perspective and learning more about what my students and I are doing together. The doctorate is the most formal excuse to write and learn about my work as a teacher.

As part of my practice, I always have some questions in terms of the expectations of the course in my mind. What I mean is, though I frequently talk with my students about our participation and contribution to the class, I have my own inner dialogue about them, and setting this dialogue within my doctorate programme, I think, gives it new perspective and will allow me to construct a kind of organization and new learning and meaning.

The written reality. The Taos Institute Ph.D. Programme, in the section of information for students suggests (2011):

"…the major requirement for the PhD degree is the <u>writing</u> of a book length dissertation, composed of original research and reflection. There is no standard format for the form and <u>writing</u> of a dissertation. A large range of styles and formats is permitted. The dissertation must be in <u>writing</u>; films, websites, DVDs, and the like do not fulfil the requirement… Thus, students are encouraged to <u>write</u> in such a way that professional peers can access and make use of their work"

I underlined the word "writing" because, for me, it has very important implications in my research. To write a text, whether in the form of articles, books, dissertations, etcetera is, in general, a major product of science. But, what is a text? A text is a narrative. It is a construction. It is not a representation of reality. It is a different reality, a written reality about something that says something about the other one.

Writing a text about my "embodied and social reality of teaching" means a way to construct a new reality, a new experience about teaching processes. That means, as well, that this written dissertation is not a representation or an exact description of it.

It is important to me to emphasise that this written document is in my second language, it is very influenced by my ability (or lack of it) to express myself, to organize a text that includes my own and others' ideas.

The philosophical context. The philosophical context includes the principles and assumptions that guide and orient my practices and my life. Here, I introduce briefly some ideas; I develop them more in chapter 4.

I can organize them around four branches: teaching as a socially constructed, transformational, political, and ethical process.

Socially constructed process. I want to describe my teaching practices as an approach to teaching, rather than a step-ordered methodology, theory, or set of techniques. This approach is influenced by ideas related with social construction like learning communities and collaborative practices from Harlene Anderson (1997), reflecting teams from Tomm Andersen (1991), and social poetics methods from John Shotter and Arlene Katz (2007), among others.

In very general terms, as Gergen (2001) suggests, and I agree, that we live in worlds of meaning. That means we understand and value the world and ourselves in ways that emerge from our personal history and shared culture. Worlds of meaning are intimately related to action. We act largely in terms of what we interpret to be real, rational, satisfying, and good; without meaning there would be little worth doing. Worlds of meaning are constructed within relationships; what we take to be real and rational is born in relationships. Without relationship there would be no meaning. New worlds of meaning are always possible. We are not possessed or determined by the past. We may abandon or dissolve dysfunctional ways of life, and together create alternatives. To sustain what is valuable or to create new futures requires participation in relationships. If we damage or destroy relations, we lose the capacity to sustain a way of life and to create new futures. When worlds of meaning intersect, creative outcomes may occur; new forms of relating, new realities, and new possibilities may all emerge.

This social constructionist approach includes a very wide group of perspectives where there is a place for ideas related with collaborative learning communities. In that kind of community, it is very important, as Anderson (1998) says, to "connect, collaborate and construct"; and it is also important that "students and teachers develop relationships

that invite jointly to create knowledge. Knowledge means what is new and unique to each participant. It is not imparted by another or a knower who bestows on a not-knower. Rather, knowledge is fluid and communal, yet personalized" (p. 67).

At this moment, I want to emphasize two ideas about the reflecting process based on Andersen's (2006) work. First, it is related with his work as a communal enterprise, as networks talking to networks. I think that teaching is a communal process; it is a network of people interacting in language. As Andersen says, there are many kinds of languages, talking, writing, painting, dancing, singing, pointing, crying, laughing, screaming, hitting, etcetera; they are all bodily activities (Hoffman, 2007 p. 13). Second, it is about Andersen's question, "how can we help people to talk with themselves and others in a way that they could not do before?" In the teaching context, this question helps me to think how I can help students to talk with the teacher and their classmates in a way that they could not do before? This question is how to stimulate, promote and challenge creativity, flexibility and openness to participants.

The central idea about social poetic that influences my teaching is related with the "poetic style". In the teaching context, using Shotter and Katz (2007) words: "poetic style exerts its influence on us not by depicting a true state of affairs to us in our thought, but by moving or striking us in such a way that we come to grasp or see something in our surrounding that we have not seen before, not cognitively but perceptually, not because it has been hidden from us, but because we have lacked the sensibility to be responsive to what has always lain unhidden before us. Under this influence, we can achieve that kind of understanding which consists in seeing connections… creating occasions in which (I say)

"participants" must creatively complete, not logically but dialogically, the process of understanding" (p 30).

In addition, McNamee (2000) says, to talk about the poetic is "to give wing to the imaginative". It is to "express oneself" in words that are "thoughtful." It is to script a sense of "beauty." Freedom is also related to the poetic, from the constraints of traditional forms of practice. One is urged, in employing the poetic, to suspend the discourse of "fact" or "form" and invite, instead, to engage in improvisation (literally, "working without a plan").

Transformational process. My teaching experiences are focused on face to face encounters. In general, I am not teaching in virtual spaces. That means that teacher and students are present in all the things that happen in the classroom. This presence is the opportunity to create a space for shared inquiry that involves dialogical process and spaces.

Dialogical space refers to room in one's thoughts to entertain multiple ideas, beliefs and opinions. It is critical to the development of a generative process that promotes fluid, shifting ideas and actions (Anderson, 1997, p. 112).

In the teaching context, this kind of space can allow conversations that the students cannot have in their ordinary life, where the teacher's ability is to create and maintain a dialogical space wherein they can access a wide range of possibilities. In that sense, topics, content, knowledge and stories can be narrated, discussed in ways that provide opportunities of transformation - transformations of the narratives and selves.

Political process. In my perspective, teaching as a political process means the institutional and personal intentions and assumptions in the classroom, the role of each participant and

their position in the relationships, as well as the ways in which teacher and students use language to talk about knowledge, reality, contents, relationships and processes.

Institutional and teacher's intentions and assumptions are not necessary the same. As a teacher, I follow general guidelines of the institutions but I have a very critical and reflective position about educational ideologies. That does not mean that I disobey the rules, I just have some questions that I ask about institutional philosophies or principles, related sometimes with how we reproduce the cultural ideologies in universities, how we assume that some kind of knowledge is the truth, and how I understand teaching and learning processes and the participation of teachers and students in them.

Traditional perspectives of teaching talk about teachers' and students' relationships as hierarchical. This organization dictates clearly what the role and position of each participant is. It recognises the teacher as the expert full of knowledge, very active in his/her activities, trying to capture the student's attention. On the other hand, it recognises the student as an observer, empty of knowledge in a passive attitude to learn, someone who needs to be motivated to learn and participate. That perspective gives the teacher a power to control and to decide all the arrangements about teaching (content, activities, assessments, etcetera), and the student simply has to follow them.

In my experience as a teacher, I think we can shift the power dynamics within the classroom to create a more collaborative and participative processes. Here, we create a space that questions traditional perspectives of teaching, and those questions have political implications in the classroom and institutions.

John Law (2004) argues about research methods; they do not just describe social realities, but also help to create them. (pp. 7, 10). In the context of teaching as a political process, they do the same and this raises the question of what kind of social realities (through language and the content of learning) we want to create. In that sense, it is relevant to emphasise how we talk in the classroom. In what ways do we describe or present topics? The ways in which we talk in the classroom interfere with the world that we create, in one way or another; they always make a difference, politically and in any other way. Things change as a result.

Addelson (1994, p. 10) talks about research, but I connect it with teaching. Teaching, like research, is not just a set of techniques, it is not just a philosophy of method, a methodology. It is also, and most fundamentally, about a way of being. It is about what kind of teaching we want to practise. And then, and as a part of this, it is about the kind of people that we want to be, and about how we should be. Teaching goes with work, and ways of working, and ways of being. I would like to work as happily, creatively and generously as possible in the classroom.

Ethical process. To be in a classroom, sharing time, space, conversations and relationship with people-students implies a very important human contact to me. It is life, interchange and who we are when we are together. Every human contact brings different kinds of compromises, depending on whether it is profound or superficial, and also depending upon the circumstances, the intentions, who is participating and the language we use to talk and relate to each other. In that sense, I want to introduce the notion of ethical processes into the teaching process. Here, I extend Swim, Wulff and St. George's description of the

therapeutic process where they consider ethics to be the respectful and meaningful interpersonal space between client and therapist (2001, p. 15). I say, teacher and student.

Ethical processes represent the collaborative efforts and decision of client and therapist (I add teachers and students). They mutually set the tone and agenda for their learning process. The guiding premise within ethical processes is the co-creation of an ethic that occurs within relational opportunities, where participants collaborate on ethical conjoint actions (Swim, Wulff and St. George, 2001, p. 15).

This collaborative effort, as part of an ethical process, has a very important influence in how I invite students to participate and work together in the classroom and in the way that they want to be there, as well as the way they respond to my invitation.

Making the ordinary extraordinary. According to Ferguson (2009), the everyday in a literal sense refers to a host of routine activities, private and public, carried out on a regular, if not actual, daily basis, such as eating, sleeping, working, commuting, shopping and so on (p. 164).

Within a traditional scientific approach, everyday life looks like something mundane and uninteresting, not worthy of research. You have to choose the phenomenon you want to study very carefully and wrap it in very elegant language that helps you, as a researcher, justify your phenomenon as something exceptional and worthy of study, as something attractive and interesting enough to be supported and sometimes financed. Most of the time, universities, governments or other institutions support social research that advances their own invested interests. In such cases, relevant research might be focused on accessible and convenient phenomenon, topics and realities. Probably this is one of the

reasons many students and practitioners complain about the ill fit between scientific social research and reality. They do not have much to do with each other when their utility and interests are only directed at supporters (funders), some government agencies, and their temporal social programmes.

On the other hand, scientific research as a profession gives the professional a very high social status. You are not a simply a person, you are a scientist. As a scientist, you cannot focus on mundane and uninteresting topics. You must study relevant and important aspects of reality looking for a kind of truth. To many scientists, reality and everyday life are different and they belong to different categories of interest. In that way, scientific action is a very special kind of activity. It is activity reserved for scientists, not ordinary people, in spite of the fact that research is a human and daily activity.

From my perspective, research as an everyday activity is more than a focus on quotidian events and a series of steps that are needed to carry out a research project. Research as an everyday activity is a way to honour and enjoy life, to appreciate poetic moments, to be creative and aware of surprises, exceptional events and wonders. It is a way to make the ordinary extraordinary.

Taking notes as a habit. I have the habit to take notes. That means I always have a notebook with me. It is where I write my class design, interesting experiences that I live, some phrases and students' thoughts, ideas about my work and whatever I want to remember. Since I applied to my PhD, I have had a special "PhD notebook" where I write all the new ideas that can be useful to my dissertation. In it, I have some of my advisor's

suggestions, book's titles, quotes to remember, dispersed thoughts, diagrams, outlines, etcetera.

The main purpose of my notebook is to help me organize my ideas; I always express my thoughts with words, drawings, and scrawling writing.

Where I teach and programmes. I have worked as a teacher for more than 10 years in different Higher Education Institutions. I have been teaching in undergraduate and postgraduate programmes on a very wide range of subjects, including Personality Theories, Development Psychology, Ethics, Postmodern Therapies, Clinical Intervention, Human Sexuality, Clinical Supervision, and other topics.

Through those years, my practices have been framed by institutional requirements and programmes. They have given me guidelines about what and when I have to teach, and some suggestions about "how" to teach.

In general, I have academic freedom; that allows me to emphasize the importance of process and content during the classes. At the beginning of each course, I invite the students to have this in mind, and along the course, we talk about it on several occasions.

For practical reasons, I have to choose a place, a programme and groups to focus my research. When I formally started my research, September 2011, I was teaching in a public university, both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and in three private universities, only postgraduate programmes. Considering the time I spent with every group, the organization of the semester and availability of the courses, I decided to consider only undergraduate programmes. Let me write something more about the public University, time, organization and availability.

I am a part-time teacher in the only Public University in my city (Merida, Yucatan, Mexico). I have taught in the Faculty of Psychology since 2000. There are many other Universities, but all of them are private. There are more than twenty that offer Psychology as a professional career. These programs take five years to complete. When a student finishes these studies, s/he has the Bachelor's degree and can work as a psychologist in whatever area s/he wants because s/he has a licence. The Public University is the most important and recognized in the southeast of the country. It offers forty-five different undergraduate programmes, twenty-five master's programmes, and three doctorates. Its Faculty of Psychology offers an undergraduate programme (in Psychology) and a postgraduate programme (in Applied Psychology). There is an average of 600 students, including under and postgraduate programmes.

In relation to time, I spend most of my work-time there. I teach between twelve and sixteen hours every week, combining undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Every course is between forty and sixty hours, divided into fifteen weeks; that is the duration of the course that we call a semester. That means that I stay with each group and class four hours every week on average for fifteen weeks.

As a teacher, I have freedom to organise my class. The only condition is to follow and review the totality of the contents on time. I design a proposal of course content organization and present it to the group at the beginning of each semester. I am going to describe this with more details below.

In August 2011, authorities assigned me to teach Personality Theories in the undergraduate programme. The programme's content is very long and completely

theoretical. It is sixty hours in duration and includes twenty two different personality theories organized by nine different approaches.

Who are we? The actors. Latour (2005) describes an actor as one who is made to act by many others; the moving target of a vast array of entities swarming toward it.

I am the common person within the three groups, not the only one, even they share some other teachers. That meant that I had seventy-two students as potential collaborators in my research, divided into three groups: Group A with twenty-eight students (eight men and twenty women), Group B with twenty-three students (six men and seventeen women), and Group C with twenty-one students (seven men and fourteen women).

Just to emphasise, the reason I chose these groups and classes is practical-- they were available.

Actors as participants all do something and do not just sit there. Each of us has a very active part; whatever our personal interest, motivations and conditions of life are, we share a space, a time and some academic objectives.

The result. The result of this writing process is the articulation of a new reality about methodology, teaching and learning. Whether I like it or not, it can be read in a traditional form; that is, it can be understood as "definitive results" of my research and thus, a sort of "truth" about them. However, the position I adopt in this thesis is that the ideas presented here are only one of many possible interpretations of my teaching practice and methodology and they are the by-product of the theory I use to make sense and to describe my work, my imagination and memories and my clumsy ability to write in English.

Chapter 2

Crafting a Creative Process

Now I would like to focus on the creative process per se. I organized my actions and reflections in a particular way such that, at the end of the day, the Creative process itself can be seen as my Research Methodology. This method of creation can be considered as a set of rules and procedures that guided my work; but actually it is a set of understandings that support it. All these features emerge during and through the writing and reflecting about my research process.

This chapter is divided into three branches. The first one is about the construction of my methodological framework and some concerns I have about traditional research. The second introduces the idea of writing as a method of research, which helps me to make evident how I know and what my position as a writer and teller is. The third is about crafting the creative process.

Branch one: The construction of a method

In my effort to make the process of crafting a creative process evident, I developed a methodological framework. In my first step, I raise questions: How to construct a method for my research? From which perspective do I want to write about my work? What is my research and what is it not? Where am I? What do I want?

The dictionary of Real Academia Española (2013) defines *method* as an organized way to say and do something; a way to proceed, and a habit or custom that someone has or obeys; it is a procedure that science follows to find the truth and show it.

In this sense, a method is a system for offering some guarantees, it hopes to guide us more or less securely to our destination, limiting the risks of distraction along the way; it may allow us to learn that particular hypotheses are wrong and that particular methods can fail; a method is taken as a provisionally secure framework.

In a traditional perspective, this idea about method gives security, certainty, controlled doubts. But, in my case, this confidence is deceitful; it makes me believe that I have the right way, but something in me is dissatisfied. Conventional research methods create some kinds of realities, dictating to the researcher specific ways to work. Traditions have naturalized these methods; we have assumed that they are the only ones and the true ones. Implicit is the idea that the world is properly to be understood as a set of fairly specific, determinate, and more or less identifiable processes (Law, 2004, p. 5).

My uncomfortable feelings, accompanied by reading about methodology (Law, 2004; LeCompte & Preissler, 2003; Bryman, 2004; Yin, 2003; Marshall & Rossman, 2006), make some concerns that are important to deal with emerge. First, I must deal with beliefs about the nature of the relationship between theory, research and the social world (social reality). In particular, I must consider whether theory guides research deductively, coming to know social reality, whether research inductively generates theory and knowledge about social worlds, or whether theory and research together, as linguistic and relational human processes, create a new reality about the world. Second, I must take into account whether or not a scientific model of the research process is suitable for the study of my teaching practice as part of social worlds and whether I make the model of science suitable to a social reality. Third, I must weigh whether the social world is regarded as something external to social actors; whether it is something that people are in the process of

fashioning together through relationships and language. Finally, I must consider the ways in which practical considerations also affect social research.

First Concern: Beliefs about the nature of the relationship between theory, research and the social world. According to LeCompe & Preissle (2003) who suggest three different ways of knowing and inquiring in research, there are Positivist approaches, Interpretive approaches and Critical approaches (p. 24). I think it is very important to establish differences among them with the intention of giving direction to my first concern, and as part of the set of assumptions that support my research writing and some of my decisions concerning how to proceed.

LeCompe and Preissle explain that within Positivist Approaches, the researcher's stand is detached and objective; the role of those researched is as passive informants. A very clear and structured procedure (definition of terms by researcher, classification / codification by researcher, enumeration, correlation, verification and prediction) is indicated. The main goals are generalization of results to subsequent similar events and phenomena and development of universal laws which govern human behaviour in all settings. The concern is about the self as defined by society and social structure (e.g. what is happening outside individuals). The way to proceed is modelled after the study of the physical universe where the control of behaviour is central. Positivist approaches agree that the origin of knowledge is deduced from laws or theoretical statements, from experiences, and their focus is observable behaviour, measurement and quantifications, controlling variance and bias.

On the other hand, Interpretative Approaches assume the researcher's role as involved and subjective whereas the role of those researched is as active collaborators. There is a clear and organized way to proceed (definition of terms by subject, classification/codification by researcher, subject to member check, enumeration, correlation/association, interpretation by researcher in conjunction with subject, communication between researcher and subject). The goal is to compare results to similar and dissimilar processes and phenomena, and develop a workable and shared understanding regarding regularities in human behaviour in specific settings. The concern is about society/form/social structure as defined by the self (e.g. what is happening within and between individuals). The aim is to achieve understanding of behaviour by analysis of social interaction, meaning and communication. The origin of knowledge comes from shared understandings, negotiation, historical and social context and the focus is to elicit meanings for observed behaviour, intersubjective understanding, explaining the variance and bias.

Finally, Critical Approaches consider the role of researcher as educative, analytic and transformative. The researcher is as an active teacher/learner. The role of those researched is educative, collaborative and active. Clear and organized procedures are important (definitions of terms by researcher and subject, classification/codification by researcher and subject to member/check, enumeration, correlation/association, interpretation by researcher in conjunction with subject, communication by researcher, and action/transformation by researcher and subject). The goals are analysis of results to unmask inequities in processes and phenomena and develop emancipatory stances toward determinants of human behaviour. The concern is about the self as defined by the structure

of domination (e.g. what is happening within and between individuals as a consequence of their given material and historical conditions). The goal is to achieve change in structure and behaviour by exposing hidden patterns of meaning, communication and control. The assumption is that there is differential access to knowledge regarding historical context and political, economic and social conditions. The focus is on structural asymmetries, critical consciousness, hidden meaning and assumptions, patterns of oppression, exposing variance and bias.

Making the most of LeCompe & Preissle's approach, let me consider my discomfort using these ways of knowing to make sense. I know that my discomfort could be related to my over-stereotyped ideas about methodologies. But, in general terms, I have a lot of doubt about pure methodology and whatever science perspective I decide to use. This means that I am making certain assumptions about the nature of social reality.

My disquiet with Positivistic Approaches, both deductive and inductive is, in general, about the role of those researched and the researcher. Specifically, I am concerned about the structured procedure, goals, concerns and ways a positivist researcher is expected to proceed. Furthermore, I am concerned about the positivist perspective about the origin of knowledge and the focus on measurement, quantifications and control of variance and bias. Altogether, these requirements do not make sense to my way of proceeding and the kind of relationship that I want to develop; this is a perspective very distant to my research.

On the other hand, I feel partially comfortable with Interpretative Approaches. I assume that the researcher is involved and that those researched (subject/participant) are active collaborators and their concerns are understood. Yet, I am uncomfortable with their

organized way to proceed and their goals and perspectives concerning the origins of knowledge.

Critical Approaches partially fit with my point of view about research and teaching. The researcher as teacher and learner as well as the focus on exposing variance and bias is consistent with my own approach. The procedures of Critical Approaches - their goal of analysing results to unmask inequities, their concern about self as defined by a structure of domination, and their ideas about origin of knowledge - do not fit with my research.

In general, no one of these three approaches per se helps me to make meaning. I need something different that considers more clearly my standpoint as an active collaborator because I think we are, on one hand, co-creators no matter what we do together. I am in the process of writing this document and responding to the collected experiences of my students, constructing a new reality. In both aspects (theory and research processes), all participants together are creating new and different realities, and we are all part of linguistic and relational human processes. On the other hand, in spite of the fact that I am going to include political issues, I do not have the unmasking of inequities or structures of domination as part of my intention.

Second concern: Is the scientific model of the research process suitable for the study of my teaching practice. Facing my second concern, I think that my own process spontaneously guides every step. I did not begin planning and creating a research model to investigate my teaching practice as part of a social world. Actually, I was already, and now I continue, teaching and it was not until this moment that I begin to construct a research example to fit it. Any scientific model is suitable to my research; but, I am looking for

theory and methodology that make sense to my work as a teacher and as a researcher of these processes. I am looking for method that makes me feel comfortable and happy in the course of research and teaching, and shows my commitment with people's experiences and my writing, otherwise I would betray them and myself.

Third concern: Is the social world regarded as something external to social actors or is it something that people are in the process of fashioning together through relationships and language. About my third concern, teaching practice as a social world is not something external to participants. Students and teacher are part of it; actually, we are it. Teaching practice does not exist without people interacting, relating and communicating with each other. All participants are in the process of shaping relationships and meanings of our social reality. On the other hand, the process of writing this document is only another way to create written social reality. The interaction, is through texts; both the social world and the written world, according to Law (2004), are being crafted, perhaps shaping, giving form or influenced by myself and the other participants (p 54).

Fourth Concern: In what ways do practical considerations affect social research. Practical issues are a central part of my last concern. Actually, they are part of the process of acting and writing. Alan Bryman (2004) takes into account the importance of practical considerations of research. I agree with him when he claims that practical considerations may seem rather mundane and uninteresting compared with the lofty realm inhabited by the philosophical debates surrounding such discussions about epistemology and ontology. Practical considerations are also important. But my concern is different. It is probably associated with my different conception of practical concerns them. For him, this issue has different dimensions. On one hand, practical considerations are associated with choices of

research strategies, designs or methods that have to be connected with the specific research question. They are different if you are interested in teasing out the relative importance of a number of different causes of a social phenomenon, or if you are interested in the world views of the members of a certain social group, or if you as a researcher are interested in a topic on which no or virtually no research has been done in the past. Another dimension has to do with the nature of the topic and of the people being investigated. How does the researcher engage with individuals and groups?

I do not deny the importance of all these issues, but in my case, for this research, my understanding about practical considerations refers to the nitty-gritty of life. Some examples are:

- Time: for me, as a researcher who has a life, researching is only one aspect of it; I have to divide my time among all my activities and responsibilities, time is never enough, above all, if you have to lead with deadlines.

- Inspiration: (what an important subject!) researching requires inspiration to act and do things, to think, to create, to sit in front of your computer and just write brilliant ideas.

- Family and friends: I am not a full-time researcher or teacher, I am a full-time person. That means, my people are always present. They do not disappear when I am working on my research and dissertation. As a researcher, I continue to participate in my social life, birthdays, caring for ill kids, visiting friends, etcetera. Sometimes I am at a party and my research is on my mind. I cannot be a hermit and disappear because my research demands my attention.

- Frustration and fatigue are present all the time. When I am relaxed and all is going well, I am happy and I can enjoy life and the research process. But, frustration and fatigue, whatever the motive is, stop my work or make it very slow and difficult.

Research as an everyday activity requires leading with all these practical considerations. There is not a formula, but it is very important to take into account that a research process is immersion in our daily life.

At this point, constructing a method for research is overwhelming; most researchers overvalue methods. I think valuing methods is a good thing, but sometimes it leads to what Brinkmann (2012) calls 'methodolatry' or a worship of methods. No method has a privileged status; a postmodernist position allows us to know something without claiming to know everything. Having partial, local and historical knowledge is still knowing (Richardson and St. Pierre, 2011, p 961).

According to McNamee (1994), "Research then must be viewed as a constructing process which implies that we construct and reconstruct the descriptions (stories) of social life as we actively engage in the research process itself. Furthermore, the traditions of interpretation that we bring to the research context must be coordinated with those we are studying, with the intellectual community to which we speak, with our own families, friends, and so forth. All are presented in some way in our research endeavours. The questions we ask and the conclusions we draw are coordinated within this complex network of relations. From this process of coordination, constraining and potentiating descriptions will emerge*"* (p 9).

I see my method as a process of creation, humanly situated, always influenced by my preferences and biases, my beliefs and understandings, also bearing my limitations and strengths of my feelings. Standing here I reread previous pages and a small sentence popped up to my eyes, "the construction of my methodological framework, emerging from the process of writing about teaching and researching," and something magical happens. I think that my writing is my creation, not just about methodology or teaching or students, but about myself, my experiences and my learning. Writing is my clue.

In *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, (2011) Richardson and St. Pierre have a chapter called, "Writing, a Method of Inquiry." When I saw this chapter, I stopped thinking about traditional methodology and immediately started to read and write more about writing. Richardson and St. Pierre have many extraordinary ideas. For now, I want to highlight one idea: "writing is thinking, writing is analysis, writing is indeed a seductive and tangled method of discovery" (p 967). And Richardson and Lockridge (2004) suggest that writing is a method of discovery – a way to learn about one's self and one's world (p. 1). With this new perspective I feel happy, more comfortable; now I know that I have to continue writing.

Branch two: Writing as a method.

Process of writing. As I mentioned at the beginning of this section, all my methodology emerges during and through the writing and reflecting processes about my teaching and my way of being when teaching. Introducing writing as a methodology and as a way to shape or craft my research implies that I am working, probably, in a different way than traditional research, where it is important to have a set of preconceived steps and purposes. I began my

research just living my everyday teaching, being and relating with people every day, every course, collecting "data" as part of teaching, not as part of a formal research project. It was much later that I made the decision to do research drawing on my students' experiences. I constructed a project, conceiving post hoc a set of steps and purposes - actually, writing about them. The next pages are the process of writing and narrating a story about the post-conceiving steps and purposes of this dissertation.

It is very important to imagine my process of writing like a snail walking, very slowly and with long pauses to think. During the pauses, I talk with myself, sometimes out loud (if I am alone); most of the time, in silence, in front of my computer or doing something else.

What is this document? It is a research report, a narration of experiences, a kind of fiction writing. Actually, it is a text. Agreeing with Latour (2005), a text is "a small ream of paper a few millimetres thick that is darkened by a laser beam. It may contain 10,000 words and be read by very few people, often only a dozen or a few hundred if we are really fortunate. A 50,000 word thesis might be read by half a dozen people (if you are lucky, even your PhD advisor would have read parts of it!) and when I say 'read', it does not mean 'understood', 'put to use', 'acknowledged', but rather 'perused', 'glanced at', 'alluded to', 'quoted', 'shelved somewhere in a pile'" (P 122-123).

Writing a text is a process of mediation, it is an act of creation that requires creativity, and patience. The most important difference between this and my other pieces of writing is my intention; both demand a strong effort, but this is covered with an umbrella of science that pushes me to say only things that I consider are "true". I mean, it is not a text

where I can feel totally free to create, I have limits, my limits are the students' experiences, and what they shared with me (writing and talking) and all the things that I "know" I lived with them. I agree with Latour (2005) when he says that "fabrication and artificiality are not the opposite of truth and objectivity", but in this writing I have the need to try to stick to students and my experiences during our shared time and try to feel that all the occurrences described here are, of course, a product of my fantasy, but as closer to that far time as possible. That means I do not add intentionally, consciously and deliberately things that in the deepest part of my heart I know we did not live; at the same time, I am transforming our experience and adding something new.

The question is not about an objective text. My writing does not expect nor claim to imitate what we live together; it is not a portrait. My dissertation is closer to what Latour (2005) affirms: "It is always part of an artificial experiment to replicate and emphasize the traces generated by trials in which actors become mediators or mediators are turned into faithful intermediaries. There is nothing less natural than to go into fieldwork and remain a fly on the wall, pass out questionnaires, draw maps, dig up archives, record interviews, play the role of a participant-observer, compile statistics, and 'Google' one's way around the Internet. Describing, inscribing, narrating, and writing final reports are as unnatural, complex, and painstaking as dissecting fruit flies or sending a telescope into space" (p. 136)

As Andersen (1994) observes, an important point to remember is that every act of description eliminates other possibilities that have never been considered (p 46). I understand description as writing. To write is a kind of description, a way to assume that I am saying something about something. To write gives me the opportunity to think, to create

and recreate my experiences. It is a new creation; it could be a fictional story about a reality and an actual story about a fictional experience.

As language, writing is not innocent. It is not neutral and it reflects particular approaches. Because I cannot avoid this, I assume that this document has (I have) preferences and, like all other forms of writing, it is a socio-historical construction.

I am going to quote a pamphlet offering advice about one of Jose Saramago's books: "To readers: All the facts that take place in this book are a product of the powerful imagination of Jose Saramago, the novel prize. Reality has rude determination to copy the facts narrated in this novel" ("Essay about Lucidity" J. Saramago, 2004). It is clear that I am not the novel prize nor have I his powerful imagination. But it is also clear that the text is as real as a social and enacted reality. As Law (2004) observes, "to say that something has been "constructed" along the way is not to deny that it is real" (p. 39).

My dissertation is not a question of reality or fiction; written and enacted-social realities are part of my experiences and I participate very actively in both. They are ephemeral, intermittent, constructed and mutable realities. But what is the difference among my dissertation, a scientific piece of writing and fiction? E. L. Doctorow (as cited in Richardson & St. Pierre, 2001) asserted, "There is no longer any such thing as fiction or nonfiction, there is only narrative" (p.961). But Richardson (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2001) emphasizes that "the difference is not whether the text really is fiction or nonfiction; rather the difference is the claim that the author makes for the text. Declaring that one's work is fiction is a different rhetorical move than declaring that one's work is social science. The two genres bring in different audiences and have different impacts on publics and politics"

Social sciences produce written reports. Actually every science does the same and this is why they all end with the graphy suffixes (Latour, 2005). It's quite another to conclude from this trite affair that we can only write fiction (p. 126).

The inquiry is situated within 'the present moment'; (Stern, 2004, p. 75). Meaning-making happens 'on the run' within the bustle, commotion and movement of a living dialogue. Everything that matters happens *within* and *during* the dialogue. Project authors find ways to extend dialogue, keeping it in play (Shotter, 2006, p. 29). In this research, the meaning-making happens on the run of writing about facts and experiences that occurred many months ago.

Writing in a second language: First of all, it is important to say that this document is written in English. That means that a first Spanish version does not exist. I am writing in English.

Writing your thoughts is a very simple practice. Writing them in a clear and understandable way is very complex. Doing so in a second language is even more difficult. Actually, I do not know what I want to say, in Spanish nor in English. I have to concentrate and then imagine. I spend a lot of energy, in my inner dialogue, looking for ideas about which to write. This document is part of a process that involves research, scientific and academic discourses, as well as personal, learning and life discourses. English as a second language has a central importance in this writing process.

Part of the next story was published at the International Journal of Collaborative Practices (Ayora & Faraone, 2012). In this moment, I think this is relevant in order to help the reader make sense of my second language.

I grew up in a family where my parents were bilingual. They spoke Spanish and Maya. But my sisters and I did not learn Maya because our parents did not teach us. They used to speak Maya when they did not want us to understand their conversations. For me, living in a world where two languages were spoken was common, but I never felt interested enough in learning a second language; it did not seem that it would be purposeful for me. I first began learning English in secondary school when I was twelve years old. I studied it for more than ten years without any interest at all, treating it only as another subject at school, without good or bad results. Thus, I learned only a few words and established some ideas about grammar.

It was not until I finished College that I felt a strong interest in English as a second language. I could understand that in it, there was a world, a new and broad world; and I took it seriously. During my undergraduate studies, I studied some English courses and I started to ask myself if I could read, talk and express myself in another language, but at that time, I could not.

When I was in the last year of my postgraduate programme in Family Therapy, my ability to speak English was very limited, in fact, I did not have any ability at all. Since then, my need to understand written and spoken English and express myself became the most important thing. I could appreciate the importance and richness of a second language. But something was holding me back and made it difficult to maintain conversations.

