

# Chapter 8

## Diverse Education Within the Arts



Miguel Rosa Castejón, David Muñoz Villaraviz, and  
Fernanda Durán Romero

### 8.1 Spain and Education: An Overview

Spain's educational history over the centuries has been rich with diverse religious influences—Christian, Muslim and Jewish—while the region was intellectually isolated from the rest of Europe and the world up until the eighteenth century. Education was seen then as bringing the possibility of social and economic reforms that, despite efforts throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, largely failed. Through most of the 80 years since the Spanish Civil War, the educational system was extremely stratified, with ten-year-olds taking a test that would track them into further education. Economic conditions had worsened after the Civil War, and within 10 years Spain became economically isolated from its European neighbors. The state had a minor role in education in comparison to religious institutions, with three out of four attending private secondary schools in 1970, at the time of major structural reform of the educational system. The aim of this reform was the increase of the public schooling and educational attainment of students at higher levels through, for example, compulsory attendance and the ending of the tracking system (Ballarino et al. 2008). Student achievement has reached some more equitable ground in the past several decades in Spain with the move toward decentralization by region, with girls now in school at equal rates and doing as well as boys.

The move toward decentralization from national to regional control of the schools helped with innovation in schools, in spite of the political swings in the 1980s and 1990s from radical left to conservative right (Hanson 2000). During this same period there was a search for a more democratic model of school governance and leadership. Principals are elected and drawn from faculty in schools in this participatory model. However, at least half of the schools required appointed principals as volunteering happened less frequently, given the level of accountability to teachers,

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M. R. Castejón (✉) · D. M. Villaraviz · F. D. Romero  
CEIP San José Obrero, Sevilla, Spain

parents and local authorities. The move toward teacher leadership has been a next step in the public-school movement in Spain (Bolívar and Moreno 2006).

The educational system was reorganized into preschool (from zero to 6 years in two age groupings); elementary education (ages six to 12 years with three age groupings); compulsory education (ages 12–16 years with two age groupings); and secondary education (16–18 years) included either *bachillerato* (preparation for university studies) or professional (vocational) training. One of the innovations was the introduction of constructivist approaches to learning and teaching with hands-on experimentation and projects supporting group work. The *bachillerato* curriculum requires two years of study with a common curriculum for all students and specific curricular paths for students in art, natural science and health, humanities and social sciences, and technology. The common curriculum includes physical education, philosophy, foreign language, religion and electives.

The educational system has established a goal of promoting and protecting all Spanish people in the exercise of human rights, including their language and culture. There are at least four languages taught by region in the country, and the Spanish Constitution further recognizes the right of the autonomous communities to use their languages in administration and teaching. The study of languages also includes a wide range with most schools offering two or more. In certain areas of Spain, the public schools have undertaken such strategies as children being distributed across neighborhoods or implementation of bilingualism to address cultural and linguistic diversity. The schools in urban settings can have many languages and cultures represented and many seek to take advantage of such diversity in the pursuit of inclusion, intercultural collaboration and celebration of differences.

## 8.2 Introduction

You can't understand our school unless you know its origins. *The Cherry Tree* was a middle-class neighborhood, which went through a great transformation with the real estate boom as there was a great exodus of families living in the area to newer areas of the city. The low prices of houses in this area made numerous immigrant groups come here. And consequently, little by little, some neighborhoods were appearing, such as the African neighborhood, the Arab quarter, which has the largest mosque in Seville, the Latin American neighborhood, among others.

San José Obrero was created in 1972 by enrolling students from Macarena, Las Hermandades, La Carrasca, El Cerezo, Princes and Polígono Norte de Sevilla. All of these neighborhoods have developed outside of the city center and are densely populated by the working class. The school has seen a number of changes over the years, especially with respect to the population of its students. Since 1972, and in the past two decades in particular, the diversity of students has steadily increased, to the point of having 52% out of 480 students in the school who are immigrant boys and girls from more than 34 different nationalities. In addition, the arrival of students from the shantytown of El Vacie contributes to the composition of our school.

