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Lections through Lecture-Performance. Making forgotten conflicts visible through creative innovation in International and Comparative Education

Lecciones desde la Lecture- Performance. Visibilizando conflictos olvidados a través de la innovación creativa en Educación Internacional y Comparada

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Abstract

In the supra and international scenario, conflict and education in countries involved in armed conflicts have become a powerful *raison d'être* on the part of both institutions and scholars, that have been developing various topics regarding politics and organization, in addition to didactics. Comparative and International Education are presently redefining its features and ontological elements and contribute to these issues, given their plural and eclectic nature.

In the light of the abovementioned, this article aims to present the research and results of an innovative education project that relies on International Education to spotlight the situation of education in countries involved in conflict. The proposal gathers different actions on methodological innovation, all with a common thread: the implementation of drama-based techniques in the classroom, in particular, the *Lecture-Performance*, an hybrid concept which combines research and student's autonomous work with basic resources of theatrical practice. The main results of the study show that this teaching methodology encourages students to develop creativity, originality and spontaneity, fostering responsibility, tolerance and empathy in relation to international and comparative conflicts.

Keywords: Conflict; education in emergencies; International Education; Comparative Education; *Lecture-Performance*.

Resumen

En el escenario supra e internacional, el conflicto y la educación en países involucrados en conflictos armados se han convertido en una poderosa *raison d'être* tanto de instituciones como de la academia, que han venido desentrañando diversos temas desde política y organización, además de la didáctica educativas. La Educación Comparada e Internacional está redefiniendo sus rasgos y elementos ontológicos y contribuye a estos temas, dado su carácter plural y ecléctico.

A la luz de lo anterior, este artículo tiene como objetivo presentar la investigación y los resultados de un proyecto educativo innovador que se apoya en la Educación Internacional para resaltar la situación de la educación en países en conflicto. La propuesta recoge diferentes acciones de innovación metodológica, todas con un hilo conductor: la implementación de técnicas basadas en el drama en el aula, en particular, la *Lecture-Performance*, un concepto híbrido que combina la investigación y el trabajo autónomo del alumnado con los recursos básicos de la práctica teatral. Los principales resultados del trabajo ponen de manifiesto que esta metodología didáctica fomenta en el alumnado el desarrollo de la creatividad, la originalidad y la espontaneidad, potenciando la responsabilidad, la tolerancia y la empatía en relación con los conflictos internacionales y comparados.

Palabras clave: Conflicto; educación en emergencias; Educación Internacional; Educación Comparada; *Lecture-Performance*.

1. Introduction

The armed conflicts that occur worldwide and happen along a reasonable time line to evidence their existence have turned into an archetypical reality that must be apprehended all its parameters. Among these, education emerges as one of the main active interlocutors, interpreting it from the cosmovision generated both for refugees and displaced persons and for societies in conflict or post-conflict (Versmeksse *et al.*, 2017). Among the reasons that lead their actions are the consequences that such conflicts bring to education itself and to the right holders: children, teachers and communities. These consequences stand as a systematic and radical violation of their rights in areas of destruction, fear and desolation.

Save the Children (2018), on their Index of Current Dangers for Children that threaten the enjoyment of this life stage, warns that, despite the fact that the situation of children in general seems to be more favourable in 95 of the 175 countries surveyed, at least 240 million children live in fragile, conflict-stricken countries. Education plays an interstitial role in the reconstruction of conflicts and affected countries, preparing their inhabitants for a state of peace, especially for children whose rights are infringed for this reason. Besides, education provides psychosocial support, helps train teachers and integrates psycho-pedagogical practices by procuring materials and reflecting human and children rights in their daily work (Dryden-Peterson, 2016, p. 195).

De facto, education is conceived as a human right for every child, and children in conflict-affected fragile states (CAFS) have fewer opportunities to attend school (Save the Children UK, 2006). Human Rights Watch defines "attacks on education" as the global scale of violations that put children at risk and deny them access to education. This situation includes attacks on school facilities, intimidation and harassment of teachers and students, military occupation of schools and recruitment of children to become soldiers, among others. Human Rights Watch therefore urges states to endorse the Safe Schools Declaration, an international commitment to protect and free them from military attacks in times of war. From his Theory of Complexity, Davies (2005) discusses the role of education from the viewpoint that schools are both part of the problem and the solution to conflict and post-conflict situations. Thus, this scholar insists on the school restructuring of relations, the culture of learning, language usages, curriculum and textbooks and, finally, the role of governance.

The consolidation of this line of research that brings together transnational and international policy, cooperation for development and education has built on its own conceptual architecture from the consideration of the so-called "fragile" or "in conflict" countries. Both denominations, often interchangeable (Dryden-Peterson, 2016), have been used by international organizations such as the World Bank or the OECD, and where the presence of children has escalated in recent years, with devastating short-, medium- and long-term effects on education (Menashy and Dryden Peterson, 2015).

Given the impact of armed conflicts on a global scale, as evidenced by the institutional cartography, this article aims to present the results of an educational innovation project developed at the University of Valencia (Spain). Based on the models that legitimise a critical view of comparative and international education (Nóvoa, 2018), this project has sought to make visible the educational situation in countries in (past and present) conflicts on a global scale, from the course of 'International Education' of the BA Degree in Social Education. This has been carried out through an active, critical and transforming

student participation, linked to the design and execution of theatrical and performative proposals, aimed at favouring critical and artistic stances with respect to situations of international conflict.