I continued trying to learn English. It was very difficult for me. I needed to change something. I was so rigid in my thinking; I was always translating Spanish into English in my mind, trying to speak English as I speak Spanish, and this made the task impossible.

Something changed in my life about my beliefs and my way to be. I am sure this change was influenced by postmodern and constructionist ideas. Suddenly, I started to speak English. Not very fluently, but I could speak.

Some years ago, I had the opportunity to live abroad. It was the best chance to practice my poor English. I went to school and studied again. I was a very determined student. I completed all my homework and I made the most of all my teachers and classmates. I was a very good student.

My life abroad challenged all my beliefs about life, relationships, diversity, people, and particularly, my ideas about "understanding," therefore affecting my work as a therapist and as teacher.

After one year studying, reading, listening, speaking, relating with others and dreaming in English, my only clear idea is that I could not have a "literal or final" understanding in English. I continue having strong limitations, but I can recognize that I have limitations in Spanish as well.

Today, my lack of understanding is inspiring; it represents freedom as well as uncertainty, and it is an invitation to talk with people while being more careful about what I believe I can understand. The richness is not in the whole or final understanding; it is in the process of relating and conversing. Experiencing this in English helped me to transfer this process into Spanish.

This story is part of my decision to write a dissertation in English. It is a challenge to myself, a way to move beyond my comfort zone, a way to learn, practice and enjoy my second language learning process.

I have to say that writing in English has been the most exciting and conscious experience. When I write in Spanish the process is easier. Ideas flow spontaneously. I do not have to think about words. I think about ideas and then I just write; but in English, I have a special pleasure to choose every word. I look for the best word to say something. I go to the dictionary looking for good words. I know about my limits, my big language deficiencies, but I do my best and enjoy the writing process. I am clear that the last version of this document has a style revision, my intention of this is to improve my writing, but not change the way I write and express my ideas.

Writing as creation and transformation of realities. *"*To eat fruit is to welcome into oneself a fair living object which is alien to us but is nourished and protected like us by earth; it is to consume a sacrifice wherein we sustain ourselves at the expense of things; it means to complete a sacrifice in which we elect ourselves instead of things. I never bit bread's crumb being in the barracks without marvelling at the fact that this heavy and rough jumble could be transformed in to blood, heat, maybe in bravery" (Yourcenar, 1999, p. 15-16).

Now, my intention is, using Yourcenar's words, to transform a *rough jumble* of ideas and experiences in a *brave* narration which is similar to Vargas Llosa's writing style…"I do not write stories just to tell life, but to transform it, adding something new" (2003, p. 17).

All actions and decisions are made in response to my need to write and finish my dissertation. Some of them are simultaneous, others are isolated and most of them are intentionally revisited with the purpose to improve their presentation.

The order I present them does not mean anything about their importance, occurrence and sequence. It is only a proposal of narrative organization. There are many ways to narrate occurrences, although behaviours and decisions do not have a lineal presence, the next chronicle put together a set of actions, relations and responses that happen during a specific period of time, approximately between March of 2011 and the present moment (today 10th of July 2013) and the next future months until I finish this document.

Branch three: Crafting a chronicle about a method

Because the stories do not begin when they begin, I can choose whatever moment to tell when this research starts. My first idea about making the most of all the experiences of my students during our time together was in February 2009, in a workshop with Sally St. George and Dan Woolf about Research as a daily activity. The workshop gave me some new ideas about what to do, but I did not do anything special in that time. My interest to do research was crystallized when I heard about Tilburg University and Taos Institute Doctorate programme.

I divide the chronicle into five events: 1) First thoughts and PhD dissertation proposal; 2) Organization of data; 3) Transcription and translation; 4) Choosing theory; 5) Changes in document and structure.

First thoughts and PhD dissertation proposal. My first formal document is my PhD application. In it, I introduced concisely my very first ideas, which (of course) have changed. As I wrote in my application, "In my research I want to present a series of spoken and written dialogues in response to some questions; what are we learning while we are together? How do we transform ourselves inside the classroom? What are the course's

ethical contributions? What are the course's political contributions? I want to describe my

teaching practice as an approach to teaching influenced by ideas related with social

construction, Learning Communities and Collaborative Practices, Reflecting Teams, and

Social Poetics Methods, rather than a step-ordered methodology, theory, or a set of

techniques. The project will derive its methods from my everyday dialogical practices in

the classroom, the different ways that I use to invite the student to converse with me during

the classes, from the students' experiences in the classroom and from our dialogues

together" Having these ideas as a preliminary starting point, I begin to develop some ways

to continue.

Organization of data.The most practical way to continue is my decision to organize all my

data. As I said above, I collect my data as my everyday practice without any other intention

than to appreciate, value and feedback our work together (students and I).

There are three important considerations to take into account about my data: First,

it is about the definition of what my data are, as Bruno Latour (2005) notes: "when you

think of what you are doing as a research project, everything is data! That everything is

data in everyday life research is both a burden and a blessing" (p. 14) It is a blessing

because I do not have to invent a population to ask something. My teaching life is a perfect

and enjoyable context to inquire, but it is also a burden since I need to limit what I want to

include, again, as Latour (2005) says, "the researcher must therefore frame the research

project very carefully in order not to end up with a deeply fragmented analysis"(p.14) I

identify with Latour's (2005) description of data: "Even if we work diligently, things don't

get better because, after a few months, we are sunk in a flood of data, reports, transcripts,

tables, statistics, and articles. How does one make sense of this mess as it piles up on our

desks and fills countless disks with data? Sadly, it often remains to be written and is usually delayed" (p 125)

The second, even though I say that I work collaboratively, this research is not the best example of it. It is not because most of the actors (students) have partially been silenced by me; rather, in spite of all our written and recorded experiences, only some ideas are included – the rest of the text is mine and the authors that I quote – students do not have any other contribution or opportunity to participate in the writing process. This is in that way because, in our daily life, students and I do not have additional spaces to interact, and our resources of communication, when the course is finished, are very limited. That means that the whole document is the result of my dialogues and interactions between experiences, authors and myself.

Marshall (2006) describes some injunctions of qualitative research (p. 5) and she suggests that we must examine how we represent the participants. I am afraid I have to disagree with her. I think I am not representing them. I am reading and reflecting about their experiences and responding to them transforming and enriching my own experience in order to write this dissertation, to learn and improve my work, and finally, as I have said, to contribute to the discussion on the field.

Third, experiences as data are not pure. They are not accurate or literal. First, they do not reflect or portray exactly what students live; they are only their written and spoken versions. Second, they have been transcribed and "cleaned" for me. I develop this idea more below, in the transcription and translation section.

The process of data collection is described in an extensive form in chapter 3. Here, I only present some important moments of this process.

As part of the first class, I ask some questions about their expectations for the course, the professor and the group; their style of learning and things that facilitate it; and about any situation in their everyday life that could make their learning difficult. They write their answers in a piece of paper that I collect and save.

In each class, between the second and the penultimate, I ask the students to write what I call "class notes" on a piece of paper. These are some spontaneous, untidy and free ideas, comments, questions - nothing formal, whatever they are thinking during the class. Each student develops his/her own style and spirit to write. I collect and save as well all these notes.

Throughout the course, I invite each group to stop and have a conversation about the class process twice during the semester. These conversations are centered on one question: How are we doing in the course? I record these conversations.

During the last class, we work with two groups of questions: First, concerning their class notes, they write some thoughts about the most interesting ideas that have emerged in their writing, among other things; and second, they write some opinions about the course as a process. I collect and save as well all these notes.

Summarizing, my "data" are integrated by two groups of experiences: writing and recording. To the written experiences belong expectations, class notes, analysis of class notes, and reflections about the course as a process. To the recorded experiences are group conversations about how we are doing the class and the course as a process.

My first impulse was to take all the papers and put them together, in front of me, on the table. Then I decide to create three different file folders that belong to each group (A, B, and C). After this, I draw a table in my PhD notebook trying to show all the work I have to do. This table pictures every group of documents I have in detail, how I classify them (according to the group they belong to and the kind of activity that are related) and what I need to do with each of them (transcribe them and translate them). This table works as a kind of register of my progress because I use it as a check list. At the end, I use it as an organizer and a personal report of my advances.

Having this physical and spatial organization, I ask again how to do my research that helps me to understand my everyday practice.

Transcription and translation. In the end, all the experiences become a text. It does not matter what we live, it does not matter what we say, it does not matter what we do, think, feel, and smell. Now all are written words.

To start the transcription requires that I read the mountains of sheets of paper. First, I read and copy each of them, noticing how many they are. After a time typing them on my computer, I decide to read, highlight and just transcribe the most significant groups of ideas. That means that the experiences included in this paper are only a part of the whole collection. In this sense, the process of transcription is full of omissions. It is a very tiring task, and many things are forgotten. Transcription is a process of the impoverishment of experiences because it is impossible to reproduce exactly what someone says, what happens day by day, moment by moment, interaction by interaction. This is not possible!

During the process of transcription of written sheets of paper, I do three different things: A) on many occasions, I decide to take ideas that are not clear, repeated words and all portions of the text that make it difficult to read and understand their writings. I do something similar with recorded conversations and, in addition, I do not transcribe laughter nor side comments and dialogues, and any other sound around our conversations, e.g. birds singing and people talking outside the classroom or office. B) I make a translation from Students' Spanish to My Spanish; although they write in Spanish, I have to interpret their ideas and create a new version that is easier to understand; and C) the document only presents some of the experiences. When I begin to write in earnest, I have to choose what I call the most significant experiences, but it is not true, there are more that are significant, many more, but I cannot include all of them. Latour (2005) says this very clearly: "you have to sacrifice vast amounts of data that cannot fit in the small number of pages allotted to you. How frustrating this whole business of studying is" (p 123).

Writing about something is a new creation where the materiality of the process gets deleted. I refer to materiality as Latour and Woolgar (in Law, 2004) say: "the process of producing traces melts into the background" (p.20). I understand traces as a text. When I produce a text, the focus is dialogue and the practices are acts, as relations. This includes all the things that happen in a teaching process. What I call "embodiment and social reality," as the focus of my research, is text.

I have worked almost a year transcribing and translating papers. When I feel tired of transcribing, I start translating from Spanish into English. At the beginning, it was an extraordinary and exciting idea that helped me refresh my mind, change my activity and allowed me to continue working. Through time, both processes became exasperating,

exhausting and endless. Time was passing. It was the moment to ask for help. I decide that I needed a person who is a native Spanish speaker with English as a second language to help me translate from Spanish into English the remaining materials. Fortunately, my officemate at the University is the English teacher from Argentina and she was pleased to collaborate with my dissertation.

The process of translation is a collaborative one. I give my transcriptions to her, organized in thirty-seven different files. While she worked on translations, we exchanged points of view about ideas and students' experiences, trying to have the best interpretation and translation. In the end, when she finished all the files, we had many conversations about our doubts and general observations. On many occasions, we choose together the best words to translate what students were trying to say and also agreed about some meanings.

I asked her to write some ideas about her experience translating students' experiences. I wanted to present what she said about this process. Alexia's comments: "*At the moment I browsed the files with the students' comments and reflections, I mistakenly thought their translation into English would not be very difficult. As an English teacher at the Faculty, I am used to reading the students' academic writing (paragraphs and essays). Two of the topics we constantly work on along the whole course are word order of the elements of the sentence and punctuation rules. When I started to translate, I could understand why the students need this reinforcement. Not all, but many of the students wrote their comments and reflections as if they were speaking. At moments, it seemed the student had used stream of consciousness as a literary device, mainly, because of the lack of punctuation and the way the ideas were written. First, I had to interpret what the student was meaning to say. Then, I translated the comments into English. After translating some of*

the students' comments and reflections, Dora and I discussed those that were difficult to understand. She gave me the context in which the students had written them: what they were referring to, if they wrote them at the end of a class or of the course, etcetera. Many times, we came to an agreement about the interpretation of the comments and reflections; on other occasions, Dora was the best judge. During this process, on one hand, I always tried to respect the source text; on the other hand, the target text had to be understandable, so I had to make the necessary changes to achieve this objective".

Choosing theory. Departing from a brief story about my understandings can be useful to describe my way to choose theory and make sense to my researching and teaching.

In the past, I was a faithful believer of the only and objective truth, I have to say, that was not my fault. I grew up in a catholic family and I was educated in very traditional school systems –from kindergarten to university – I was never motivated to question anything. Actually, questioning could have been seen as a kind of rebelliousness, it was impossible to question, above all, the truth about life and authority. Knowledge represented how intelligent you are – the more you know, the more intelligent you are – knowledge was the reality which is the reason I only had to memorize all the things at school, without reflection or questioning. Language was a product of my thoughts and the perfect vehicle to represent reality or maybe reality itself. If I disagreed with something for certain, I was wrong. Relationships were only a circumstance in my life. Ethics was based on doing right and good actions – you are a good or bad person if your individual actions and thoughts are correct. My personal opinion was not important or valid if it was not supported by very strong theoretical and scientific foundations since they are rationally superior.

My family and professional education taught me to believe and relate with knowledge and reality as something objective and unquestionable; and act thereon as a person and professional who plans every step, controls everything and who is not allowed to be spontaneous.

My teaching during my professional beginnings was very rigid, only repeating what books said and assessing students in terms of how much knowledge they had. Dynamism in class did not exist because I was the expert who had the knowledge to give to the students. It was a very difficult part of my work because I was never a good student and I always knew I was not an expert on any issue. Thus, my need to control the students' behaviour stuck me as the "right" thing to do.

My first contact with postmodern and constructionist ideas occurred when I was studying for my master's degree more than fifteen years ago. Since then, I have been reading and learning something new about these ideas every day. Throughout those years, postmodernism and social construction have been framing and informing my life and professional practices and they continue to be my preferred discourses for making life meaningful.

As time has passed, my standpoint concerning postmodern and constructionist ideas has changed. In the beginning, I was shocked by the postmodern critiques of individualism and objective knowledge and science as the truth. And, I was equally shocked by the postmodern attention to multiplicity and knowledge as socially constructed. I have to confess that before these ideas came into my life, I was a happy woman, very committed to my job and family, always doing "right" things – which means, doing what you have to do.

I was a believer in the idea of an absolute, universal truth and the correct way to live and act. After being introduced to postmodern ideas, I continued being happy and committed, but my sense of the critique of postmodernism has changed. My standpoint is different. I am more reflective, less a believer in only one truth, more cautious about what I am saying. I try to choose my words carefully. I feel more relax about life and its decision making process. I am less worried and pressured about the future. I am more optimistic. I feel freedom, confidence about my own experiences. I can be more flexible, open-minded and creative. In summary, I am changing my life.

If my life is changing, then also my actions, relations and understandings change. I want to emphasize some parts of postmodern and constructionist discourses that influence me the most, and above all, they influence my teaching practices and offer me the possibility to conceptualize it as an approach rather than a step-ordered methodology, theory, or set of techniques.

Actually, I cannot identify what happened first, the change of my practice, my way of thinking and acting, the process of appropriating some postmodern and constructionist ideas… I do not know. Probably everything happened at the same time; probably I was not a very different person and I only have new perspectives to talk about myself and my practices and relationships. Whatever, I have to recognize that, a personal and philosophical transformation is more like living life, instead an educational or formal training as part of it. In the present, I like myself much more than in the past,

Philosophical transformation. My process of philosophical transformation can be seen as a process of discovery, as a creative act. According to Koestler (1964), "the creative

act is not an act of creation in the sense of the Old Testament. It does not create something out of nothing; it uncovers, selects, re-shuffles, combines, synthesises already existing facts, ideas, faculties, skills. The more familiar the parts, the more striking the new whole" (p. 120).

The introduction of philosophical ideas is a kind of theoretical patchwork, a philosophical pastiche. It is clear that I could never think, create or reflect anything similar. Each author, each idea I chose to engage, I did so to help me create something new, help me make sense of my life and particularly my work, and mainly, because these ideas and authors make me feel happy, creative and free. That means that I talk about theory (and "methodology") agreeing with Andersen (1995) as a product of feelings (dislike and agreeable feelings) instead of a product of intellectuality.

The process of writing theory is really a reading-writing process, as I said above. I am sure I could never think or create anything similar to what thinkers, philosophers and theoreticians can do. During the process, I am looking for appropriating and making sense of these ideas. I read books and articles collecting meaningful ideas. Then I stop reading and start writing, organizing quotes and ideas in groups. When I feel stuck, I start to read again and then I write and start the process all over again.

Theoretical considerations help me to interpret my life and practices from these ideas, and re-understand and create something new. Some of them are introduced deeply in chapter 4.

Changes in document and structure. Shaping this document has been very spontaneous and haphazard. I am working on at least three different documents at the same time in a

disorganized way. If I have an idea and it is connected with the first document, I immediately go to it and write the idea. Sometimes I develop something about it; sometimes I just write a brief idea. Then, in writing this idea, a new one suddenly appears. I turn again to the appropriate document and continue working on it. Then again, during my reading, I have another idea. I turn to the third document or go back to the first or move again to a different one. The process has been very uncertain. It does not have a lineal, ordinate, and organized growth. The document gains structure, clarity (I hope), and linearity through time and through the increasing number of written pages, all associated with my need to express my ideas logically and clearly in English.

The original idea of the structure of this document was a theatre script. But I could not find a clear way to organize the pieces of writing in that form. I clung to it as best as I could, but at the moment that this started to bother me, I abandoned it. In another moment, the document started to look like a common dissertation with chapters such as justification, methodology and results. When I noticed that, I could know very clearly that was exactly what I did not want. Then, the option to organise it as a kind of dialogue among students' experiences, quotes and my ideas appeared, but the dialogue idea did not come to fruition. The final version of this document is the result of a crafted process; it changed at least four times from some very rigid structures to a different, I hope, more flexible one that is also kinder to read.

I think it is important to make evident that the creative process has been a permanent presence, which means: since this dissertation started, I am in a permanent process of looking -- looking for ideas. Some come from books and journals, conversations with friends and colleagues. Some others pop up in my head during classes, taking a

shower and driving my car. My everyday life is totally connected with research; whatever I do, I spontaneously look for ideas. When a good idea comes to me, I immediately save it to write about it later. The research process is not only the mere act of writing or working on the dissertation; it is the quotidian set of actions, relations, and dialogues that emerge and help to develop the document.

Chapter 3

Re-Creation of the Enacted and Social Reality

Everyday life in the classroom

Everyday life is very complex and, -- in spite of the idea proposed by developmental psychology that describes the normal lifespan as lineal, progressive stages where every stage has a group of tasks to fulfill and there is a normal lifespan trajectory -- shows itself highly variable. According to Stephen Gould (1980), life is discontinuous and not progressive.

As life, some theories describe teaching (Barber, 2012; Sztajn, P. et al 2012; Givens, R. 2012; Sevilla et al 2010) in such a way that it looks clear, ordinate and structured, but it is theory what makes it look in that way. The process of teaching and all the things that are present in a classroom as a reality are, as John Law (2004) says, a mess. And, according to him, this world, as many others, is "vague, diffuse, emotional and ephemeral" (p. 2).

Teaching as a piece of everyday life, as a communal process, as a network of people interacting through language, implies that each encounter in the class involves many things associated with participants (our expectations, interests and personal agendas), institutional requirements (all the objectives that we need to achieve according to the academic programmes and the specific topics), a wide range of interactions (different types of conversations that can be created, generated by issues, actions and contributions of all the participants; their spontaneous and unpredictable responses; the very active reflecting process that is always present, among others), and social discourses that are present in our

context, our common and different culture - we are all Mexicans and the majority is Yucatecan people - discourses about socioeconomic level, education, values and gender, among many others.

How could I create a written reality about teaching as a communal, relational and dialogical reality that lets us feel and appreciate its complexity and messy existence? It is not a simple task. Actually, it is an impossible one because written and enacted-social realities are two different ones. That means to me, two realities interconnected through my assumption that the former says something about the latter; and in the process of writing, I lose a lot of details about sensorial and contextual experiences, not impossible, but tedious and impractical to describe. As Latour (2005) mentions, there may be something missing. The simple act of recording anything on paper is already an immense transformation that requires as much skill and just as much artifice as painting a landscape or setting up some elaborate biochemical reaction. This is, the highest and rarest achievement (p. 137).

This chapter introduces the Re-creation (Re-enactment) of everyday life into the classroom from two perspectives: from my perspective as a teacher, considering what I think I do, who I am and the way I live dialogues and relations between the students and myself, and from the students' perspective, how they live our time together and their experiences. These descriptions are more than only a narration; first, it is an extraordinary effort to write in a second language; second, it is a new version of the experiences enriched with new ideas and perspectives through time and theory.

Professor's perspective

It is important to always remember that I, as a researcher and writer, as well as a teacher, am a person writing in a place. Also, it is necessary to remember that all the things I can share in this document emerge from me in relation to different contexts and circumstances, and that this writing occurs many months after the course and experiences that are described here have finished.

My perspective on teaching has been constructed along the years and it is the result of relationships with students, colleagues, the academic environment and myself. Probably it could look as something very structured, maybe very rigid. But actually it is very flexible, creative and participative. If at a certain moment it looks overly structured, it can be part of the process of writing, writing in my second language, organizing ideas and choosing words.

Teaching as a relational and dialogical reality requires very spontaneous responses and decisions. This orientation invites us to consider the participants' expectations, our needs, and interests. All these things motivate me to look for new ways to invite and generate very productive, reflective and rich processes of dialogue. Through time, these processes have had many similarities, but each group and course has had its own particularities that make it necessary to change, to improve and to create new forms of participation from updating the articles and bibliography to including new ways to invite students into dialogue, as well as to consider the ways to offer examples, ideas about how to put theory into practice, how to evaluate the students' learning, and the way I feel free and comfortable in every group.

This temporal structure and organization has been constructed through a constant process of reflection as well as individual and collective conversations among participants. I talk with my students about our participation and contributions to the class frequently; these conversations allow me "to see" from a new perspective what we have been doing together. I have to recognize that trying to understand my participation from the student's point of view has been very interesting and didactic for myself. Actually, some of their ideas are not totally new for me, but after talking with them, I understand and make sense of my work in a different way; these conversations have been a way to find new meanings, revalue my contributions and enrich them constantly.

The newest contribution to my practices has to do with PhD research. At the present, I am asking the students about the ethical and political aspects of the classes. In the past, I had never asked about these aspects, nor did I think it was important. But the PhD motivated me to include these ideas.

In general terms, the teaching processes have evolved along the years in a very spontaneous way. The whole process spans more than all the facts between the first and the last class. Many things are happening before and after this time; in spite of this, I am going to focus only on three different moments. The first one, take places specifically during the first class and includes some introductions of participants, general aspects of the course and what I call, according to Anderson (1997), Collaborative Learning Communities (CLC); the second moment is between the second and the penultimate class, which includes a description of general characteristics of the generated dialogues among students and myself; and the third moment is during the last class during where we do a very detailed review of the course.

Moment 1: Who we are. Course. CLC.

Week from August 8th to 11th, 2011.

It is the beginning of a new course, students and I will work together for four months approximately, from August to December, three times per week, at 7:30 am.

Summer and autumn is usually hot and humid. Although we start early in the morning, the temperature at this time fluctuates between 22° and 28°C. Classrooms do not have air conditioning; they have three or four ceiling fans. There are two very big windows that are always open. Every student has his/her own chair. As professor, I have my own chair and desk. Every classroom has a whiteboard and a projector as tools to help classes.

For me, the first session is very important. It is my first formal contact with students. My main purposes during this session are: to introduce ourselves to each other and to the subject, to talk about the calendar of activities, the importance of reading and the evaluation criteria and my intentions during the course; finally, I talk with them, agreeing with Anderson (1997), about how to create a collaborative learning community.

As an exceptional activity, I invite the students to be part of my research; I introduce my project and ask them if they agree to collaborate with me. All of them accept to participate. I tell them that the clearest thing that will be different to me is that I need to record some of our conversations, in the middle and at the end of the course. I add that in general terms we will work together as I am used to do and I invite them to feel free and participate in their own way, as they are used to enjoy and learn better.

In general, it is not my style to ask information about groups; first, because sometimes they are new groups, my course is their first time together; and second, the information they give me, in my opinion, is usually excessively traditional (i.e., teachers

generally describe students and groups emphasising whether they must read or not before class, whether they must do their homework, about their performance on exams and oral participation. Honestly, it is not useful information for me; it does not say anything relevant about the way I want to meet students.

August Monday 8th, Tuesday 9th and Wednesday 10th 2011.

These are the first classes with each group. Every group decided to introduce themselves in a different way, talking about their favourite dishes, what they do or where they go on vacations and describing some personal characteristics, as well as giving their names and something else about them.

Mole, Lasagne, Spaghetti, Strawberry cake, Kafta, Papadzules, Fruit cocktail, Tamales, Burritas, Cookies, Tuna croquettes, Prawn cocktail, Poc chuc, Apples, Sushi, Meat.

To the Local Beach, Working, Mexico City, Riviera Maya, Cozumel, Cancun, Sleeping, Valladolid, Eating, Cuernavaca, At home.

She laughs a lot, Responsible, Organised, Smiling, Diana's Soul Mate, Hedonist, Good person, Tranquil, One of the best students, Fresh, Industrious, Friend, Intelligent, Funny, Nice, Actor.

The first part of the class is dedicated to introducing ourselves. After saying, "good morning," I invite the group to spend some time introducing themselves, according to their suggestions for a dynamic and agreeable way. At the end of introductions, I talk about myself.

"Who I am in relation with students" is constructed, on the one hand, through the ideas that the students have about me, at least from two different kinds of experiences.

First, they could have a previous knowledge about me without personal or direct interaction with me simply because we are part of the same institution. In that sense, it is very common

that students exchange points of view about professors and ask each other about the singularities of them. From these ideas, the students create a first image about who I am, and this is the very first approach to me and what they can expect. On the other hand, if they have not talked with other students, they can have some information about professors by reading their available CVs.

Second, I usually introduce myself during the first session we have together. This introduction is a version of myself that includes the things that I decide to share with them. It is, obviously, a small description. I usually talk about my academic background, my professional experience, my interest in psychology and therapy, what I think about teaching and collaborative learning communities. Sometimes I share a bit about my family background too and how my interest in psychology emerged. It is very common that I describe myself as someone who is very interested in others, flexible and enthusiastic, committed to my work and the things I do, as a person, who enjoys life and who generally has a good mood.

Who we are is a continual process of construction, and it is very important to consider that it is influenced by previous ideas we have, the way that we introduce ourselves, and it is part, as well, of the relational and dialogical processes that we share together. It is related to direct knowledge we will have in the everyday school life during the course.

I consider that some of my contributions to the course are intentional and they are principally influenced by: 1) my collaborative and constructionist ideas 2) my ideas about teaching as a political and ethical process, and 3) my conception of teaching as a way of

being. I am always public about my intentions and share them at the beginning of each course. I found a phrase in John Law's book that describes perfectly my very first intention when I am teaching. I would like to teach as "happily, creatively and generously as possible" (2004, p. 10).

Other intention is related to a question: how may we create a less hierarchical space within the classroom and a more equitable relationship between students and teacher? I agree with Anderson's ideas (1997) to conceive of students as experts about themselves, about their learning preferences and what they want to learn. Seeing them in that way helps me to invite them to create together a kind of relationship that considers their interests about the dynamics of the class and the topics to include, to recognize their talents and abilities that can become recourses to the class, to promote and accept their contributions in a form that they can feel free to participate in the way or ways that are more useful for their own learning.

Another intention is to prepare a stage that promotes dialogue among participants, a kind of dialogue that opens the possibility to reflect, to question ideas. Every conversation is just an opportunity to think about different topics where every idea that comes from a student, book, article, author or myself is seen as "just one perspective". My intention to create dialogue implies that the classes are not monologues. Neither the students nor I give long presentations; we participate in very interactive processes in clusters, binaries and conversations among the entire group, as well as integrate other ways to dialogue. I am very clear that my position as a professor is a very privileged one because I have an audience disposed to listen to me. I prefer to use this privilege to invite them to share. I

believe that this hierarchical position is very powerful and I have decided to make the most of it to create, with the students, a new way to be together.

Obviously, now my interest in my PhD research is part of our conversations, and I invited them to be part.

Sharing my intentions has allowed me to emphasize the importance of process and content during the classes. At the beginning of each course, I invite the students to have this in mind, and along the course we talk about it on several occasions.

We also dedicate part of our time to talking about the "pre-established learning agenda" that is connected with the academic programme of the subject. I call it the "pre-established agenda" because it is something which we, as a group (class), did not agree to ahead of time. They are a set of topics, tasks and activities that we must have very present in our work together; this academic programme stresses the general and specific objectives that students have to learn and reach as part of the institutional programme.

I create a calendar that includes all the pre-established topics, the days we will be working together and the bibliography we will review, according to the academic programme and my own suggestions. This calendar is always tentative; it is just a proposal to organize us, because we are limited in time and issues. We discuss the calendar and we agree that we can change it if we need to do something different along the course.

I invite them to read for each class, being public about my experience, which means, I know that every student has different needs about reading, some of them read before class, others read after class, and others read just before the exam. When I make this public,

my intention is to emphasize that "it is an invitation to read" just recognizing the differences.

As a professor, I have to assign a number that "represents" each student's learning. We talk about the evaluation criteria, which includes what they need to do to pass the course; this is an institutional requirement. We have to evaluate their learning as part of the criteria. Most of the time, we make the classroom activities part of these criteria, which includes class notes (I will describe below), some homework, and sometimes we do some tests. When I evaluate with an exam, I am do it in a special way. I ask open questions and the students work in duos. I believe that we construct learning together; in that sense, when they are discussing and talking to each other during the evaluation, they are creating and constructing new meanings and learning.

During the last part of the first class, I ask them some questions, which help us to talk about how we can create a collaborative learning community. The aspects that are addressed are: their expectations about the course, the professor and the group, their learning styles and things that facilitate them and about any situation in their everyday life that can create a challenge to their learning.

These questions help me learn about the students' particularities, and they can also help me to have ideas about how to construct an ad hoc work space attending their interests.

They write their answers to these questions on a piece of paper, and after they finish, I invite them to have a conversation about them. All the answers are valued, no one is judged, all the comments are heard and all the participants pay attention to them. Participants share freely their ideas; it is a conversation as open and spontaneous as

possible. I have saved the written answers; we will go back to them some time during the course and at the end of it.

Moment 2: Between the second and the penultimate sessions.

From August 15th to November 30th, 2011.

Every day, some students are late, some of them read before class, some others do not. At the beginning of the period, we are very motivated but our motivation tends to decrease with time and work. At the end of the course, it is more common that we look tired and more dispersed. Frequently, we can hear birds singing, people talking outside in the corridor. Also, some students ask for permission to go to the toilet, others are whispering, and sometimes somebody knocks at the door asking for information or for a student. Occasionally, before the class starts, we talk about general topics, some national or international news, or something important that is happening at the school or the University. In general, each class has diverse kind of interruptions, and flows differently.

The second and subsequent sessions are totally different from our first meeting; they are focused on the course topics. In every meeting we have a specific subject to discuss according to the academic programme and the calendar. I always bring a project to propose to the class, which is an idea about how to create a dialogue or dialogues about the issue. I try to bring something new every class; sometimes I just have a very small and unstructured idea that I shape when I am walking to the classroom. Most of the time, it is dynamic process, but it is invented by me. It is not a technique, it is just something that comes in the moment that I am reading and anticipating the class. It is part of my inner dialogue while I am thinking about the next class. It is not easy to describe because it is connected with the moment, issue and my inspiration. Any project I propose in class is absolutely tentative. I

present my ideas to the students and we agree or change it. We choose the best option for the moment; sometimes I come with an idea and it changes once or twice during the class.

Although the topics of each course are very important, they are the perfect excuse to invite students to dialogue about them, and to construct very rich dialogues that can influence our personal and professional life.

Most of the times, I have to teach the same class at least twice to different groups. I do not design different classes for each group, but they become different spontaneously. I think the difference is influenced by the interest and very different process that is generated in every group. During class, I am very attentive about what is happening; in my inner dialogue I review the process of the class. When I feel uncomfortable about it, I think about the next class and I make mental changes for the next. I take some notes about my new idea and I try to put it into practice the following time. Always, my expectation is to contribute to have a more agile, active, participative and better class.

From the very first class meeting, I ask the students to write what I call class notes on a piece of paper. They are spontaneous and free ideas, comments, questions - nothing formal. In every class, students write whatever they are thinking during that class and share it with me in a kind of "written dialogue". I collect and save all these notes along the course and try to read them all. This is not always possible. It depends on the size of the group and the number of groups I am working with, but I eventually manage to do it.

The class notes have two intentions. On the one hand, they are designed to collect and save unplanned students' thoughts in a documented format; on the other hand, at the end of the course, students have the opportunity to read all their notes together, this review

is a kind of re-encounter and re-valuing process with their own ideas, and these actions become part of the learning construction.