Thirty percent of students don't have Spanish as a mother language. Most of our students come from South America and Morocco. Our goal is to take advantage of this diversity and develop learners' competence in the languages of schooling, whilst valuing all native languages as a rich resource for learning.

This considerable increase in gypsy and immigrant populations has defined us as a school and allowed us to create and develop inclusive strategies in response to the increase in diversity within our educational community. We have come to understand that the problems and conflicts regarding coexistence do not occur as a result of contact between cultures, but from the way we approach that diversity. We can affirm that cultural differences are an enhancement and what may initially appear as difficulties can in fact turn into opportunities, and the labels that segregate students can be blurred thanks to coexistence and inclusive educational work.

Our school is classified as a difficult performance educative center, considering the characteristics of the neighborhood and the low socioeconomic and cultural level of the families. This is our strength; we transform difficulties into learning challenges and these into educational success. Our challenge is to transform these difficulties into real opportunities for our students. Our approach defines us as an integrating, inclusive and participative school.

On the one hand, by looking for meeting points, through integrated projects, inclusive projects that adapt to the reality and needs of each student and are based on their interests and possibilities. On the other hand, by doing social work. The educative task of the school covers first the social and then the academic issues. We advise families, we seek resources and links with other organizations, institutions, etc. The aim of every teacher is to bring out the best in each one of our students and achieving this through projects closely linked to their real interests is highly motivating for them. In this way, they are the center of learning and they really feel involved in the process. They are empowered and this has a very positive impact not only on meaningful learning, but also on the creation of a positive and encouraging environment.

In our school, we are aware of the importance of teaching a twenty-first century citizen. Our society needs creative people, entrepreneurs, with critical thinking, with digital competence, with adaptability, with a good management of social skills, but, above all, honest people with great social values. That school aims at the acquisition of social skills is the basis for achieving a peaceful and rewarding coexistence. Nowadays, in our society, the work of teaching is difficult and increasingly complicated. The two most important socializing human groups (the family and the school) mention the following difficulties: lack of motivation, a lot of aggression, the means of communication do not help, and the models of success. To this scenario is added a transmission of knowledge centered on instruction, but this is not enough. It is necessary to educate, to provide our students with the skills that allow them to live a better, fuller and happier life, more critical and capable of transformation.

Learning requires mutual trust. Students must have confidence both in themselves and their teachers, must believe in their own possibilities of improvement and also trust the help they will receive from their teachers. Teachers must believe that their students will achieve high goals in their learning process. Trust is a principle

that is based on the images and beliefs we have about the people with whom we interact. We are convinced that each one can achieve a lot even though from their role as an apprentice despite what may happen because there are people working to make this happen. Trust is forged through interaction and the learning of trust is reached by way of love.

Our project is based on the relationships between different members of the educational community. Coexistence, the development of ideas such as the values of respect, tolerance and the creation of a favorable climate, are much greater priorities than the content of the curriculum. We are a school with open doors to the community and we favor the participation and intervention of associations, NGOs and other entities, which through their activities energize the different projects we carry out within the school. We now can envision a utopia undivided by knowledge or subjects, and although it is virtually impossible to tear down the walls of the classroom and eliminate arbitrary classifications of students by age or knowledge, when we develop our projects we certainly move toward this utopian idea, these concepts of inclusion and equity. When our students undertake a project—for example, the one called *Lights of the Neighborhood*—individuality is the basis of learning, albeit in a group collaboration context in which teachers and members of the educational community guide and design activities together with the children. The search for an “active school” encourages inclusion.

