

# Learning in Service, Historical-Cultural Psychology and other trajectories: dialogues with Beatriz Macías Gómez-Estern<sup>1</sup>

Aprendizagem em Serviço, Psicologia Histórico- Cultural  
e outras trajetórias:  
diálogos com Beatriz Macías Gómez-Estern<sup>1</sup>

*Beatriz Macías Gómez-Estern<sup>2</sup>*  
*Camila Turati Pessoa<sup>3</sup>*

---

**ABSTRACT**

Beatriz Macías Gómez-Estern is a professor at the Universidad Pablo de Olavide, UPO, in the city of Seville, Spain. She is a psychologist, works in several areas that relate Psychology, Education, Social Sciences, migration studies, otherness, among others. The professor has a vast trajectory of studies and research in Europe, the United States and Latin America. This interview briefly portrays this path and illustrates some exchanges of concepts, ways of acting and interlocution between concepts of Psychology, Historical-Cultural Psychology and the relationship with other areas of knowledge.

**Keywords:** Beatriz Macías Gómez-Estern; Learning in Service; Sevilla; Spain.

---

**RESUMO**

Beatriz Macías Gómez-Estern é professora da Universidad Pablo de Olavide, UPO, na cidade de Sevilla, Espanha. É psicóloga, atua em diversas áreas que relacionam Psicologia, Educação, Ciências Sociais, estudos migratórios, alteridade, dentre outros. A professora tem uma vasta trajetória de estudos e pesquisas na Europa, Estados Unidos e América Latina. A presente entrevista retrata brevemente este percurso e ilustra alguns intercâmbios de conceitos, de maneiras de atuação e interlocução entre conceitos da Psicologia, da Psicologia Histórico-Cultural e da relação com outras áreas do saber.

**Palavras-chave:** Beatriz Macías Gómez-Estern; Aprendizagem em Serviço; Sevilla; Espanha.

---

<sup>1</sup> Interview conducted in Spanish and translated into Portuguese by Prof. Dr. Camila Turati Pessoa.

<sup>2</sup> Postdoctoral researcher in Psychology. Associate Professor at Universidad Pablo de Olavide, Seville, Spain since 2002. PhD in Psychology (2002). Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4952-1811>. Email: [bmacgom@upo.es](mailto:bmacgom@upo.es).

<sup>3</sup> Postdoctoral degree and PhD in Psychology from the Universidade Estadual de Maringá (UEM-PR). Master's degree and undergraduate degree in Psychology from the Universidade Federal de Uberlândia (UFU-MG). Adjunct Professor at the Faculty of Education, Universidade Federal de Uberlândia. Lecturer in graduate and postgraduate courses at master's and doctoral level at the same faculty. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0803-2472>. Email: [camila.pessoa@ufu.br](mailto:camila.pessoa@ufu.br).

## 1 Introduction

This interview is the result of a Work Assignment abroad<sup>4</sup> carried out by Prof. Camila Turati Pessoa in November 2022 at the Universidad Pablo de Olavide (UPO) in Seville, Spain. On that occasion, Prof. Beatriz Macías Gómez-Estern, PhD, the guest interviewee, was the professor at the foreign university who hosted the work mission, which consisted of establishing joint projects between the foreign university and the Universidade Federal de Uberlândia (UFU).

With the aim of sharing information about Prof. Beatriz's educational background, professional career, and areas of work, this interview was conducted intending to publicize these trajectories and dialogues carried out with various projects and countries throughout her career.

During the interview, several topics were addressed that span the interviewee's career in studies and research, and after she reviewed the recorded answers, it was suggested that some passages be emphasized to highlight the themes to which they referred. As a result, during the transcription of the answers, we have some subtopics that identify which theme the answer refers to illustrate the path taken and/or the subject addressed.

Figure 1: Professor Beatriz Macías Gómez-Estern, PhD, on sabbatical in San Diego, United States (2023).