This article is divided into four sections. Firstly, the focus is on the object of study: the consideration of conflict in educational research to move on, secondly, to account for the methodology used in our educational project on conflicts in the course 'International Education', which focuses on the design and implementation of Lecture-Performance as a pedagogical resource. The third section deals with the results from the development of the methodological approach. Lastly, we offer some conclusions from the analysis and impact of the experience

2. Meaning and uses of critical and reflexive comparative and international education: reading the world

With respect to the purposes that comparative and educational education should deal with, there is at present a large number, according to the contexts that need to be elucidated in a socio-educational manner. Arnove (1999) identifies three dimensions in comparative education from the meaning given by the comparatists: theoretical, melioristic and international, the latter linked to a world in peace. Schriewer (2015), in turn, refers to the discipline as being either academic or interventionist. We deem this latter dimension as highly relevant, as it seems to most accurately describe one of the current scenarios that the discipline exhibits. This third model, advocated by, for instance, Albatch (1990), Nóvoa (2000, 2018) and Phillips (1999), should necessarily be added to the classic diatribe between theoretical and practical comparative education. A model that has been coherently developed from the heuristic nature that distinguishes comparative and international education on today's world scenarios and that requires, in effect, both forms to be, primarily, critical as "we have to move from the analysis of facts to the analysis of the meaning of facts" (Nóvoa 2000a, 106). A problematised comparative education that, through estrangement, intercession and communication, in a bipolar scenario of competition and collaboration (Powell, 2020), does not relinquish its commitment to everyday reality, nor does accept the mission of merely feeding political powers: a comparative education that is not confined to descriptive and prescriptive models but rather embraces its own historicity and defends the development of comprehensive approaches (117). Phillips (2000) also holds this view, arguing that comparing is an essential part of thought processes that allows us to understand the meaning of and our experience in the world: only by making comparisons can we legitimately defend our position on most important issues that need judgement.

In this model, there is not only one but "many Comparative Educations" (Cowen 2000) that rest on the current scenario of globalisation. Based on earlier interpretations by Cowen (1996) ('read the world') and Dale (2000), the most current perspectives highlight the role played by both comparative and international education in the emergence of still embryonic science of comparative global educational policy that compels us to reconsider both the object of study and the structuring method, as well as to reappraise its forms of interpretation and to redress the limitations of some decontextualized and excessively nomothetical analyses that hinder effective comparison.

The position above has to be complemented with the object of study of the present work. In fact, as Shas, and Lopes Cardoso (2015) argue, reflections are needed on historical and current forms of globalisation and on the modes in which conflicts based on social, political, cultural, religious, ethnic and class grounds within education are linked to tensions derived from movements and flows of ideas, goods, services and people within and across borders.

It is precisely from this critical perspective that we must read the tensions and contradictions between countries in armed conflicts and their links to education, for which we require interdisciplinary perspectives beyond the educational space: the insights of Law, Political Economy, Sociology, Gender Studies and, de facto, Social History, will help to develop research geared to this area of study, from a multiplicity of discipline-specific analytical methods and frameworks (Steiner-Khamsi 2014). From this critical model, research ought to question and challenge issues perceived as hegemonic in these contexts in pursuit of social transformation. In this regard, while research in this field of conflict and education has tried to focus on particular crises and the specific problems that caused them, this critical perspective would attempt to signify that conflicts cannot be defined from positivist and naïve perspectives that adhere to the cause-effect principle. Accordingly, the position of countries involved in such conflicts must be ascertained within a broader context of the institutional, structural, economic, and socio-economic settings, given the melting pot of "the structures, institutions and agents operating under, around, above and behind nation-states (local governments, national states, neighbouring states, regional treaties, supra-governmental bodies and other nation-states" (Novelli 2011, 7).

Thus, acknowledging the delicate and critical present period of transition and new configuration of attributes and ontological features of comparative and international education (Egido and Martínez-Usarralde, 2019), as pointed out, Davies (2005, 368-369) puts forth several avenues of work from which both disciplines can contribute, given their epistemologically plural and eclectic nature: to activate alternative mechanisms for evaluating the relevance and quality of education in conflict-afflicted countries through indicators such as ISAPSE (International Studies of Achievement in Peace and Security Education); to produce and disseminate comparative statistics of the ratios of military and education expenditures, as well as 'soldier-teacher' ratios; to explore how educators can more effectively teach about citizenship, peace and democracy – linked precisely to conflict – through the analysis of resources, demands for accountability or for engagement in active citizenship movements; to conduct comparative studies on how schools in conflict or post-conflict zones educate about their own conflict, as well as studies on the resilience or disappearance of these schools; and to undertake intercultural and longitudinal research on the impact of education for global citizenship on its contribution to peace.