Another goal is maintaining the active participation of families. In our school, the relationship with students’ parents and other caregivers is tenuous, mainly due to their way of life. It is evident that in complex and disadvantaged environments, where families seek to survive on a daily basis, it is extremely difficult to establish a consistent calendar of meetings or appointments that encourage their participation in activities. The entire school community (families, pupils, teachers, etcetera) takes an active role in the projects that use a methodology called “*Aprendizaje y Servicio*.” In the projects that use this methodology, participants undertake a project that improves the reality of the whole school. The participants learn a great amount thanks to doing this work. An example of this type of project is *Sanjochef*. Students get to know other cultures and broaden the knowledge of their own through gastronomy. As well as working in an atmosphere of diversity and multiculturalism, in this project students learn to cook, to create recipes, to classify foods, to distinguish healthy from unhealthy food, all with the help of their families. This project received an important educational award given to projects that further diversity. In this sense, we are talking about an inclusive and participative school in which the entire educational community takes part.

We believe that an inclusive school is comprised of two pillars: the first is to understand that children are unique, to consider that we are all special. According to this pillar the students undertake responsibility for their growth. They need the ability to identify their own methods and establish strategies that develop their skills to their maximum potential. The second pillar is a participatory methodology in daily assignments. These assignments involve participation, collaboration and leadership in which students look past materialism, fixed schedules and superficial groupings.

In conjunction with the concept of inclusion, we must also consider an external realm that includes everything that occurs beyond what could be termed “school life.” The product of inclusion and going beyond school life promotes a unique culture that will evolve so long as the principles of belonging and identity are maintained. In other words: “(culture)... is learned in social life” (Grimson 2008, p. 48). In any case, a social life obligates you to get to know people who may be different, your neighbors, or the parents of a friend. This type of immersion with other cultures eliminates prejudices and xenophobia. A clear example of such social occasions are birthdays. When a boy or girl celebrates their birthday, so do not only their friends but also their parents, grandparents, neighbors and friends from any other country.

It is a change that requires the immediate initiation of the following actions: The design of a plan that welcomes students and immigrant families; a profound modification of the methodological strategies where the child is at the center of education; fundamental learning regarding emotions, resilience, inclusion; and above all, the facilitation of an excellent school climate. Certainly an arduous task that involves the participation of our school in every way, which leads us directly to a different approach in the dialogue and design of new school culture and curriculum.

Max Weber (1974) offers the concept of culture as implicit within the theory of “or?” where it does not use the term “identity” but that of “community consciousness” (pp. 318–322). It is this community consciousness that defines our project, giving it continuity and meaning. Families are committed to the education of their children, either through working in interactive groups in the classroom or providing guidance outside of school. On the other hand, teachers are an active part of the community. In their roles they are responsible for the teaching process, for relationships with the families, for developing basic skills in cooperative and collaborative learning (Pujolás 2008), for opening their sphere of action beyond knowledge and formal learning so that it comes to include resilience and emotions. The terms “coexistence” and “inclusion” become the common thread of any socio-educational actions that the community takes.

To affirm this trend and ensure coexistence we have three active projects that work in a transversal way: *Space of Peace School*, *Gender Equality Plan* and the *Coexistence Plan*. Although at the formal and institutional level there are three different projects, in our school we treat them as one. In addition, the coordination is carried out by a single teacher together with the Head of Studies. Its follow-up is done in the Technical Team of Pedagogical Coordination. The implementation of these projects is vital in schools such as ours, which face challenges in performance. The relationship between all the members of the Educational Community requires a framework of action based on dialogue and emotional intelligence in order to respond to possible conflicts that occur in daily school life. The results have been very promising indeed, perhaps because it takes place full-time, permeating any activity that is carried out, whether it is reactive or not.

As a fundamental part of the change, teachers are trained according to the need for specific projects or topics that we see of interest for the proper functioning of the school (We have taken different courses based on conflict resolutions, emotional

education, multiple intelligences, diversity and multilingual education, among others). There is a high demand for this type of training and sometimes we turn to local organizations. This includes self-training among teachers, in addition to the regulated courses of the Teachers' Education. We believe that this training is vital to respond adequately to the demands of our students, which is necessary to ensure that the school functions normally. There is a good climate within the school, especially because we talk a lot among ourselves, and keep each other updated. The majority of projects are put into practice in collaboration with families, with the peripheral organizations contributing ideas, solutions and resources.