Source: Online registration by Professor Camila Turati Pessoa, PhD.

<sup>4</sup> CAPES-PRINT-UFU funding, November 2022.

Beatriz is Spanish, Andalusian, and born in Seville. She studied Psychology at the University of Seville, graduating in 1996. She later completed her PhD in Experimental Psychology at the same faculty, defending her doctoral thesis in October 2002 on identity and emigration among Andalusians. She has undertaken pre- and post-doctoral research internships at various Latin American (in Cuba, Colombia, and Argentina), European (Italy, England, and Germany), and American universities.

Her main research interests focus on the impact of “otherness” on identity-building processes, studied mainly through discourse and narrative, and applied in culturally diverse socio-educational intervention contexts. Since 2002, she has been a professor at Universidade Pablo de Olavide in Seville. In terms of management positions, Beatriz has been responsible for Gender, Innovation, and Internationalization at the Faculty of Social Sciences of her university as vice rector for the last 8 years.

## **2 Interview with Beatriz Macías Gómez-Estern**

**Camila Turati Pessoa (CTP):** Hello, Beatriz! Thank you for agreeing to this interview. I thought you could start by telling us a little about yourself, your education, your career in psychology...

**Beatriz Macías Gómez-Estern (BMGE):**

*Beginnings at the Laboratory of Human Activity at the University of Seville, Spain*

**BMGE:** Well, I did my degree at the University of Seville and got involved in research work very early on, starting in my second year. I joined two research groups at the Human Activity Laboratory, which was led by Professor Juan Daniel Ramírez at the time and is one of Spain's best-known groups working in historical-cultural psychology. At the same time, I also got involved in a

psychophysiology group... Not much to do with anything, right? However, well, that was the beginning of my career, and I learned everything. I was very curious from the beginning about the subject of research, and even though I didn't know anything about it, I was very curious about everything. Throughout my degree, I continued to get involved in research issues, and in my final year, I received a scholarship from the Ministry.

*Research periods as a student: Psychology opens up to the Social Sciences and the Latin American context.*

Throughout my degree, I began doing research periods at foreign universities. The first was at the University of Havana, where I participated in a student congress organized by the Federation of University Students. This has been an inspiration for other Latin American universities, as Cuba has a strong historical and cultural tradition. Therefore, in a way, from the beginning I already had this seed... of a psychology related to social issues and not a psychology isolated from the political and social context.

Since my training at the University of Seville as a psychologist and also as a participant in the Human Activity Laboratory, from the beginning it was a psychology very open to what happens in social contexts and to other social sciences, and this also happened since my first entry into the University of Havana. Later, I also did my doctorate at the University of Seville, a doctorate in experimental psychology where I acquired all the most orthodox methodological research training in psychology. Moreover, throughout my doctorate, I did several research projects, always in faculties that were not related to psychology, which is, constantly trying to find answers beyond psychology. I did a research project at the Universidad de Montería in Colombia, in a faculty of education, and I did a research project in a faculty of political science in Pisa, Italy, and in political science in Rosario, Argentina.

*Doctoral experiences: theory, daily experiences, and practices in dialogue concerning the migratory process and multicultural settings (California and Denmark).*

I went to the Comparative Human Cognition Laboratory in San Diego, where Michael Cole was the leader at the time, and there I worked directly with Olga Vázquez with the Latino population on socio-educational projects. I was doing my PhD and had already started working on the issue of identity and migration, identities and otherness in contrast to each other, and how it influences the way people construct their identity as a psychological process. So, already working there, in all these research instances I did abroad, it is true that they were fed both by empirical experience, because I was interviewing Andalusian or Latino migrants everywhere I went, and by theoretical experience, right? Always around migration science, otherness, and the construction of identity, but always feeding off other social sciences.