3. International education: the conflict as *raison d'être*

The research on the intersection between conflict and education is abundant, given the heterogeneity of theoretical perspectives, paradigms and heuristic models (e.g. theories of socialisation, international legislation and cultural political economy, education for global citizenship-EGC), which are granted a certain corpus through specific studies and research. Shah and Lopes Cardozo (2015) also draw attention to the changing nature of

this binomial, as it is subject to geopolitical balances of power through tectonic changes. Paulston and Rappleye (2007) state that, in general, and especially at the beginning of the 21st century, publications in the field of education and conflict reflect an apparent distance between theory and practice in this field. However, in this section we wish precisely to refer to some studies after a non-exhaustive bibliographical search, in order to map three focal points on which they are based: the political and educational perspectives, centred on conflict-afflicted countries and their educational situation and, finally, the pedagogical perspective which, from developed countries, suggests the way to work on conflicts from education. Our work is inscribed into this latter perspective.

Thus, on the one hand, we find some attempts to *read* the educational conflict politically. The international educational agendas have, therefore, to recognise violence in education as an inexcusable and urgent challenge in the context of human and children's rights, and a barrier to social and economic development. Novelli (2016) argues that education in these contexts increases inequality, and they advocate an interdisciplinary and holistic approach that examines and guides educational inequality in conflict-afflicted countries in their economic, cultural and political dimensions; and in ethnically diverse societies, this inequality is built through schools ethnically-based on national identity, thus excluding minorities (Dryden-Peterson and Mulimbi, 2017). In a student-centred ethnographic analysis of Rwanda, Williams (2019) unveils the contradictions between its narratives and the government's inclusive development policies in basic education, thereby evidencing the reproduction of inequalities in formal education. This line of research is also pursued in higher education: Sen (2019) uses the term "hybrid governance" to refer to the political reforms in Higher Education in Cambodia after the armed civil conflict. Finally, this first political perspective is completed with such other studies as those on the effectiveness and sectorialisation of international aid in the reconstruction of post-conflict countries (Donaubauer *et al.*, 2019), or on the effects of remittances on educational enrolment rates in the different quintiles of families also in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina (Oruc *et al.*, 2019).

Secondly, research on educational perspectives that are spread and implemented in contexts of conflict: how teaching and learning unfolds in contexts of conflict or, more appropriately, how these "resilient schools" contribute to transforming education (Davies, 2005, p. 364). Conflict is interpreted from this educational focus in the classrooms of conflict-ridden countries. Thus, it is acknowledged that minimum security standards must be ensured (Nordtveit, 2016), while at the same time attempts must be made to take measures on the effects caused in such contexts: early dropout, different forms of abuse and bullying both at home and at school, the increasing incidence of child marriage, abusive work and, in some cases, the worst forms of child labour. From this perspective, Slone and Shoshani (2008) analyse the resilience of Israeli children exposed political violence and psychological stress as a result of political conflict through an intervention programme in primary education, thereby reinforcing the role of the education system. Zuilkowski and Marty (2021) center their interest in how students feel safe in school in a region in northeast Nigeria experiencing protracted conflict. On the conflict in Syria, Deane (2016) also recognises that current educational policy is focused on the resettlement of refugees in host countries, where educators are equipped to identify, respond to, and transform the needs of the next 'lost generation' (in their opinion), thus trying to reduce the risk of stigma, desolation, intra-community tensions, marginalisation and even radicalisation of Syrian society. Meanwhile, Taka (2021) examines

how learners in post genocide Rwanda give meaning of the complex education journey that they undertook and their motivations for a second chance education.

Notwithstanding this educational perspective, some other research, including Hanna (2017), focuses on analysing the conflict narratives which have a very defined identity in the case of ethno-nationally divided countries, such as Israel and Northern Ireland, interpreting the notions of "freedom", "freedom of expression" and "no discrimination" in the classrooms of these fragmented societies. Teachers who live in these contexts are also of interest: Matsumoto (2018) is concerned with the aspirations and experiences of vocational trainers in countries in conflict, especially Sierra Leone, with a focus on capacity theory. Within the framework of Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS), Kester (2019) carries out an ethnographic study on 25 peace scholars in order to enquiry into the meaning these give to "global equity" and to "post-structural violence", thus confirming the clearly educational value of the first concept over the second.

In this respect, some research denounces the way textbooks and teaching materials in countries in conflict are hindering the reconstruction of a culture of peace and coexistence in education (Bradley-Levine and Zainulabdin, 2020). Furthermore *et al.* (2016) show that, in spite of the dissemination of materials for primary education, policies in post-conflict countries such as Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Southern Sudan, far from contributing to peace-building, engendered and reinforced dividing perspectives of reproduction of culture of hostility, division, violence and silence so as to maintain and even exacerbate existing inequalities. In this same line, Cunningham and Ladd (2018) carry out research in 6 interreligious schools on the secondary-education curriculum developed in Sri Lanka's peace-building era. Their results evidence that teaching does not explicitly address the historical roots of conflict, critical thinking or the necessary skills to discuss social coherence. Finally, in this review (likely to be expanded), a third group of studies focuses on articulating educational actions, based on pedagogical teaching and learning methods, to work on topics directly affecting countries in conflict. These actions mainly originate in conflict-free countries and are generated for fundamentally sensitising purposes. These are often united with perspectives linked to cooperation for development, in addition to heuristic interests about reality in terms of internationalisation and its effect on global geopolitical and human order. Belloni (2008) makes use of role playing with Italian students for them to acquire a more active and empowering role in their learning process on the basis of the management of conflict dynamics and intervention in conflict areas contextualised in a Bosnian town. Kampf and Cuhadar (2015) evaluate the motivating role of a teaching-learning software – Global Conflicts – to pursue the interactive resolution of conflicts and education for peace with Palestinian, Israeli-Jewish and Guatemalan students. From the university classroom, Toros *et al.* (2018) address the perceived distance between human experience in war and daily life with British students. From the university classroom, as a result of multi-disciplinary work, the present research is ascribed to this third line of investigations that approach conflict from the perspective of higher education. In this sense, the didactic proposal developed in the following section aims to contribute to this third strand.