### 8.3 The Arts as Foundational for the School, Local and International Communities

As a result of the changes, we have developed a high percentage of activities based on artistic teaching and music. The artistic component is always present in any project, for example, the service-learning project *Qué Bonito es Mi Cole*, where we remove all graffiti from the school and instead design a mural. Emotions are the leitmotif of school life. They say that without emotions there is no learning; We go further: without emotions, without feelings there can be no education.

As an example of the work carried out, we elaborated a educational project called *Sanjomix*. In March 2017, the components of the *Zemos Association* (*Zemos* develop mediation processes that activate relationships between activists, artists, academics, foundations and public institutions. Our objective is to value political and cultural processes for social change) told us about the project *Antropoloops*, where a group of multidisciplinary artists is at work combining different music of the world, applying computer science, technology and data visualization. We organized the first meeting with just one idea: How could we apply musical information and turn it into an educational project taking advantage of the enormous diversity of our students? At the same time, the *Antropoloops* group began the process of requesting a project in public art from the *Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation*. On the foundation's page it is described as follows:

*Antropoloops is an artistic project that remixes fragments of traditional music of the world to create new musical collages. The educational program aims to enhance the intercultural and intergenerational dialogue among students through the development of structured music teaching on remixing of traditional music. The use of active pedagogy methodologies is complemented by the development and use of digital tools for collective creation based on spatial and geographical interfaces for remixing sound fragments...The Antropoloops program wants to promote educational innovation and musical remixing, the integration and coexisting strategies that educational centers have been developing in recent years.*

The project was launched in our school for the 2017/2018 academic year with the name *Sanjomix*, combining the experience of *Antropoloops* and that of the *San José Obrero School*.

The first year of the project, we worked with two groups in the fifth year with this approach:

1. First Term: “Introduction to the Remix.”

Work the remix from different artistic expressions, while introducing the diversity of traditional music and introducing the music software.

2. Second Term: “Life Stories.”

Investigate, collect, select materials (images and music) from our personal stories and our family, to visualize them on maps. Where we come from and what’s in our backpack.

3. Third Term: “Remixing our school / Sanjomix.”

Remixing personal materials in a collective construction, composing and playing together with the soundtrack comprised of students within our class.

The first day we asked some questions to get an idea of what remixing was to them.

Within this annual framework, to begin working on remixing, we will carry out 6 stages:

1. “The trip of Antropoloops”: To awaken the interest of the students in the Antropoloops project.
2. “See with the Ears”: Develop active listening to world music through mediating elements (concepts, categories). Introduction to resignification as a basic remix feature.
3. “Building the Professorship”: Introduce the concepts of decomposition and recomposition. Work on hybridization. Discover new meanings from the visual and narrative collage.
4. “Musical Professorship”: Introduce students to the idea of musical layers (rhythms, accompaniments and voices) and their combination using various components of the teachers.
5. “Dismantling and Assembling Songs”: Unveiling influences of traditional music in today’s pop music, deconstructing songs in sound layers. From there, select and combine musical fragments.
6. “What Happened Here?”: Reflection and collective evaluation of the project.

## 8.4 Introductory Session Workshops Antropoloops

The general idea of this first course was to test and experiment, develop the pedagogical objectives and make concrete proposals for each session, try technologies that can help us achieve those objectives, test how we are in the classroom and how students feel with our proposals. With the first session, we sought to arouse interest in the project and introduce some fundamental elements of the Antropoloops workshops (traditional music, diversity, mix, technology). For that, we decided to design an activity that included the three phases into which we divided the remixing

process: listening, selection and composition. We also wanted there to be an important presence of technological elements, to test its use and response among students.

### **8.4.1 *The First Day***

We assembled a “MakeyMakey” with 16 pads to release sounds distributed on different tables and prepared the projector to visualize those sounds on a world map. The MakeyMakey is a small device that connects to the computer via USB and (among many other things) is able to create sounds. It works by closing an electrical circuit, usually joining the ends of two wires, but we take advantage of the fact that the human body is a conductor of electricity, and we assemble a system with metallic paper that is activated by making a human chain.