I was also in Denmark with Mariane Hedegaard and Seth Chaiklin, who work extensively with the Turkish community and on educational and socio-educational projects, as well as with communities of diverse origins. Perhaps the most significant milestone was my time at the University of California, San Diego, which was also during my doctoral studies; because it was there that, the influence of Professor Olga Vázquez, from that university, entered my career. They have a project there that is an adaptation; I do not know if you are familiar with it, of Michael Cole's project, from the Fifth Dimension, for the Latino community, called "The Magic Class," a project by Olga Vázquez. So I joined as a professor of the subject, which is partly related to the project, and as a trainer of an Adult Education curriculum, because I also brought from my training at the Human Activity Laboratory in Seville a career in Adult Education with Juan Daniel Ramírez. So my experience in Adult Education was completed there, with my interest at the time in my doctorate, with the issue of identity and migration. Olga's project worked with Mexican boys and

girls in the United States. It was an educational project that sought to contrast the educational inequalities of the Latino community, in this case Mexican, in the United States, through a bilingual program and the empowerment of the Latino community. They worked mainly with children, but at that time, the parents also wanted to participate and needed someone to design a curriculum for adults. Therefore, while I was there, I took charge of this with my experience in both identity issues and adult education issues. I devised a curriculum for adults, and it was a full immersion, also being my research topic, which was identity and otherness; we could say in a more basic way, more basic in the sense of psychology, of the construction of identity as a basic psychological process, since it also had an applied aspect, which was the management of multicultural educational environments, as was the case with the Magic Classroom in San Diego.

This was the start of my second work niche, so to speak, which was managing cultural diversity in socio-educational contexts. It also marked my participation in UCLinks (<https://uclinks.berkeley.edu/>). There's a group of universities that's working on similar projects, like Michael Cole's Fifth Dimension and Olga Vázquez's Magic Classroom, which have been around since the 1980s and are part of the University of California network. It's called UCLinks, short for University of California Links. They're in Berkeley and Los Angeles, and Kris Gutiérrez is also working on this project. They've formed a consortium where they have similar Community Engaged Research projects with the community, usually with the Latino community, with different characteristics because each university is different, and so are the communities they work with. They share a structure of collaboration between the university and the community, and they also share an idea of how educational processes should be and of educational and social transformation based on Historical-Cultural Psychology..

So, when I started working at the Magic Class in San Diego, I had a pretty active role. I stayed there for a year. Olga Vázquez was a great mentor

in that sense, as were Juan Daniel Ramírez and José Antonio Sánchez in Seville. But Olga, when you go abroad, well, also, or maybe because I'm a woman, I'm talking about the 2000s, right? Olga gave me an active role, and I was young. I started teaching, and my American students were almost my age. It was an experience, a great challenge, and a great learning experience. It became another of my work niches. At first, it was about cultural identity, but then it shifted to what's happening in educational settings and how to create educational programs that empower minority communities, like the Latino community in San Diego here in the United States. Then I also started using that UCLinks network, and I'm still using it now. It's a network that's been around since the 1980s. Now universities from the US and Germany are getting in on it too. There are folks from Brazil, from the CLICAR project, and I'm not sure if you're familiar with it. It just wrapped up, I think because they ran out of funding. I'm not sure if they're from São Paulo, but it's fascinating because they work with street girls.

**CTP:** Oh, how interesting.

**BMGE:** It's also available in Japan. Basically, it's a project that's been adapting to different situations. When I continue telling the story, I'll mention that, since we've taken the project to Seville, it's always been flexible. It's a living entity that's flexible and nourishes itself. It's a community that embraces new creations and still works, even today. I'd say this is pretty atypical in the academic world, wouldn't you agree? International academic communities have been around for ages and are valued because they're supportive and collaborative, which is pretty rare in academia these days. That's when I got involved in that community, thanks to Olga Vázquez. I did this internship before my doctorate, and it was a great experience. I ended up teaching while I was still a doctoral student and designing a curriculum for adults. I had one year. That was during my doctorate. I also did another stay at the University of Havana at that time with Professor Carolina de La Torre,

who also worked on identity issues. As I mentioned before, my thesis was on cultural identity and the emigration of Andalusians. I looked at the discussion groups and the way Andalusians discussed their identity, and how that influenced how they felt about being "other." However, during all that time in my PhD, in all those stays I told you about, well, I was also getting interviews and learning about the experience of otherness with Latin American migrants in Denmark, Latin Americans in Italy, Andalusians in Cuba, and the socio-educational part of San Diego. Therefore, that's how it went down. I think it was exactly how a PhD should be done, right? I'm pretty open to ideas, but I'm not going to jump on the first thing that comes to mind.