4. Methodological design

The presence of imagination, creativity and attraction is an important value in the exercise of university teaching (Dubovicki, 2019), which has an impact on the learning and

the competencies acquired by students. The freedom of unlimited imagination cannot be the exclusive privilege of professional artists, but must be part of all teaching activities that enter uncharted territories. Camnitzer (2018, p. 17) points out that "proper education is, precisely, a confrontation with the unknown, while confrontation with what is known is only training". Thus, it is possible to participate actively in the construction of the pedagogical practices of the future, after invoking the social imaginary and reflecting on the international educational past and present. Therefore, the use of Lecture-Performance (Even and Schewe, 2016; Milder, 2011) as a pedagogical method in the field of International Education contributes to reinventing the teaching practice in areas of knowledge tied to the use of traditional teaching methodologies (Belloni, 2008; Kester, 2019; Matsumoto 2018; Oruc *et al.*, 2019).

Lecture-Performance is a construct in which pedagogy and artistic practice converge and interact to further the deconstruction of knowledge through the development of divergent thinking that is coupled with various artistic readings on situated educations. Conceived as an artistic expression, it is a teaching resource that can help university students realise that creative thinking constitutes an opportunity to reflect critically on problems or situations to then transform them.

The emergence of Lecture-Performance as a sub-genre of Performance, at the crossroads between art and the academia, goes back to the 1960s, with its basis in conceptual art. On the idea by the American artist Sol LeWitt (1928-2007), this art advocates that the true work of art is not the physical object produced by the artist but the concepts and ideas contained in it1. Lecture-Performance, as a mode of expression for visual artists, refers to a type of presentation that transcends what is merely academic. Through it the artist tries to interpret the world using representations that merge elements of drama with those of other visual disciplines. Thus, the hybrid nature of this medium of expression combines such features as storytelling, media, the internet, advertisements, slogans, images and technology, in order to explore the relationship between image and text, facts and consensus, ideas and narratives through drama. With regard to contemporary performance, artists carry on with tradition, and they seek to shift through their work the dividing lines between art and life. The aim is to achieve a perhaps utopian ideal but which must still be pursued in the university classroom: "the belief that consciousness stemming from teaching and learning can lead to a new way to live in society" (Milder, 2011, p. 13).

Considering the case of university academicism, there are two aspects in the present pedagogical proposal that deserve special consideration: firstly, the revival of the Lecture-Performance on the artistic side and, secondly, the introduction of artistic (i.e. dramatic) techniques in the classroom (Ryan and Marino-Maio, 2011). This approach, in which teaching and learning intersect, is limited to these two sources of inspiration and redefines itself with the aim of renewing teaching methodologies in the field of higher education (Devlin and Samarawickrema, 2010). This is essential work for the construction of new teaching models based on the use of drama.

In terms of the methodological approach, we focus on an intrinsic case study - understood as a particular, descriptive and heuristic analysis of an example in pedagogical

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1 Conceptual art attempted to make explicit that art could be made without the need to produce artistic objects, and that, thus, the aesthetic experience exists without being mediated by objectuality. In this sense, there is an appeal to judgement and reflective contemplation, over and above immediate pleasure provoked by contemplation. Cf. Masdearte.com: http://masdearte.com/movimientos/arte-conceptual/ [Accessed January 11, 2021].

action - (Yacuzzi, 2005), and driven by participant observation (Hamel *et al.*, 1993). In the present work we focus on Lecture-Performance as a didactic resource in the field of international education. When lecturers and students at university resort to it as a subject, significant pedagogical processes are forged, in which creativity and drama play a part in facilitating the understanding, interpretation and reconstruction of the various theories, discourses and practices currently linked to international politics and the education of children in conflict situations. With our proposal of Lecture-Performance, conceived as a hybrid form that integrates topic-specific research with its stage representation, we intend to raise students' awareness of a real presence, not hidden behind a screen or isolated from the academic environment or tangible relations. The execution of this methodological approach enables students to view reality through new lenses and to try to question and interrogate it, thus wondering why things are the way they are and why they produce their corresponding effects and consequences; and learning, furthermore, to decode reality in order to transform it through their artistic abilities.

Acaso and Megías (2017) highlight the need to position the arts as an educational strategy, as a praxis. These scholars refer to *Art Thinking* as a fabric for social action that can foster the idea of changing and transforming the world, which is presented as a political space from which to address contemporary and international educational problems in order to analyse them and subsequently consider a potential action. As pursuing to transform learners through artistic expressions, Lecture-Performance is understood as a distinctive way of doing *Art Thinking* since, they argue, "the methodologies of knowledge creation that art activate increase citizens' freedom of thought and self-esteem" (Acaso and Megías, 2017, p. 5). We thus aim to promote creativity, dialogue, civility, assertiveness and cross-disciplinarity in and out of the university classrooms.