In an academic environment it is assumed that every student has the opportunity to participate freely during class but, in general, I prefer to explicitly invite all students to always participate very actively. Of course they can refuse my invitation, and it does not matter; they know that because I tell them. However, they generally agree to participate.

I believe that students have different styles of participation. Some participate very actively by speaking, others speak less but participate in the "dynamics." Some never talk but write class notes. For me, if a student does not speak during class, it does not mean he/she is not learning or making the most of the class. He/she just has a different way to be part of the group and that is the reason why I invite them to participate in different types of dialogues, including whole group discussions, cluster conversations, cluster interviews, conversations with me, and a kind of "reflecting teams", among others.

From September 12th to 14th, 2011.

Having finished our first part of the course, we take an exam to review the contents, and after that, we take a pause to talk about how we are doing in the course. In general, all of us agree that we are doing well and that we can continue working in the same way.

From October 5th to 6th, 2011.

It is time for our second stop. We review the results of the second exam, and talk about how we are doing in the course. On this occasion, students suggest the following: more deeply analyse the topics, some of them felt isolated in some reflecting groups, they like the analysis of social repercussions of theories, they love the review of contents previous of the exam, and suggest that I should talk slowly.

I invite all the groups two or three times during the semester to stop and have a conversation about the class process, which means we reflect about the following questions: What are we doing? What are we learning? Are we going in the right direction? What are the things that we are doing that are useful? What do we need to change? Are we reaching our expectations? I have never recorded these conversations before the PhD. However, since beginning my PhD research, I asked groups if it is possible to record these conversations and save them to include in my dissertation. The main intention of these reflections is to make new decisions, open the possibility for changing our way of working or maybe continuing to work in the same manner.

Moment 3: The Last class.

From December 5th to 7th, 2011.

The weather has changed, rains have gone and temperature is less high; we have just finished celebrating the Day of the Dead with our traditional food and altar, and immediately the City smells of Christmas and we wait anxiously for holidays.

The course is ending, the students look tired and stressed. They have enormous quantities of homework and exams to prepare. Even so, we take some time to talk about our time together. We offer each other feedback and thanks for our effort, time and interest during the course.

The last class is as important as the first, because it is our last opportunity to talk about the process. Our conversation spins around two groups of topics. The first group is about their class notes, which I have collected and saved during the course. I give every student back their own class notes that I have classified and organized according to their names. We work with them in the following way: they begin reading all their notes; second, they write some thoughts about the most interesting ideas that emerge in their writing,

commenting which ideas are different now, learning through writing. At the end, I ask for a final reflection and some notes about their process of writing. The second group of questions include an exploration of the course as a process. This includes questions concerning our learning together, the students' immersion in the course, our personal and group contributions, and our initial expectations. Finally, I ask for some comments and suggestions to improve the course. As part of my PhD research, I decided to include two new discussion issues: the political and ethical implications of the course. That means, on one hand, asking students how our way of working in the class changed something about their ideas of theory, learning, society, etcetera; on the other hand, how they see ethical processes as part of our way of being together.

The students work on these two groups of questions. In the end, they share with the group their answers as freely and spontaneously as possible, and I collect and save the new pieces of writing.

In general terms, we have at least five opportunities during the semester to talk about the process: the first and the last sessions and two or three times along the course.

When we finish every course, I have a lot of students' experiences, some in a written version (expectations, class notes and analysis of class notes, reflections about the process that we do the last class), and others, in a recorded version.

Every story has more than one side. My writing pretends to show more than one, but I am not sure if my effort is enough. It is not.

"That we create a single story shows people as one thing, as only one thing over and over again, and that is what they would become…It is impossible to talk about a single story

without talking about power…How the stories are told, who tells them, when they are told and how many stories are told; really dependent on power. The power is the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but make it the definitive story of that person…The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotype, is not that they are untrue but they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story"

Chimamanda Adichie (2009) The Danger of the single story

Students' Perspectives

In this section, I am going to write about the students' perspective; this is the part where I include the most significant writing and recorded experiences. In general terms, I try to organize them in a similar structure like the first part of this chapter. Let me emphasize that the way I am going to present the experiences is not the order that they were collected or lived, it is only an approach.

The organization that is guiding the next description is focused on the students' perspective around four general topics. First, it is about questions that I ask during the first class, it contains: Who am I, what are my contributions to the processes and what are their course, group and Dora's expectations? How do they learn? Do they have any situation in their everyday life which can make their learning difficult? The second is the students' written thoughts (they are class notes which were written class by class). In this section, I present the comments that they wrote in every class and are the most interesting to me in that they move me and make me feel connected to the students; and the questions that I ask in the last class about those class notes (What are the most interesting ideas about your writing? Which ideas are different for you now? What is your learning and what changed to you through writing? Make a final reflection and write some notes about your process of

writing). The third topic is the students' experiences about the whole process of the course, which covers the following questions: What are the general characteristics of the course (class as a process); What are the students' contributions (group and individual); What happens with them when they are immersed in the process?; What do we learn together?; What are the class's ethical contributions?; What are the class's political contributions?; Were their original expectations accomplished? Also, the students give some final comments about the course. Finally, the fourth topic is a section that refers to recorded conversations around how we are doing in the course, and the whole course as a process.

The presentation of the students' point of view is divided by groups (A, B and C); my intention is principally to show them as a separated group of ideas. I do not want to compare or to show their differences. It is only a selection of pieces of writing that are interesting to me and allows me to describe our time together, our learning as a collaborative effort, not as a technique or a model to follow, more as a presence, a way of being and relating with others.

Topic 1: 1st Class questions

a) Who I am and my contributions

Beyond my ideas, intentions and expectations, students have a wider perspective about me, individually and as a group. They emphasize my creativity and ability to introduce original dynamics; my commitment, attention and interest to them; students appreciate my point of view, my explanations and my work style among many other things. Next are some of their opinions about me and my contributions.

GROUP A

"She contributes a lot, she knows how, where, why and when, she is always accurate, right and purposeful, she is a reflection generator".

"The exercises of critical thinking, that no theory is innocent, social repercussions, consequences of a scientific approach, the creativity to make the whole group participate, even that student who didn't read".

"Besides the professor facilitated this process with her commitment and with her entertaining and dynamic classes, she also offered us the opportunity to listen to what nobody says about the other theories, those things that theories say indirectly or that are hidden in the background".

"She provided us with a base to develop the class together; she paid attention to us and showed her interest in us".

"More than a professor, she was a guide in this long process. She taught us to clarify ideas by enriching them, even with her own opinion. I feel that she devoted herself to us, but she also learn; as I said, it was mutual".

GROUP B

"She was like a guide since in each class she gave us her perspective and explained the topics on which we had some doubts. Also, when she talked to us, she made us some questions or left a topic unfinished, so we started thinking and reasoning. I think this is cool, since she motivates us to reflect and not to content ourselves with what a person says".

"Dora was a very good professor; I think her main contribution was helping us no to take everything established so seriously. I feel another contribution was to help all of us to guide our perspectives towards psychology and towards ourselves".

"She transmitted us her knowledge and passion for this subject, for this psychology area. Experience and creative dynamics".

"The professor gave me all the necessary tools to learn this subject, all the classes were very good and I learnt a lot from them".

"Dora's contributions were many. If there is something I will never forget is the famous phrase "nothing is innocent". I feel that thanks to Dora's help I was able to have a better capacity of judgment and, above all, I obtained that capacity to judge every theory objectively".

GROUP C

"The self-confidence and the encouragement Dora gave us".

"New ideas to understand the topics of the classes".

"Dora's biggest contribution as a professor and as a person was to motivate a class to have a more active participation and, at the same time, the teamwork helped cohesion"

"We learnt from Dora to see both sides of the theories: the positive and the negative or "the innocent". She also made us think about the theories, about the dynamics. Thus, the content of each class was easier to remember".

"From you, your availability and willingness to work".

"Dora gave the basis and let us free".

"Disposition, attention, amiability, creativity, honesty, concern for us".

"Dora made us see the subject in a different way; she helped us to value it and discuss the theories and apply them in different fields".

b) The students' course expectations

When I asked the students, *what are your course's expectations?* two sensations emerged for me. On one side, I am not sure what I can expect, because the wide range of answers I received show me the diversity and variety of hopes students have. On the other hand, I am sure that each student expects something different. If I pay attention to differences, I can find an amazing world of expectations.

What is important to each one? What a complex question, when you, as a professor, take seriously the enormous amount of answers that you can have, and you pay attention to the difference between each other. The class becomes a very serious thing, probably a scary situation. You can ask yourself, what you can do to offer something significant to each student. How to work, relate and dialogue with them in a way that their main expectation can be considered.

When we are together in the classroom, we do not have time to respond every idea. We just pay attention. I take some notes and at the end of the class I read their expectations and I use them to think and prepare every class throughout the semester.

What they expect about the course.

GROUP A

"It could be light, but full of learning".

"Talk beyond the books to have more examples".

"I think it will be very long texts and many hours in front of the book; at the end of the day I know it will be valuable".

"The subject won't become too heavy, that when we will do the activities we won't do them just for the sake of doing them".

"Well, at the beginning I didn't have any idea about what I could expect, but after the introduction of the course, after knowing how the classes and the professor's way to explain will be, I think it is easier to explain in this way: ´I fell in love´".

"I expect I could learn the theories analytically because I am very good at memorizing, but it is very difficult for me to interpret".

"It could be useful in my personal future projects".

 "I expect I could learn new concepts. To annex a new learning that can be useful not only to pass the course but the everyday life".

GROUP B

"It could be fully functional and could help me to have the necessary knowledge as a practitioner".

"I just expect that the proposal could be reached though the subjects is pure theory; it is not compulsory to be boring or tedious".

"Without having information about the subject, I have high expectations, I am a theory lover, I think about the authors that we will know and it is exciting".

"Make the most of it the most I could and finish it with a good score".

"It could be possible to make a content integration".

 "I think it will be a very rigorous semester because of the texts we have to read, we will work too much, even I find the way that we will work a bit relaxing".

"I do not know the subject, I expect to know what it is about and how it could be useful in psychology".

"Define myself as a person; understand through theories my own being, my personality to understand myself".

"It scares me a bit the fact that it is a lot of information, but I trust that with organization, all will be fine".

GROUP C

"A semester is beginning; I expect to study successfully".

"The subject looks very interesting to me and very useful… I expect that I could always be entertained and that the topics surprise and interest me".

"It entertains me though it sounds like fun, I expect each class makes me feel a desire to be, and it intrigues me".

"Actually, I don't have anything to expect. I know if it is in the study plan, it is because it will be useful, and I know it is good and interesting".

"Both, course and subject could be interesting".

"Subject itself broadens the panorama (about the topic)".

"The classes could be very interesting and they won't fall in the routine to avoid boredom…"

"I can learn all the basic concepts; I can identify them in the everyday life and that I can do contrasts and relate".

    c) The students' expectations about the group

As part of a group, I assume that every participant expects something about the others. My intention in inquiring is to know what they expect from their classmates in order to make public what is important to everyone. In general terms, they ask for respect, patience, collaboration and motivation to participate.

GROUP A

"Personally, I expect to integrate myself with the group because I am studying the second semester again, and now I will be with them all the classes. I expect to learn from them".

"The group always cooperates, since it is a group that hardly participate".

"Respect to everyone".

"Have intention to learn beyond the class".

"Patience".

"Based on my previous experience, I expect to finish the course looking like the worst person in the world and being sometimes despised for reading for the class since I was the only one who read, even though thanks to the professor now I know all the group have to respect and have consideration to my particular way of being".

GROUP B

"It could be cooperative".

"I hope this year we can be in harmony".

"The group could be mature, it can focus more on welfare's group and they have new visions about learning interactions".

"They could be participative in all activities and it could have an innovative and purposeful attitude to improve and make the class better; it maintains its own compromise to read to create an active, critic and fun atmosphere in front of the course".

"We could work as a team, all of us could work and struggle, etc."

GROUP C

"We could work as a team in a supportive and patience environment, that all of us participate in class sharing our thoughts and feelings and contributing to the dynamism of the class".

"We could read, make an entertaining class, we could discuss and we could make agreements".

"We could read or promote good classes".

"It could be an environment of solidarity and respect".

"All of us could debate about the topic of the class; all of us could pay attention to the class. It could work in a harmonic group".

"Actually, I don't expect too much, I just want in this occasion it could work well with the teams, I even prefer to work alone".

d) The students' expectations about Dora

As a teacher, I am part of each group, whether I like it or not. I have a special participation in the group. From the students' perspective, I am a person who is flexible and open. I am a guide who explains the topics well. The students expect the following from me:

GROUP A

"Patience because we are a big group and sometimes this makes the relationship difficult".

"I expect understanding".

"She could not be very rigid; she could be sociable, flexible and fun".

"She could be a professor, not only a texts exhibitor".

"Only that she could be concerned about the group".

"She can have a good relationship with the group".

"The openness she is showing could be present through the course, similarly, the meticulous organization that she has. I have expectations as if it were a first love that you know will be good forever".

GROUP B

"She could be sufficiently prepared to teach, she applies techniques and examples"

"She could guide and help us to have a better critical thinking".

"I created good expectations, many ex-students told me: excellent professor, you will love her, she is a very good professor, and with these recommendations you can expect a lot from her".

"She could be flexible and strict; due to the way I work, it is better when it is strict. I expect she can understand me about many things and I expect, principally, she could share her knowledge and experience".

"She could be tolerant with her grades and review criteria"

"Both students and professor could explain all the topics".

"She could proportionate an environment of respect among the participants, and she could give clear explanations and use everyday examples".

GROUP C

"I like Dora because she allows us to make decisions, and she tries to follow our learning style".

"I expect that she could be tranquil and relaxed like now".

"She could be an accessible professor, which wakes up our interest about the subject".

"She could make a good student-professor relationship".

"She isn't a demanding strict person, and she could be accessible when I have a doubt or something like this".

"She could submerge us into the knowledge of the course".

e) Learning style

In addition to accepting that every student has his/her own expectations, I assume that everyone has their own learning needs and a very personal learning style. Inquiring about this gives me the chance to consider multiple possibilities; for me, every learning need and every personal style is a chance to create a new way to teach.

GROUP A

"Paying a lot of attention to the class and making notes. Reading doesn't work to me, but highlighting main ideas helps me".

"Listening, studying in small groups".

"Making Power Point slides".

"Talking or interchanging ideas, though I get distracted very easy".

"Every day, every moment, but above all, asking questions".

"Writing".

GROUP B

"I read sometimes before the class, and sometimes at the end of the period"

"Learning, to me, is almost a ritual, it is slow because I need to organize and write my abstracts, quotes and charts".

"With a previous reading; an explanation, a discussion about the topic studied and at the end a second reading".

"Talking about readings".

"Through reading and a summary of the class; classmates' presentations are a good way to introduce topics under the condition that students and professor participate"

"I always believe that my studying and learning style were wrong, until I came to the University. I could understand that every person has their own style; then I understood that my style was not wrong, it only was weird. I like to listen to the class and give my opinion or give my point of view in such a way that when I read the book I can understand what it tells, the opposite way does not work to me".

GROUP C

"Reading after class; having an organized and clear notebook and a highlighted book".

"Listening to explanations and reinforcing them with texts; I like that someone tells me the topics and then prove them through reading".

"I use a method, read at the end of the period, it is more relaxing to me, but I prefer read before class because it helps to have a better class".

"That I would like the subject and that the professor would not have a traditional teaching style".

"Normally, I adjust myself to the situation, I like to listen and give my opinion"

"When I am alone and I am reading aloud, it is easier".

f) Students' everyday life

As I mentioned, teaching is not something separated from students' and professors' lives. When we are in the classroom, the rest of our personal lives do not disappear during this time. It is present in many forms. Making students' thoughts public is the opportunity to express part of their interests and everyday lives beyond the class. This includes their relations with their families, their worries, their boy/girlfriends, their economic situation, work, etc. Sometimes, these experiences can influence students' performances and participation in class. My intention is not to invest a lot of time trying to understand and change these aspects of their lives. However, writing about these aspects of their lives allows us to share and think differently.

GROUP A

"My parents work and sometimes I have to assume a mother role and take care of little sister".

"My attitude from studying".

"My difficulty could be my lack of time, I have two jobs though I devise to read and study, it is very hard to me".

"Maybe economy at home, the cost of copies, buses, prints, everything has a price and sometimes I´m delayed in my homework because I don´t have the things I need to do it".

"The only situation is I'm moving to a new house, but it'll be solved very soon".

"My job; I work in a restaurant because I have to pay my studies and most of my needs".

"My parents' illnesses, sometimes I have to care my little brother and take some home responsibilities".

"I work in the afternoon, it could interfere with some homework, I do my best to avoid this".

"I have a difficulty to listen when people speak softly; I expect that always people speak clearly and with an appropriate tone of voice".

GROUP B

"I am in a state of transition, I am moving away from home, I'm going to live with my son; it could be a very hard stage".

"Well, I am worried because I didn't pass two subjects and I don't want to fail again".

"It could be my family and job duties".

"Yes, I think one is I travel a lot".

"Maybe the fact that I have difficulties to express myself, but I am looking for a solution".

"I am living an emotional confusion at this moment, sometimes it saddens me".

"I am very distracted, when we talk about a topic, many disconnected ideas come from my mind, something reminds me something and sometimes I get lost in it".

GROUP C

"I can be lazy, but this is not an obstacle".

"At present, I have communication problems with my father, it makes me feel bad; but until now any external school problem has made me feel distracted; I hope I don't have anything enough strong to distract me".

"Being stressed and pressured, time for the other subjects".

"Yes, Sometimes I can't sleep well because of my baby, also I am used to be distracted".

Topic 2: Class Notes

a) Written thoughts

I love promoting a personal dialogue with every student. Asking each to write whatever s/he is thinking during every class is not common for students. For some, it is a very difficult task. For others, it is easy and fun. Whatever the case, it is an invitation to share with me and with themselves all the spontaneous ideas they have in every moment. All the simple, irrelevant and non-interesting ideas are part of my interest. What are the things that students think during the classes?

GROUP A

"I have been writing a story lately; one of my characters is a sculptor, so this activity was very significant for me".

"This makes me think how often reality seems to be a kind of fog: it doesn't matter how close you get, it always seems to go farther…Unfortunately, we don't get to know this fog completely. But perhaps it is that what gives meaning to life: the fact that there is always something to know or discover. Something infinite and uncertain".

"All my life, I have had the intention to show the world what I think, but my point of view has been ignored. Particularly speaking, I'm a hermit, I love my family, I love chatting with my parents and siblings. The fact of interacting with my boyfriend and his ideas contrary and arbitrary to mine broadened my conception of the world and society"

"Actually, I don't have anything to write about today".

"Actually, I feel that I needed to focus on the class more. Sometimes I think about personal things and this has affected me; I can't pay all my attention to the class. However, I have concentrated more during these last classes".

" ???!!! Something I didn't share".

"I call it "Facebook Effect" because it has happened to me that when we chat, texts are not always interpreted in the same way. This is mainly because our writing, including spelling and punctuation marks, affect the text. I think communication is important to interact".

"If I decide to end my life to leave a positive useful seal, I think it would be a good option. There was a man who decided to teach his government system a lesson by sacrificing himself in front of a government building after suffering humiliation. This provoked the rage of a country, and other countries joined the riot to get free from the oppression of their totalitarian regimes. This man was metaphorically called 'the wick that ignited all Middle East'. I see him as a new hero of our society. In spite of having committed a bad action as suicide, something really positive was unleashed in the world because actions like this one against governments were copied by other countries".

"Today, I finally felt I was at university!!! Voices, opinions, arguments, stances, situations, stories. I want to listen and I can resign myself to believe that there is nothing to say. I wish my professors opened these doors, and not only taught and guided only because they have to. Nothing outstanding happened, only something different that became extraordinary".

"It's evident that people have intrinsic and extrinsic problems and conflicts. However, there exist favorable, agreeable and positive situations around us that motivate

us to take action and raise awareness. Not only do we have to take that problematic side into account, but also the values that we obtain from the positive conditions around us".

"During our whole life, we act like architects since we build many things: relations with our friends, couple, family, we build our own objectives and ideals. And from this point, we can create our own reality. Taking a perspective of a theory according to a particular situation and then modifying it seems more interesting than focusing on only one rigid and constant theory without the possibility of modifying it or changing approaches".

"I think human beings are responsible for what we do in our life, but we are determined by social factors such as violence, discrimination, drug trafficking, etc. Society expects you to follow an adequate pattern of customs to live well and be a productive person. However, it's necessary to follow this pattern to do things in the correct way since each of us acts on their own impulse and personal interests, as far as we take our responsibility into account".

"I feel a little nervous about the exam. The first thing I thought was that I would arrive sleepy that day because I had to work the previous night. What I do thank is to have different dynamics in each class; thus, I can remember many of the concepts we saw"
"Death, wisdom, experience, style, religion, freedom, meditation, karma, planning, body, society, standards, destiny, culture, desire, detachment, soul, steps, limit, rebirth, learning, happiness".

"Thus, questions will never end. Why is this so? Why? Why? Why? These questions and the interest for answering them make science continuously updating".

"The first thing that comes to my mind is my lack of punctuality. The last thing I'm thinking is that I am a little feminist. PS: I love the dynamics of the classes".

"For some reason, this week reminded me of the series "The last Air Bender": a 12- year-old boy, the last one of his tribe, is able to find interior peace and save the world"

"Today, I don't feel very well; I'm sleepy and I can't think very well. I get easily distracted".

"Society would not exist without us (individuals) because we were committed to limit and 'harm' ourselves".

"Thank you for making my day happy and activating my thinking so early".

"Today in particular, I feel apathetic; and I know this is not important in this class. However, I felt that the first part of the class was good; perhaps another day I would have participated more. Maybe, there is something that you forget in class: the individuality of each person, the mood and other personal things that can diminish our performance; on the other hand, we could do catharsis during the activities".

"Perhaps I have never felt the same for a long time, as when I traveled and I was in a church at the top of a very high mountain; the landscape and silence made me feel very calmed and in peace. I felt that my problems had a positive sense".

"It reminded me of the polemic about the building of the underpass on Montejo Av. It was so evident how most people were against this, even the children of the politicians who belong to the PRI party felt frustrated because they could not express their opinion. People feel helpless since the government uses violence to suppress society. And the injustice that many people felt originated hatred and controversy among the citizens. As regards drug trafficking, I remembered the movie I saw some days ago: "Miss Beating"; it seems that people for whom killing is part of their life are not aware of their acts, their fault and the others' rights. It's unbelievable how people can reach this point".

"During this class, I thought about a friend a lot. Yesterday, she told me that she was depressed, so I related this with the fact of being negative towards the world. Despite having everything, she thinks that everybody is wrong, and things like that. I think that her view about the world makes her see the negative things, but not the positive side of things. I would like to know what makes her think that way and why she feels like that so often"

"I will finish with something I forgot to say to the group. It's a Chinese proverb that I like very much: "Before changing the world, go round your kitchen three times". As I said, it could be simple, but I think you can learn from a personal point of view".

"No ideas or comments that are good to read come to my mind right now. However, I think that does not mean that I don't have anything to say…A part of the movie "V for Vendetta" came to my mind: Mr. V says something like this: symbols are nothing until a person gives them a meaning".

"The class made me think about our current society. We complain about society, government, people, institutions…but many don't think that, first, you have to change yourself. We cannot demand anything from the external world if we do not cooperate. We can talk about thousands of negative things about society, but the times we talk about the positive things each of us does are few".

"I think my life was commented in class. I take the idea that things are spontaneous. I want to read 'The Turbot'!!! I apologize if I didn't pay much attention today, but in 48 hours I have slept only 3".

"It reminded me of an anecdote, giving marriage as an example: My brother is 27 years old. One day, my mom was chatting with another woman who asked her "How old is your son?" My mother answered "27". The woman replied: "Is he married?" My mother answered that he wasn't. Surprised, the woman said "He isn't married! Then, she asked

about me. My mom told her that I was 20, and the woman got surprised again because I was not married either. I mean, society leads your decisions".

"I will take this opportunity to comment that I didn't do my homework because I misunderstood the instructions. However, I would like to mention that I did read the chapter…"

"Today we tested our learning and I failed…well…it's a joke. I remember many theories, and I have an idea about others, but I confuse the authors. I worked with my team very well; we helped each other to remember. I must recognize that we did not make many mistakes. I only have to study and review a little more".

"Are we really the owners of our decisions?"

"Is it necessary perhaps to be more human and less psychologists to die from love?"

"I'm redundant today. We have to be ecological".

"I would like to get rid of my emotions. I love trying to get close to what is real, but we don't know anything. Today, I am living between boredom and the shame of belonging to an animal species like the human race. That is why I would like to be an elephant, but a wild one, and not let anybody hurt me even though the torture continues, but within the little freedom I could get" (Leonora Carrington). When I saw a man dressed up as a tree giving his leaves to write peace messages and let them fly, I thought about the importance of consciousness. Maybe I can't express everything I think. FAIL".

GROUP B

"It is interesting to know all the new things that are related to food, medicine and economy; but in my case, seeing how they are misused since they benefit only a few people

makes me sad. The fact of seeing how we "need" things only for the purpose of belonging

to this modern world also makes me sad".

"I did not like the dynamic. I expected more power point presentations".

"I got distracted for a second since I had an appointment in mind I had immediately

after class. Fortunately, everything is clear now, and I am just waiting for the second

session".

"I feel a little identified with these concepts. I felt well in class and I felt it was very

productive. I apply these concepts to my life, but I prefer to keep this private" .

"Today, a certain degree of anxiety is truly felt because of an exam, personal

reasons, etc."

"And here, as a confession, I am more motivated to read because I do not want to

be excluded without participating in class".

"I found the fact of sharing our feelings and thoughts interesting because it is a way

to improve the class".

"As regards the topic of destiny, it reminded me a phrase by William Shakespeare

'Destiny shuffles the cards, but we are the ones who play'".

"It reminds me a documentary about biological bases of behavior. It explained how

brain 'freeways' change and how new ways to see the world are created. Since they are at

a biological level, they can explain how beliefs such as racism are preserved during

generations".

"I could not concentrate very much in class".

"After seeing the theories that make emphasis on the biological aspects, I

remembered myself and my environment since I am very different from my mom and my

siblings, although I have lived with them all my life. However, every time I do something

different, my mom says that I look like my father and/or the Carrillo family, although I have not lived with my aunts and I rarely see my father".

"At this moment, I have many things on my mind, but I will share the most important one. The most important question on my mind is: Isn't it an absolute truth?"

"Today's class was interrupted by a sham. I think the objective of the program is excellent; I find selling glasses at an accessible price great, but as university students, as people that are being trained, we should not allow that a group of people come to our Faculty to insult our intelligence by telling us that they are part of our federal institutions and that their glasses have all those benefits at such a low price".

"Actually, I do not understand many of the things that you are proposing, and I found this class a little confusing, especially the activity in which we had to draw in groups because I did not have the concepts very clear, but I will make an effort to learn them."

"We started today's class with a reflection about how we feel the class dynamics, about some suggestions, and about the course in general. In my opinion, I like this course a lot; I do not like missing it. I find this course very interesting and the dynamic is ideal to understand the subject and make the most of it".

"I really like the circle of ideas that we do after each mid-term exam because our opinions are taken into account and all of us share ideas and options that can improve or be more beneficial with the class".

GROUP C

"I do not feel so nervous or worried about how the exam will be"

"There were also some moments in class when I thought about songs, well, one in particular, because I am in love. I agree with Julia on the well-known and commented fact that everybody thinks differently".

"This class made me think about the things I have done, and I remembered when people told me what they thought about me. I have heard that I am often very impulsive. I am not sure how bad that could be; I have even seen myself that way".

"This class fascinated me; I like talking about "the other side" of things. In one of our moments, I asked my best friend to draw a dog, and she did this: △ hahaha, it was very funny, and we still remember it. My mind flew to fabulous memories of my friends!! Excellent class!! ☺"

"Straying from the topic, I would like to apologize for my constant yawning during class. It is not that I find it boring (on the contrary, I find it very interesting), but because I did not sleep very well last night and now I cannot do my best and I feel tired. I am also going through a difficult moment".

"I found the feedback after each class very interesting. I liked how all or most of the class participated and shared their ideas, and how the professor listened to and respected them. I feel I am committed to the course and the subject to doing my part, participating and giving ideas. Rather than an obligation, it is a pleasure, without forgetting that the professor motivates me to do my best during the session".

"I do not know why Dora asked us if it is possible to die from love…but too many different ideas came to my mind"

"I think that people should take a time to rediscover themselves in the world, become aware of themselves: people who hurt or who are simply in "stand-by" are not aware of themselves; they do not know what the world is, and therefore, do not care about it".

"Definitely, I want to read "The Turbot" and "Persepolis".

"Uff, Proffesor! Today, you made me think too much and I think it is enough for today".

"Today the class was calm. I liked talking about the exam and how the class was given. I did introspection with this activity; well, I reflected on how much the course and the school itself have changed me. Apart from that, I am thinking to make summaries of the chapters we studied, so it will be easier for me to study".

"All this reminds me my dad because he is a depressive person and tends to say that he is silly, stupid…not to mention other things".

"This makes me think about the world we live in, actually, in our society: each of us looks for their own benefit; people are even envious instead of being happy for the others. We are very selfish and stupid because we spend our life suffering! We just think about how to get more material things and we often forget to enjoy life".

"Since I was a child, I have trusted people, sometimes blindly. Many people judge me because of that, because I am naïve or because I do not want to see reality, i.e. you cannot trust anybody else, but yourself…I have always found that the idea that everybody is bad or that today's world has been corrupted absurd. I am mentioning all this because I am studying psychology and I realize that I am not the only one who believes in human kindness".

"I consider myself to be a humanistic and positive person; and I feel well with myself".

"I remembered many life experiences in which I have made bad decisions. I thought how I could have prevented them. But even though I knew I was wrong, I took those experiences and learned from them in order not to repeat them".

"It made me think of a special cousin of mine who seems not to be motivated by anything. He is always pointed out as the lazy, bad or stupid one. Obviously, that influences on the way he looks. Nobody sees him in a different way or thinks if he is happy or if that is his way of being or if he feels well or stable. What will happen to him when he does not do what the others dictate or say? The fact of understanding him is very interesting because he looks so neutral and normal that it seems he does not care about anything. Sometimes people do not like him, but it is the truth. Do all of us have to be equal, move and think the same way? No, and I want to discover what makes my cousin be as he is".

"I did not find anything interesting in the texts since I did not understand them, and I trusted I could know more about them in class. And so it was".

"I felt that today's class was rather a talk. That was excellent, I liked it very much"

"Now, I have a love dilemma. I do not know if I should tell the girl I like about my feelings or not. She is a very good friend but a very weird person, so I do not know how she would react. I do not know what she could think or how she would perceive my words. I have no idea what will happen until it happens. I do not even know how much risk I am taking. I do not know what will happen, but I think that in order to find it out, I have to do it, even though I am scared and uncertain. I do not know what will happen, but I want to do it. I need to clarify my thoughts and act more and think less, so what is on my mind will become true when I say it orally".

Questions

At the end of the course students have the opportunity to re-read their own ideas and re-think them. I invite students to reflect on the texts and process of writing, asking some questions. What do they say about the process of writing?

a) What are the most interesting ideas about your writing?

At this moment, free writing takes on a new meaning. Students have to read their own written thoughts and think about them and then answer some questions. The first question is about the most interesting ideas they discover in their texts.

GROUP A

"I express many of my own doubts and concerns in my writing. I tried to end my ideas, but I did not finish the paragraphs. I imagine that, as I thought so many things, I only wrote what was easier for me to write. Thus, I did not have to write about other topics I was interested in in detail".

"The change in my prose class after class. At the beginning, I limited myself to make a summary of what we had seen in class. Later, I added more dispersed thoughts; in some cases, they were not related to the class. The final reflections were complemented by ideas, memories and even wishes. It calls my attention how flexible an activity like this can be since you give us complete freedom to accomplish it".

"As anything you learn, the examples I mentioned in some of my reflections must be applicable to daily life and intertwined with previous ideas. In that way, they are really useful and more understandable".

"What I said about fog could represent the reality we live in, the truth we do not see; that was a very interesting insight. I did not remember many of the things I had written; when I read my writing I saw myself in the past, my ideas when I was a child, my frustrated plans, my complicated present life, and my final reconciliation with Freud and

his ideas. Besides, I felt this process helped me a lot, it was like a conversation with myself through time".

"The way I combined things (school and personal things, my opinions, etc.) The fact of reading things I no longer remember and the fact of criticizing a theory in a way I had never thought (for better or worse) also surprised me. It also called my attention how fast I changed my opinion".

GROUP B

"I think it would be my writing style. At the beginning, many of my reflections were not very coherent; it seems I just wrote my stream of consciousness. I also noticed that I wrote questions in my last reflections. This makes me see how I improved my writing since I did not only accept what I read, but thought about it more critically".