It was very formative. In 2002, I finished presented my thesis after all that, and that same year, in the same month that I presented my thesis, I got a position at Universidad de Pablo de Olavide as a professor. I started as an assistant professor, and since then I have been a professor with different roles at Universidad de Pablo de Olavide. In other words, I have been at the Universidad de Pablo de Olavide for 21 years with different types of contracts, and in the last year as a full professor.

*Postdoctoral research: Universidad Pablo de Olavide and consolidation of lines of work on migration, identity, and culturally sensitive education*

Over the years, I have mainly followed these two lines of inquiry. The most basic way to look at it is to think about how people form their identities, both cognitively and emotionally. I rather moved where my research question was taking me. For example, in my doctoral thesis, one of the most striking things was that migrants narrated in the first person and with great emotion what had to do with their identity of origin. The experience of migration led to some strong feelings of attachment in the people who migrated. When it comes to their community of origin, they became bicultural at the same time. It was like there were two paths, and they were kind of opposites. People got more integrated into the host community over time, but they also developed strong

feelings for their community of origin. This was a big part of my thesis, and it really got me interested. So, I kept going with this approach, looking closely at the stories. Since these immigrants were the ones telling the stories, they forged a more solid narrative. Non-immigrants and returned migrants, on the other hand, tended to have more generic, abstract, and historical discussions. They spoke about language, culture, and so on... The immigrants told each other their personal stories and anecdotes with great emotion. These narratives made me very curious, so I set out to discover how to analyze them what potential they had as a semiotic tool for managing or giving meaning to the transition that migration constituted. And so I went, for example, to London with a group of sociolinguists who analyzed narratives at the Center for Language, Discourse & Communication at King's College ([https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/centre-for-language-discourse-communication#:~:text=The%20Centre%20offers%20extensive%20research,identities%2Din%2Dinteraction%2C%20narrative](https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/centre-for-language-discourse-communication#:~:text=The%20Centre%20offers%20extensive%20research,identities%2Din%2Dinteraction%2C%20narrative))).

In other words, I have been exploring other sciences and disciplines, but always out of curiosity about my subject. I have several publications on this analysis of narratives from a more micro analytical and interactive perspective. That is one line of research. The other line that I have been developing for 23 years is, again, socio-educational contexts, transformation in socio-educational contexts where there is cultural diversity. I have participated in several research projects on the management of cultural diversity among the immigrant population in Andalusia, with other universities, mainly with the University of Granada. In Granada, there is an Institute for Migration Studies (<https://migraciones.ugr.es/>), and with them, we participated in a project on the mechanism that was established in Andalusia mainly to serve the immigrant population, which are called Temporary Language Adaptation Rooms (ATALES). In addition, several projects on multicultural schools.

*The Magic Class Project in Seville and the beginnings of research into identity changes among students participating in Service Learning*