The main objectives of this research are to disseminate a pedagogical proposal whose purpose is to promote creativity, dialogue, civic-mindedness, assertiveness and transversality among Comparative and International Education students at the University of València (UV), both inside and outside the university classroom. Along the same lines, and in accordance with Milder (2011), we seek to show that the awareness derived from the teaching-learning processes that are the subject of this research can lead us to new and more dignified ways of living in today's society.

4.1. Sample and procedure

Embracing this pedagogical challenge, in the academic years 2016-7, 2017-8 and 2018-9, we applied Lecture-Performance to various courses in the BA programmes in Philology, Translation and Communication, on the one hand, and in Social Education, on the other. Under the auspices of an educational innovation project subsidised by the University of València in a yearly competitive call, we aimed to conduct international and inter-disciplinary learning experiences2. Within this project, we refer here to the design, production and evaluation of the Lecture-Performances on countries in conflict, carried out in the 3rd-year course *International Education* of the BA Programme in Social Education. This 6-ECTS semester course is divided into two groups: this method was applied to one

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2 The project is called "Application of basic drama techniques in the classroom", with 5 members who link their courses on "Studies of drama and performing arts in German", "German Language 2 and 4", "Introduction to literary texts", "Narrative studies in German" and "German Literature" (from the Faculty of Philology, Translation and Communication) and "International Education" (from the Faculty of Philosophy and Educational Sciences), respectively.

of the two groups in the abovementioned academic years. In both cases, the groups were heterogeneous: one group with 80 students and the other with 50, with 10 Erasmus+ students per group (20 in total), given the nature of the subject. These groups mainly involve women, who regularly attend the classes. It should be noted that the sample of students with whom the teaching innovation project in question has been put into practice refers to people from the lower-middle social class, mostly living in Valencia (Spain) and its province, and all of them with a special sensitivity to conflicts and difficulties in the world. A highly significant percentage of them participate in neighbourhood associations and NGOs.

The application of Lecture-Performance as a teaching method is linked to group assignments in this subject within a formative proposal that complementarily entails the preparation of a group diary. Based on the lecturer's questions, this diary involves the construction of a discourse on the reality endured in some countries from a socio-educational perspective, with the help of international organisations and their reports on the countries being examined. In any case, both methodological approaches require cooperative work in which interdependence, creativity, group cohesion, commitment, critical reflection and personal and group responsibility, among others, are actively developed.

Both the production of the group diary and the development of Lecture-Performance start in this case from an initial extract of the geopolitical Atlas of *Le Monde Diplomatique* (2010)3. In accord with the importance of group work in Higher Education (Hammar, 2014), in the first sessions of the course students – in groups of 5-6 – decide which conflict-afflicted country they want to delve into during the course.

In this way, while students are working on the group diary, the course intersperses content-based lectures with a series of practical sessions in which the students research on their chosen countries. The course is completed with the preparation, execution and assessment of the corresponding Lecture-Performance. Thus, the purpose of this educational proposal is that the group must generate a process of collaborative learning that is tied to other competencies and knowledge identified in the diary as a distinct process but inextricably linked to it. Through this practice, students strengthen their competencies linked to their consolidation of educational reflections, to their adoption of a critical opinion of globalisation processes and their consequences; to their assumption of stances generated from global citizenship (through their emotional expressions), their creative capacity and their vivid transmission of values such as peace and coexistence, empathy, respect and solidarity that the whole process entails *per se*. All the above is nourished by their own process of intellectual inquiry, founded on scientific criteria set by the subject of International Education.

For this, a 2-hour intensive workshop ("Introduction to Lecture-Performance") is held at the beginning of the academic year, taught by invited lecturers of the Faculty of Philology, Translation and Communication – and also members of the Teaching Innovation Group INNOVA-TEA –, who have been using this methodologies in their teaching and research for more than ten years. This workshop is linked to disruptive pedagogies (Bastos, 2009) and is highly motivating for students (judging by their own positive evaluations). Through the use of diverse techniques, students are able to adopt

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3 In fact, other publications of the same organization, which are more up-to-date and still allow for the implementation of this methodology, are recommended at this point, since it continues to be based on specific countries and conflicts. Some suggested titles are "Atlas of History and Comparative Criticism", "Atlas of Conflicts and Borders" or even "Atlas of Utopias", among others; all of them published in 2014.

different approaches, styles and modes of expression based on the knowledge of the country they are working on, which is progressively acquired throughout the semester.

After this workshop, the groups work indistinctly on the diary and the Lecture-Performance. The groups are allocated time and space during the subject's teaching hours and can also make use of online and on-site consultation hours during the semester. Thus, the role of the lecturer is primarily to guide, advice and orientate, while at the same time solving doubts and problems in the interpretation of the practices as the course unfolds.