"I emphasized the social aspect of the individual as much as I could. I used cultural terms in my reflections because I think that I am very interested in the present, social and political fields (separated from Psychology)".

"Many things attract my attention. The first is that, influenced by Dora's opinions, I always wrote what, from my opinion, the theory lacked. I also expressed that I liked some authors I do not like now. In my first reflections, I talked about the dynamics, the rest were based on critics".

"Let's say that, at the beginning, I wrote more critically, expressing my own opinions about the theoreticians; that is why my first reflections are richer in content. But with time, I felt that my reflections became more superficial".

"That I always related the class with my life or with something I remembered"

"It called my attention the need to write in a good style and to create literature in each reflection. Social influence is important to me. Psychoanalysis is present for me in some of my reflections. My critical capacity has increased".

GROUP C

"The emotion I felt when I read some of my reflections: when I was interested in a topic and it made me think a lot, I wrote trying to express that enthusiasm. On many occasions, I mentioned that I felt that I took a blindfold off my eyes, and my overlook about things changed".

"That most of my ideas remain the same; but above all, it called my attention the fact that I wrote some anecdotes or thoughts different from what we were studying; I also wrote about my friends and my mother. I also saw that I FULFILLED THE OBJECTIVES of my reflections very well since I expressed all, or at least, many of my thoughts, just in the same way I perceived them".

"It called my attention the fact that some ideas in my reflections changed; other ideas became part of my thinking; others did not change at all. I realized that some of the strongest ideas that form my personality did not change at all; I mention this in my first, last and many of my reflections".

"I remember that it was hard for me to write down all my ideas because my mind is faster than my hand".

"The first thing that called my attention is that my handwriting is TERRIBLE! By reading my notes, you can see that I loved classes such as the ones about psychoanalysis and Constructionism, among others. They really made me reflect".

"What called my attention the most was my writing style since I use words that I do not regularly use. It also called my attention how I see the theories in detail and how I disagree with them".

"That on some occasions, I didn't have the slightest idea of what to write. Maybe I wrote something just for the sake of writing; although there were many interesting things to write about".

"That in the first class notes, my writing style was different. So it seems it is not me who wrote them".

b) Which ideas are different for you now?

The second question refers to whether the students have some new ideas or whether they think something different now.

GROUP A

"My ideas are not different from the ones I wrote, but they are different from the ideas I had before taking this course. First of all, I realized and understood that all currents have a raison d'être; second, that they are not good or bad, but that they agree or disagree on certain aspects".

"I thought I would get a precise definition of personality at the end of the course. This was not possible despite the fact this was the most entertaining course, and from which I got a very useful learning to continue my literary projects".

"I do not know exactly what changed, but I feel I opened myself to more currents that I barely took into account, currents that now call my attention and make me wonder about many things".

"In my opinion, there are many concepts, thoughts and ideas that have changed. All the theories studied have offered us the opportunity to observe human behavior and thought from different points of view. The panorama of Psychology and of the complex meaning of the word 'personality' that I have now are much wider than at the beginning of the course. I agree with many ideas about the different theoretical perspectives, but at the same time, there are others I do not like very much. Besides, many of the questions I expressed in my reflections at the end of each class have been answered; just a few of them have been left hanging in the air".

"I do not have any different idea. I have the same ideas I wrote at the beginning of the course".

"Absolutely all of them. Maybe we have not studied each theory in much detail, but I do not have now a rough knowledge of them (just knowing their concept): I understand the 'dynamic' of each theory. Undoubtedly, the theory about which I changed my opinion the most was psychoanalysis".

"I think some of my ideas have changed: how to see and criticize the authors. I think I used to criticize them in a very superficial and hardly supported way. I also believe that the authors created these theories based on their own life experiences".

GROUP B

"Maybe now, after studying a whole semester, not only Personality Theories, but other subjects, particularly Theories and Systems, I do not feel pressed as I did at the beginning. I am not sitting in a comparative or judging chair. Everything I saw was integrating, interesting and contributing".

"At the beginning, I thought that I had to adopt a stance or an approach by force, but now I realize that human complexity can be understood and explained from different points of view and approaches. In the same way, I realized that, as the professor mentioned, 'no theory is innocent'; all of them have something that is refutable and at the same time, they contribute to understand human endeavors a lot".

"The ideas themselves I wrote are the same I have now. The difference is that now I have a wider panorama of each of them and I compare each other and look for the way to complement each other. For example, as regards psychoanalysis, I expressed my ideas about its determinism and the way its influence continues until now; now I take into account the particular way it influences on each author".

"I found an interesting point: I used to identify myself with some of the authors during the semester. I clouded my mind thinking that there wasn't anything better. At the end, I found that none of them covered what I used to call 'concept integrity', but that they just collaborated. I think what is different now is this capacity to criticize and/or analyze

many points we are interested in in life, and not only to be content with what is set, but go beyond it".

"Above all, I used to have favorite approaches; however, now I think I could not say that there is a better approach. In the same way, my idea about many approaches has changed lot".

"None. Now that I reread my reflections, I realize that I thought carefully what I was going to write since it is important for me to delve into my reflections. I think that is why my ideas do not change".

"I do not magically agree with each wonderful theory created; now I am able to see what motivated an author to propose their theory. I am able to notice the mistakes through the authors' impulses. I know that no theory is able to explain personality, but I prefer Psychoanalysis".

GROUP C

"In my reflection of August 15th, I wrote that proofs highlight the bad side of each person, but I think differently now: I think that they are a tool to classify people".

"Well, I did not see a big change. Knowing authors and theories helped me understand the classes and thoughts".

"Essence does not change because we are the same".

"Well, I do not really think my ideas have changed. All my comments along the course complement to get a bigger self".

"When I was writing, I felt I was writing incoherent things; but now that I reread what I wrote, I feel it makes sense and has a lot of content. I also know that I am more critical to evaluate situations. Perhaps I also changed my opinion about some concepts I agreed or disagreed with".

      c) What is your learning and what changed in you through writing?

The third question refers to their learning and changes through writing.

GROUP A

"I think I learned to order and select my ideas; sometimes I had many ideas and I did not know which one I should write first. I also learned to write concise reflections: sometimes I wrote a lot and I did not know how to finish. So the reflections helped me to improve these aspects a lot".

"I realized that I always try to look for the good or positive side of the theories or ideas. Although I said they did not call my attention or that I did not agree with them, I tried to find something I liked about all of them".

"I think I learned to find myself, to look at myself and deduce my way of thinking. We usually interpreted other characters. Now, these reflections help me to have an idea of myself and of the authors, those I liked and those I did not like so much. I feel that I criticize more what I read".

"As I do not have a good short-term memory, rereading my ideas helped me a lot. I had forgotten things that were really important for me. I learned that the writing exercise helps and supports my memory a lot".

"Writing reflections and things like this are usually difficult for me; I feel that I need more time to do it and I do not know how to start. It is as if I want to say many things, but I cannot manage to organize myself and write what I want to. Sometimes, I write something different from what I wanted to say, or sometimes I write very little, as I did in my reflections. Though it might not look like it, I learned something in each reflection I wrote. I hope I can improve my writing because it is very necessary, even more in this major".

"I think I understood my way of thinking, my sporadic thoughts about what was happening or that crossed my mind in each of the classes".

"By reading everything I wrote, I realized that my spelling is not good and that I have to improve it. But somehow, my ideas are good and meaningful. Talking about what I read helps me to organize my ideas, and that is good since I tend to get the authors confused. It also made me reflect a lot; I think this made me a critical thinker. It can be said that the process of writing helped me to know myself, and how I think and believe".

GROUP B

"Very superficially, what I first notice is the importance of punctuation marks. Even though it was me who wrote the reflections, it was difficult to understand them. As regards this particular process, I learned to be more critical, to see, listen and read something, think where it came from, why it was originated and how real and applicable it is".

"The fact to fully express myself: every time I wrote, I had more and more ideas to express. I realized that".

"Above all, thanks to the writing process, now it is easier for me to order my ideas and finish them. Many times, I have many ideas 'floating on my mind', but it is a little difficult for me to put them in order and express them".

"The only and simple fact of seeing our own opinion before experiences"

"The fact of getting feedback from ideas forgotten on my head but expressed on paper is very important. Writing my thoughts and reviewing them later to verify my improvement or sedentary learning was very useful. It was also useful to see myself some months ago".

GROUP C

"What can I say! It was just what I wanted; I had already decided to start writing to feel relief".

"It is very good; you suddenly write something and then your mind starts creating new ideas, or you suddenly have an insight. It promotes reflection".

"That it is possible to have a better performance of learning: when we write, we express our opinions, and at the end, when I read them, I can see the qualitative changes. I also consider writing a more authentic review".

"I learned that it is very difficult for me to focus on exploring what I think or feel and write it at the same time".

"My self-assessment by reviewing all my class notes, and comparing it to myself as I am now. Also, learning is expressing what I had understood in each class".

d) Make a final reflection and write some notes about your process of writing.

The last request is for some final reflections about the process of writing and how students make the most of it.

GROUP A

"It is the best way to learn about oneself".

"Many of the things I wrote were a product of a combination of experiences, ideas and knowledge that were somehow related to the topics we analyzed in class. I think each reflection is different and its richness varies according to my interest, motivation and knowledge of the topic. Perhaps it would be good for me to try to give more profound comments and opinions in order to get a greater transcendence. During the writing process, I sometimes feel limited, and others inspired; I have to take advantage of these latter moments to achieve the so expected profoundness".

"One reflection about this exercise is that I have a strong commitment to myself, but I still have to fulfill it. By rescuing these ideas, stances and dreams, I feel tranquil and committed. I feel I grew; I could see how I did it rather than how much. I think that is very important, maybe it is the most important thing since I can see my own evolution".

"I do find everything related to writing and developing ideas hard, but I know I can do it, even though I take long; something will come up… ha, ha. Well, in general, that is how I did it during the semester, but I liked doing it a lot".

"Sometimes, it is difficult for me to express my ideas orally; writing them is easier. Sometimes, I had many ideas on my mind and I didn't know where I should start from. On other occasions, I had no idea what to write, my mind went blank, and even though I tried to think about what we saw in class, no thought came out. Even though this .happened, it was rare"

"Personally speaking, I write every day since I was a little girl because I like reading what I used to write; and I used to do it in a different way because the way of writing, speaking and thinking always change. I think writing and reading are customs that should be shared by more people".

"Writing processes are developed with time; writing helps you clarify your ideas. To focus on what you do helps to write what you think and feel".

"I think the writing process helped me to see what I think, how I express myself and what changes about my way of thinking as time passes by. It is interesting to see how somebody adapts to new ideas with time and how these ideas change or not".

GROUP B

"In general, I find this activity useful since by rereading everything we wrote, we can realize how much we have improved and how our way of thinking changed. Even though the reflection exercise was difficult, in the end, it is a characteristic that I cannot avoid. As regards the course, I found it very interesting and I liked it a lot".

"It's not very flattering, I think I did not write the best of my thoughts, but they may have changed in these 3 months".

"The fact of not including the name of the theory at the moment of writing was weird. Sometimes, I mentioned the authors' name, but sometimes I didn't. So, by reading them today, I could identify which theory I was talking about. That was very gratifying because now I realize that I improved my learning. I take the most significant learning of each author; always taking the context of each theory into account. One more time, the idea that Psychology is multiparadigmatic comes to my mind just because human beings are very weird and complex".

"I liked the process of writing my own ideas and expressing them. It forced me to think (it was the most difficult part), but I think that I learned a lot".

"After reading all my confusing writing, I see that my way of writing about the theories was constant. Perhaps".

"In my opinion, I really enjoyed writing my opinions and see how my ideas changed with time. I like writing a lot; only because there was not enough time during the class, I was not very profound about the theories".

"I think it was a little worrying, at least for me, because I get distracted. Whatever it was written, it expresses the essence of the topic we saw. So I agree since it evidences our attention and participation".

GROUP C

"Each of my reflections about the classes helped me a lot. I have learned a lot during this wonderful writing process; I say "wonderful" because I love it. When I read

everything I have written, I have a weird feeling because it is weird to read yourself; it is not something you are used to do. Well, I take everything I wrote".

"Well, about the writing process, I can conclude that it was something very important for me in order to be more analytical and critical".

"I feel that doing all this has affected my learning (even now I feel very well). Undoubtedly, I love it".

"I liked them a lot! I had fun when I read them! Writing? Writing my ideas and feelings was enriching and relaxing. I'll keep on doing it because I watched a video that made me believe in paranormal things more, even though a professor told me that is only magical thinking".

"About this, I can tell you that in this class we are motivated to say what we think, to doubt and to believe in whatever we want".

"This activity surprised me a lot!!!"

"It was very nice to reread everything".

"After rereading all my explanations, I think I would write them again. Maybe I could have been more critical in some of them, but I liked the idea of comparing them with my life and my experiences as well as with my society since this writing activity gave me a better understanding of each theory".

Topic 3: The whole process of the course

a) What are the general characteristics of the course (class as a process)

When I ask them if they could see the course as a process, how could they describe it? My intention is to know what they can say about the course as a whole, as something integrated. As I described above, we have several occasions to talk about our process together, about what is happening among us at the end of the course. As a form of feedback, I take up again this issue, and those are the students' perspective.

GROUP A

"As a consistent and reflexive process, in which we could give ourselves the opportunity to listen to points of view, to provide knowledge about every reviewed topic, helping us in our training".

"It is a very different learning process in which you do not know how you will gain knowledge every time that a new topic is reviewed; I mean, it is something out of the routine and it is always interesting. You see new ways to learn and you meet many other people's points of view, and they supplement you".

"As if I were to prepare a cake: knowledge as ingredients, dynamics as the way to prepare it, and at the end you have a good recipe".

"The process we go through is reciprocal, between the student and the professor. If the second one shows commitment, the first one will give her enthusiasm in the class, and this will motivate the professor to continue her work. I think I did it very well because the course met my interest and the professor facilitated my learning".

"I don't understand the process very well, but I can see it as if the school were a process to become a psychologist, right? So, this subject is part of it".

"The instructive process looks to me very complete according to my knowledge level and the multiple abilities that I have reached; it fulfills the goals of the subject as regards our professional education. From my point of view and my experiences with other course, the process looks to me very rich, about meaningful learning because it has a big repertory of teaching techniques, very attractive, motivating and new. The schemes and routines were totally changed; these contribute to our interest and attention and commit us to work".

"As a generative and regenerative process; regenerative, because as a psychology student or a student in general, by listening to new ideas, new concepts, the self I used to be stops, and analyzes all the past and integrates the present to continue forward in order to nourish more who I am; and Generative, because it generates new ways to see life, new perspectives".

GROUP B

"At the beginning, it looked very complicate because it is very extensive and could be laborious; however, when you are in it, you notice that it is very easy and entertaining. In spite the fact it is very long, you don't feel the time passing. At the beginning, it was a little confusing, but I think that, at the end, it reached its objectives".

"Maybe it is a process of self-discovering".

"It is like an egg. First, you are inside, then, to be born, you need some conditions. When the egg hatches, the development process starts".

"It is like something that shapes and questions your ideas and opinions, and little by little, they will be substituted by different ideas and opinions".

"It is like starlight seen from different places in the universe… every person has a different version about the course and the theory"

"The course was always fresh, I mean, it was never monotonous; the class integrated the students and the professor's contributions since the students participated hand in hand, and the professor gave her own opinion. In itself, the class stimulates our inner critic area, analysing every issue and integrating knowledge in such a way that it opens frontiers and makes our thoughts more flexible. From the beginning, the course offers a different way to work that includes all the participants (without a previous knowledge)".

GROUP C

"As part of a personal growth, because of the teaching style and the classmates' comments; as a process in which the students and the professor work together and the learning is meaningful".

"In my view, it is an original and different learning process from those I used to know".

"As a really constructive one; a dynamic process in which all participants contribute with something interesting and meaningful".

"Information (book) + professor and her information + dynamics in class + share information + enthusiasm = we learnt personality theories".

"It is like going to a class from which you don't know what to expect; we had a notion about the class due to some comments we had heard, but no more than "it was a very good course, different". Moving beyond the course, we gained knowledge, and it became a process of change, enriching and evolutioning the way of thinking".

"Like a process whose aim is to promote critical thinking, expression of points of view and acquisition of knowledge. It is also a tool for life".

b) The students' contributions (group and individual)

From a relational perspective, all participants contribute to create a learning space and relationships. Making public their contributions opens opportunities to talk about commitment, participation, respect, interest, etc. The students have individual and group contributions.

Group

GROUP A

"Participation and cooperation at the limit of the minimum required; from there on nothing, or not much".

"I think the fact of constantly participating, each one giving their ideas".

"In a way, I think all of us gave something. We contributed our participation and questions, opinions, etc."

"I feel that, in this course, we achieved a group cohesion that had not been seen before. This gives me the opportunity to communicate my ideas, read the texts and analyse them".

"Compared to last year, I think the group worked and participated in class more, no matter if they had read beforehand or not".

"I think the group also committed themselves to the professor and the subject"

"I think they did make an effort for the activities to work. I think the thoughts they always kept in silence were the best they could give".

"They were willing to do the exercises in the best way many times".

GROUP B

"My group has always been characterized by their reflections".

"The group was always collaborative, we worked together very well, and that is very helpful".

"I think the group's contributions were the respect and openness towards new opinions as well as willingness to have a good class".

"Thanks to the group's diversity of opinions, we could see the different opinions"

"The group's contributions were just as good as Dora's".

"The group became participative and tolerant to a large extent. The collective consciousness helped us to complete each one's learning".

"I saw many of my classmates very active; and I thank their participation since their comments and debates allowed me to have a wider outlook than the one I already had. I liked listening to them and being listened".

GROUP C

"All the ideas expressed by the group, inside and outside the classroom".

"They have contributed that spirit of freedom of expression".

"As regards the others, we complemented each other by saying what we thought. Thus, we understood the topic better".

"Their openness".

"From the group, I learned how they think and I contributed examples and experiences to enrich our learning".

"Their comments, opinions and critics; almost always, their willingness, listening capacity and tolerance".

"To be present, not only in mind, but in body".

Individual

GROUP A

"My participation in each class, my reading before the classes, my opinion, feelings and some personal information (when I shared it I felt self-confident, and I felt the professor's interest at least)".

"I think it was the fact of criticizing and reflecting the authors to have a wider understanding and an own judgment on them".

"Being more active in class".

"I think my contributions complemented others with my point of view and with a certain critical eye".

"My contributions, even though they were few, had the purpose to give something to the classes, such as clarifying general doubts or doubts related to criticism".

"Only to say what I think".

GROUP B

"In my case, I don't think I contributed a lot".

"In my case, perhaps my contribution was to give my opinion when it was possible".

"I shared some of my little experience and revealed a small part of my life. This had an academic purpose; in that way, my classmates and I could roughly see the theory reflected in life. If my life can help all of us to learn, why shouldn't I tell my experience?"

"I always tried to read the texts before class; I made an effort for each mid-term exam, and respected each other's opinion".

"My commitment, and above all, my interest in the subject. Also, I participated in class".

"My greatest debates and contributions were to my work team. There, I could analyze the information better and I gave my perspectives of each theory".

GROUP C

"I'm not sure about mine".

"My commitment to participate, to take the others' opinions into account, and my commitment to learn".

"My thirst for knowledge and the opinion I could give to my classmates".

"I contributed examples and experiences to enrich our learning".

"My participation; I contributed some comments, besides paying attention, being tolerant and respectful".

"In my case, I contributed giving my points of view".

c)   Into the process

Although the whole learning process is very important, what happens with students in it is one of the most important aspects to me because it tells me, from the students' perspective, what the significant learning and changes are. I am not referring to content learning; it is important too, but it is not the focus of my interest here. They mention changes about personal grow (whatever it means), integration, ways of thinking and a lot more.

GROUP A

"I grew as a person; I think that criticism exercise is vital for human beings (rational animals). I was very rational, but my criticism exercise was minimum; now the more critical I am, the more adult and mature I feel, even, a better person".

"I had a lot of fun with some topics because you know new things, analyse information and, in this case, you try to understand how people's behaviour is conceived in societies. It was also gratifying to finish the course with new learning".

"The way the professor developed her classes allowed me to explore qualities that I did not use to put into practice in other courses. This process allowed a better integration with the professor and the subject compared with others. In addition, it allowed me to be more critical about information".

"A change of perspective occurred in me; I changed the way how I see the world and people. In each class, I learned different things and I understood changes through theories".

"The course helped me to develop new abilities like comparing authors, criticising them, seeing from different perspectives, seeing similarities; I liked this".

GROUP B

"I think I changed while the course was developing. At the beginning, I worked in a clumsy way; but, with every piece of work, exercise and dynamics, I changed in different aspects"

"The fact of knowing all these theories has given me the opportunity to adopt an openness stance before each of them".

"It could be said that I have just been born and that I am still a baby bird"

"Each experience gives something important to our personal growth. In this case, the educational process of the subject contributed a lot of learning for me to improve as a person since very interesting attitudes and thoughts that generated stances and capacities to learn were promoted. I obtained knew knowledge, learning, excellent experiences, new studying styles, etc."

"I learned many theories that explain why people are the way they are. But above all, I reflected myself in many things I hadn't realized before; my eyes were open to new things. I also found answers to many questions about myself. Now, I understand people better than in the past".

"Thanks to this process, I learned a lot because it stirred my interest in the subject and the knowledge of new authors and of personality theories. The process helped me to learn and memorize, to distinguish and look for similarities among the authors' different proposals".

"Precisely that; the ideas and opinions that I had changed little by little"

"I tried to travel to every place from where I could see the stars, to look at the phenomenon objectively. But the length of a class wasn't enough to travel to all the viewpoints".

"Along this course, many changes occurred in me. To begin with, I got a very satisfactory personal growth. I broadened my way of thinking towards new possibilities, new ways to understand the world, to be more human, have new mental flexibility and a better capacity judgment. As I mentioned above, my knowledge is wide, now I know more

about the different personality theories. Above all, rather than adopt a theory approach, I

analyzed the pros and cons of each theory. I just agreed or disagreed with some

perspectives".

"I could take advantage of the dynamics since they helped me to understand some

topics. If I got lost at some point, it was because of a personal and external reason.

However, I think it was a very useful dynamic".

GROUP C

"I learned to tolerate different ideas, to work better on a team, to accept the idea

that there are no bad contributions and that we don't have to feel ashamed of giving our

own contributions".

"Even though it is still hard for me to identify each author's approach, I can have a

general idea of each one. This could have not been possible if the classes had been the

same as others; I'm talking about the professor's unique explanation and the notes"

"I learned; that is the most important thing, and not only did I memorize things for

the exams. I'll take this with me for the rest of my life".

"I learned to respect the others' points of view. At the same time, this enriched my

life in a very significant way. I think I grew as a person, and I like this".

"I broadened my perspective of how I see people and how I understand them in the

different aspects (educational, personal)".

"It helped me a lot. I learned many new things, I learned from my classmates and I

learned from myself".

"Well, many things; old and new knowledge, which reinforced my thoughts. I think I

became a little more flexible, but remained critical. I got interested in the theories and their

practice in reality" .

"My thoughts became deeper and I acquired new skills".

         d) Learning together

From a collaborative perspective, all participants contribute to the class; we learn together. Whatever we do together adds something new to the class. Every person enlarges experiences, ideas and at the end of the day, all of us gain something beyond content. It is a kind of learning that is not captured in traditional course evaluations because learning assessment is focused on topics (content) not on issues about other kinds of learning associated with relationships, life and classroom culture. But, what do we learn beyond content?

GROUP A

"We learned tolerance, the exercise of critical thinking, to work together. Also, we learned about personality theoreticians' life and work. Finally, although there are many things to add, we learned that life and opinions (even those of the same person) are multifaceted" .

"We learned that nothing is totally innocent, to create our own criteria, and that we can learn from each other".

"Besides the syllabus, by being together, we learned that all of us are different and, at least in this course, we learned to work together without rivalry".

"We learned that not everything has to follow a preexisting order or rules. You don't have to accept everything. No theory is innocent".

"We learned to know how classmates think and act, and their way of being as unique classmates. Particularly, we learned from their experiences and their points of view about problems, knowledge and topics of the subject in a clearer way. We learned to interact and respect the different perspectives without necessarily agreeing".

"To work on a team, interact and share our ideas in group".

"We learned to work with different kinds of people. We learned to see new ways to fully understand information, even currents and authors we didn't know about".

"We learned that when the theory is vast and looks boring, classes can be fun, didactic and comfortable, depending on the professor" .

GROUP B

"I think the first thing we learned was a greater tolerance and the ability to work on a team. We did many activities on a team, but not necessarily with the same classmates we used to work with. Also, we always shared our ideas with the whole class".

"I guess the entire accompaniment was also important. The shared and opposite ideas gave each of us a different and unique opinion about the theories and even of psychology itself".

"We learned that every answer always contributes something".

"I learned about the others a lot, how to understand and look at the others, as well as a set of their thoughts, visions, morals, etc."

"To accept different points of view and strengthen tolerance, among other things".

"By commenting every topic with my classmates and the professor, I observed that each of us has different ways of thinking and that they may differ from mine. However,

along the course, I learned to respect the others' opinions and have a more flexible thinking. In the same way, each of my classmates' opinions enriched my knowledge; I could see a perspective from another point of view, in the same way my professor gave us a view totally different from the theory revised; she helped me to see the pros and cons of each theory".

"By being together I learned, first, that we can see professors as our friends, besides the fact Dora made us more knowledgeable. I don't know exactly what she learned from me, but whatever it was, I hope it's very useful for her".

GROUP C

"I think we learned to work together and with different kinds of people, and to be much more confident when expressing ourselves" .

"We learned that sometimes we think in a similar way to the others, but not always. Also, we learned that each of us can contribute their very good and own ideas, and also, that it is possible to be together and in harmony".

"I learned to express what I think, to share ideas and learn from them or reject them, to be tolerant and respectful, and to issue a judgment".

"To respect, refute and debate opinions. I realized the importance of working on a team and complementing our ideas".

"Each of us has different points of view, and many of them can broaden the others' perspectives and help to enrich our own concepts".

"We learned that we can have an enriching discussion in class about the theories and theoreticians by giving our own opinion".

e) Ethical contributions

I believe that ethical behaviours and relationships cannot be taught in a theoretical class just by reading a book or having debates about ethical dilemmas. We learn ethics by living everyday life. Our way to be a person and our way to create relationships with others are the school of ethical interactions. The classroom, as a scenario where we meet and relate to people, is one of the places where we can develop an ethical life. How did the time that students and I shared together contribute to the growth of our personal ethical life?

GROUP A

"I don't know if it's right what I will write. As regards opinions, I think she helps us and gave us a greater respect and acceptance".

"We learnt a lot of respect, tolerance and understanding".

"Above all, that you question yourself what is ethical and what is not; or why that is ethical, and, depending on the situation, how this can be modified".

"Personally speaking, this subject taught me to value life, my family and friends more since after studying the theory, I realized that nothing is certain in life, that everything can change in a minute, and how important family and friends are. Also, the tolerance towards others' ideas is reinforced when we study different theories".

"Responsibility; if my professor is making an effort, I'll do it as well. I respect each one of my classmates' opinions".

"Tolerance towards different ideas, freedom of expression, respect for the authors and the others".

"Listening to the others with respect, participate as a group and respect each other as well as the diverse opinions".

"To have fun and learn, depending on how you are".

GROUP B

"Above all, the openness I have now towards the other psychological currents".

"The subject contributed to my ethical education since I learned more why one should not repeat everything that is told. I learned to listen and respect the others opinions".

"Above all, this work style left me something very clear…It's always better to create our own perspective rather than only accept and take for granted what the author says. As regards ethics, maybe it has promoted respect and tolerance".

"Well, honestly, I don't remember any".

"To respect, know to listen, be able to share ideas, and not to be prejudiced".

GROUP C

"Being better human beings. There were moments in the course in which ethical aspects were treated, and I think that's good. We exercised many ethical values".

"Being able to observe the human being, not as a machine, nor as a demigod capable of achieving everything, but as a being that is not perfect but that can achieve his/her happiness through different processes".

"Well, when she mentioned what is not good or ethical about the theory, she made us see that there are species that do not agree with our moral standards".

"I don't know if "ethics" is the word, but I think there were moments during certain debates when the tolerance and respect towards the ideas and the people could be observed".

"Actually, I think there were, but I cannot explain them".

"The wide communication that exists between Dora and the group".

"As regards gender distinction and social class".

f) Political contributions

Our participation in the world is always engaged with something. We are not neutral people. Whatever we think or do is connected with some discourse; conscious or not, we act within these discourses because of how we were educated, where we grew up in a specific culture or context that provides us with a very sophisticated group of ideas that make sense our life.

When we are part and participate very actively in dialogues, we have opportunities to construct, interchange, compare and change our ideas. Whether we transform our ideas, we change the manner in which we interpret and create meaning. In that sense, we modify our form of participation in our world and relationships. We can change our way of being. In my understanding, this is a political stand. The form in which I participate in my world has repercussions that influence and transform my contexts. What happens in our political stands between students and myself?

GROUP A

"To Expose, unmask and unravel theories; make it clear that they are not innocent and that they have from minor to serious social repercussions".

"I think the course makes us reflect on our context, on our society because each topic contributes new knowledge. I don't know, I think they are something very common to adapt or contextualize in my society".

"I learned to see other aspects of things. My way of thinking about certain situations did change. I think my way of trusting also changed".

"This course taught us what is not innocent about each theory, how theories affect our everyday life. Thus, it taught us to have a critical view of everything around us".

"I think these contributions are related to the "political" skills such as criticism and reflection".

"As I have said, now I see a wider and more selective perspective. This is, I don't see things superficially, but I analyse and question each thing, and I see what is not innocent about it" .

"In the sense of how I understand this question, I think one characteristic is your commitment with what you do. You have not only to decide to change, but to fulfil your purpose based on what you want to be or on your objective".

"We learned that there are different points of view for a same topic. They are neither good nor bad. We have to learn to respect everybody's opinions and beliefs".

"It's difficult to think about something. I can't really identify anything in particular".

GROUP B

"I think the contribution is the fact of not accepting everything you are told or everything you read (as only one person expressed their opinion, we'll hear only their particular perspective) as my classmates said, another contribution is to be able to defend your ideals, but always in a way that doesn't accuse or hurt the others".

"I liked to see theories applied to the social field as well as to reflect on current national and international situations with a psychological approach".

"The openness towards other opinions is one of the main contributions. This openness was promoted when we accepted or gave opinions about the others'. Another highlighted political contribution is the feedback of our beliefs and ideologies as well as the fact of not being dogmatic. Accepting that 'nothing is innocent is another contribution since it contributes to think of ideas and reasoning about our own and someone else's criticism" .

"Express my opinions and not always accept everything".

"My political education took an unexpected path. I have identified myself with some of the authors' ideas. I understand that I cannot "fall in love" with only one theory, but I can understand why psychology is multi paradigmatic".

GROUP C

"Tolerance for the others' negative opinion as well as the participation in teams in which there were different opinions".

"The fact of knowing that a simple ideology can be transformed in actions that are not always beneficial for everybody".

"Well, I think I have already written about this in other answers. I do see society and people with different eyes. When I am told about a person, I automatically think about the theories we studied. I love seeing that I have taken advantage of the course".

"The course taught us not to be conformists as regards the information in the book. It also taught us not to accept everything the authors 'sell'. It taught us to be flexible when we discuss, and to adopt other stances".

"I learned to take my own stance. If I want to change something, I have to participate in the decisions to be taken. I learned not to be a conformist, to express my opinions, to research on my own, to have the habit of asking something I'm not sure about"

"The course helps me to doubt things. Not everything is totally good. My point of view is firm".

"To try to improve society; in order to consider theories in a social context, we should consider all of them since they also affect society".

g) Initial expectations

How can we create a collaborative learning community? It is a question that is very present for me. One aspect that helps me to think and create a good invitation to collaborate in the classroom is asking about what students want and expect from the course, the professor and the group. At the end of the course, it is very important to come back to this question, as feedback, farewell and re-visit what we did together.

GROUP A

"The positive ones were definitely fulfilled. I learned a lot, read a lot, and I didn't realize it, I didn't suffer it. And as I thought, the group didn't react before this wonderful course".

"Yes, because we used the whole material in a constant and organized way; that's why I didn't find the subject so heavy. Also, the professor used a different dynamic in each class; thus, I feel the reflection and understanding were greater".

"Completely, it was much more than I expected. All the topics were covered, and we studied more than was needed; we went beyond the book and made interesting and different classes".

"Actually, I don't think 'fulfill' is the word; I fell in love with the subject. It went beyond I expected. I didn't see it as a subject, it was something else".

"They were totally fulfilled; I liked the way the subject was given a lot. The dynamics that changed in each class surprised me since, at the end, they helped me to learn what I learned in class. I think the expectations were exceed and I feel very satisfied".

"Most of them were fulfilled. I learned new and diverse things and I applied them to everyday life; the professor was dynamic".