And then, on the other hand, together with Vicky together with Virginia Martínez, who is my colleague at UPO, we started this Service Learning project at the Universidad Pablo de Olavide, which we have been running for 10 years, which seems to have nothing to do with what I am talking about, but actually... it has everything to do with it. In the sense that, first, our project was also a transfer of the San Diego project to our university, with its characteristics and with the characteristics of the Polígono Sur community, which has different characteristics from the Latino community in San Diego. And the Polígono Sur neighborhood itself has a different history and development. The Polígono Sur neighborhood has a wealthy community life, and it didn't make sense for us to arrive with a project imported from the United States as such. What we did was, in a way; establish a collaboration because we also knew the neighborhood well. Vicky and I, another advantage we had, right? In other words, I knew the San Diego project well because I had been part of it, but we both knew the neighborhood very well. Virginia, because she had been deputy director of the Flora Tristán University Residence, which already had a project within the Service Learning methodology. I knew the neighborhood very well because I had been volunteering there since I was 17, I had worked as a volunteer in a youth association in that neighborhood, and I had done an internship there. So, somehow, we ended up in a very marginalized neighborhood of Seville, very isolated, that almost no one knows, but we knew the neighborhood, and we had a perspective on it. We saw with the San Diego project, basically with the educational agents in the neighborhood, telling them, we have these possibilities, we belong to this international community, which is UCLinks, where things are done that have an educational, theoretical ideology, we have that to offer, we have a methodology to offer, which we put at your service. And at the same time, we

can connect what is done in the neighborhood with an international community, because some very interesting projects are done in the neighborhood, but often they are not known.

After a year of negotiations and discussions about how we could register this Magic Class project in the polygon, we began working with the adults there, in this case under the title of On-the-Job Learning. What On-the-Job Learning gives us is that the project is like the Magic Class in San Diego. In its structure, we would say, it is a university-community collaboration project, where university students provide a service to the community while learning, and the community gets, we would also say, help with its projects, while also getting, well, in addition to getting help, that relationship with the university student body. Thus, the terms of this collaboration change according to the needs, both of the proposals that are implemented and of the entities with which they collaborate. The San Diego project did not call Service Learning, UCLinks projects are called Service Learning, they are called Community Engaged Research, but they are Service Learning, I mean, it depends on the terminology.

The student body of these projects, that is, we adopted the work scheme; the syllabus of our discipline was the same as it was in San Diego, which we then adapted to our reality, to our students, to the number of students we have, to our degrees, but the scheme was the same, the structure was the same. The difference is that in almost all UCLinks projects, as these projects combine research, teaching, and community intervention, in the research part of the UCLinks projects, the Magic Class and the 5th Dimension, those by Kris Gutierrez, focus mainly on the benefits for the Latino community or the marginalized community when thinking about participation in these projects.

To put it simply, most of their research shows that these community projects are beneficial for educational equality for both boys and girls. But in my 20 years on this network, I've also seen that many people say, based on a decolonial logic, that the benefits are not only for the disadvantaged. There's a give-and-take here where the larger society, through the university student

body, gains just as much as the disadvantaged, and we're moving away from a paternalistic way of thinking. This is something that keeps coming up in UCLinks, but no one has really looked into it. We put our heads together and decided to combine this need with our specialization, so to speak, in the UCLinks network. Instead of thinking about the benefits that boys and girls, gypsies, get from being part of the project, which we also know exist, we should think about what the university student body gets out of it.

That is why we began working with the logic of Learning in Service. But this also has to do with the practical experience of science. Virginia had worked in this area, and we saw that at that moment we could obtain subsidies in this sense and continue, in my case specifically, in the area of identity and otherness studies, because how this change is produced in the university student body, how this contribution we offer to the university student body is produced, is through otherness, through the knowledge of a reality that did not exist until then, and through daily contact with that community that is so marginalized and so unknown.

So, eventually, we are in the process of studying identity and otherness in university students and how this influences their integral formation, not only from a conceptual perspective but also academically. That is the other part of my work, which, as you can see, has to do with the beginning of identity and otherness, but it appears that it does not. Currently, I am developing these two lines.