4.2. Evaluation of the innovation

At the beginning of the course, students are provided with a specific document that details the stages, guidelines and characteristics of the Lecture-Performance to be developed. This material is also presented in class and made available to students in the virtual learning environment for the course (*Moodle*). Inter alia, the document includes a timetable with the specific order and dates of the presentations; instructions on hetero- and self-evaluation, respectively; time available for the performances; an explicit invitation to freedom in designing and creating and an appeal to creativity as regards what and how to present their views on the conflict and its links to education; rules of respect for the time allotted to each group and distribution of roles within them.

Each group has 25-30 minutes for their presentation, distributed as follows: 5-8 minutes to prepare their performance (make-up, costumes and stage set-up, if needed); 10-15 minutes for the Lecture-Performance; the last 5-10 minutes are devoted to discussion and hetero-evaluation of the groups, according to previously-set criteria, which are subsequently commented on.

The last hours of the course are devoted to the final presentations. In these, through Lecture-Performance, each group communicates their cognitive and emotional narratives, trying to socialise and interact with the rest of the groups in order to transmit all the conceptual and experiential knowledge gained and built through their learning process. The numerous expressions of commitment with the work carried out and of creativity are gathered in a series of videos, produced and edited by the technical staff of the University of Valencia who are also part of the innovation project. The results are materialised in a wide array of displays: humorous (TV contests in well-known formats) or tragic stories, artistic expressions linked to music (violin concert, rap, swing, reggaeton, blues or *chirigotas* songs4, etc.), to dance (choreographies created by the group, belly dancing), to ethnographic encounters (tea ceremony, first-hand testimonies), to painting, to poetry, and all manifestations that evidence the quality and relevance of the expressions to be shown to the class. To illustrate, some of the Lecture-Performances in the two academics years can be watched following the links below:

-mmedia.uv.es/html5/g/cream//46034_grupo_1_i.mp4
-mmedia.uv.es/html5/g/cream//46040_grupo_8.mp4
-mmedia.uv.es/html5/g/cream//46042_grupo_10.mp4
-mmedia.uv.es/html5/g/cream//46038_grupo_6.mp4
-mmedia.uv.es/buildhtml?user=garfadie&path=/cream/2017_18_proyectos/diego/lecture_per/&name=siria.mp4

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4 Songs of Carnival from Andalucia region, mainly.

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Assessment is a fundamental aspect of the present proposal. In our case, the final mark in this course is obtained by attending to the following aspects and their weight:

Table 1.
Assessment items for International Education and their assigned weight %

ASSESSMENT ITEMS	ASSIGNED WEIGHT
EXAM	15%
GROUP DIARY	30%
LECTURE PERFORMANCE	20%
HETERO-EVALUATION	15%
SELF-EVALUATION	10%
Total:	**100%**

Regarding the assessment of the Lecture-Performance, this is done through a series of actions linked to hetero-evaluation and self-evaluation, following Darwin (2016), for instance. The assessment of the final work for each group is done by means of an assessment tool designed by the INNOVA-TEA team which is previously known by the students. This tool focuses on three aspects: 'dramatics', 'performance and staging' and 'group work and social cohesion'. Each of these criteria subdivides into several indicators that the different groups firstly assess quantitatively, as shown in Table 2:

Table 2.
Hetero-evaluation of the Lecture-Performance

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

GROUP MEMBERS..

		NAME OF GROUP/CHOSEN COUNTRY	NAME OF GROUP/CHOSEN COUNTRY	NAME OF GROUP/CHOSEN COUNTRY	NAME OF GROUP/CHOSEN COUNTRY	NAME OF GROUP/CHOSEN COUNTRY	NAME OF GROUP/CHOSEN COUNTRY	NAME OF GROUP/CHOSEN COUNTRY	NAME OF GROUP/CHOSEN COUNTRY	NAME OF GROUP/CHOSEN COUNTRY
DRAMATURGY	Analysis and selection of material									
	Structure and adaptation/organisation of the text									
	Originality, creativity									
STAGING AND PRESENTATION	Use of space									
	Stage props and costumes Rhythm									
	Intonation and pronunciation									
	Gesticulation, movement, attitude, improvisation									
	Participation of spectators									

GROUP WORK. GROUP COHESION	Assignment of tasks in the group							
	Synergy / Collaboration in the group							
	Solutions to potential conflict							
	Featuring of education Structure							
FINAL MARK								

| **OBSERVATIONS:** |
| Write here positive and/or negative aspects of the lecture performances of the groups. |

Once discussed and accepted by all groups, the students make use of this tool to assess the rest of the groups quantitatively and qualitatively (peer hetero-evaluation). Each item is scored on a 0-10 scale, and completed with a qualitative evaluation written on a blank space ('Observations'). The teacher gives this feedback to the groups in order to foster improvement.

Group self-evaluation is finally added to the result of the hetero-evaluation done by all groups. Self-evaluation is carried out after all presentations, thus completing the evaluation of the work done by the group and having compared it to the rest.