"They were not only fulfilled, but exceeded. I expected few and simple things, but the course, the group, and the professor exceeded them".

"Actually, it's the only course where my expectations were fulfilled. It was a very good course and the group took it seriously. I could learn a lot".

"Yes, and by far. I think the only thing that failed was my lack of organization. But my expectations about Dora and the group were fulfilled".

GROUP B

"Yes, totally; and more. As the course developed, I realized that the subject would be much deeper and that it had more content than I thought".

"Honestly, all my expectations were fulfilled, I liked the classes very much, and each activity we did was very useful and well used for learning. At the beginning of the semester, I wanted the classes to be more dynamic, and they were so through the course"

"Not all of them, I expected to adopt somebody, a theoretician in particular, but it wasn't so. Later, my expectations changed. My objectives of being open-minded and letting good things arrive were fulfilled".

"A regards the participation of the group, the professor and the everyday dynamic, I think the expectations were exceeded since I have never had a course like this one before".

"Yes, and more than that; I expected a lot from this course and it gave me a little more. I just wished Dora had shared some experiences related to her sessions with patients; nonetheless, the classes were magnificent".

GROUP C

"Yes, because the learning was significant, the topics we studied were useful, in the positive as well as in the negative aspects of the authors. Not only did we see the good side of the authors, but the hidden ones too. The professor was always willing to clear doubts, to give examples and to make a creative class instead of following the same dynamic. As regards the group's expectations, they were fulfilled; although there were different ideas, there was never a disagreement atmosphere with the person".

"That's right, they were fulfilled. It was one of the best, if not the best course because of the atmosphere, the content and the activities".

"Yes, I liked the teamwork and the classes in general a lot. Besides, I think that I did understand the concepts".

"Yes!! I never got bored, I felt interested in every author and their topic. And the professor was just as good Ü, accessible and flexible =D".

"Yes, completely. This course will be very useful for the career; and I think it taught us many things for life".

        h) Final comments

My curiosity about what students think is not endless, but almost. I always ask something new; that is the reason I ask for some final comments. It is my last opportunity to know something more about the students' thoughts. This is the actual last occasion to write something. They are free to write whatever they want; it is a kind of last will or farewell.

GROUP A

"I really learned with this course, I am taking many things. It was one of the best classes I have ever had. I would like to thank you for being the professor you are, and for teaching not only academic things, but about life".

"What a beautiful way of learning!".

"From all the subjects I have taken so far, this one is my favorite. The classes were very entertaining; and the fact that we studied a different theory in each class helped me. I don't usually like to participate in dynamics, contests or games in class; but in this course, I felt comfortable; I never felt pressured. What I liked the best was the professor's positive opinion about the group since that motivates us to do things in a better way, while the other

professors had a more negative concept of us. I think that limits us, since no matter how well we do things, they never feel satisfied. I want to thank for this positive opinion that, at least for me, was very helpful".

"After what I wrote above, it only remains for me to thank you for the time, effort, interest in each of the interesting sessions of the course. I hope, in the future, you are my professor again and that I acquire the same interest and knowledge as in this subject"

"I liked this subject very much. The classes were unique: I learned not only the theories in the syllabus, but I learned to share ideas, experiences with my classmates; situation that we had never had in another course. I feel very satisfied with everything related to the subject: I have learned a lot from the classes, the professor, the reading and the exercises".

"I thank she was able to teach in a different way and go beyond an ordinary class; I think that by being an intriguing professor (because she invites us to doubt), she helps and will help us to learn and interact in a better way. I hope I can take another subject with the same professor; I think that I didn't have these dynamics and contributions in another course".

"Thanks for the quality time shared with this group. Although we are a difficult group, she managed to take the best of us. I hope she can be my professor in another subject of the major, in a different schedule, and I hope I do my best; I feel I didn't do enough. With all that happened during this semester, I have a clear conscience since I know I did my best at that moment, although I know I have more capacity. I hope I contributed not only my attendance to your classes. Thank you and happy end of 2011".

GROUP B

"Admiration for the professor; but, above all, knowledge".

"I think there is not much to say. The semester ends in a very nice way. It's very likely that I take another subjects with Dora, she has a very attractive professional and personal profile".

"I think it is very useful to comment this type of learning among all the students since it promotes many aspects that train the student's integrity, aspects related to analysis and reflection before the others and ourselves without forgetting the academic context"

"In general, the class as well as the subject and everybody implied gave me knowledge for my education as a professional. But, above all, I think I benefited personally, and I discovered many things about me that I hadn't noticed before. I really liked the way everything was handled, and the fact that I was given a space to express my ideas and opinions. I also thank the professor very much for having contributed to my professional as well as personal education".

"The subject and the class plans are very interesting, the professor transmits her enthusiasm in each class, she makes us want more classes; she was a good guide".

"I don't want to flatter, but the course has really been one of the best so far. I know it because I enjoyed listening to the class; also, Dora's attitude was very helpful since her way of being and her teaching style make you prefer it".

"Magnificent professor, magnificent course, magnificent experience".

GROUP C

"I wish every course were like this; the work plan is very good. I wish I had arrived at all the classes early; every minute of this course was very important and enriching. I

consider Dora to be a very good professor and person; I like her attitude. I really enjoyed the course, time flew".

"Having met you left us a very pleasant feeling. I think you were a motivation and a great example to us. Thank you very much Ü".

"Thanks for making us learn and for doing it in an original way!"
Actually, I'm so speechless. I think this course was the best in all my life. I learned a lot, and I like that very much. I think the perfect combination of professor + subject makes this 'learning-teaching' process so great. I really loved it".

"I take many new things, new views and also ideas that I had never had before. It was very cool to go through this process!! I liked it very much!"

"The best course I have had since it's not about memorizing, but learning, which occurred, but in a simple way".

Topic 4: Recorded conversations around how we are doing the course and the course as a process

This section introduces students' perspectives about two topics: their experiences from the beginning to the middle of the course and their experiences at the end of it, considering the course as a whole process.

Our conversations turn around these questions: What are we doing? What are we learning? Are we going in the right direction? Which of the things that we are doing are useful? What do we need to change? Are we reaching our expectations? What were your personal contributions, the group and Dora's during this semester? Does the way we work contribute to your political and ethical training? among others.

a) How are we doing the course?

GROUP A

Dora: First, we are going to talk about how we have worked, if there is something we need to change, as we talked last week. The basic question is: how are we doing in this second part of the course?

Student: Well, I did not like the activities done about Allport so much. They were rather repetitive and boring. Among the activities we have done, they were the least useful.

…

Dora: Anything else? Is there anything we should include or stop doing?

Student: These class dynamics help me remember a lot, so I do not have to go back so much to the reading material.

Student: I think drawing a summary chart helped me a lot. I feel it helped a lot when I had to write about the theories during the exam.

…

Dora: Let's try to think about some things that have to do with the ideas that I have about the class… As a dialogue, if we think of the class as a process of dialogue, what do you think?

Student: It helps me a lot because sometimes I read the material about each author and I interpret it in a particular way. But when I arrive here, I listen to what the rest of the class understood. I realize that I had not seen it from that point of view. This helps me a lot

to integrate many things that may not have been very clear to me; it helps me a lot. It also makes me think that I should contextualize what I thought…and oh! Why did I think that? Why did that particular person think that? And reach a joint of both.

Student: I think that process of dialogue is also very necessary; not only for this course, but to create our ideas and our stances through time. It also helps us not only to integrate what we understood, but even to understand the others' ideas all of a sudden. They can change the way we see and understand that process of dialogue. I like chatting a lot, at least in this course; I do not think it is good in all the courses. There is not much dialogue in the others.

…

Dora: As a process of transformation…how have we changed since the beginning of the semester until now, two months later?

Student: I feel that this process has helped me start taking a stance as regards the currents, and above all, to criticize them. That is the aim of this course: to criticize the currents that have emerged, well…I criticize them and pull them apart. I don't have to believe everything.

Student: I think I have had a transformation of dynamics rather than a personal transformation. Again, teachers are the ones who give the class, and I was used to it. In the first year at university, I kind of change a little bit. In secondary and preparatory school, the teachers give the class, write on the board and you are spoon-fed. On the other hand, here, we are the ones who make the class and often end up explaining new concepts and the points of view that each of us has. Transformation in this sense.

...

***Dora**: So, thinking about this idea that you mention, how is it useful for you?*

***Student**: It's easier to understand. As there are many viewpoints, you reflect on what you thought, and understand better. It helps you integrate what your classmates say with what you thought; it leads you to something, it gives you more tools.*

***Student**: Moreover, it makes you think. You won't have a professor that tells you how things are all your life. It makes you be responsible for those things, it makes you think on your own, look for the things you want to know and not to wait until somebody else gives them to you. Life is not like that; in the end, you are the one who will have to be active. I feel this transformation helps a lot, I think many of us experienced that. All our professors dictated everything, they gave the summary of the book and you only had to read it, and that was it; you didn't have to worry about anything else, you just had to learn it by heart and that was it. Now, you have to understand, it makes you think.*

...

***Dora**: I think about this professor-student hierarchy. Does this hierarchy exist here? Where do we place ourselves?*

***Student**: I think that you do guide us, but I feel that we also contribute. You are not the one that does everything. You do help us understand the concepts and the topics; you give us a wider view of what we read. But we also have our own ideas, and not only for what you tell us, but also when we listen to our classmates. We create a stronger idea from what we read and observe in class.*

Student: You are also like a student, you're not like the professor who is like a god and everything he or she says is right; you are open to integrating our ideas. It is as if we learn from you, and you from us.

...

Dora: And if we think about these topics related to ethics, for example, what you are talking about now. What are my and your contributions from ethics perspective? Not in the sense of angels and well-behaved people, but of our compromise, our responsibility, what each of us has to do.

Student: I think this is the course we are most committed to. The truth is that it motivates us; it's not the only course that gives us homework, but it is the only one we study for. I know that we have to study for this course because there will be a dynamic I know I will like, that I will understand everything I read (and it makes me angry when I didn't actually read) And when somebody hasn't read for the class is because he really had to do something else. Really, it's frustrating to come to class without having read the material because we are really committed. There are some courses we are not committed to, even though we are begged to read. I think the fact of your being committed motivates us and makes us commit ourselves to the course. As you are our guide, your attitude and your dynamics help us a lot.

Student: At the beginning, I thought: "Could it be that we are going to study all this information? We are always asked to get many copies, but we never cover everything. At the beginning, I thought we wouldn't study everything, but now that we are already in the middle of the semester, you realize that you have almost finished the book, and you didn't

realize how you were moving forward, while in other courses, you are not motivated to read. It's the commitment we see in the professor. The classes are so interesting for us that you feel bad if you don't do your part. I think that's why all of us get our act together and there are classes where we wouldn't do it at all.

Student: When the classes finish, you are alert. You arrive to the class sleepy, and suddenly you realize it is already 9.30 a.m.

Student: At the beginning of the semester, as I had more time available, I read about the topic of the class in advance. Then I thought I should read after the class because I didn't have time. But it didn't work! I felt frustrated because I could not participate in a class that was very interesting and fluid.

GROUP B

Dora: The first question is how we are doing, as we talked last class. If the way we have worked is useful, what can we add? What can we eliminate?

Student: The activities are cool, but up to a certain point, I feel personal reading is important, otherwise, you can't understand. I think it would be necessary to delve more, I think we cover the topic a little superficially. It would be cool to delve a little more deeply into the topic during the class.

Student: I also find the group discussion very important. I didn't like last activity where we got into small groups, and then those 10 groups discussed among them. I couldn't hear; it was as if we were isolated, so we didn't participate.

Student: First of all, it's not the typical class where you know what's going to happen. You never know what activity we'll do, how the class will develop; you are always expectant of what's going to happen in the class. That's what I like, what motivates me. In the same way, I like the book very much. The only difficult thing for me is (as last time) to answer the questions about the others' opinions about this topic.

...

Dora: Let's think about this: I start from the idea of what happens in the class as a dialogic process. Let's think we have different ways of communicating, sometimes they are written dialogues, notes, sometimes, open dialogues among all of us, dialogues among the whole group, pair dialogues…if we thought about the class as a dialogic process, what would you say about that?

Student: I think we follow this method in class very well. You can know a very important point of view of each of us very well when the dialogues clash. With this kind of conversations, very important topics are treated, and which you cannot get if you only keep your own view. This dialogue system complements it, makes you see it in a different way, or as you had not noticed it before; or as it is said, if we talk about this, we can get many things.

Student: I do like this thing about the dialogue. I feel that I learn more. I don't know about the rest, but I think that the majority also learns in this way, talking about what they think about a theoretician. And with the others' points of view, you may understand what you didn't. It's like a complement.

Student: It's ok to talk about all the authors; you share, understand, realize. But at the same time, I think that your role as a mediator is fundamental; that you tell me "Dasha, you are going the wrong way" or sometimes I don't know if what I am saying is correct or not. Sometimes we need a guide for the dialogue.

Student: Something very important about the dialogue and that I like very much is the fact that we make ourselves use our own words to describe a concept. It's not our memorizing to repeat exactly as a parrot what we read in the book, but that we have the concept, the idea in our mind and we transmit it with our own words. By doing this, we understand it more easily; it's easier to remind it.

...

Dora: Let me add one more idea so you start thinking about it. Think about the course, not only as a dialogue process, but also as a process of transformation; something happens to us, something changes in us as long as we are together.

I also think of the course as a political process. We have started from the idea that nothing is innocent. Neither any way of working is; it also has repercussions. But I believe that it's also an ethical process: since there are many people involved, we are in interaction; ethics is also present. So, what do you think of the course as an ethical, political and transformation process?

Student: For me and I'm sure that also for the rest, because of the course dynamic where we chat about the topic all the time, you form a critical thinking. Somebody thought something and you think how to apply it as if you were a kind of approach.

Student: It seems that when I'm studying I always take a stance or a theoretician that calls my attention the most. I don't leave aside the others, but I integrate some concepts that I find good and that I even notice in everyday life. I integrate them to form something of my own, to form a personality. I integrate all the theories.

Student: Well, for example, in my case, I am in a dilemma, a conflict: I was married to a very specific approach… "Jung", and then I see the others and get into a conflict because I think he's right. What can do? How am I going to balance? I study a theory and I agree with all of them, all are right…but, how can I balance that? But it's interesting, I see that other people have another approach and hate mine. This is good because in the end, the more you research, the more you want to get. It's cool anyway.

…

Dora: Last question: if we think what your contributions and my contributions to the course are, what would you say?

Student: I think our greatest contribution is our personal reflection as regards our projection in each theory. I say I feel identified with this theory or I do what it says.

Student: I have a little complaint, a conflict. I think your comment of the topic, the way you explain and what you transmit are entirely gratifying. So, when I'm listening to you, I want to write down those ideas. But I feel that you speak very fast or your ideas fly by and I don't have time to take notes.

Student: Well, I think that our contributions are those reflections and ideas to discuss. Maybe someone who is thinking something that nobody else had though before

tells it and a debate starts; the conversation can get more interesting. As regards a contribution of yours, I like how you have given the classes. Personally speaking, I don't see a similar class. I think that your teaching style is integral. I have never had a class with this style.

*   **Student***: I don't want to miss any class. All the classes are different. I hate arriving late to your class.*

*   **Student***: It seems that what we study in class is not much because of the way you develop the class. I don't know everything that was said by heart, but I do know what you did as well as the most meaningful topics. The agile way how you give class makes things easier for me.*

*   **Student***: Well, talking about the questions, I think we have participated a lot, behaved very well, contributed and reflected. Also, as regards the final written reflection, I feel that I write everything and then I say how I am going to integrate everything.*

*   **Student***: Our most important contribution is the fact that we take the course seriously. Actually, we don't take all the courses seriously. Well, personally speaking, it does motivate me to read, it does motivate me to understand and talk with the rest, to say what I understood and what I didn't, and integrate; I like that. As regards your greatest contribution, you keep us expectant about how this class or the following will be because although we have already studied a topic, all the classes are different. There is a different activity in each class, so we wonder what activity we will do today. That motivates us to go on reading and taking the course.*

Student: I like how the course is organized very much. It's not like other classes where, oh! We are behind or ahead. Then we don't remember what we are studying. But here, we know that the author that follows is the one we have to study about and reflect on. I think it's simpler if we know what we are going to study, even though we do not know how.

GROUP C

Dora: How are we doing in this following part of the semester, of the course? About what we have done, what do you think about it? Are we doing ok? Are your expectations being fulfilled? Is there anything we should add or eliminate? It's like what we talked about the first class.

Student: The truth is that, at the beginning, I didn't read. I thought twice before reading. But as we did the activities, I felt like reading and I started to read. That motivated me to come to class prepared.

Student: In fact, because of the way the exam is designed, you get feedback from it.

Student: I like how we have been working because during the exam you remember that we did a certain activity on a particular day, and you start remembering the concepts and all that. I feel that my panorama of Psychology and many other things is finally open now. Everything we have been studying. Now I reflect more on things.

...

Dora: Is there anything we are not doing and that would be worthy to include? Or anything that is not working and that we could exclude?

Student: *Something I love, even more than an activity, is actually, when you explain.*

Student: *It's an analysis about the theory, so we practically need to think.*

Student: *I really like when I feel that you make us understand that the theories are not innocent and make us reflect how those theories impact now as they may impact in the future or how they impacted some time ago. I like it very much, and it makes me think beyond the subject.*

Student: *You don't make the subject too long to get bored, although it's a theoretical subject. You complement it with an activity. You make the classes suitable; and we integrate what you explain.*

...

Dora: *Let's think then about these other ideas. I think about the course in many ways…I think that the course and the way we participate is a dialogue process…But I also think the course is a process of transformation…I also think that what we do in class has to do with a political process as well…And I also think that the class has an implicit ethical process or processes as well.*

Student: *As regards the dialogue, I like the different ways in which we, as a class, communicate.*

Student: *In this course, we don't always work with the same classmates, so we learn to perceive in what way each of us perceives the reading. I may perceive it in a way, but another person in a different way.*

Student: As regards transformation, it has helped me. For example, I'm very bad at remembering names, so I relate the activity to the author's name, so it's easier for me to remember the name since we did a meaningful activity.

…

Dora: What if we think about the class as a process of transformation?

Student: All this made me focus not only on one theory, but take a more eclectic stance to know each of them since what one of them can't say, the other can, and can complement it. So, in this stance, all of them can help to understand and explain human development. That has helped me a lot.

…

Dora: What are my contributions? What are your contributions? What does each of us do here in the classroom?

Student: Well, what I like is that whatever the activity is, all of us participate.

Student: I think it's very important because it's not the typical class where you raise your hand, and there are some who never raise their hand; but here you must do something. Actually, it is very entertaining.

Student: There are some classes where I am sleepy, so I would pay my full attention and give you my openness, feeling like doing whatever you propose. What you give is like a new way to assimilate this kind of theoretical subjects. You give your points of view, you don't only work with the reading, and I like that. Many professors focus only on what the book or a certain person says. On the other hand, you do give your opinion, and I find this

very interesting, different. Not all the professors use your kind of exam feedback, I also like it. I like that you take time to do those feedback activities, so they can help us with our final exam.

Student: You give us a variety of activities; every day, you surprise us with something. It's not that we know what we'll do; we don't know what will happen in the following class. I liked the fact that practically each class was a surprise. And as regards what we give, it is the fact that now we read because the reading it will be helpful for what we don't know we are going to do in class.

Student: Something you have given us is that you show self-confidence and a high command of the topic. The way you prepare and give the topic catches our attention. You make the activities interesting, so we can have the possibility to participate. I think you are a woman most of us try to imitate.

Student: It's something very pleasant. I think you are the best person and professor who does this, you are different.

…

Dora: Where are we placed when we are together? What happens to this hierarchy or dimension (professor-student)?

Student: I feel that this course is easier, there is certain accessibility, trust, as if we could give our point of view without being afraid of what others might say (that what you think is wrong, or that it isn't like that); it respects anybody's points of view. There is a

hierarchical relation, but there is a lot of trust to say or ask something, and each person's perspective is respected.

*   **Student***: Something I like very much is that you take our opinion into account: "Guys, I suggest this, which option do you prefer?" Not any professor does that. You make our trust bond grow and make us stay in class, read and do it well.*

*   **Student***: I think that the relationship is not based on the authority on the others' lack of knowledge. You know and you can guide us, you listen to us. I think this is important. We are here and it's our course, you motivate us, you take the trouble to prepare the class to make us think instead of only sharing the theory. You share what you think and make us share with you what we think about what you are saying.*

*   **Student***: I think that some of us perceive certain authority from you. However, I think there is no difference between the value of your and our comments. What you say is as valid as what we say; that's very good. It's ok to see you as our professor, as the person who gives us those little boosts to create our own knowledge, our own opinion.*

*   **Student***: I feel that you are very accessible, close to us; some authority can be noticed because you are our professor. Nevertheless, I perceive you like relaxed, balanced, like a cool professor.*

…

*   **Dora***: What is not innocent about this course we have been doing together during the whole semester?*

Student: What I don't see as innocent is that since we have a wide range of knowledge at hand, our judgment grows, and that judgment is directly related to our attitudes or behaviors we learn day by day.

Student: In fact, I think that most of us are quite critical, and it's very difficult to relate to any kind of people.

Student: Sometimes, this happens to me when I am with my parents. My parents are not open-minded, mainly my mum. So, when I want to talk to her, she gets upset. My dad and I clash a lot, for example, when we talk about science. We start to be sensible or we even start reasoning.

…

Dora: What do you think about the quizzes and how we have done them? What is not innocent about them?

Student: Since the exams are in pairs, it can't be proved if both have the same knowledge, if both understood the same. I think that could be the answer.

Student: Since they are in pairs, sometimes it's difficult to get to an agreement. And sometimes one of them is the one who studies a lot.

Student: I think that kind of relationship is not so frequent. There must be a commitment because they are two people; it has to be reciprocal.

Student: You are enriched again when you get your grades. For example, this semester I learned to express myself better.

...

Dora: *What do you think about this conversation?*

Student: *It's original because in this way we listen to each one's opinion. It's the only course that does this, the only professor that applies it.*

Student: *We talk about knowledge in all the courses, but we don't evaluate the program, the course, the way the classes are given or how we participate in class. It's very important to do this, evaluate not only the course, but how we are learning, and know whether it's correct or not.*

Student: *Besides, I think you are taking our opinion into account. It's not only that you're the professor and you do whatever you want; but you see how we feel with what you do.*

b) Class as a process

GROUP A

Dora: *We could start with the question about our contributions. To begin with, what were the individual and group contributions?*

Student: *I perceive that the most significant contribution was that each of us exposed their own ideas.*

Student: *The most significant is that we talked about our ideas; you said yours, I said mine, the others too. That increases the perspectives: maybe I think something about*

the theory, but another person thinks in a different way. So they can analyze: "Oh! I didn't think that way, and they might be right".

Student: I was going to mention that one of your most important contributions during the course was that you were a guide. I think the fact that you were a very pleasant guide, the kind of guidance you gave us and the questions you asked motivated us to talk our ears off. This group participates in class a lot; they always want to give their opinion.

Student: I think that even though we stopped talking about a specific topic, we can take it back and expand it. This made the class dynamic and pleasant.

Student: I also think that one of the professor's greatest contributions was to encourage us to see each perspective from an objective point of view. Rather than telling us her opinion about a theory, she told us: "Analyze the pros and cons; you don't have to adopt this opinion".

Student: I consider that famous phrase "Nothing is innocent" very important since it left a mark on us.

Student: Yes, because we are a little corrupted by what we read. We accept what the book says. Once Dani told us that you analyze Human Development and you say: Wow, I'm in trouble because I don't have this and that. Then you are in a chaos: how bad my life is…; but not everything has to be like the authors say. This course helped to clarify that a lot.

Student: Also, the fact that you took the trouble to plan each class. I think that gave us a basis to work. Also, that plan was flexible: if that day we didn't feel like doing a

particular thing, we could change it, so it was more functional for us; and we could feel

that we learned more. I remember that you used to ask: "How do you learn more?" And

then we proposed or changed something or did what we could with that class. So, I think

that made us learn more.

Student: The group's contributions: I feel that besides these ideas, thoughts and

reflections, the group was willing to work. Many of us wanted to prepare the reading

before the class to make it faster and more fluid. Also, the group created that reflection and

learning work atmosphere; we were really focused on what we were doing because we

were really interested in it.

Dora: There are questions, maybe the last two. They are like the weirdest: Does the

way we work contribute to your political training? If so, how?

Student: As regards a political training, we learned not to take anything for granted;

we really understood when it is said that "a theory is not an axiom or absolute truth"; and

I also learnt to defend a stance.

Student: Regarding ethics as well as politics, this course made me reflect because

we saw many perspectives, even in the social field. Despite all our criticism, I kept

thinking: which stance I should take as regards the present and my personal training, as a

professional, what I want to achieve, what my limits are, and how critical I can be. That

boost to criticism was always present, and that was good. I don't think I can say a last

word about ethics because the process is still long, but it has been interesting.

Student: I think that this course, by listening to the different points of view,

strengthened our tolerance because we don't always agree.

Student: I think of another topic, the openness each of us had and the feedback we got from different ideologies or the different aspects of each theory. As Carlos well mentioned, we also learn to defend our ideas, but without falling in the dogmatism that only my theory is the correct one, or that only what I think is correct, but we can "taste" many of the theories to adjust ourselves to them and not focus on only one idea. Nothing is innocent, and we should criticize not only what is external to us, but what is inside us. We should criticize the theories we don't or may not believe in, but also our theories.

…

Dora: I don't know if this is separated from the other question about what we learnt being together. What did we learn being together?

Student: I think we learnt to work together in many ways. We also learnt to listen to each other and respect each one's opinions and perspectives. I think many of us shared experiences or things to contribute to the classes; and we learnt to respect this. I also think that each of us learnt because we shared experiences. Personally speaking, some people surprised me; ok, I didn't know something about a person, and now I respect him or her for this; or by giving their opinion, we get to know the person more; I didn't know that this person thought that way. And we also knew a little more about each of us.

Student: I learnt to keep quiet because I didn't have to defend myself a lot. I don't have to be against the others and this is also very interesting. I liked listening to the rest. You will always have your own issues, we grow up and train, we become stronger and it's cool to see each one's strength and how we grow up; it was very interesting.

Student: *I agree that every opinion is valid, that we have to learn to respect. But you also have to realize that you also have an opinion, and that it is valid although it is refuted.*

Dora: *How about your expectations?*

Student: *Personally speaking, rather than fulfilling my expectation, I think they changed. I went to class with the idea that we were going to study all the theories and finish class tired. Then this changed and I realized that you cannot be faithful to only one approach for the rest of your life because there are many things that explain other things.*

Dora: *If we pick up the topic of the quizzes we talked about previously, how would you describe your experience taking the exams in pairs?*

Student: *I perceived it as a double-edged sword; it depends on us, if we are tolerant to that, we can agree or not. It depends on how we analyze it.*

Dora: *If we now assume that nothing is innocent, we would have to assume that the way we work in class isn't either innocent, so, what is innocent about having worked like this?*

Student: *I think that the way we worked fits us perfectly because we love speaking, we like to make an effort and most of us like reading, we like to participate. But what happens if there is an apathetic group that doesn't make any effort?*

GROUP B

Dora: *What about starting with this question that used to be number 4, thinking about my, the group and each one's contributions. What would you say about that?*

Student: Each of us shared our opinion and way of thinking about the topic we were studying. We shared our perspectives with the rest and each person complemented with theirs. Mine were that I tried to read before class and tried to understand. Yours was that when you explained, you invited us to see things from a different point of view; and all of us cooperated.

Student: From all of us, I think there was a lot of respect, we listened to the other and allowed everybody to comment whatever they wanted. From you, commitment, because it was obvious that you prepared your class. Also, our disposition.

Student: I also wrote "dedication and creativity in the classes". All of them were different; you didn't even imagine how a class would be.

...

Dora: And, what happens when you have the opportunity to speak, to give your points of view, when there is disposition, creativity. What happens when all this occurs when we are together?

Student: It was a chat, a debate, something cool because as long as all of us listen to the rest with tolerance and respect, you'll be listened to in the same way. So, it turned into a cool chat among all. Each person listened and each said whatever came to their mind. Many times they were topics related to the curriculum, but suddenly something else came to your mind and you related it to something else, and that was also heard. It was always related to the topic we were studying, and you were like the mediator. If we went off at a tangent, you made us come back; you made us questions so we could think about the same topic.

Student: Learning more would be the most important thing. I think that you only give us what it is and that's it. We can't relate it to what we want at the same time. When you present your idea it's a relation that you create. By listening to the others' ideas, you could relate the topics; rather than learning, we could understand better. You could take each one's opinion as something useful or not. But there is something for that person (even for those who could understand) that would be useful to improve their thought about it, to explore other worlds, other things that, in the end, you remember when somebody talks about something. It helps you to understand the theory itself.

...

Dora: And does that have any impact outside the classroom?

Student: You start seeing things in a different way. You start like looking for the points of view in many things that help you understand the good and the bad sides of things.

...

Dora: I gave you back your expectation sheets. I think they were an important part of this because the first thing we did the first class was that, talk about what you expected from the course. What happened to your expectations? Were they covered?

Student: Fortunately, my expectations were fulfilled, and it surprised me how much attention I paid. I wished the professor were a facilitator, and she obviously was. And I wrote that I would like we could work on a team and in a supporting and patience atmosphere. I thought this couldn't be possible because of the intense debates this group

had, but in the end, it was. Maybe I'm not very psychoanalytical, but I like it and learn; I adopt those little ideas that I find suitable for everyday life.

***Student**: Also in my case, as regards the expectations I wrote, I got surprised at seeing that they were fulfilled. I wrote that I expected to learn new things, and I obviously learnt a lot. I also wanted to learn things that would motivate me to do my best for my major; and this course did motivate me. As regards the professor, I expected that we learnt a lot, that we saw the course in an entertaining way. I think this is everybody's favorite subject. And even though we had to read a lot, the debates were very entertaining and intense.*

***Student**: You actually grow up. I never did the same thing in the different classes. I never had the same activity. I used to go to class wondering "What's going to happen today? What am I going to do? How am I going to learn everything I read? If the situation had been different, I would have cried. It was actually very good; it was a beautiful way to sell us mundane theory. The subject itself has something that anyone would have loved: we had to study theories, but theories that you are going to study in an ordinary way; but you made us study them in a very dynamic and entertaining way.*

***Student**: For me, as I had already taken this course and you were also my professor, I didn't know what to expect. I already knew what the topics were and what activities were done. I wondered what else I could learn, but in fact, I learned much more. I think that this time, I made the most of it. I think that the fact I feel good with the course makes it successful.*

Student: Actually, I didn't have great expectations. But as the course developed, I did have a particular one: that there would be a stance that impressed me, and that I said "That's the stance I like". But it wasn't you as a professor; it was the book, the topics it covers. Actually, I didn't find one that I liked, although it's very complete, and it also says everything I think. Some of them could get to something; it isn't exactly what I was looking for. But as regards the class activities, the course and you, my expectations were overcome in an overwhelming manner. I had never had a dynamic course and had never understood anything in any way. Everything was very nutritious.

...

Dora: Let's think it's a course after all, and that we need a grade, and that there are some criteria set since the beginning, that we need a number. Part of this is related not only to the activities we did throughout the semester, but also to the quizzes. Even though a part of them was in pairs, there was also a part that was individual. What do you think about the exams being taken in pairs?

Student: Well, as it is said, two heads are better than one; if one person didn't know something, the other did. I think they complemented a lot. It was ok, it was easier, but at the same time it was complicated because we had never had a quiz like this one before. It made you think, so you knew you had to think for the following exam; and rather than learning, you had to understand, relate. So, as we were two, two different ideologies could understand and link two authors or two theories better than only one person.

Student: It was something new up to a certain point because we hadn't worked like this in other courses. We didn't only ask about the theory, but we had to express ourselves,

understand and go on. I think that helped us much more than having a filling or multiple-choice exam because in these exams we had concepts; what we did was to analyze everything we had studied.

...

    Dora: *And if they helped, how did they help?*

    Student: *It was like awakening that critical thinking towards certainty; the fact that, as it was said many times, theories are not innocent.*

    Student: *It was like placing it on a practical level, a level of life. If you ask me about the first quiz, I may probably not remember many concepts, but what I am going to remember is that they are already part of my life, it's in me. When you start speaking with other people, you start taking it into account. It was understanding that even though you didn't know who the author was, but you understood why he did that, you do have stances without knowing everything on a row.*

    Student: *I liked your invitation not to accept everything the author said. It was as if we were looking for different points of view. At the beginning, it was like you liked everything you read.*

    Student: *I liked that not only our memory was evaluated, but our reasoning as well. Something important: at least, we remember the name of each author; something we can't do in another course. And not all of us remember concepts. Anyway, it's an improvement; it's not that we don't know anything about a semester and that we do the final exam without any knowledge.*

…

      Dora: If we think about the course and that this way of working we have had is not innocent, what is not innocent about the way we worked during the semester?