The idea is that, in working as a group, they make human chains to create the sounds, and that by combining those human chains, the musical fragments are remixed. We were worried that, due to the overexposure we have in our society to digital devices of all kinds, such a “low-tech” thing would not capture their attention, but our doubts faded when we saw the emotions on their faces. We were also surprised by their receptivity to the strangest sounds and musical memory when some fragment caught their attention (the wheel of Saint Michael).

### **8.4.2 *Session 2: See with the Ears***

We intended to start a trip that lasted the term, talking about the remix. As starting points we wanted to work with listening and resignification. Working with the resignification was to express the meaning, and at the pedagogical level we found it interesting to use mediating elements and other nonverbal expressions. For listening we designed some dynamics of body expression. We asked them to look at some specific elements (rhythm, pitch, texture) and to express what they heard through movements or dance. We also played “What does it sound like?” And using food, colors, emotions or other more or less abstract ideas, we asked the pupils to associate the musical fragments with any of those elements. The last part consisted of drawing, in groups, what they were hearing. At first with freehand drawing, and then encouraging them to leave the figurative drawing and “dance” to the music with the brush. We spent four hours starting the project and it is difficult to list the number of sensations and emotions we experienced. The interest and receptivity and the level of collaboration of the students exceeded our expectations. They reaffirmed our idea of continuing to delve into the game as a motivator of learning.



### **8.4.3 *Session 3: Building the Teaching Staff***

In this third session, we have built the teaching staff. The students have taken photographs of different teachers, have cut their images and assigned to each of their parts a piece of music related to their place of origin. At the end of the first term, the students presented the sessions we had done to their classmates, in which we worked on the idea of remixing from different approaches.

### **8.4.4 *Stories of Musical Life***

Throughout the second quarter we have been working with the early adolescents on their life stories, and we have tried to do it from the family perspective. It has been the families who have provided documentation, narrated their lives and told as emigrants their cultural vision of the host country. A way to maintain and strengthen the culture of origin. The final result has been recorded in sound format and placed in interactive panels where photos, drawings, currency, musical instruments are collected.

## **8.5 Workshop “Culture for Solidarity”**

After the first year of work of Antropoloops workshops at the school, we planned to expand the project by participating in a European project being developed by Krytyka Polityczna (Poland) and the European Cultural Foundation (Netherlands): “Culture for Solidarity.” The idea was to collaborate with the Polish artist Sebastian Świąder doing a workshop during the first term of the 2018–19 academic year, our second year of the project. We decided to concentrate on working with early adolescents. We think that the global approach for these two courses could be: the first year is a period when they reveal and explore value from remixing, the diversity of the classroom, ask where we came from and how our origins are diverse. After this first year, the second year would be a year to go outside the classroom and approach the musical diversity of other cultures through the idea of travelling. The possibility of the workshop for Culture for Solidarity fit very well with this approach.

Working with Sebastian Świąder and Dorota and Igor (from Krytyka Polityczna), we decided to make a sound exchange between our students and the Free Democratic School Bullerbyn in Warsaw, where Sebastian works. What do we want to hear about the daily environment of children living in another country? How do we introduce ourselves to others using sound? How do we show our school using sound?

The first part of the workshop was held in Seville. A theater experience and pedagogy by Sebastian and Fran was fundamental to work with sound with the students from the corporal expression and the game, encouraging the active listening of our

sound environment. The goal was to record a message for the Warsaw students of Bullerbyn School. Sebastian took a cassette tape to Warsaw with the sonic presentation of our students recorded on face A, along with the questions they had thought up for the children of Warsaw: What does your school bell sound like? What does your voice sound like? What is the sound of your breathing? How does your teacher sound when he scolds you? How does your school sound? How does your house sound? How does your laughter sound? How does your favorite music sound? What do your classmates sound like in the courtyard?