Finally, we present here purpose-built rubrics for the lecturer's assessment of the presentation of the Lecture-Performance, using similar criteria to the previous tool:

Table 3.
Assessment rubrics for International Education

RUBRICS FOR FINAL PRESENTATION OF LECTURE PERFORMANCE. COURSE: INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	10-9	8-7	6-5	4-0
Motivation for task	The group is highly motivated from the outset and faces the challenge with enthusiasm	The group shows motivation.	The group focuses more on drawbacks than on the benefits of this initiative.	The group has a negative predisposition from the beginning.
Creativity and originality	The LP is highly creative. The group shows command of this gradient and uses it pedagogically.	The LP approach is creative.	The LP is scarcely original; it follows more traditional models.	The LP lacks originality. It replicates some habits acquired in other courses.
Aesthetic aspects of presentation	Excellent presentation, with attention to details.	Careful presentation.	The presentation neglects some parts.	The presentation shows lack of implicit connection and work of the group.
Timing	They stick to the time allotted.	They almost stick to the time allotted (12 minutes).	They exceed or fail to stick to the allotted time by ten minutes.	They exceed or fail to stick to the allotted time by fifteen minutes.
Visual contact and posture	Participants keep eye contact with audience, with naturalness and display oral and argumentative competence.	Eye contact and posture are correct.	Eye contact and posture denote some insecurity and even lack of preparation.	Eye contact and posture are erratic and confusing. They denote insecurity, lack of preparation and connection among the different parts of the performance.
Order of narrative	The narration is orderly, with a clear logic at all times.	The narration is orderly.	The narration is orderly only occasionally.	The narration has no order at all.
Clarity	The speech is very clear.	The speech is clear.	The speech is dense at some times.	The speech is dense at most parts of the presentation.
Complexity and richness	The LP displays a high degree of well-managed complexity and richness that reinforce the ideas they seek to convey.	The group sometimes goes beyond the established roles, thus enriching them with nuances, explanations, etc.	The LP shows that the group mostly conform to the script.	The LP shows that the group never deviates from the set script.
Impact on the class	The group has had a positive impact on the class.	The group has had an appropriate impact on the class.	The group has poorly impacted the class.	The group has had no impact at all.
Group feedback:	The group replies questions (if any) with efficiency, quality and creativity.	The group replies questions (if any) with certain efficiency and quality.	The group finds some trouble in answering questions raised in the class (if any).	The group does not reply to the questions raised (if any).

5.Results

Thus, the final result is obtained by calculating the average of peer hetero-evaluation, lecturer's evaluation and self-evaluation. The results of the evaluation of the course with regard to Lecture-Performance are especially positive. In the three academic years of the study (2016-7, 2017-8 and 2018-9), out of a population of 130 students, 24% obtained an A+-A and 46% a B+-B. Only 17% obtained a C and 3% failed the course.

At the end of the course, in addition to their respective self- and intra-group evaluations, students are asked to individually provide a definition of International Education, which they had already accomplished at the beginning of the course, before gaining any knowledge of the subject. Thus, when comparing pre- and post-definitions, considering the development of the teaching-learning process that has taken place, the capacity of students to generate new, more experience-based knowledge is noteworthy. The use of Lecture-Performance, coupled with the production of group diaries, fosters more meaningful, enjoyable and thought-provoking learning, which notably serves to expose forgotten conflicts and build empathy towards them. At the outset of the course, students viewed International Education as a discipline that, for instance:

> "...confers knowledge related to education in different countries at an international level in order to analyse and compare their educational policies and thus enrich mutually" (A2).

> "...helps us study and compare the kinds of education implemented in different parts of the world and their different institutions and methodologies to develop it" (A8).

> "...is linked to international cooperation and we must understand it from our previous knowledge of the socioeconomic and political map of globalisation" (A32).

Conversely, at the end of this learning experience, students still try to build their definitions on the basic concepts, but they also manage to realise how this newly-acquired knowledge has influenced their lives, inasmuch as they are able to recognise and connect it to what this learning experience has granted them personally. Thus, it is worth quoting the following pieces in which students refer to what they have learnt and internalised on a personal level during the course. This is undoubtedly the most compelling results of the present work: through the use of Lecture-Performance as a didactic resource, contact with forgotten and present conflicts from an international perspective promotes a more enriching, emotional and meaningful learning. This is ultimately expressed by the students:

> "Work-wise, it has been a very intense subject, but above all in terms of managing our emotions and feelings when faced with the injustices that occur in the world. A great discovery that has awakened my conscience, my curiosity, my courage and my desire to fight for basic education for everyone in the world. An open door through which hope can be glimpsed at a distance" (A26).

"International Education is the reunion of countries, perspectives, data, but also of values and feelings, which were never really separated. It is an inexhaustible source of educational and pedagogical growth: after the experience in this course, it is impossible to return to a technical definition: International Education means emotions!" (A29).

"When it rains in Kurdistan, in Venezuela… we also get wet here and feel the water through this subject" (A37).

In sum, and with regard to the final results of the pedagogical experience described, we can point out that it has contributed to a creative break with the more conventional and, therefore, traditional tendencies in which teaching in Higher Education has become stagnant in recent times. In this sense, we justify the efforts made by teaching staff in the planning, design and development of educational proposals based on the use of new teaching-learning methodologies, including the one that is the subject of this study. Along the same lines, it is necessary to highlight the degree of involvement and interest of the students participating in this experience, as well as the level of satisfaction obtained, once the training period linked to this subject has ended.