      Student: For me, the fact that now we reason everything and don't swallow anything straight away. I think there was a class in which we concluded that it was an invitation to rebellion. So, this could be what is not innocent because I think that each of us is thinking about very different things, things that we don't like, things we can contribute to improve and really impact as psychologists.

      Student: When I entered the classroom, I started doubting everybody.

…

      Dora: If we think about the way we have worked, how each one has contributed…That makes me think that, well…there is a certain degree of participation or learning about ethics, not from the theory, but from the way how we are doing the things here. Regarding what we did in class, was there any contribution to your ethical training as professionals?

      Student: I think that one of the ethical contributions of this course is the fact that, as it was commented, you can't accept everything you are told, that you have to know more theories. I think this course invited us: "come, there are more theories, try them, get to know them. It invited us to go beyond.

      Student: To revalue personally what is wrong and what is right because some theoreticians take something as right while others don't.

Student: Complementing what you say about tolerance, I think that you never said that an opinion is better than another. They are only opinions in their context, their field. They are all as valuable and useful. I think that is very important; why should we favor one, if in the end we are all people and have the right to give our opinion? Each one's opinion can be valuable.

...

Dora: And if we think of the political aspect of assuming a stance, seeing not only what happens here in the classroom, but having a different point of view about your personal life, in our society, in the culture, in the world in general. Is there any contribution to this political attitude to assume a stance towards something?

Student: I think the same about the different ideas. I think that many are afraid of thinking something and then somebody tells them something different and then they have to recognize that what the other person said may change their mind. Sometimes, there exist that fear to change stances, and I think it's a part of it; we're not perfect. We shouldn't be afraid of changing our stance or expand it. Each of us has his or her own way of thinking, we are all different. The political aspect we learnt was to keep your stance as well as learn from the others, and be able to expand your stance with the others'; and be able to use the others' stance to expand yours.

...

Dora: I think that the interaction among human beings can also be very poetic and have contributions, and we can change as people starting from our relationship with the others. Why don't we make poetry when we are together?

Student: In fact, it's harder for me to socialize if we don't speak. I feel more comfortable talking as we are doing now than when we're in class. I like talking very much because when I started the major, I hardly ever participated, I was quieter; now I am self-confident and I know that I won't be criticized. I was afraid of criticism.

...

Dora: In this sense, is there any difference between the way we have worked and other courses and experiences that give you that feeling of self-confidence and of not being criticized?

Student: I think that, here, there is nothing correct or incorrect. Here you can say what you think, and not everybody may agree. In the end, you already expressed yourself and nobody criticized you. You can speak freely and say whatever you want; we usually say what the other person says is wrong.

...

Dora: Is there anything we haven't talked about so far? Anything you would like to add?

Student: I think that thanks to this course I realized that if you want something to change or happen, you shouldn't keep quiet. If I think differently, it could help; but sometimes I don't say it. Whatever your opinion is, you should express it because it could make a difference.

Student: What I realized was that your objective as well as the objective of the course and of the dynamics was to make us think, express ourselves and understand. I think

it was accomplished. One more thing, I wish all the courses were like this, more dynamic. There are many good courses, but the professors don't make the most of them.

Student: I think it's that, it's a lack of creativity. There are subjects that are very cool, but although you try to pay attention, it's impossible. Lack of creativity.

…

Dora: Anything else? Well, if I think about my own expectations, which I also expressed at the beginning of the course, they were certainly fulfilled. I'm very satisfied and glad because it has been an extraordinary group. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Student: I'm very curious about your notebook where you always write down something.

Dora: What is written are things that you say that call my attention, things that come to my mind and I want to remember in order to share them, many things you say about the classes. In general, it's for me to remember.

GROUP C

Dora: What were your personal contributions, the group's and mine during this semester?

Student: What I wrote was that Dora gave a value to the group. She taught us to speak among us and, at least in me, reinforced the fact of not believing blindly in everything an author says. As regards the group, I feel that we did make an effort to make the dynamics work and that the thoughts we kept in secret were our most important

contribution. The fact that each of us exposed our feelings, worked in class, studied the authors and took a stance, or even represented a character enhanced our ideas. According to my perception, as regards my contribution, I say what I think.

Student: I think that, above all, we achieved cohesion in the group because we can speak among us. We commented things that we may not have dared to talk. As it was said, we could confront our opinions, not necessarily as a dispute, but as we said, as opposite; and we accepted and understood them. I think that here, above all, we managed to understand the others.

...

Dora: What happened to the group and to all of us to make you dare give your point of view?

Student: I feel that thanks to the dynamics, it was easier for me to talk to some classmates I have never dared to talk before. Suddenly, fate joined us and we sat in small groups; and it was easier to communicate with somebody you may not have dared to talk to before. You listened to what they said and you also dared to give your opinion. I think that was very important to me.

...

Dora: What is not innocent about this course? Of all we have done, how we have worked, all that has happened, what is not innocent when we get together and talk?

Student: Well, as regards my expectations of the course, my wish was that the greatest contribution of the course would be to learn from the theories. Well, I actually

learnt much more than just the theories or the theories of each author; I learnt to interact with my classmates, to tolerate, to listen, to express my ideas; that is, a lot more. So, I think that if you see the course from the outside, as it is said, it's only theory, and it will be hard because it is long. But what I feel that wasn't innocent is that "sold image" that it's a lot, that it's theory, that's hard; we learnt much more. I think it was tricky, but it was good for us.

…

Dora: *If we think about your comments about commitment, participation, and the ability to interact with your classmates in a different way, I can't stop thinking that this also has to do with learning about ethics. What did you learn about ethics? What are the contributions in our learning about ethics that are not in theory, but that rather have to do with the way we interact? I don't know if my question is clear.*

Student: *Respect. Respect for other people's opinion. Also, respect for the book, since we are responsible for studying for the exam. On the other hand, respect for my classmate: since the exam is in pairs, we have to study and not leave all the responsibility to him. There should be commitment.*

Student: *When you do an exam in pairs, you have a double commitment. On one hand, you are self-committed to study and get a good grade, to achieve the exam objective. On the other hand, you're committed to support the other person and not let him down.*

…

__Dora__: Anything else? Thinking about your final comments, is there anything else you would like to add?

__Student__: I would like to thank you because when you asked us what our expectations were, I remember that I expected feedback, depth and reasoning; and I wished Dora were a professor and not only a text presenter. For me, the university is not only reading (maybe it was the hardest for me, to adapt to certain situations). I do thank you for having given more than just classes.

When shared time is so good, it is not easy to say good bye. I am full of mixed feelings, satisfaction and happiness and tiredness and relief to finish.

Even though, there are many details that are missing, previous description says something about the complexity and messy existence of teaching as enacted-social reality. I hope, it could help us, to feel and appreciate the richness of the students and professor's experiences.

Chapter 4

Re-visiting enacted and social reality

This chapter re-visits the narration about enacted and social reality. It is an effort to link participants' experiences, theories and authors' thoughts. It is a way to introduce a wider theoretical frame, not as separated from the dissertation as an independent chapter, but instead, as part of the process of construction.

The challenge that I have to face in this chapter is to return to my writing, as Latour (2005) says, "I'd say that if your description needs an explanation, it's not a good description, that's all. Only bad descriptions need an explanation. It's quite simple really". (P 147)

This chapter is not an explanation, neither is it a conventional data analysis. Actually, this is not an analysis from practices of coding data and then sorting that data into categories that are then grouped into themes that become section headings in an outline that organizes and governs the writing. My decision not to create categories and a traditional analysis is because I do not have to do what the expert researchers and methods order just because they do it and because it does not make sense in my dissertation. The fact of not creating categories is not an assumption that this writing is truer or better than other forms of exploration and knowledge. I do not analyse why a student says what he/she says; I do not interpret what they really want to say. I am looking for a good way to express myself about the teaching and researching process, and I am responding to what the texts tell me.

Links between participants' experiences, theories and authors' thoughts, as Richardson and St. Pierre (2011) describe "happened in the writing. I watched word after

word appear on the computer screen – ideas, theories, I had not thought before I wrote them" (p. 970). In reality, in my case, what appears on the screen are phrases after phrases because my way of writing is with two fingers looking at the keyboard all the time, in such a way that when I look up I see phrases. What I see is the result of typing-writing my thoughts.

In spite of the case that social reality (everyday in the classroom) is a mess, it looks tidy. It is because, during everyday life, I pay attention only to some aspects that look interesting to me. On the other hand, when I write, I just describe other aspects. Shredding the text, descontextualising and reorganising it does not mean I know this social reality better. It is indeed a seductive and tangled method of discovery and creation of knowledge. But it has a danger as Law (2004) says. It is a way of routinisation, to produce statements about realities, when these take standardised and transportable forms (p.33). At the same time, when you observe something through a method, something new shows up that you did not notice before.

To do categories or not to do categories are only different ways to link experiences, to introduce theoretical frames and to make tidy a messy reality. In summary, no cathegories is the way that I found in this writing to express myself, to discover and to create something new.

What is the newness? Let's see.

From February, 2012 to December, 2013

The course finished many months ago. Students and I were very satisfied with our work together. We finished on time, wishing to have another opportunity to coincide in the future in another class.

I have been working on my dissertation for more than two years. During this time, I have had opportunities to say hello in the corridors to some students. With others, I have shared another class. I tried to contact them through email, sending some drafts of the writing, but I did not receive any response. Although we have some occasional encounters, we did not have time to talk about my dissertation again.

I want to share with all of them the final writing. One limitation is language since most of them do not read and speak English. And probably they do not have the interest to read it. And it is ok.

As a reminder, do not forget that the introduction of philosophical ideas is a kind of theoretical patchwork, a philosophical pastiche. The theoretical considerations introduced in this chapter describe some movements from my earlier understandings to postmodern and constructionist approaches, and help to inform my life and practices and to create something new. They are introduced in alternation with the students' experiences and my ideas as a way to sail through them and to establish links and interconnections. The headlines can be seen as categories. However, do not read them as such. Take them as highlights to invite the reader into different ideas.

I describe eleven movements which I call: An invitation to question, Rethinking language, Relationships, Dialogical Voices, Collaborative learning communities, Transformation, Ethical process, Politic stance, Reflecting processes, Social poetics, Teaching and Learning.

An invitation to question

The first movement is the possibility to question. The possibility to doubt knowledge and the idea of singular truth opens my mind to a wider perspective about the philosophy of science, the idea of a singular truth, universal knowledge, psychology as a disciplinary discourse, and the professional as an expert.

According to Hoffman (1992) "the philosophy of science has largely been replaced on the intellectual agenda by the history and sociology of knowledge" (p.4).

Agreeing with O'Hara and Anderson (1991), postmodern consciousness has been raised by "the cumulative effect of pluralism, democracy, religious freedom, consumerism, mobility, and increasing access to news and entertainment" (p. 20). Anderson (2007) emphasizes "knowledge from a postmodern perspective as socially constructed, and all knowledge and knower are embedded within history, context, culture, language, experiences, and understanding" (p. 8); she takes a position of plurality that does not imply nihilism or solipsism. It simply suggests critical reflection of our truths, keeping all truths open to critique, including postmodernism as well.

As a professor, there are a number of temptations that can seduce me in my practice: to invoke knowledge as historically separated, to provide answers to understand the world from certainty, to look for patterns of interaction that can be changed through replicable actions, to provide the classroom with 'content' as the truth. To situate knowledge historically and locally allows me to think that it is the byproduct of some circumstances, procedures and social conventions instead of reality and the truth. That makes me act and

relate with knowledge in such a way that questioning is allowed. Therefore, my way to talk and to introduce theory and ideas in the class requires that I be tentative and cautious.

Postmodern tendencies permit me appreciate multiple perspectives about culture, lifestyles, ways to understand and value each one as a different tradition of knowledge that says something about world and life.

Student: "Honestly, my way of thinking changed. I realized that no theory is innocent. Now, when I read, I want to research more about what I am reading. This is: Who wrote the text? Why did they write it? How did they support what they wrote? This is, I have become more critical".

Student: "We learned that not everything has to follow a preexisting order or rules. You don't have to accept everything. No theory is innocent".

Student: "I consider myself to be a critical person; however, I think I learned to accept other stances present in the course. I think I learned that not for being influential people and having very important stances, we have to accept them. I think that the fact of seeing theoreticians as people that can make a mistake helps us to be more critical".

Student: "We learned that every answer always contributes something".

Student: "During this process, I developed a more critical sense about theories. At the beginning of the course, I saw them as 100% true theories. As time passed by, I changed my mind. At some point, the theories were not so innocent".

Student: "I think it was a difficult process because I took each situation in the class very seriously, and I used to go back home thinking: Which stance should I take? What was the correct thing for me to do?".

Student: "Everything happened: from dogmatism to the question 'From whose point of view is that true?' I expressed and shared opinions, reflected, contextualized theories with a critical thinking and at the end, I reached a conclusion about the subject and psychology"

Student: "I was able to have a wider view of personality".

Student: "I think my ideas have not changed very much. I still think that, so far, no theory has been able to include all the aspects of personality. Perhaps, I can see the repercussions and defects of theories clearly now".

Student: "The ideas are not different. What changed was the process to discern and understand what the author wanted to imply".

Critical thinking promotes a different way to relate with knowledge, in a less hierarchical relationship in which theoretical knowledge is not necessarily better than personal experience; our experiences can teach us something new and different from theories.

From a constructionist perspective, Gergen affirms: "the traditional attempt to test hypotheses about universal processes of the mind (cognition, motivation, perception, attitudes, prejudice, self-conception) seems at a minimum misguided, and more tragically, an enormous waste of resources (intellectual, monetary, temporal, material). Not only is the subject matter itself a social construction, thus not subject to empirical evaluation outside a particular tradition of interpretation, but such research represents the arrogation of a uniquely western ontology of the mind to the status of the universal" this viewpoint offers me a frame to conceptualize knowledge as a communal construction, as something authored in a community of persons and relationships, emphasising the activity and the

product of social exchange. That is the way that people arrive at their descriptions,

explanations and understandings of themselves and their world (Anderson, 2007, p. 12).

McNamee (1994) adds that we construct our knowledge about any topic in

collaborative interchange with others. If a particular way of talking constructs our worlds,

then the discursive forms that emerge and gain viability within particular communities

construct the ethical standards which we live… What we "know" is dependent upon our

forms of relatedness (p. 71).

The social constructionist perspective showed me that it moves beyond the social

contextualization of behaviour and simple relativism. It suggests that there are possibly

infinite ways to describe, explain, understand or value the various aspect of our world.

Student*: "What most called my attention was the fact that I was able to find the*

good and bad side of every topic we saw. This is, I liked some ideas and I agreed with

them; but I also saw something that I did not like or I disagree with. It called my attention

that, at the beginning of the course, although I knew little about the authors or the currents,

'I had already decided which one I would follow'. However, I now realize that I do not

have to choose only one theory, but that I can take the best part of each one".

Student*: "Since I was a child, I thought that everything was already said, that*

people knew what to do in each situation. Obviously, this was only part of my common

sense; by contrasting it with reality, it turned out to be completely false. I take this

anecdote to show myself, everyday, how multifaceted human life and reality are. Once I

read a theory that said that the truth was only one, the difference was that each of us had a

different perspective of it. I still bet on this assumption, even though every time I see that the truth (reality) is wider than I can imagine".

Student: *"All my life, I have had the intention to show the world what I think, but my point of view has been ignored. Particularly speaking, I'm a hermit, I love my family, I love chatting with my parents and siblings. The fact of interacting with my boyfriend and his ideas contrary and arbitrary to mine broadened my conception of the world and society"*

Student: *"How is it possible that something as simple as an everyday interaction could have so many answers and perspectives influenced by many factors and beliefs?"*

Living our life from a stance of uncertainty and collaborative interchange with others encourages my curiosity. I am inclined, therefore, to observe details and, to view life in detail, broadens my possibilities to create and to relate from a more open and irreverent attitude (particularly in relation to those big truths that cast a shadow on the richness of life).

Student: *"I love listening to what the others think, feel and how they perceive reality. Even though all of us live on the same planet, we have a different life".*

Student: *"Every bad thing can be improved on this planet: war, drug trafficking, crime, etc. However, this will take time since it would be necessary to make some changes in society. We should never lose hope of growing doing the right thing and we need to deeply reflect on the different stances human beings have before the problems society faces. All of us must contribute to the society we live in because it's there where we develop as people and because we look for happiness in ourselves and in our fellow men".*

Postmodern and Constructionist ideas blur my certainties. My support tools become fragile and fallible and my frames of reference lose power; at the same time, I gain uncertainty, freedom, and a wider range of perspectives. This freedom lets me see Psychology's contributions as standardization of life and a sort of dangerous fib.

Hoffman's (1992, pp. 9-13) critiques about the five sacred cows – actually six – of modern psychology were fundamental to invite doubt. She and social constructionists challenge the idea of an objective social research branding it as a downright lie. Hoffman compellingly agrees with Gergen's questioning about self as a kind of irreducible inner reality represented by words like cognitions or emotions and she, quoting Chatwin (1987) offers the Australian aborigines myth as a poetic example of the social construction of the self: "The Australian aborigines think of their 'songlines'. Songlines are musical roadmaps tracing paths from place to place in the territory inhabited by each individual. A person would be born into one of this songlines but would only know a section of it. The way the Aborigines extended their knowledge of a particular songline was to go on periodic 'walkabouts', allowing them to meet others living far away who knew a different stanza, so to speak. An exchange of songlines would become an exchange of important knowledge. These songlines would also be tied to the spirits of different ancestors – animals or plants or landmarks – who sprang forth in the 'dreamtime' before people existed. A person might share and ancestor whit people who lived in an entirely different part of the territory".

Similarly, Burman (2008) and social constructionists (Gergen 1982, Anderssen et al 2001, Burman 1992) interrogate the assumptions surrounding developmental psychology and provide a critical evaluation of its role and contribution within social practices. Hoffman (1992) quotes Harré's (1986) challenge to the belief that emotions exist inside

people as discrete traits or states and that they are the same all over the world. The fifth

sacred cow that Hoffman questions is about levels. She questions dichotomies such as the

superficial symptom versus underlying cause, manifest content versus latent content, overt

communication versus the covert, and asks "what if none of these ideas were true? What if

all these levels, layers and nests were nothing but sets of different factors influencing one

another, all equal to one another, but singled out by us, described by us, and given

hierarchical standing by us?" (p.12). Finally, she introduces what she calls the most

serious challenge to the field of mental health, "normal social science" that perpetuates a

kind of colonial mentality in the mind of academics and practitioners (p. 13).

Anderson and Goolishian (1988) contribute to the invitation to question these

taken-for-granted understandings of the world by introducing and challenging systemic

ideas. They introduce the notion of human systems as linguistic systems. In their words,

"Human systems are language-generating and, simultaneously, meaning-generating

systems. A therapeutic system is a system for which the communication has a relevance

specific to itself. The therapeutic system is a problem-organizing, problem-dis-solving

system. The therapist is a participant-observer and a participant-manager of the

therapeutic conversation" (p. 1). Anderson and Goolishian encourage us to think about

hermeneutics - understanding the meaning of a text or discourse, including human emotion

and behaviour. They propose that understanding is a process that is influenced by the

beliefs, assumptions, and intentions of the interpreter (Anderson, 1997).

Student*: "A perspective change occurred in me; I changed the way I see the world*

and people. In each class, I learned different things and I understood changes through

theories".

Student: "It could be said that I have just been born and that I am still a baby bird".

Student: "Many things of everyday life make sense now. I am more critical and my analog reasoning has increased. I'm not sure it was because of this course, but I want to believe it".

Student: "This course made me think of the fact that theories exist because, somehow, we wanted them to exist. It is like faith, like religion, i.e., we cannot see God, paradise or hell, but we can formulate our own theory about them. In that way, we can have a belief that makes us carry on with our life. Honestly, I found this class very interesting and I felt totally free to think what I wanted".

Student: "We have to go beyond and leave prejudices! We have to stop thinking in black and white and start considering the scale of grays".

Student: "Since I was a child, I have trusted people, sometimes blindly. Many people judge me because of that, because I am naïve or because I do not want to see reality, i.e., that you cannot trust anybody else, but yourself...I have always found the idea that everybody is bad or that today's world has been corrupted absurd. I am mentioning all this because I am studying psychology and I realize that I am not the only one who believes in human kindness".

Student: "It made me think of a special cousin of mine who seems not to be motivated by anything. He is always pointed out as the lazy, bad or stupid one. Obviously, that influences on the way he looks. Nobody sees him in a different way or thinks if he is happy or if that is his way of being or if he feels well or stable. What will happen to him

when he does not do what the others dictate or say? The fact of understanding him is very interesting because he looks so neutral and normal that it seems he does not care about anything. Sometimes people do not like him, but it is the truth. Do all of us have to be equal, move and think the same way? No, and I want to discover what makes my cousin be as he is".

Anderson and Goolishian also question the professional as an expert with their proposal that the client is the expert: a not knowing approach to therapy (1992). "Conversations that stem from the position of not-knowing become a collaborative effort of generating new meaning based on the linguistic and explanatory history of the client, there is a mutual search and people talk "with" one another and not "to" one another"(p.29). Anderson (2007) suggests, "we can only know the world through our experience, and what we create, continually interpreting our experiences and interpreting our interpretations is fluid, continually evolving, shifting, broadening, and changing; that is knowledge, meanings, understandings or realities are not individual activities or passive processes" (p.9).

It is impossible for me to think about teaching as something separated from students' and professors' lives. When we are in the classroom, we share a common scenario. The rest of our personal lives do not disappear during this time. We are relational beings, integrally connected to one another and our environment.

Our lives, important events above all, are present in different moments and scenarios. To value my personal life and experiences favours a kind of reconciliation with myself. I never felt as an expert, neither as a therapist nor as a professor. Having the

possibility to recognize my lack of expertise relieved me of my professional worries. I can appreciate, as well, the importance of experiences as a valid way to know the world.

Student: "I think we are too influenced by a learning style we do not know, not even its origin".

Student: "The first part of the reading reminds me my mom and RI (a professor) saying that a child's self-concept depends on external stimuli".

Student: "After studying the theories that make emphasis on the biological aspects, I remembered myself and my environment since I am very different from my mom and my siblings, although I have lived with them all my life. However, every time I do something different, my mom says that I look like my father and/or the Carrillo family, although I have not lived with my aunts and I rarely see my father".

Student: "The class made think about many things, but it confirms the way I think about life, and I think I am right. Many people are surprised by my way of behaving and thinking, but I realized that I am focused on something a little deeper, and that the present society is focused on something superficial. I do not know exactly where all this is taking me, but I feel calm and satisfied, although not completely since I am afraid of many things; but I have dared to face this fear to allow myself to feel what for me the meaning of life is".

Rethinking language

The second movement of ideas is associated with a different approach to language. Within a postmodern, constructionist perspective, we move from a view of language as a result of one's thoughts (i.e., the perfect vehicle to represent reality) to a perspective that

conceptualise language as constitutive – we make meaning, reality, the world and knowledge in language. As a social phenomenon, language is very dynamic. It is our most powerful vehicle for constructing understandings of our world; at the same time, language limits and shapes our thoughts and our expressions.

A constructionist standpoint suggests that things and phenomena are silent. The world begins to talk when we name it. Language encompasses words, signs, sounds, gestures and whatever other way we coordinate with others (Ayora, Chaveste, Vadillo, 2010).

Student*: "I already knew or thought some things, but I did not have a name for them. Thanks to the theories I already named the concepts".*

Student*: "Ways of looking and body language are also a way of transmitting realities, and I like them more than words since I feel it's more difficult to lie when we use them".*

Student*: "I have never thought about language power on human discourse. I thought that it was only a way of communication and it didn't influence on what was intended to be said. Now, I am more aware of that. I didn't know what I could develop by using the right words at the right time by sending a more beneficial message for me. That's a lot of hidden power not many are aware of".*

Our ways to name and respond to others are not separated from our traditions, considering that we use language inside the groups to which we belong and within which develop our life. Hoffman (1992) affirms that world and phenomena do not exist apart from humans. They cannot be separated from communal process. We create the conventions of

discourse (science and everyday life). We have the power to generate; we also have the power of alteration. In that way, development and transformation of knowledge is a communal process. Knowledge and knower are interdependent; what we know or assume we know is socially and linguistically constructed (Ayora et al, 2010). This does not mean that there is nothing outside language, nothing beyond what we make it out to be. However, it does mean that, because our conjoint formulations of what is the case are typically embedded within our patterns of action, our formulations are enormously important in constructing our future (Hoffman, 1992). In the same way, Gergen (2001) does not suggest that nothing exists outside linguistic constructions; whatever exists simply exists irrespective of linguistic practices. The constructionist emphasis is focused on the meaning of these existences and the actions they inform, once we begin to describe, explain, and interpret them (Anderson, 2007).

__Student__: "How is it possible that something as simple as an everyday interaction could have so many answers and perspectives influenced by many factors and beliefs?"

__Student__: "Sometimes, when we are in a group, we reject other group's ideas, even though they are good, only because they are not our group's ideas".

__Student__: "Something else that made me think was the idea that theories are not eternal, this makes that after a certain time, a group of people question everything they believe in and get confused in their professional practice".

__Student__: "This class made me thinks about the things I have done, and I remembered when people told me what they thought about me. I have heard that I am often very impulsive. I am not sure how bad that could be; I have even seen myself that way".

Student: "How do I know when I am talking about my real self or my ideal self? From which point of view should we talk? Are these concepts influenced by the environment? I think the questions show what I was thinking about".

We have many ways to communicate, to express ourselves. Most of the time our forms of communication become automatic. We do not notice how we are communicating. We pay less attention to how we choose the words we use, to their meaning and, above all, the effect they have on the others. We develop different manners to express: writing, speaking and drawing, among others, and are accustomed to talking and describing things and phenomena without giving importance to our linguistic practices and cultural traditions.

Wittgenstein (1969) and Bakhtin (1993) offer a different understanding about language. *"Language did not emerge from some kind of ratiocination" (Wittgenstein, 1969, p. 475). And Bakhtin defines language as, "a social phenomenon, a group of interactions that mediate social actions produced by users in dialogical interactions. It is the product of a collective human activity and reflects in all its elements as economic and socio-politic organization of the society what has generated it" (p. 227).*

Wittgenstein's and Bakhtin's perspectives share the idea that language gains meaning through its use. They suggest that "in the practice of the use of language, one party calls out the words, the other acts on them. The language is meant to serve for communication, for this purpose they use a language" (Wittgenstein 1986, p.3) and "the word is born in dialogue as a living rejoinder within it, a word forms a concept of its own object in a dialogic way" (Bakhtin, 1981, p.279).

Student: "All this reminds me my dad because he is a depressive person and tends to say that he is silly, stupid…not to mention other things".

Student: "This class made me thinks of the fact that theories exist because, somehow, we wanted them to exist. It is like faith, like religion, i.e., we cannot see God, paradise or hell, but we can formulate our own theory about them. In that way, we can have a belief that makes us carry on with our life".

Student: "I like the fact of asking questions to myself through a text".

Student: "Individual categorization takes from human beings their essential characteristic: diversity".

According to Marrero et al (2007) without language, there is nothing, neither conscious nor sensations. Both are expressed by language. It is a vehicle of meanings, its fundamental function is communication. Language is a social practice that is made concrete in dialogue. It is an interchange, a communicative interaction among people produced in a determined context (p.29); and, according to Wittgenstein (1953) "without language we could not communicate with one another - but for sure: without language we cannot influence other people in such-and-such ways; we cannot build roads and machines, etc. And also: without the use of speech and writing people could not communicate" (p. 491).

Writing as a form of communication gives us some different opportunities to express ourselves and some advantages over other ways of communicating. To write gives us the chance to stop and review our ideas, to erase and to change, to clarify and to describe in a very extensive way or just a little part. In general, when we write, we have the chance

to develop our ideas as fast or as slow as we want, as deep and as superficial as we can, as beautiful and as stunning as we desire.

Student: "I have written for a long time, and what surprises me the most is that sometimes, when I read things I wrote a long time ago, I feel as if somebody else would have written it. Sometimes, I thought: how did I think this? Ha-ha…if it was me! It's very funny".

Student: "I am not very good at writing; however, I believe that writing what I was thinking at that moment was a factor that influenced a lot. Sometimes, I had so many ideas that I did not know where to start from".

Student: "I think I understood my way of thinking, my sporadic thoughts about what was happening or that crossed my mind in each of the classes".

Student: "Writing about each of the theories we studied gives me a space to reflect, debate and analyze my stance about the perspectives. Writing is a kind of feedback; for me, it is a very good way to remember the theory studied".

Writing as a kind of language is more than just a way to communicate, it is a way to surprise, to learn, to understand, to reflect, to analyse, to feedback, to enjoy, to create, to feel and over all to be and relate with life, people and world.

Relationships

The individual within a constructionist view is always engaged in conversational becoming, constructing and reconstructing, and shifting identities through continuous interactions with others (Anderson y Goolishian, 1988; Anderson, 2007). In this sense,

relationships are not natural, we construct and create them (Gergen, 2003). Relationships are built through dialogue and at the same time they are an important element in the very creation of dialogue; and, in this way, relationships and dialogue build one another mutually in a particular context or space (Ayora el at, 2010).

On the other hand, Seikkula and Arnkil (2006) point out the importance of networks in our life. People have connections to agencies, services, and institutions at birth, in babyhood, as toddlers, at school age, as adolescents and young adults, as providers, at middle age, and as a senior citizen. One simply cannot find a person who has appeared in the world and lives totally outside a personal network of relationships or has never been in contact with professional systems.

Dialogism and constructionism imply a very special appreciation of human interactions. My third movement can be illustrated with a postmodern approach that redefines individual and relationship, conceiving individual as person in relationship, dialogically and relationally created.

Student: "I feel that in this course we achieved a group cohesion that had not been seen before. This gives me the opportunity to communicate my ideas, read the texts and analyze them".

Student: "I saw many of my classmates very active; and I thank their participation since their comments and debates allowed me to have a wider outlook than the one I already had. I liked listening to them and being listened".

Student: "We learned to listen to each other, to respect the others' opinions and complement ours with other ideas. We learned to analyze the topics in the book by

comparing them to the topics in other books, and by seeing not only the good side of each theory, but thinking how its innocent side is affected, trying to explain why it was explained in a certain way. We learned to analyze in a deeper and more reflexive way".

Student*: "We learned that it is possible to work and learn on teams".*

Student*: "I guess all the accompaniment was also important. The shared and opposite ideas gave each of us a different and unique opinion about the theories and even of psychology itself".*

Stavros and Torres (2006) introduce the idea of dynamic relationships and suggest that the very nature of relationships is that "we are relational beings, integrally connected to one another and our environment. Our relationships deeply inform who we are and how we act, which in turn impacts others at 'this moment' impacting the 'next instant' in the relationship." Our actions and their impact on others are inseparable; and from an appreciative paradigm they suggest "we are interconnected, changes in our relationships and communities come about through our conversations – the words we choose to use, the questions we decide to ask, and the way we hear and understand the answers informs our thinking and knowing (p. 43-44).

Student*: "By being together I learned, first, that we can see professors as our friends, besides the fact Dora made us more knowledgeable. I don't know exactly what she learned from me, but whatever it was, I hope it's very useful for her".*

Student*: "I really learned with this course, I am taking many things. It was one of the best courses I have ever had. I would like to thank you for being the professor you are, and for teaching not only academic things, but about life".*

My way of being is my way to relate; it is a bit different depending on the context, people and circumstances. In an academic context, I am typically more "formal." I usually tell some jokes, but in a different manner than when I am with family and friends. I guess that students do the same. The academic environment dictates to us some traditions of behavior and guide our relations in part. On the other hand, we arrange and create our relationships and we learn to relate in a special way during our time together. I am not the funniest or most extroverted person, but I look for manners to express my interest and commitment to my students.

Student: "A regards learning, I like how she cares for her students. I also like the fact that she is a professor willing to learn from her students during the process of her classes".

Student: "I learnt to keep quiet because I didn't have to defend myself a lot. I don't have to be against the others and this is also very interesting. I liked listening to the rest. You will always have your own issues, we grow up and train, we become stronger and it's cool to see each one's strength and how we grow up; it was very interesting".

Dialogical Voices

The fourth movement goes from my earlier understandings about dialogue to a constructionist standpoint. In the past, as professor and therapist dialogue was the interchange of messages or a group of ideas transmitted from one to another person; a process where I make people say what I thought they have to say. Through dialogue, I facilitated a process of whereby awareness increases and consequently, this awareness would produce the change I assumed is needed. Other voices and spaces where dialogue

had a place were not important and its development had to be very organized, structured and formal.

In the present, the constructionist standpoint offers me a perspective to conceptualise dialogue more than the simple interchange of messages, or a process which I can control and organize. Constructionist standpoint is a more flexible, useful and less arrogant stance considering the following ideas.

