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EDUCACIÓN: PERSPECTIVAS ANTROPOLÓGICAS

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Abstracts

Un paseo por la antropología educativa

Wayne J. Robins

The article is a brief historical summary of the development of the Anthropology of Education, principally in the United States, with a short reflection on the limitations of the sub-discipline as practiced in Mexico. The term "education" has many meanings and there are many different spaces where an individual educates himself or herself, although today the institutional space called "the school" is considered the principal one. The article covers many of the contemporary themes in the Anthropology of Education showing their historical antecedents. At the same time it points out the resurgence of interest in the ethnography of the school in educational studies.

Ecology of education in Temoaya

Guadalupe Acle Tomasini

Using as an example a monolingual (Spanish) primary school in the indigenous locality of San Pedro Abajo, Temoaya, Mexico State, this article focuses on the school as a human habitat, integrated vertically into different levels of cultural, economic, social and political organization. Following the model of cultural ecology applied to education, the article analyses the interrelation between school and those contexts, trying to discern the impact in the community of the school as an institution and the education which the children receive in it.

The construction of a public space among students of CCH-Sur: writing practices in the context of the strike in the UNAM (1999-2000)

Octavio Falconi

This article analyses how the students of a preparatory school (CCH-Sur), in the context of the strike in the UNAM (1999-2000), developed a public space for the expression of public opinion by means of their writing. It interprets the cultural practice of writing as linked to the history of its social uses, and analyses the non-academic writing practices, their function, and the meaning attributed to them by the students on strike. It also describes how these social actors produced their texts appropriating diverse written material and objects both of the school on strike and from other socio-cultural spaces. Writing was related to the construction of authorship and articulated within the power relations maintained between editors and readership, both drawn from the student body. The article shows how, by means of the interchange of written texts, the students tried to promote dialogue and a new form of social and cultural participation.

Between the collective and the individual: the experience of the school expressed in life stories

Claudia L. Saucedo Ramos

This article analyses the experience of the school as an expression of the interdependence between the individual and the sociocultural contexts in which he/she participates. From their experiences and subjective perspectives, how do individuals interpret or use collective cultural models about the value of the school? The author uses the concepts of cultural models and personal agency to interpret the relation between the collective culture and subjective, personal experience. Using the life stories of 10 "railway" families, the author studies narrative constructions which express generational changes about the role of the family with regard to the school, and the value of schooling in view of the labor market. In the case of the children, the multiple cultural models which they used to recreate the narration of their school experiences are analyzed, as well as how they justified their decisions to leave school or keep studying. The diverse reactions to schooling among the children of these families and their different ways of explaining them require a more detailed attention to the study of social groups, their socio-historical contexts, and the capacity which individuals have to choose and make decisions in view of available cultural resources and materials.

Educational decentralization in Baja California: the new political and institutional context of educational action and some empirical evidence

Marcos S. Reyes Santos

This article discusses the impact of the process of educational decentralization since 1992 in the new political and institutional context of the State of Baja California. The discussion centers on the vicissitudes of the process. Firstly, as a general context, the objectives of educational decentralization are discussed. Secondly, to identify the principal contemporary conflicts and tensions in the process of centralization-decentralization of the State of Baja California, the Mexican historical experience of educational decentralization is analysed. Preliminary findings contribute empirical evidence to the national debate about the effects of educational decentralization. Finally, the author tries to answer the following questions: What are the ultimate objectives of decentralization? Who promotes or impedes the process? And what are the new political and institutional arrangements which decentralization causes at the local level?

Diversity and differentiation of university education at the Bachelors level in the State of Jalisco

María Luisa Chavoya

Using Jalisco State as a case study, this article analyses diversification and processes of differentiation of university education in Mexico at the bachellors level as the result of both internal and external factors. Internal factors stem from the historical process of the development of university education in Jalisco, and external factors include international and national policies relating to university education. The article builds on two concepts: the diversification which explains the structure of systems, institutions and programs; and the differentiation which refers to processes of change generated within systems and institutions. It is shown that, although it no longer retains a monopoly of university education in the State, public education still dominates and is the alternative for most students. The article also demonstrates that, despite the growth of private universities, private and public institutions are not complementary since many small, private institutions design their careers to respond to immediate demand, without considering regional and national economic and social needs and, above all, the future employment of graduates.

The strengths and weaknesses of competency based education (EBC)

Jesús Carlos Guzmán

The article discusses the principal debates generated by competency based education (EBC). It analyses the implications of designing curriculum content in response to the demands of the workplace. Some of the aspects of contemporary society are commented as well as their consequences for education. Finally, the limitations of EBC are discussed, pointing out that labor norms are developed in circumstances far removed from the educational context. Nevertheless, EBC can offer relevant, attractive and useful learning because it facilitates and helps students prepare themselves for insertion into the world of work.

Formation in school and in the company: a consideration of the assembly plants in Tijuana

Alfredo Hualde

The article analyses the role played by assembly plants in the north of Mexico in the production of knowledge, especially those of Tijuana which, after Ciudad Juárez, has the greatest number of plants and workers. From the point of view of the theory of the acquisition of knowledge and productive know-how, it emphasizes the importance and the limitations of educational institutions, of professional formation, and of training for work. These institutions, together with personal and collective initiatives to acquire knowledge, are fundamental due to their constant renovation in response to organizational changes and technological innovations in industry. In a context where continual formation is an unavoidable requirement, the creation of new knowledge is a social necessity and not the exclusive responsibility of the educational system. Based on these theoretical and empirical foundations, the article analyses: *a)* the role of upper secondary and university educational institutions in the training of professionals and technicians; *b)* the ways knowledge is acquired in industry by technical and administrative personnel; and *c)* the interactive mechanisms between educational institutions and assembly plants.

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