*Conceptualizing social transformation in hybrid scenarios through music: most recent applied theoretical constructs*

I'm working on a couple of new research projects right now. They're still in the early stages, but they're based on the ones I mentioned before. They keep showing up, always in conversation with others. A few years back, I was invited to contribute to an issue of the journal Theory and Psychology. It was all about epistemological issues in working with minority communities. So,

what are the main challenges when it comes to critical psychology and indigenous psychology? It was an article, actually. It was an open commentary on an article by a philosopher of science named Barbara Held. It was an Open Review, and they were open comments. I was invited. To be honest, it was a bit of a challenge for me because I've been doing empirical research for 20 years. But it's closely related, you could say, to practice. They asked me to do a broader epistemology, but I accepted the challenge because I also thought, from a feminist perspective, that maybe it was time to force myself to see what I had learned, what "my truth" would be, you know? So to speak...

**CTP:** I'm finding this very fascinating. I'd like you to continue...

**BMGE:** Well, it was a challenge. Again, it was a challenge because it was difficult for me in some ways. I think I'm not going to talk about women because there are many ways of being a woman, and there are also many generational differences, but at least the way I have socialized as a woman, I have socialized with a commitment to the creation of knowledge and transformation, but it is true that I have not socialized with the ambition, shall we say, of the gift of speech or teaching. I never thought that what I say has to be true; that is, I have been more dialogical in the way I have built knowledge both in science and in teaching. I never felt that I possessed the truth, so that makes it very difficult to do an interview where you make a statement. Moreover, the same thing happened when I was asked to participate in this edition, but I tried precisely because of that, thinking that people, usually women of my generation, who do not have this ambition, who have a more collaborative way of building knowledge, end up not participating in the public forum. Therefore, I made this effort and somehow tried to systematize in writing what were the conclusions, let's say, clearly partial and very practical, that I reached around the epistemological reflection on how to bring together different types of knowledge in contexts of social intervention. And this difficulty arises because, also in communication psychology or historical-cultural psychology, as we conceive

communication, there is the difficulty of how different discursive genres, different forms of knowledge, and different ways of being in reality obviously exist; there is a hierarchy between them in the formal context, and how to deal with this in the context of social intervention, both in the context of the construction of science and in the context of education. So, as these are issues that have always hovered over my research, in that article in *Theory and Psychology*, I tried to bring together my practical truths that helped me, without intending to enlighten anyone. And from there, I also developed this same idea in a broader chapter that was published in 2022 in a book by Palgrave Macmillan (Machín, 2022), because a colleague also asked me to, and it also has the human relations of science, because a colleague from the University of Havana, who is now at Andrés Bello University in Chile, read my article on *Theory and Psychology* and told me it was perfect for a book he was organizing, so he invited me and asked me to expand the discussion. So, it's interesting because there's also that human side of human commitment; it's not wanting to dictate teaching that motivates you to write about it, but rather people who value your work and want your voice to be heard, or your voice or your perspective, but otherwise I wouldn't have done it. More theoretical line that I tried to develop, a theoretical idea of what generates social transformation in contexts of cultural diversity and the concept of the hybrid agent, began to develop a little in this way. It's a work in progress, but I started to develop it in a way that was encouraged by women who have their voice and by specific people who asked me to. It's a work in progress.

Another part that is under construction within the socio-educational aspect is working with multimodality. With music, precisely. I also studied community music the psychology of music, but also empirically, through the analysis of this specific intervention, this group that remixes popular music in a multicultural school in Seville. We have a published article, Juan Daniel Ramírez and I, with them, with two practitioners, two people, two boys, who are the musicians who work on this; well, they are musicians and architects who do this project. And that's

what I also wanted and want to develop here in Miami, since Miami is a highly multicultural city, because I look for scenarios where music is made, and how that can generate processes of transformation.

**CTP:** Interesting!

**BMGE:** The multiple lines, which are completely incipient, but as you can see, are related to the previous ones, that is, they are derivations.

**CTP:** Yes, and I was curious: in your training and career, the concepts of Historical-Cultural Psychology are very close. When you talk to me about emotions the formation of the subject, I would like to know if there are any concepts, or which concepts you think are most present in epistemology and Historical-Cultural Psychology in these multicultural practices. Which ones do you think are strongest or help you think about these practices and interventions?