Dialogue implies alternation of voices or words among people. It is an encounter and incorporation of other voices in a determined space and socio historic time (Marrero et al., 2007, p. 31). Dialogue involves the intertwined reciprocal multifaceted processes of listening, hearing, and speaking; each member of conversation constantly moves back and forth between these processes. They are part of the natural spontaneous way of conversations (Anderson, 2007, p. 35). Dialogue is a way to think together, where understanding is formed between the participants, as something that exceeds the possibilities of a single person. To achieve this, the parties need to turn towards responses, to listen and be heard (Bakhtin, 1981).

Never before has dialogue, as an interchange, a participatory process, been more important to me. I can appreciate from this perspective that responses are an invitation to collaborate, to create. When we are in dialogue, we respond to the others and they respond to us.

Student: "I think that process of dialogue is also very necessary; not only for this course, but to create our ideas and our stances through time. It also helps us not only to integrate what we understood, but even to understand the others' ideas all of a sudden.

They can change the way we see and understand that process of dialogue. I like chatting a lot, at least in this course; I do not think it is good in all the courses. There is not much dialogue in the others"

*   **Student***: "I think we follow this method in class very well. You can know a very important point of view of each one very well when the dialogues clash. With this kind of conversations, very important topics are treated which you cannot get if you only keep your own view. This dialogue system complements it, makes you see it in a different way, or as you had not noticed it; or as it is said, if we talk about this, we can get to many things".*

*   **Student***: "I do like this thing about the dialogue. I feel that I learn more. I don't know about the rest, but I think that the majority also learns this way, talking about what they think about a theoretician. And with the others' points of view, you may understand what you didn't. It's like a complement".*

It is easier to be a professor when I imagining teaching as a dialogue. This idea allows me to be and act more relaxed. It inspires me to invite the students' voices, my own voice and then trust. Dialogue permits me to construct with students our everyday labour in the classroom, generated from local opportunities instead of theories or techniques.

*   *Every discourse is dialogic; it is direct to another person, to his/her comprehension and effective and potential response (Bakhtin, 1980, en Silvestri y Blanck, 1993, p. 65). Marrero et al (2007), says that, according to Bakhtin, every dialogical communication has three elements: statement, genre and responsive attitude or active listening. Statement is contextual, the situation creates statements; act and word are similar, but the concrete fact of communication is the act, what interlocutors live and make in a specific situation and*

moment. Genres are ways of fulfilling discourses linked to situations and contexts.

Different contexts determine different genres which generate specific activities bonded to

its characteristic uses. Every genre creates its own ways to see and conceptualize the

world. Genre gives a statement certain intentionality and asks for an active response. To

communicate dialogically, every active response implicates the need that the listener takes

a posture before the message which promotes a critical sense to respond, each message is

elaborated looking for a response (pp. 34-40).

It is in dialogue and interaction that we respond; therefore, it is important to

respond to each other in a "meaningful way" (Shotter, 1993, p. 2). Our meaningful ways to

communicate are full of words that we use, as Shotter suggests, "in socially constructing

and socially sustaining different forms of life between ourselves" (Shotter, 1993 p. 6).

From this perspective, what we say is linked with a concrete situation we live and

with the context in which a communicational emission is produced. What moment, what

place, who the speakers are, who the listeners are, what their relation is are important. All

these elements contribute to create a dialogical interchange. Whatever is said gains

meaning through the other's response. Meaning is constructed in the interaction, in the

interweaving of responses.

Student*: "It helps me a lot because sometimes I read the material about each*

author and I interpret it in a particular way. But when I arrive here, I listen to what the rest

of the class understood. I realize that I had not seen it from that point of view. This helps

me a lot to integrate many things that may not have been very clear to me; it helps me a lot.

It also makes me think that I should contextualize what I thought…and oh! Why did I think that? Why did that particular person think that? And reach a joint of both".

Student*: "It's ok to talk about all the authors; you share, understand, realize. But at the same time, I think that your role as a mediator is fundamental; that you tell me "Dasha, you are going the wrong way" or sometimes I don't know if what I am saying is correct or not. Sometimes we need a guide for the dialogue".*

Student*: "Something very important about the dialogue and that I like very much is the fact that we make ourselves use our own words to describe a concept. It's not our memorizing to repeat exactly as a parrot what we read in the book, but that we have the concept, the idea in our mind and we transmit it with our own words. By doing this, we understand it more easily; it's easier to remember it".*

Andersen (1996) adds body activity as part of this process. The listener who follows the talker, not only hearing the words but also seeing how the words are uttered, will notice that every word is part of the movement of the body. Spoken words and bodily activity come together in a unit and cannot be separated (pp. 120-121).

Shotter (1996) complements these ideas: our living gestures and responses are not merely reactions to our immediate circumstances, but ones that also connect or link our reactions to other possible circumstances in sometimes very complex ways - in taking up a past, incorporating the present, and linking to a future, in a quite specific way. (p. 9)

Dialogical conversation to Anderson (1997) is distinguished by shared inquiry. Shared inquiry to her is the coordinated action of continually responding to and interacting with; of exchanging, and discussing ideas, opinions, biases, memories, observations,

feelings, emotions and so forth.   It is a process in which the participants are in a fluid mode characterized by an in-there-together, two-way, give-and-take exchange. People talk with each other, and do not assume they know what the other person is saying, means, or wants; each one is committed to learning about and trying to understand the other by negotiating meanings through the use of language. According to Anderson, shared inquiry has several features: dialogical space, mutual exploration and development, understanding from within the conversation, internal dialogue, expanding and saying the unsaid, conversational background, belonging to the conversation, and shared intentionality (p. 112).

Classroom is the perfect space to create dialogical conversations. Collaborative teaching as a kind of dialogical conversation is a process of responding, interacting with others; it is a process of exchanging and discussing ideas, in which professor and students talk to each other. They not only talk through words, interact as the people they are, their bodies, their faces and movements are present too.

Clusters, duos, group conversations are not only about topics, and class subject; every conversation brings personal opinions and circumstances, every opportunity to dialogue incorporate and link topics and opinions to other new perspectives. If we commit together, professor and students can develop a mutual exploration, expand and say the unsaid and build up a sense of belonging to the conversation.

Student*: "As regards the dialogue, I like the different ways in which we communicate as a class".*

Student: "In this course, we don't always work with the same classmates, so we learn to perceive in what way each of us perceives the reading. I may perceive it in a way, but another person in a different way".

Student: "The most significant is that we talked about our ideas; you said yours, I said mine, the others too. That increases the perspectives: maybe I think something about the theory, but another person thinks in a different way. So they can analyze: Oh! I didn't think that way, and they might be right".

In my experience, to interact dialogically with people stimulates certain kinds of relationships that honour people's knowledge and experiences of life and the sensation that we are learning and transforming together.

Collaborative learning communities

Teaching as a collaborative learning community and a dialogical process became a watershed in my practice. Bakhtin (2004), Anderson and Swim (1993), Freire (2006) and McNamee (1997) are part of my fifth movement to constructionist and dialogical approaches. I do not know how, but their ideas inform my ways of being. It is not clear to me how I changed from a monologic and very rigid approach to a more flexible and collaborative way of teaching. But, this group of ideas describe very well what I am doing nowadays.

Ibañez (2010) suggests that Bakhtin is a dialogical pedagogue, considering that his proposal of construction of knowledge is through critical dialogue and professorial authority decentralisation; that the liberating aim of education trains critical consciences.

Bakhtin (2004, p. 22) describes his conversations as "cheerful and interesting" that generate an articulated, elaborated, unprejudiced and creative language. Though teacher continues controlling class, it makes a decentralisation of authority that allows listening to the student's voices. He talks about the need to promote a creative, original and exploratory thinking… in contact with richness and the complexity of life.

Bakhtin's ideas make me think about my ways of teaching as a form to promote critical training and original thinking and to invite students to appreciate richness and the complexity of life; as being a creative teacher and having less of a leading role.

To Bakhtin, the goal of teaching grammar is to insure that students are able to evaluate language uses to become competent and reflecting speakers and writers (Ibañez, 2010). About this idea I add that whatever class can contribute to evaluate language and make us aware about its uses.

Student*: "Also, the fact that you took the trouble to plan each class. I think that gave us a basis to work. Also, that plan was flexible: if that day we didn't feel like doing a particular thing, we could change it, so it was more functional for us; and we could feel that we learned more. I remember that you used to ask: "How do you learn more?" And then we proposed or changed something or did what we could with that class. So, I think that made us learn more".*

Student*: "It was a chat, a debate, something cool because as long as all of us listen to the rest with tolerance and respect, you'll be listened to in the same way. So, it turned into a cool chat among all. Each person listened and each said whatever came to their mind. Many times they were topics related to the curriculum, but suddenly something else*

came to your mind and you related it to something else, and that was also heard. It was always related to the topic we were studying, and you were like the mediator. If we went off at a tangent, you made us come back; you made us questions so we could think about the same topic".

Freire describes humans as a Presence with world and the others (Freire, 2005, p. 20) and emphasises dialogue as the essential way to develop a critical consciousness (Ibañez, 2010, p.6). He adopts a critical stance to some pedagogic practices that are repetitive and prescriptive and he promotes a sharing research of meaning, through dialogue among participants, making critique explicit and producing books that reflect this shared search of meaning.

Anderson and Swim (1993) help me make sense of my teaching practices through their Collaborative Learning Communities. *They emphasise the importance of the learning environment, taking responsibility, the learning process, the generation of knowledge through conversation, and role switching between teacher and student.*

Anderson (1997) and Anderson and Swim (1993) stress the intention to create and facilitate a learning environment and process where participants can access, elaborate, and produce their own unique competences. I used to describe this learning environment as a place for sharing, a place where people are doing something together: creating and contributing, and belonging to the place. But this place is not only a room or building—it is a setting, an atmosphere, which has been constructed by us through our interactions, words, and dialogues, through who we are, with all our beliefs, values, dreams and fears. A place for sharing has space for all perspectives, yours, mine, and others'. No one is more

important, true or relevant, and everyone contributes to opening new meanings and

possibilities (Ayora, D. et al., 2010).

As well, I am used to talking about the importance of creating a space to talk with

people, which is open to a diversity of perspectives. Therefore, each idea, experience or

opinion needs to be respected in and of itself. These kinds of spaces are at the same time

the scenario for conversations and relations among people.

Student: "I was going to mention that one of your most important contributions

during the course was that you were a guide. I think the fact that you were a very pleasant

guide, the kind of guidance you gave us and the questions you asked motivated us to talk

our ears off. This group participates a lot in class; they always want to give their opinion".

Student: "From all of us, I think there was a lot of respect; we listened to the other

and allowed everybody to comment whatever they wanted. From you, commitment, because

it was obvious that you prepared your class. Also, our disposition".

Student: "I also wrote 'dedication and creativity in the classes'. All of them were

different; you didn't even imagine how a class would be".

Regarding responsibility, Anderson and Swim (1993) and Anderson (1997) point

out the importance of inviting and encouraging participants to take responsibility for, and

to be the architects of, their own learning. Ensuring that each participant has a voice,

contributes, questions, explores, is uncertain, and experiments.

McNamee and Gergen (1999) suggest replacing individual responsibility with

relational responsibility. "We hold relationally responsible actions to be those that sustain

and enhance forms of interchange out of which meaningful action itself is made possible. If human meaning is generated through relationship, then to be responsible to relational processes is to favor the possibility of intelligibility itself—possessing selves, values, and the sense of worth" (pp. 18-19). What McNamee and Gergen suggest is consistent with the notion of knowledge and language as relational and generative, calling for an ethic that involves joint responsibility and accountability. That is, responsibility and accountability are not individual characteristics or one-way street processes, even though one person may be socially and culturally designated to a hierarchical or authoritarian role (Anderson, 2007).

*   **Student**: "I perceive that the most significant contribution was that each of us exposed their own ideas".*

*   **Student**:"I think that here there is nothing correct or incorrect. Here you can say what you think, and not everybody may agree. In the end, you already expressed yourself and nobody criticized you. You can speak freely and say whatever you want; we usually say what the other person says is wrong".*

From this perspective, learning processes can be conceptualized as a collaborative and egalitarian effort. Learning is a co-evolutionary process in which teacher and student are jointly engaged.

*   Anderson and Swim (1993) state that, "participants begin to experience, recognize and value their expertise, competencies and talents. They become more thoughtful and active in delineating what they want to learn, and in requesting a teacher and fellow student's participation in their learning" (p. 148). These authors also add that the core of*

a dialogic process resides in the fact that "participants create knowledge with each other. Knowledge is not something teacher gives to student. The creation of new narrative or knowledge is not standardized; it is realized in the process of conversation and relationship. Learning is the generation of new knowledge through conversation" (p. 150).

The teacher is as entitled as the learner to express strong opinions, but does so from a position of always being as open to change as she or he expects the learner to be. In this sense, both are learners. The expertise that each of them brings to the process influences the other; it creates newness for both learner and teacher. In a collaborative learning system process, the familiar roles of teacher and learner seem to be switched. The teacher becomes the not-knower and the learner is the knower. This involves a shift in the teacher's role from being an expert on content and solutions to being an expert on process (Anderson and Swim, 1993).

McNamee (2007) promotes a collaborative and relational approach to teaching. She considers the potentials opened by approaching teaching as a form of collaborative conversation instead of a traditional metaphor of teaching as a technique or method for conveying knowledge (p. 314) and conceives conversation as a relational practice and, by extension, teaching as conversation. The collaborative process of learning is also a relational practice. It is a relational practice where participants, both teacher and student, engage in a process of making meaning together. According to her, a relational approach to education requires that we abandon the idea that knowledge or information can be conveyed from one mind to another. Instead, she describes knowledge as constructed in conjoint activities with others– in what people do together.

Whatever we do together is the result of our agreements; I invite students to participate in some activities. I am accustomed to offering some options from which they can choose the best for each moment. When I feel the students are less participative, I ask if something is wrong or needs to be done in a different way or I suggest something new.

Student: "You actually grow up. I never did the same thing in the different classes. I never had the same activity. I used to go to class wondering "What's going to happen today? What am I going to do? How am I going to learn everything I read? If the situation had been different, I would have cried. It was actually very good; it was a beautiful way to sell us mundane theory. The subject itself has something that anyone would have loved: we had to study theories, but theories that you are going to study in an ordinary way; but you made us study them in a very dynamic and entertaining way".

In every class, we worked with a different dynamic and activity. At the beginning, it was spontaneous. It was, for me, just a way to enjoy and to have fun. But when I asked the students about it, they told me that it helped them to remember information because they could make a link between theory and activity. Now I intentionally suggest a different activity every class.

Transformation

My sixth movement has to do with Transformation. My earlier education and life made me think about the world and life as static phenomenon. Actually, not exactly static but predictable and with known changes; things change because are part of a very organised and expectable process.

From a postmodern and constructionist perspective, transformation is associated with emergence of new meaning. Conversation as a linguistic phenomenon and as a meaning generating process has a transformational nature.

Student: "As regards transformation, it has helped me. For example, I'm very bad at remembering names, so I relate the activity to the author's name, so it's easier for me to remember the name since we did a meaningful activity".

Student: "I feel that this process has helped me start taking a stance as regards the currents, and above all, to criticize them. That is the aim of this course: to criticize the currents that have emerged, well…I criticize them and pull them apart. I don't have to believe everything".

Student: "I think I have had a transformation of dynamics rather than a personal transformation. Again, teachers are the ones who give the class, and I was used to it. In the first year at university I kind of change a little bit. In secondary and preparatory school, the teachers give the class, write on the board and you are spoon-fed. On the other hand, here, we are the ones who make the class and often end up explaining new concepts and the points of view that each of us has. Transformation in this sense". .

According to Anderson (1997), transformation rests in its dialogical nature and its capacity to re-late the events of our lives in the context of a new and different meaning.

Anderson (2007) assumes, inherent in language, is the transformation of experience, and at the same time it transforms what we can experience. A transformative view of knowledge and language invites a view of human beings as resilient; it invites an appreciative approach. And, it invites uncertainty (p. 1).

New meaning does not emerge from all types of conversations, not all of them have the potential to allow development of new meaning. Changes emerge in and through the redescriptions that result from the telling and retelling of familiar stories. In the telling and retelling not only do new stories emerge, but a person changes in relationship to them. Dialogical conversation is a generative process in which participants are capable to create new meanings, different ways of understanding and making sense of life events (Anderson, 1997).

Student*: "You start seeing things in a different way. You start like looking for the points of view in many things that help you understand the good and the bad sides of things".*

Student*: "I liked your invitation not to accept everything the author said. It was as if we were looking for different points of view. At the beginning, it was like you liked everything you read".*

Student*: "For me, the fact that now we reason everything and don't swallow anything straight away. I think there was a class in which we concluded that was an invitation to rebellion. So, this could be what is not innocent because I think that each of us is thinking about very different things, things that we don't like, things we can contribute to improve and really impact as psychologists".*

In general terms, I have a good reputation as a professor; I know that students consider me as a very valued one. I have to accept that it makes me feel very happy and at the same time very uncomfortable. This is because I do not want to be in the centre of the

stage, I do not want to be a kind of celebrity at the school, but it is as well the way that they can recognise and appreciate my contributions to the class.

Gergen, McNamee and Barrett (2002) suggest some dialogical resources that are essential for transformative dialogue: A) Validation: it is the "act of making sense to validate the existence of an enunciation instead of nullifying and refuting it. Validation requires actions that make sense to the presence of beauty". B) Metonymy: it "exists in dialogue when the actions of one contain remains of the other's actions, a fragment that represents the whole". C) In addition, Gergen, McNamee and Barrett (2001) consider Relational responsibility that contemplates the importance of: internal others, "to locate within yourself another voice that is 'speaking to you' in the situation", you are positioned to evaluate your actions as something other than yourself. Conjoint relations have to do with questions like "what we are now doing together" "how did we get ourselves into this situation" or "if we are killing ourselves going on like this, why we don't we start from the beginning and have a different kind of conversation". Group realities are a "way of seeing ourselves not as singular individuals, but as representatives of groups, traditions, families and so on, we may avoid the habit of individual fault found in the context of group differences". Finally, the systemic swim that implies "the conversation in which we broaden our concerns to the ways in which we participate as a society in creating the conditions for most of what we devalue. It takes more than a village to create a rape, a hate crime, or a robbery". D) Self-expression: it means having "ample opportunity to share views that are important" for each one through personal stories, to speak personally as opposed to using abstract arguments; E) Affirming the other: it "implies locating something within the other's expression to which we can lend our agreement and support.

F) Coordinating action: meaning making is a form of coordinated action". Thus, if we are to generate meaning together, "we must develop smooth and reiterative patterns of interchange" – Metonymy, (B above) is a very good example – "dance in which we move harmoniously together coordinating rhythm, coordinating discourse; without forgetting that, coordinating actions is not itself sufficient". G) Reflexivity: as the ability to recognize multiple, simultaneously salient systems. "We participate in multiple relationships and we carry with us myriad traces of these relationships". "We are poly-vocal; we can speak with many voices". H) The co-creation of new realities: "transformative dialogue is essentially aimed at facilitating the collaborative construction of new realities. The challenge is not so much to consider the future in terms of fixed starting points, but through dialogue to construct a viable future together. This is not to rule out the investments with which one enters the exchange, but to focus on the potentials of the dialogue to reveal new, unifying amalgamations of perspective" (pp. 689-698).

Student: "In fact, it's harder for me to socialize if we don't speak. I feel more comfortable talking as we are doing now than when we're in class. I like talking very much because when I started the major, I hardly ever participated, I was quieter. Now I am self-confident and I know that I won't be criticized. I was afraid of criticism".

When you participate in a conversation that considers valuable whatever your contribution is, it is transformative, who I believe I am into the classroom and in relation to students is part of process of construction and deconstruction about who we are together. We have the opportunity to contrast, to affirm, to question, to change and to add new forms of description and knowledge about myself, as a professor, and them, as students; all of us are part of the group. This process of construction contributes to our work and relationship

throughout the course; therefore, it influences the environment to facilitate our difficult learning processes.

Ethical process

Ethical features constitute my seventh movement, which place people interconnected through dialogue and relationships. To live is to live in relation and dialogue. A dialogical vision of the world makes us responsive and responsible beings for our words and acts. Dialogism as an ethical and philosophical proposal is a stand of openness to the other, an attitude that…

According to Bakhtin (1982) is manifested through the hue of language.

Student*: "I think this is the course we are most committed to. The truth is that it motivates us; it's not the only course that gives us homework, but it is the only one we study for. I know that we have to study for this course because there will be a dynamic I know I will like, that I will understand everything I read (and it makes me angry when I didn't actually read) And when somebody hasn't read for the class is because he really had to do something else. Really, it's frustrating to come to class without having read the material because we are really committed. There are some courses we are not committed to, even though we are begged to read. I think the fact of your being committed motivates us and makes us commit ourselves to the course. As you are our guide, your attitude and your dynamics help us a lot".*

My earlier understanding about ethics is represented by ethics as a noun; it means a kind of individual property, as something that exists inside people that pushes them to act

ethically, and to do good things. You are an ethical person because you have this characteristic that you acquired through your development.

From Kohlberg's view, only decisions resulting from cognitive (conscious and rational) processes count as moral (Kristjansson, K., 2009) and the agent performing it must have done it for a reason. The prototype of a moral action on the Kantian/Kohlbergian understanding is thus an individual intentional action (p. 821). On the other hand, from a biomedical perspective, you are a moral or good person if you have a 'healthy brain' and/or genetic code (Webel, Ch. & Stigliano, T., 2004, p. 85). One principal consequence of ethic as a noun is that all moral judgments of behaviour are focused on the individual, their personal characteristics or the health of brain tissue, which, according to Webel & Stigliano (2004), presumably, if the brain is healthy, then one can act morally (p. 90). This would imply, by the way, that immorality is really a matter to be addressed by psychopharmacology and/or psychotherapy, and/or ethicists and theologians!

Following this grammatical metaphor, constructionist and dialogical perspectives invite me to think about ethic as a verb, as action in relationships and dialogue with others. It is more useful for me to understand ethical descriptions of good, bad, common, or unusual as emergent by-products of joint actions that are always situated in discursive contexts.

Thus, what we "know" is dependent upon our forms of relatedness (McNamee, 1994, p.4). Anderson (2007) introduces a view of ethics as "representing or communicating agreed upon values and morals—and the rules for those values and morals—that have been

historically, culturally, contextually, communally, and linguistically created". She adds

that "ethics are socially constructed through language, they is fluid rather than static" (pp.

1-2).

Her proposal emphasises ethics as a communal activity that invites us to consider

the importance of ethics as locally and mutually determined by people involved. Ethics

invented outside contexts should not be simply, assumingly, and sweepingly transferred into

the specific situation; the ethics of the dominant discourse are not precise and do not fit the

unique situation and each circumstance; participants have not silently agreed upon ethics

beforehand; and some situations and circumstances, therefore, might challenge the

broader contextual ethics and vice versa.

Student: "Above all, that you question yourself what is ethical and what is not; or

why that is ethical, and, depending on the situation, how this can be modified".

Student: "I think that from the ethical point of view, this subject left us many things,

and the quantity of contributions depends on each of us, according to what we decided to

take from the pieces of reading. Each of the pieces of reading showed different types of

personality in which it was possible to find positive values and lifestyles that, in a way,

contribute to the person's ethics, such as respect, tolerance, morals, etc."

Student: "Respect was a notable contribution in this item, since, although we

didn't talk about our own topics, and that they could be contradicted, the openness towards

these topics and the respectful treatment generate an adequate learning relationship".

Student: "We practiced tolerance, we learned to listen and respect the others, to

see both sides of the coin, the pros and cons in a critical way; this is, to prevent

prejudices".

Student*: "We learnt a lot of respect, tolerance and understanding".*

What is interesting about ethics as action, as communal activity and forms or relationships is the way that students describe the process. They refer to ethic as something that depends on the situations, that is connect with the way that we treat topics and relations; students use We instead I, referring to ethics as communal instead an individual process, emphasising what we did together.

McNamee and Gergen (1999) suggest replacing individual responsibility with relational responsibility. We hold relationally responsible actions to be those that sustain and enhance forms of interchange out of which meaningful action itself is made possible (p.18).

Lynn Hoffman refers to the "ethic of participation" claiming that our aim should be to adopt a critical stance that favors becoming aware of the power relations hidden within the assumptions of any social discourse, including critical discourse itself. Thus, not just our theory, but our practice should reflect an awareness of hidden power relationships (Hoffman, 1992, p. 22).

"I think this is the course we are most committed to. The truth is that it motivates us; it's not the only course that gives us homework, but it is the only one we study for. I know that we have to study for this course because there will be a dynamic I know I will like, that I will understand everything I read (and it makes me angry when I didn't actually read) And when somebody hasn't read for the class is because he really had to do something else. Really, it's frustrating to come to class without having read the material because we are really committed. There are some courses we are not committed to, even

though we are begged to read. I think the fact of your being committed motivates us and makes us commit ourselves to the course. As you are our guide, your attitude and your dynamics help us a lot".

Student: "You are also like a student, you're not like the professor who is like a god and everything he says is right; you are open to integrating our ideas. It is as if we learn from you, and you from us".

Student: "I think that you do guide us, but I feel that we also contribute. You are not the one that does everything. You do help us understand the concepts and the topics; you give us a wider view of what we read. But we also have our own ideas, and not only for what you tell us, but also when we listen to our classmates. We create a stronger idea from what we read and observe in class".

Student: "The wide communication that exists between Dora and the group".

Relational responsibility and ethic of participation make sense to students' experiences about commitment and motivation; recognizing our participation, professor and students as participants in mutual influence and the importance of our communication.

This relational perspective fits with Susan Swim, Sally St. George and Dan Wulff's (2001) suggestion of "process ethics." Although they refer to therapy, their considerations apply broadly; they consider ethics to be the respectful and meaningful interpersonal space between therapist and client (p. 14). It represents the collaborative effort and decision of (I say "participants") clients and therapists who mutually set the tone and agenda of their therapeutic endeavor. The guiding premise within process ethics is the co-creation of ethics that occurs within relational opportunities where participants collaborate on ethical

conjoint actions. Process ethics do not attempt to deem whether codes of professional

conduct and licensures laws are negotiable or necessary (pp. 18-19).

   Student*: "I don't know if it's right what I will write. As regards opinions, I think*
she helps us and gave us a greater respect and acceptance".

   Student*: "Responsibility if my teacher is making an effort, I'll do it as well. I*
respect each one of my classmates' opinions".

   Student*: "Tolerance towards different ideas, freedom of expression, respect for the*
authors and the others".

   A last concept is "relational connectedness," introduced by McNamee and Gergen

(1999). It is located at the core of process ethics. Relational connectedness refers to the

degree to which clients and therapist engage with one another, how they organize and

coordinate their interactions. This takes me to Shotter and Katz's consideration: "only if

you respond to me in a way sensitive to the relations between your and my actions, can we

act together as a collective we; and if I sense you as not being sensitive in that way, then I

feel immediately offended, ethically offended (Shotter and Katz, 1999, p. 152).

   From my grammatical metaphor (i.e., ethics as a noun vs ethics as a verb), ethics as

communal activity, relational responsibility – including the ethics of participation, process

ethics and relational connectedness – all used as a verb, indicates action, action in

relationships and dialogue with others, that according to McNamee's (1997) "description of

research (I can say "teaching") all other forms of interaction are situated in **practice**. Its

ethics, relevance, value, and appropriateness will be judged differently depending upon

how one situates the research – teaching– **activity**" (p. 9) (words in bold are mine).

Finally, as regards ethics, I want to emphasize two more ideas*: Anderson's approach about the right and duty to participate and McNamee's consideration of a way of talking. Anderson (2007) compares a citizen's right and duty to participate in the creation and operation of their government, with a therapy client's same right and duty. I connect this with a student´s right and duty. Anderson reminds us that we must be ready and willing to deal with the inherent uncertainty, including the possible questioning and transformation of our own ethical stance. McNamee (1994) stresses the importance of our way of talking, "if a particular way of talking constructs our worlds, then the discursive forms that emerge and gain viability within particular communities construct the ethical standards by which we live. A 'way of talking' can only be given space if others engage in and add to it. Thus, the relational aspect of meaning is featured" (McNamee, 1994).*

Student*: "Personally speaking, this subject taught me to value life, my family and friends more, since after studying the theory, I realized that nothing is certain in life, that everything can change in a minute, how important family and friends are. Also, the tolerance towards others' ideas is reinforced when we study different theories".*

Student*: "Being able to observe the human being, not as a machine, nor as a demigod capable of achieving everything, but as a being that is not perfect but that can achieve his/her happiness through different processes".*

Ethics as action -- as relations -- moves me to a collaborative and constructionist perspective, which invites me to participate in my life in a more relaxed manner, assuming that I am not the only one with responsibility and thus feeling freer to contribute to my different relationships in different contexts and with different expectations.

Student: "I think that one of the ethical contributions of this course is the fact that, as it was commented, you can't accept everything you are told, that you have to know more theories. I think this course invited us: "come, there are more theories, try them, get to know them. It invited us to go beyond".

Student: "Complementing what you say about tolerance, I think that you never said that an opinion is better than another. They are only opinions in their context, their field. They are all as valuable and useful. I think that is very important; why should we favor one, if in the end we are all people and have the right to give our opinion? Each one's opinion can be valuable".

Student: "Respect. Respect for other people's opinion. Also, respect for the book, since we are responsible to study for the exam. On the other hand, respect for my classmate: since the exam is in pairs, we have to study and not leave all the responsibility to him. There should be commitment".

Politic stance

A political stance is one of the newest issues in my everyday and professional life. My eighth movement demands that I consider many social aspects that I never pondered before. The process of teaching as a political topic challenges the idea of teacher as an objective professional, as someone who possesses a wide range of knowledge. His/her task is to give the students that knowledge, without regard to what she or he thinks.

Student: "I think it taught me rather to not get carried away by first impressions of each theory. You explain theories, and it looks very nice and I sold it, but I also learned to see the bad side or not innocent side of each, that made you question the theory itself, I did

not fall so easily and so fast and have a broader idea of all, not only to keep one but to learn from others and to get an idea bigger and wider than they are, and not be alone with one".

Student*: "I think the same about the different ideas. I think that many are afraid of thinking something and then somebody tells them something different and then they have to recognize that what the other person said may change their mind. Sometimes, there exist that fear to change stances, and I think it's a part of it; we're not perfect. We shouldn't be afraid of changing our stance or expand it".*

Student*: "Each of us has our own way of thinking, we are all different. The political aspect we learnt was to keep your stance as well as learn from the others, and be able to expand your stance with the others'; and be able to use the others' stance to expand yours".*

If I assume a constructionist discourse, I immediately feel a political commitment. This posture, from my understandings, implicates me to be public in my stand. You must recognize that you use a specific way of talking to refer to occurrences. This reminds me of John Shotter's contribution to an email conversation on May 6, 2011, at 5:49 AM. He wrote: "*Does social constructionism have political implications? Yes, of course, we are constructing 'ways' into the future and 'whose' way is the way 'we' take matters. It meant to depict the fact that, while a particular "way of talking" gives a particular "form or structure" to an event occurring in our surroundings, that particular "way of talking" is "in a responsive relation to" that event; it is "rooted" in it… So, in its original occurrence as a happening in our surroundings, it can have (but may not have) occurred independently*

of us; but clearly, the formulation we give it, as this or that particular kind of event, it can seem to be not at all independent. And this, of course, is where the politics comes in, whose formulation, whose projected future."

*   **Student**: "I learned to take my own stance. If I want to change something, I have to participate in the decisions to be taken. I learned not to be a conformist, to express my opinions, to research on my own, to have the habit of asking something I'm not sure about".*

*   **Student**: "To try to improve society. In order to consider theories in a social context, we should consider all of them since they also affect society".*

*   McNamee (1994) refers to why and how one theoretical perspective could be more true than another. How could we possibly mediate among competing perspectives? Who stands in a position to make such judgements? If each theory or perspective is, as Lyotard says, a "discourse of legitimation," whose discourse is being sanctioned by particular forms of practice (both in research and everyday activities)? (p.2)*

Teaching as a political practice requires, from my point of view, that we recognise the way we talk inside the classroom, the way we describe knowledge, the way we introduce the topics. Teaching is always political and raises the question of what kind of social realities we create through it. Topics become an excuse to construct very rich dialogues that can influence our personal and professional lives, instead of knowledge that students just should learn.

Student: "When I got together with my family or friends, I sometimes went with the flow. But with this, I start to think in a different way; it makes you see things in a different way".

Student: "As regards a political training, we learned not to take anything for granted; we really understood when it is said that "a theory is not an axiom or absolute truth"; and I also learnt to defend a stance".

Student: "Regarding ethics as well as politics, this course made me reflect because we saw many perspectives, even in the social field. Despite all our criticism, I kept thinking: which stance I should take as regards the present and my personal training, as a professional, what I want to achieve, what my limits are, and how critical I can be. That boost to criticism was always present, and that was good. I don't think I can say a last word about ethics because the process is still long, but it has been interesting".