At the completion of the didactic process, using the participatory assembly technique, in a 45-minute session, we sought to capture and analyse the opinions of the participating students in relation to the meaning and opportunity for them of being able to learn the contents of a subject through the Lecture-Performance methodology. Thus, based on a series of questions aimed at extracting certain generalised asessments from the students in relation to this didactic proposal, it is particularly noteworthy to point out some aspects that were highlighted:

a) Learning through Lecture-Performance has provided students with greater access to knowledge and an incentive to approach Comparative and International Education in a creative, playful and dynamic way.

b) The development of the activities carried out has facilitated critical and analytical thinking in relation to the study of forgotten conflicts.

c) Teamwork and creativity have contributed to the strengthening of problem-solving skills.

d) Teaching proposals of this type have helped to increase students' motivation to learn.

e) The didactic processes experienced have allowed students to develop an empathetic attitude towards International Education and towards all those conflictive situations that require human involvement, sensitivity and solidarity.

Thus, and in accordance with everything expressed in relation to the results of this pedagogical experience linked to the subject International Education, we can point out that it has constituted a critical, constructive and enriching training process for the students, in which the use of Lecture-Performance as an innovative teaching resource has highlighted its educational potential to make the teaching-learning processes linked to teaching related to Comparative and International Education more significant, creative, attractive and comprehensible.

Lastly, and with regard to the teaching staff involved in the development of this pedagogical experience, it is also necessary to point out some results that have contributed to

making the use of Lecture-Performance as a pedagogical resource capable of enriching university teaching activity significant and practically useful. Thus, aspects such as the following are noteworthy:

a) The teaching staff have become aware that the application of a methodology of this type in Comparative and International Education contributes to making their teaching practice more dynamic, helping them to implement new didactic mechanisms adapted to the current needs of students.

b) The dynamism that teachers manage to achieve during the course of their teaching activity is remarkable, providing opportunities for students to interact, participate and engage in critical dialogue.

c) The Lecture-Performance has helped the teachers involved in the experience to gain personal confidence when choosing creative teaching methodologies that contribute significantly to the improvement of students' education, which has also allowed them to self-evaluate their teaching work according to creative parameters.

d) The use of Lecture-Performance as a teaching methodology has allowed the teaching staff to connect and empathise with the students in a very personal way, which has helped them to easily recognise the students' achievements throughout the teaching-learning process, together with their personal satisfaction in learning.

e) The pedagogical experience developed has allowed the teaching staff involved to articulate new ways of teaching and learning from theory, which have also proved to be transferable to other educational contexts and scenarios and to other related subjects.

6. Conclusions. Critical-educational significance of Lecture-Performance

Universities and their faculty must leave behind the most traditional conventions that have stiffened teaching practice in Higher Education (Michavila, 2002). In this regard, our reflection on the teaching methodology used during three academic years in the course International Education is an enriching and much-needed process, both to appraise the effect of Lecture-Performance as an innovative teaching resource and to enhance its educational potential to make teaching-learning processes more relevant, creative, critical and comprehensive, as linked to the teaching of comparative and international education, in a way that focuses on making differences visible (Rappleye, 2020). In this way, lecturers meet the requirements of the teaching commitment with quality and educational innovation at the university, while improving their academic and methodological repertoires (Zhu, 2015). In this sense, we justify the need for increasing efforts in the planning, design and development of teaching proposals based on the use of new, more creative teaching-learning methodologies. All this, in order to be able to better reach the students with whom we work, providing them with greater access to knowledge based on creativity as a fundamental pillar. Precisely, this research into teaching innovation

has highlighted the possibility that the teaching staff, in addition to improving their level of methodological and didactic knowledge, contributes to responding to the required teaching commitment to quality and educational innovation at the University (Álvarez Domínguez and González Toro, 2015).

The use of creative teaching methodologies furthers the learning process of university students (Cremin, 2015; Liddy, 2021). In this respect, Lecture-Performance has been used in other contexts and disciplines are a teaching resource in the field of international higher education. In the present work, we have shown formative usefulness and pedagogical potential to provide students of international education with the related content and competencies. Insofar as students embrace this method and benefit from the opportunity to build and generate international educational knowledge through creative practices, they multiply the possibilities to recognise that the use of Lecture-Performance is not exclusive to the teaching and learning of artistic disciplines, but that its potential is particularly transferable to other pedagogical disciplines such as the ones mentioned here.

Over decades, the number of conflicts in countries around the world portrays a devastating scenario that cannot be ignored. Comparative and international education cannot remain detached from social reality (King, 1983), nor can it fail to be concerned about students' attitudes towards teaching innovations in this subject. In this way, international education finds in Lecture-Performance a transversal and interdisciplinary pedagogical instrument that facilitates, in a sympathetic, constructive and critical way, that students deal with the study of the so-many forgotten conflicts that have historically afflicted most fragile countries.

Finally, it should be noted that this pedagogical experience, with the appropriate didactic adaptations, could be transferable to other university educational contexts and other subjects that aim to foster a critical spirit, empathy, sensitivity, solidarity and creativity in pupils. Students who learn through the practice of Lecture-Performance have in their hands the possibility of constructing knowledge in a scenic space that, by fusing concepts with theatrical and pedagogical aspects, enables a greater intellectual, emotional and affective commitment, linked to unrepeatable teaching experiences.

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