Once in Warsaw, at the Free Democratic School Bullerbyn, Sebastian worked similarly with the students, who recorded a sound presentation of his class with questions addressed to their Seville peers on side B of the cassette: What are the sounds of animals in Spain? I want to hear outside sounds from you. How does the wind sound to you? What do the leaves sound like in the rain? What do you play in Spain (games)? How do Spanish advertisements sound (in radio, TV)? What song gets stuck in your head? Questions even came for Halloween! How do broken bones sound? What does death sound like? How does the sinister laugh sound?

The second part of the workshop was to answer the questions. The students of Warsaw recorded the answers to the questions they had been asked by those of Seville on the A side of the tape, which flew back to San José Obrero with Dorota. Once in Seville, the answers were recorded on side B, and in this way, the tape returned to Warsaw with both sides full of questions and answers.

The workshops were developed in a mixture of language. From Seville, our students, fascinated by the sound of another language, played to imagine what the questions meant, and when they heard the answers they said, “They are just as crazy as we are!” Listening to the sound of the choir concert at the Bullerbyn school, it was striking how different it sounded from ours, why? Is the floor in your school made of wood? To close the process, we made a videoconference with Sebastian before Christmas and we rang in the New Year.

## 8.6 Synergies

One of the objectives we set ourselves this second year was to try to generate synergies in the school that go beyond the workshops. David, the PE teacher, had done a podcast with his cell phone, and this year he wanted to continue with the idea. We decided to allocate part of the budget of the *Carasso* materials budget that we had not spent last year to buy recorders and materials to set up a recording studio for podcasts in the school. After the experience with Sebastian, we decided to end the term by doing a podcast with the students in which they would tell how their experience had been. We were working in groups of script, translation, management of the recording equipment and creation of sound curtains. Here the result: broadcasting from Sanjomix to the entire galaxy.

After finishing the first term with the Culture for Solidarity workshop, seeing the students’ answers and the feedback of the school’s teaching team, the idea of these

sound and musical exchanges seems very interesting to continue developing with other educational schools. Taking advantage of a previous collaboration channel of the school, we will continue the “trip” in the second term through a collaboration with the Tamer Özyurt İlköğretim School in Istanbul. The school is located in the district of Esenyurt, in the European part of the city, an area with an abundant migrant population (Syria, Egypt, Congo, Iran).

The objective is to make a musical exchange and make a remix piece between the students from Istanbul, Warsaw and Seville. The evaluation is continuous, focused on the learning itself throughout the process. The collection of data, records, direct observation, acceptance of criticism, defense and argumentation of the work performed and the individual and group rubrics. For example: In the Sanjomix project, students have had to bring documentation about their family and tell a life story, making the group assembly together with the Antropoloops educators. The form of evaluation at the end has been the exposure of the product and the preparation of an individual and group rubric, while in the execution trajectory all the contribution of documentation, narrative works and configuration of the digital support has been valued.

One of the keys for the success of the educational model of San José Obrero school is to know how to take advantage of the synergies (cooperation). The majority of the educational experiences have a great impact and diffusion in the educational community and society in general. The teachers that lead and participate in the innovation projects are conscious of the importance of empowering their pupils and their educational model, presenting their educational experiences in prestigious events where the pupil is the main protagonist in presenting and telling about what is done in the school.

For instance, Sanjomix project has participated in the intergenerational innovation project MuAC (Annual Exhibition of the Communication). San José Obrero school is one of the centers that organize MuAC. MuAC was created to empower pupils and good teaching practices. This is the goal of MuAC: turn the student into the protagonist of the learning process and exchange good teaching practices that have already been carried out in schools with students of all ages (children, teenagers and adults). This exhibition is an event in which groups of different levels or educative stages interact. The schools exchange different realities, learn and teach tasks. These tasks have been previously worked out in class using not only innovative techniques and methodologies, but also some that are not that innovative, such as gamification, handicrafts or collaborative work.

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