Student: "I think that this course, by listening to the different points of view, strengthened our tolerance because we don't always agree".

To me, Shotter's 'ways of talking' looks similar as John Law's (2004) stance about research "its methods don't just describe social realities, but also help to create them" every method as a way of talking provides a different stand point to events.

Student: "I think of another topic, the openness each of us had and the feedback we got from different ideologies or the different aspects of each theory. As Carlos well mentioned, we also learn to defend our ideas, but without falling in the dogmatism that only my theory is the correct one, or that only what I think is correct, but we can "taste" many of the theories to adjust ourselves to them and not focus on only one idea. Nothing is

innocent, and we should criticize not only what is external to us, but what is inside us. We should criticize the theories we don't or may not believe in, but also our theories".

Student: "All this made me focus not only on one theory, but take a more eclectic stance to know each of them since what one of them can't say, the other can, and it can complement it. So, in this stance, all of them can help to understand and explain human development. That has helped me a lot".

Student: "A regards my political contribution, I consider that I got a different outlook of each theory. However, my way of thinking remains the same: I accept different opinions".

Reflecting processes

As part of my ninth movement, the reflecting processes proposal introduces a totally different way to be with people. It is a perspective that gives me voice to offer my opinions and experiences as valid and freedom to relate with people in a more comfortable way. As a person, it is fundamental to be with others, and it is difficult when you are worried about the "correct" way of being. To inform and interpret my practices from a reflecting approach make me feel happy and relaxed to relate, to create and to dialogue with others.

Student: "In fact, it's harder for me to socialize if we don't speak. I feel more comfortable talking as we are doing now than when we're in class. I like talking very much because when I started the major, I hardly ever participated, I was quieter. Now I am self-confident and I know that I won't be criticized. I was afraid of criticism".

When I was a student, professors pushed me to talk loud but I never could, it was very uncomfortable to me. I felt a lot of pressure to be part of the class and traditionally it was considered the best way to show that you are learning, that you are a good and intelligent student. Reflecting processes grant meaning to different forms of participation increasing a sense of comfort and underscoring the idea that there is not only one way to be in class.

Student: "We learned to listen to each other, to respect the others' opinions and complement ours with other ideas. We learned to analyze the topics in the book by comparing them to the topics in other books, and by seeing not only the good side of each theory, but thinking how its innocent side is affected, trying to explain why it was explained in a certain way. We learned to analyze in a deeper and more reflexive way".

Student: "Besides the syllabus, by being together we learned that all of us are different and, at least in this course, to work together without rivalry".

Developing reflecting manners has changed my way to be and relate, making it easier to be attentive to others, to appreciate diversity, and to look for new ways to offer ideas, ways that are more positive, beautiful, and with an original touch.

One of the most influential aspects of reflecting process is Andersen's (1991) consideration about their objectives: team participants share their thoughts and feelings in a reflecting exercise. From their stories, reflecting teams privilege the richness of language, value plurality of perspectives and voices, appreciate and welcome experiences, contributions and the potential of each person, encourage capacities and hope, honour the importance of communication, the sense of belonging and being the owners of our life. On

the other hand, Andersen (2007) emphasises the importance of avoiding telling people what they should do and think, and, instead, invite a 'this and this' perspective, (for example, 'in addition to how you are thinking, we have thought…' and 'in addition to doing what we have been doing you could also consider this…'- in addition to, that is) (p. 159). He also stresses the importance of talking less and listening more. It is important to stop trying to be so active and emphasise ourselves less, emphasize ourselves less and listened more, in that way the others are better able to assert themselves more (p. 163).

As regards Biever and Gardner, they note that reflecting teams inherently provide multiple descriptions of every event, signifying that different people construct meaning differently (Chang, 2010).

Student*: "I learned about the others a lot, how to understand and look at the others, as well as a set of their thoughts, visions, morals, etc."*

Student*: "We learned to know how classmates think and act and their way of being as unique classmates. Particularly, we learned from their experiences and points of view of the problems, knowledge and topics of the subject in a clearer way. We learned to interact and respect the different perspectives without necessarily agreeing".*

Multiple descriptions provide wide frames of possibilities, owing to not all of them are meaningful and useful, is important to consider their potential impact. We cannot know or predict the impact, but we can take in a count some ideas and guidelines that draw upon in attempting to ensure that, at least, reflections are not harmful to the others.

According to David A. Paré (1999) as reflecting teams, "they offer a forum for affirming client strengths and noticing positive developments; as they could also be

experienced as rituals of public shaming, or group pathologizing exercises if team members

are not vigilant of the potential impact of their interactions" (p. 5).

As part of a frame to reflecting teams, Paré (1999) suggests first, "the importance

of inviting participation by clients, considering that, not surprising, while some clients

welcome the opportunity to widen the circle of helpers, others find the prospect

threatening. Second, preparing clients to meet with a reflecting team, emphasizing that this

is an unusual way of working. And third, preparing clinicians to reflect, it should be clear

by now that reflecting team work is far more than merely talking with other counsellors

about clients. Finally, introducing three central objectives of reflecting: to develop an

empathetic understanding and to convey it to clients; to notice experiences and ideas that

don't fit the dominant problem narratives; and to notice discourses that support problems,

and to trace their origins" (pp. 5-6).

Although there are some guidelines to reflecting teams in therapy, I engage

reflecting processes in teaching in different ways. I take some of Paré's guidelines to

encourage a special environment in the class and then invite students to write their thoughts

freely and spontaneously. During the course, all participants have many opportunities to

contribute their reflections. One way is students' class notes. They are one way to be

present during the class. They are a kind of refuge of thought, chances for students to have

more freedom to be present or to escape from class.

Departing from this frame, Paré proposes some guidelines to reflecting teams,

awarding that none of these general guidelines should be viewed as rigid rules of

reflecting, considering them as reminders to reflect in ways that are both respectful and

supportive of clients; and stressing that its richness comes from the multiple points of view to offer (p. 19). His recommendations are: a) maintain an optimistic, competence-focused outlook; b) focus on generating constructive and helpful experience; c) reflect with other team members, not the clients or primary counsellor; d) offer clients the chance to be a "fly on the wall", and give them more freedom to accept or reject comments; e) ensure that all clients are included in reflections, try to be inclusive in your reflections, rather than aligning with one person; f) be tentative and curious; g) situate reflections in your own experience; h) keep reflections brief and focused; keeping reflections to one or two clear ideas helps (p. 13).

Reflecting team's atmosphere contributes to create a special environment in the classroom, every opinion is value, no one is consider better, smarter or suitable, including professor's contributions. In addition, students share their thoughts as freely and spontaneously as they can, without judgments and critiques. Paying or not attention to the reflecting teams' ideas students are free to think and to write whatever they want, including personal, social and general topics.

According to this and agreeing with *Freedman and Combs (1996) reflecting team's atmosphere "is a way to neutralize hierarchy. This hierarchical flattening comes about through reflecting team members' shared personal experiences as they reflect on clients' problems. It presupposes that clients will hear these tales in a way that will make them feel in a more egalitarian relationship with the entire team and strengthen the joining process. This places the client, therapist, and team in a more authentic therapeutic atmosphere, thus allowing new and meaningful narratives to emerge" (p.56).*

Less hierarchy could contribute to create more egalitarian relationship among students and between students and professor, strengthening convergence of multiple topics.

Student: "People not always think in a logical way nor behave in an ideal way. Nothing should be forced".

Student: "I have thought about the author's perception of society a lot. Since you are a child, you imagine the world you are going to live in. But as you grow, you often feel disappointed with some people. However, you still hope that everything turns out to be as you wished. So, you try to build your own society to satisfy your needs".

Student: "Actually, I feel that I needed to focus on the class more. Sometimes I think about personal things and this has affected me; I can't pay all my attention to the class. However, I have concentrated more during these last classes".

Student: "I liked the analysis we did today a lot. I would have liked to see the whole movie; I feel it has many interesting things to comment in class. I think, in this way, it's easier to understand some concepts and I find them more practical".

Student: "I got distracted for a second since I had an appointment in mind that I had immediately after class. Fortunately, everything is clear now, and I am just waiting for the second session".

Student: "I think: do we actually think and then act? What happens with the decisions that are made in an impulsive way?"

Student: "I consider myself to be a humanistic and positive person; and I feel well with myself".

It is incredible the amount of topics that the students have present in their minds. It is amazing how we all have our personal lives totally present during our time together. We cannot separate personal and professional lives.

Social poetics

Tyler (1986) invites us to "create texts of the physical, the spoken and the performed, an evocation of quotidian experience, a palpable reality that uses everyday speech to suggest what is ineffable, not through abstraction, but by means of the concrete. It will be a text to read not with the eyes alone, but with the ears in order to hear 'the voices of the pages'" (p. 136).

'To hear the voices of the pages' sounds beautiful. Most professional and scientific texts are very boring and difficult to understand. I love literature, and it is a way to enrich myself with ideas. Novels and their stories are like a journey that illustrates; as Vargas Llosa says, stories translate me and make me be someone I am not usually; they take me to a different identity. Are novels' truths less true than the assumed reality we live? I do not think so. They are as well ephemeral truths, intermittent. They sometimes take us the length of a book; or sometimes we keep them the rest of our life and we appropriate them in a way that we make them part of our memories that we share as a small fragment of our existence; considering that to talk about a novel that we read is also to talk about an experience we had, as memories of a birthday party (Ayora, 2013 in press).

My tenth movement is a perfect match between living life and literature, between experiences and writing. *Using Richardson & Lockridge's (2004) words, I write to find things out - to make sense of things. I want to tell the story of my travels (in teaching), but I*

want to do more than that; I want to make sense of my life experiences, put them in some kind of order. I set no parameters – no limits – to where my writings might take me (p. 241) In that sense, social poetic styles of writing help to honour the relational and creative influence of our expressions (Katz & Shotter, 2004).

Student: "I think that here there is nothing correct or incorrect. Here you can say what you think, and not everybody may agree. In the end, you already expressed yourself and nobody criticized you. You can speak freely and say whatever you want; we usually say what the other person says is wrong".

Student: "Well, at the beginning, I didn't have any idea about what I could expect, but after the introduction of the course, after knowing how the classes and the teacher's way to explain would be, I think it is easier to explain it in this way: 'I fell in love'".

In the production of a social poetic text, the writer maintains the role of responsive interlocutor throughout, relating simultaneously to other textual voices, to the subject of the writing, to an imagined or known reader, to the emerging dialogues that develop. The writer continually tunes and re-tunes to the others and otherness present throughout the writing process. Efforts to generate practical understanding are situated within "first-time" interactions. Each time writers and readers engage with the text, they do so for "another first time" (Garfinkel, 1967, p. 9).

The normal aspects of our everyday life, as Shotter (2008) mentions, are all extraordinary events. They cannot be captured in any existing categories. They must always startle us and are capable of changing our lives in irreversible quantum jumps (p. 133).

"Social poetics in living life is about focusing our attention in the mutual negotiation of the senses. Poetry cannot be created by you nor me. It is born from the relational process, and questions the common things and stimulates imagery and makes birth the aesthetic. Poetry lets us touch that which is sublime" (Gergen, 2006, p. 179).

Teaching is poetic. Successful teaching cannot be created by professor or student, alone. It is born from the relational process. Every situation and interaction in the classroom asks you for something. If you respond in a very sensible, sensitive and creative manner, it is an invitation to the other to collaborate in the creation of something good, something where all participants are engaged and committed, favouring satisfaction and the appearance of extraordinary opportunities to learn.

Student: *"Completely, it was much more than I expected. All the topics were covered, and we saw more than was needed; we went beyond the book and made interesting and different classes".*

Student: *"Totally, the course was dynamic, always looking for the best way to take advantage of the content".*

Student: *"My expectations were fulfilled since things that I didn't expect happened, which I had never been involved in".*

Everyday teaching routines turn classes and courses into automated and standardised rituals. As a teacher, from a poetic stance, it is important to adopt an attitude that lets me respond whatever a situation demands, I need to be creative, flexible and ready to move.

Student: *"It is the best way to learn about oneself".*

Teaching and Learning

According to Lobanova and Shunin (2008,) nowadays, education in a broad sense has been considered as the investment in the development of society. Governments and the wide public are concerned about adequacy of quality of education and training and economic and social profitability of the means invested in education. The question of educational content corresponding to tomorrow's demands has become a vital issue in educational reforms all over the world. Importance of flexibility, adaptability, mobility, creativity of education and life-long learning in the global, changing world is the focal point of modern national and international discussions concerning higher education and vocational training. In spite of these current interest and worries, traditional assumptions about teaching and learning continue been present.

My eleventh movement is about education, specifically teaching and learning. Traditional perspectives conceive teaching as all activities and actions of the teacher, emphasizing the importance of developing better strategies and techniques to teach – that used to be standardized. The teacher shares her/his knowledge and wisdom from the expert position providing relevant information to students. Some standards for education articulate the knowledge, skills and attitudes that educators shall possess as well as the responsibilities that accrue to them.

The standards define the attributes and expertise that educators bring to bear for benefit of children and society (Ministry of Education, 2012).

Recent approaches focus their attention on teachers' competences; United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), for example, describes in its document, the

competencies that individual educators should have in order to provide a good quality

education in their discipline. The UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable

Development (ESD) aims to equip people with knowledge, skills, understanding, attitude

and values compatible with sustainable development. To this end, it calls specifically for

the development of educators' competencies in order for them to engage in ESD (UNESE,

2012). In Mexico, the Directorate General for Higher Education for Education

Professionals (Dirección General de Educación Superior para Profesionales de la

Educación. DGESPE) establishes two branches for higher education professionals: an

approach focused on learning and an approach focused on competencies. The first one

suggests that learning is achieved while it is meaningful to students, when it is linked with

her/his context, previous experiences and life conditions. Curriculum is more than a goal

itself, it is a way to contribute in developing critical and reflexive thought in students

(DGESPE, 2012 a). The second focus emphasises the importance of competencies as a

cognitive knowledge and resources to face a problem situation. A person is required to

show the capacity to solve complex problems and to learn in an autonomous way in school

and throughout life (DGESPE, 2012 b). In general terms, all these international

perspectives privilege competencies as something that students and teachers possess or

acquire; that means cognitive resources, the capacity to solve problems, and individual

development of competencies.

On the other hand, students' learning as an individual process consists in

collection, addition and accumulation of information. The idea to improve individual

learning is associated with having better strategies and learning tools and technology

(Sztajn, P. et al 2012; Broatch, J. & Lohr, S. 2011; Givens, R. 2012; Sevilla et al 2010;

Eurydice, 2002; Hutmacher, 1997; Lobanova and Shunin, 2008). Some researchers, such as Westera (2001), point out that knowledge should not be confused with understanding. Being able to reproduce information does not necessarily presuppose understanding of the information. Understanding represents our intellectual capability to use information in a sensible, meaningful way. Understanding is assumed to arise when existing knowledge is to bear on a new situation. Others underline students' competencies as complex processes of performance in activities and problems with qualification and ethics, seeking individual achievement, quality of life and a sustainable and economic development in balance with the environment (Aguerrondo, 2009).

Hutmacher, W. (1997) names the European Key Competences. These include, students' key competences for lifelong learning like communication in the mother tongue, communication in foreign languages, mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology, digital competence, learning to learn, interpersonal, intercultural and social competences and civic competence, entrepreneurship, cultural expression, autonomy and personal initiative and life-long autonomous learning.

In my earlier time as a teacher, I did not have any clear idea about teaching and learning, I simply did my work without thinking about what I was doing and what my contribution or students' role was. The descriptions just provided of traditional perspectives and approaches focused on competences, mirrored my past way to be and relate with students and learning, as part of separated and independent processes that privileged individual actions and cognitive development to solve problems.

From collaborative and constructionist ideas and, according to Anderson and Swim (1993), the teacher, like students, is always in the process of learning. Learning is viewed as a process, as a lifelong learning, interactive, collaborative and egalitarian effort in which new meaning and change evolve through dialogue. Learners are regarded as expert in their understanding of themselves. They are responsible, along with teacher and other learners, for determining the agenda, gaols, and strategy of the learning process. Learning is the product of a generative conversation, both internal and external, characterized by mutual inquiry (pp. 145-146). Learning is a co-evolutionary process in which the teacher and student are jointly engaged. At its core, it is a dialogic process in which the teacher and student create knowledge with each other. In this sense, both are learners; knowledge is not something that teacher gives the student. It is not accumulative; that is, the teacher is not the pitcher that fills the student with bits and pieces of information that add up to more knowledge, more competence, more skills. In the classroom, the student does not collect and add up information provided by the teacher. Teaching is not something that you do to someone. Teaching does not address a particular content or variable to be altered or fixed. It is an interactional process. The creation of new narratives or knowledge is not standardised; it is in the process of conversation and interaction. (p. 150). This is not to say that the teacher does not share her/his expertise, her/his wisdom, her/his biases, and her/his experiences. But she/he does not do it from the position of privileged knowing, of knowing what is best for learners, or of assurance of how and what the other person will learn (p. 150). The teacher's primary responsibility is to create an atmosphere of excitement and encouragement of learning, in which a meaning-generating, knowledge-making process can occur, in which students can have the widest possible opportunity to think about and deal their learning agenda. The learner is the expert on his or her

"problem", the expert on what he or she wants to learn and how the teacher can help him or her to learn (p. 151).

Student: *"I tried to travel to every place from where I could see the star to look at the phenomenon objectively. But the length of a class wasn't enough to travel to all the viewpoints".*

Sometimes I feel that my way to design classes is contradictory because I have the sensation that structure and creativity do not fit. I try to console myself, saying that this structure only has a practical purpose, and I can change whatever I want. As it is, everything changes during the classes. Students respond to my proposals extraordinarily. They transform them. Students' participation convert the original idea in a renewed and better option.

In addition, knowledge and the knower are interactionally dependent. Everything (knowledge, meanings, beliefs, feelings) is co-authored in, is a product of, a community of persons and relationships. Narrative and narrative knowing emerge from, are the social construction of, the products of, persons in conversation with one another and with themselves. Knowing is, therefore, linguistically constructed and communicated through language (p. 146).

I always imagined myself walking freely around the classroom during classes. My process to develop a philosophy to teach is related with my search for freedom, which is associated with the creation of an environment that permits participants to be and to do freely and spontaneously. In spite of compulsory programmes and institutional agendas, we can agree and change whatever is needed; making the most of our enthusiasm of

participation, including the situations that look like disadvantages, like boredom and tiredness, some students do not read before class, different expectations about classes, teacher and group, styles of learning and personal lives, weather conditions, among others; contents become our excuse to talk, to reflect, encouraging our participation to share ideas and experiences.

I have two more ideas to complement collaborative and constructionist's. The first is in the article *Intoxicated Midnight and Carnival Classrooms: The Professor as Poet* (Irving and Moffat, 2002). The authors *describe the social poetics approach to learning, calling the professor to reorient to "the event" in the classroom, with all its elements of surprise and indeterminacy. They draw upon dialogic relationships to promote education within the classroom" using social poetics methods. They turn themselves towards particularity and 'the unusual' within unfolding events. On the one hand, they say that the challenge for the professor is to refocus on the event; on the other, it is to let the event happen, and unfold. The play for the professor is to watch for those languages, ideas that are most surprising. It is in the surprise perhaps that we can avoid the self-evident and promote the "violation of the usual" (p.p. 1-13).*

This vigilant watching for and cherishing of the event with all its surprises resonates with Morson and Emerson's(1990) characterization of dialogue as oriented to "surprisingness"(p.2) and Shotter's (2006) expectation of creativity and the continual emergence of novelty in dialogical processes (p. 4).

Student*: "First of all, it's not the typical class where you know what's going to happen. You never know what activity we'll do, how the class will develop; you are always*

expectant of what's going to happen in the class. That's what I like, what motivates me. In the same way, I like the book very much. The only difficult thing for me is (as last time) to answer the questions about the others' opinions about this topic".

Student: "From all the subjects I have taken so far, this is my favorite. The classes were very entertaining; and it helped me the fact that we studied a different theory in each class. I don't usually like to participate in dynamics, contests or games in class; but in this course, I felt comfortable; I never felt pressured. What I liked the best was the professor's positive opinion about the group, since that motivates us to do things in a better way, while the other professors had a more negative concept of us. I think that limits us, since no matter how well we do things, they never feel satisfied. I want to thank for this positive opinion that, at least for me, was very helpful".

Student: "This activity surprised me a lot!!!"

The second idea comes from Tompkins (1996): our classrooms do not usually provide a nurturing environment where the emotions, body, spirit and mind can all be present and engaged. Teaching and the classroom as a space could be a place for liberation, transformation and abundance if we confessed that students and teachers have bodies that feel pain and are mortal, "hearts that can be broken, spirits that need to be fed" (p. xiii). She recognizes that there is no final source of knowledge or authority outside the many selves and identities that an individual is.

Paying more attention to our bodies and whatever feeling and sensation we experiment like discomfort, sleep, hunger, happiness and joy during the classes can transform the classroom in a space that humanise and embody the learning process. When

I feel boredom, tiredness, and the sensation that class is becoming tedious, I ask students if they share with me this sensation. But there are some occasions I just move to another activity.

Student: "Today, I don't feel very well; I'm sleepy and I can't think very well. I get easily distracted".

Student: "I found the fact of sharing our feelings and thoughts interesting because it is a way to improve the class".

Student: "The first thing that comes to my mind is my lack of punctuality. The last thing I'm thinking is that I am a little feminist. PS: I love the dynamics of the class".

Student: "I could not concentrate very much in class".

Student: "Actually, I feel that I needed to focus on the class more. Sometimes I think about personal things and this has affected me; I can't pay all my attention to the class. However, I have concentrated more during these last classes".

Student: " ???!!! Something I didn't share".

Many things are present during our interactions in the classroom, all are part of our everyday life in the University and life in general; ignoring them does not help us, but by making them evident, they can be transformed into resources and opportunities to learn.

Student: "Death, wisdom, experience, style, religion, freedom, meditation, karma, planning, body, society, standards, destiny, culture, desire, detachment, soul, steps, limit, rebirth, learning, happiness".

Chapter 5

And then…

I have to stop writing; my deadline is close and it is time to harvest learning and newness. My interest in this chapter is to propose something that, in some ways, invites us to reflect and to discuss how we might develop beyond our traditional perspectives toward research and teaching.

Human activities

Teaching and researching as human activities are no more than two examples of ways that people spend time in life. They are not different from playing football, going to school, working as a waiter, carpenter or dancer, among many others. They are manners in which human beings make a living.

All of these activities imply schedules, tasks, responsibilities and salaries. We organize and plan our lives through them; we share time, space and activities with people who are part of them. As part of our everyday lives, we enjoy, suffer or feel stress because of our way to involve and participate in everyday activities. Depending on our interest and opportunities, we can develop a career and gain social recognition in our performance.

Regardless, everyday activity is a way to know, to learn, to relate. But in our worlds of meaning, some activities are privileged over others and give you a higher social status, more salary and better conditions of life, privileging university studies and ostentatious titles. As human and social activities, teaching and researching are part of a very complex context of political, economic, social, individual and commercial meanings that contribute

to create certain kinds of relationships and expectations about professors' and researchers' performance.

Teaching and researching as scientific activities have grand prestige; this positions them as privileged resources for knowing, learning and relating. All the results or products of teaching and research are considered as more valid and more true than many others. It is the world of meanings and relationships which supports professors' and researchers' labour as better and more useful and grants them privilege. This gives them a very powerful stance and making science and research as something almost unattainable.

To consider our labour as professors and researchers as a human activity represents to me an opportunity to involve myself in these activities in a way that is closer to the person I am, and to propose, to create and to develop personal and more flexible ways to teach and research. I do not assume that this is a better or more useful way than others. Rather, it is only a different way to be a person in an academic and scientific context.

Ways of being more than methods and techniques

As professor and researcher, I am a person, who in every interaction, communication and interchange, whatever I do, say and act is no different than my way to be in life and the world. Teaching and researching as professional and scientific disciplines are full of theories, methods and techniques that not only guide, but also determine the way that I, as professor and researcher, have to act. If I, as a professional, take the theoretical and technical background seriously, I have the risk to become an automaton or maybe a faithful believer about this as the only way.

Let me write something about teaching. When I talk and read what my students write about classes, I feel very impressive about all the things we can do during our time together. It reminds me of my colleagues' comments about the busy agenda that professors have. They complain about time because there is never enough to teach all themes. Students do not appear so interested in many topics as well. And then, I ask myself, what are we doing that my students and I always have time to finish the programme, time to talk about what is happening among us, and I do not have any complaint about students' participation?

We always complete all the content, in spite of the fact that we are not focused only on content since process is just (if not more) important. The teaching process is a relationship among participants. A relationship requires interaction among people, and interaction among people is life. That is all! Teaching cannot be a technique or a theoretical procedure. Teaching is what people do together.

Teaching, as any activity, is a temporary one. As a process that starts and finishes, it is a relatively new idea to me. I know that it could sound naïve, but it is true. I had a conversation with a student and he told me that, for him, our course was the first that indeed showed a complete process. This means, it was the first course that took into account students' expectations and suggestions. Many professors ask at the beginning of a course similar questions about what they want, what they expect. But it was only in our course when he could feel that we took the students' ideas seriously, and we talked at the beginning, during, and at the end of the course about them. Teaching as a creative and living process is not only about knowledge and content, it is about people and life, about what we are doing and learning together.

On the other hand, research is a creative process. If research is guided rigidly by methodology, it misses possibilities to create, to improve and to learn about life, and could make us blind and deaf about what phenomena, social reality and whatever we investigate wants to tell us.

Research procedures, techniques and theories are used to privilege standardised, systematic and organised ways to proceed, diminishing and blurring exceptional details, beautiful minutiae, extraordinary niceties and trivial things, bringing, as a result, a weakening and clouding of richness, diversity and abundance of life.

Some researchers are devoted to methods, giving preference to the procedure, the research process itself – being accurate applying interviews, questionnaires, observations, and whatever method or strategies planned – in lieu of unplanned, spontaneous situations or new necessities that circumstances demand. I say that these researchers privilege methods and techniques.

Researching, as a way of being, privileges experiences and people, responding and changing whatever is needed depending on the situation. As a way of being, it is a process of construction, response, creation and it evolves on a par with participants. The present research evolved on a par with me – as researcher – with writing, and with all participants in the teaching process.

Teaching and researching, as a way of being, require a philosophy of life because they have to do with human beings, with people, with someone who has a life, aspirations and desires. They are not something that is separated from who we are as professors and researchers.

Reflection, questioning and political stance

In spite of the fact that the academy and science promote reflection and questioning, their rigorous methods have transformed research and teaching procedures into dogma. The reflection and questioning promoted are about the correct application of techniques and veracity, validity and reliability of results. I think professional contexts, universities and research institutions need to consider different perspectives. On one hand, it is important to move to reflections and questions about what kind of knowledge they are creating, what kind of constructed discourses they are privileging and what kind of assembled truths they are writing and promoting.

On the other hand, it is also important to reflect and to question about historical and social repercussions of this knowledge, familiar and individual consequences of their discourses, and relational and dialogical concerns that every truth brings.

Actually, it is not only a scientific and professional discussion. I think it has to be a human discussion about what we are doing and saying about our worlds. We do not live in the believed objective world of the past anymore; we live in worlds of meaning that are not neutral and objective. We live in worlds that technology and media connect more every day, making multiplicity, diversity and complexity of human lives visible.

This is a political, partial, aligned, interested, passionate and personal stand which invites us to broaden our ideas about questioning and reflection. We cannot escape from our bias, actually. We do not need to escape or act as if our biases do not exist. They are the sort of certainties that we need to figure out our lives and their challenges.

One of the most important, not the only, but a main aspect of teaching and researching that is questioned in my dissertation is the idea of hierarchy because it is related with power, with the fact of being an expert, and overall of knowing. At the end of the day, I assume that hierarchy will not necessary disappear only because it is uncomfortable for me, but it does not matter now. What is important is that students call me sometimes an expert professor. It does not change my way to be with them or how I appreciate their contributions, suggestions and ways of being in class. Expert professor means that, at the end of each course, I become an expert of this course and group. Next time, I will be a novice again. In researching, it is similar; I will always be a novice. So far, I think I could be an expert of this writing, but sometimes I have some doubts.

Do things pretty! Poetic style

I am a very optimistic person. Neither the best nor the worst situations in life have been able to make me lose my positive sense. That is part of my bias, and it is also part of my proposal about research and teaching.

Whatever you do in research and teaching, just do it pretty! This weird expression means that joy and happiness in your work produces good results in relationships, environment and tasks. A naughty and playful attitude makes whatever actions you embark upon more relaxed and less solemn. Taking life (teaching and researching) less seriously, does not mean we are doing our jobs in a less professional or committed way.

Pretty and poetic actions are as powerful and dangerous as serious actions. The power of doing nice things can transform our way of being a researcher and a professor, and allows us to live and relate with knowledge and people more equally.

Transformation

Research as teaching is a transformational process. It is because both are human and relational actions. Both can be seen as personal and collective processes. As personal, research and teaching are part of a life learning process instead of a knowledge learning process. As a process of learning, it is expected that teaching and research make and promote some changes in researcher and professor's life. As collective processes, research implies (in a dissertation or in another kind of research) interaction among theories, ideas, methods, realities, people, that make you confront your believes and truths agreeing or disagreeing with them. In teaching, something similar happens. Relationships among students and professor, content and experiences challenge every day participants' beliefs and truths. Both those interactions invite you to reflect, evaluate and consider new perspectives.

If we are able to make teaching and researching significant processes, they can be an invitation to re-create, renovate and transform our lives and practices. And why not our contexts and worlds?

Ethical Processes

As formal content, ethical education is only present in very few courses. Above all, in Ethics courses. I guess that no one assumes that the only way to learn about ethics is studying a course or having a spiritual education. Even though, sometimes it looks like it.

We learn ethics in every place and situation we participate. Intentionally or not, every circumstance shows us multiple possibilities to be and to relate with others. In our everyday life, the process of developing ethical relationships is created in every interaction.

An ethical teaching is not that one that assumes that everything is right only because it looks right to your eyes. In my perspective, an ethical teaching requires more than being a good person and doing good things. On the other hand, ethical research is not only one that includes a section about ethical considerations, that has the informed consent of participants, and that changes the participants' names to protect their identities.

Both require, principally, to be public about your interests, make your intentions evident, to be clear about the way you use language; it is how you talk about knowledge, theories, and content in general. Ethical teaching and researching are a way of being, a way to invite participants to involve and commit, it is to learn to relate every moment with every person considering contexts, different values, expectations and diverse goals.

As a person, professors and researchers have preferences that are present, every day, in the classroom, in every research project and in the other spaces where he/she interacts. In the classroom, professors and students, and in the research context, participants and researchers, need to learn to relate, to share spaces and time, and to learn how to be together. Those are ethical processes. Ethical processes are always present. Not as content. They are present more as a way to be and relate among participants.

What is successful teaching?

First all, as with any human activity, teaching is messy. It is full of details that we, as professors, cannot appreciate if we are only focused on content, assessments, and on the oral participation of our students. Teaching is full of senseless circumstances. If we take what is happening every class during a course seriously, we can be amazed by the incredible number of occurrences that are present at every moment: participants' ramble thoughts, familiar worries (about money, illness, discussions), interruptions (failure of electricity, excessive wind, students are late), exterior noises (like animals, cars, conversations), dynamism of class (individual and group participation), expectations and motivations. The sum of all these occurrences is an ordinary class.

I think that a naïve professor is the only one who thinks that what a student is thinking during the class is only related with the specific content of the course. All the events influence considerably the progress and development of every class. In this sense, teaching and learning are much more than content, themes and homework.

From my perspective, a successful class is that one that assumes that we learn more than content. That we learn to relate, to express, to be and to dialogue together, to socialise. That it is important to consider that we learn to live together respectfully and that the contents of every class and course are only an excuse to share time, experiences and life, whatever the content is, those who are together are people.

From my experience, a successful class starts with novice people and finishes with experts in our shared time and experiences together, with a background of content that gains sense and meaning through our conversations and relationships.

What is a successful researching?

No perspective is innocent because, to be expressed, a perspective needs whatever kind of language that voices their meanings. Every form of knowledge and research as language says something that can be relevant, important and meaningful for some.

From my view, research and successful research develop, create, construct, fix, or assemble truths. But there is an important difference between them. It is about the kind of truth that they speak of. Research talks about serious, imperative and sometimes, unquestionable truths. Successful research talks about possibilities, truths as ways of being, truths that are invitations to doubt, invitations to enjoy and appreciate life, to discover that there is always something new, that there is something new that can be created and can contribute to construct better worlds for us.

A philosophy of life

As simple as complex, live as creatively, flexibly, generously, inspiringly and spontaneously as you can. Be open to experiences, everyone can be and guide teaching and researching or more. Everyone can develop successful ways of being in life.

Just be creative!

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