**BMGE:** Look, you've asked me a really difficult question. It's difficult because I believe that Historical-Cultural Psychology is, for me, the “aquarium in which I live.” There are times when I don't mention it because it's the way I conceive of the human mind. We could say that I'm unable to say that this concept enlightens me, but rather that these concepts are the air I breathe. That's how I interpret psychology, but that's how I interpret life as well. So I wouldn't know what to tell you. Perhaps the heterogeneity of thought (Tulviste), from your standpoint, but that is totally related to the concept of privilegiation (Wertsch) as well. The social origin of psychological processes, but the fact is that they are all related to each other. So, I don't know if you want to ask me specific questions about concepts because I say it's the air I breathe, Historical-Cultural Psychology. I have noticed this many times, because I go to contexts where Historical-Cultural Psychology is talked about as something new, as an approach that contrasts with another, when for me it is obvious. For example, I also see this in my Cuban colleagues. The Cuban comrades who graduated, and whose professors graduated with the Russians, with the Soviets, have that seed

of the idea of social conformation of the psychological process. We would say that I experienced a psychology that did not have this individualistic logic. So, well, I know because I studied psychology and because we are exposed to it, but the way I perceive both intervention and psychological processes is completely rooted in social practices. From there, I am guided by the analytical view of everything. The social origin of psychological processes applied not only to cognitive processes but also to emotional ones. And there is also the concept of *pereživanie*, but as a derivation. The concept of heterogeneity of thought applied not only to verbal thought but also to emotions and experience. James Wertsch's concept. I believe that Wertsch's influence was strong because he had a lot of weight in the research group at the Human Activity Laboratory. Wertsch's concept of privilege, of how different tools are privileged in different contexts. The concept of activity scenario (Leontiev-Engestrom) is also very present. Everything that has to do with communication is also very present, right? With the difficulty or, at the same time, difficulty or vicissitudes in communication when the people interacting were socialized in different activity scenarios. Brunner's idea of constructivist theory of meaning was also very relevant in my training, especially about the issue of identity. The construction of meaning, the idea of narratives as tools for meaning construction. But all of this is inscribed in the idea of activity scenarios and tools. I believe that the most influential structure in the way I conceptualize everything comes from Wertsch, from the idea of tools and privileges, and was later fed by everything else.

**CTP:** For example, when you talk about these multicultural interventions, in Brazil we are also using theory to think about how to carry out these interventions, especially in the fields of psychology and education, using these concepts as a basis for thinking about all of this. I would like to ask a little more about Service Learning, because when students are in the field, can they make this connection that they are taking action, but that there is a theory behind it, you know? That this connection is made through action.

**BMGE:** Well, one of the artifacts, as Michael Cole says, and everything we use to guide these theoretical-practical processes are field notes. The student body has to write, of course, I didn't go into details, right? I've been telling you this in a very general way. Of course, the On-the-Job Learning exercise is not just about putting the student body in a hybrid context, because when the student body goes to do their internships, it is a context that is at the same time university-based; it is a scenario of activity that is at the same time a university, with its motives, its tools, and its artifacts. They are evaluated, they have to learn, and their role is that of an apprentice, but at the same time, it is a professional context where they have to act as educators. So, this in itself already has a transformative component because they have to navigate between these two scenarios and create their own reasons for action. And with their performance, because we also consider that our projects are open enough for them to have to generate their motives and at the same time change the motives of the activity. It is an activity that is under construction, a source of learning for them. But that's not all. Field notes are a tool that, in addition to being corrected, we correct the field notes in quotation marks... They are instruments for evaluating the discipline. Field notes are evaluated, and in the course, I am teaching with few students, they account for 50% of the grade for the discipline. I correct them weekly, and, in doing so, I give them feedback where I help them in some way, guiding their gaze as an ethnographer, as an observer, but also helping them to reflect on what is happening there and to make that journey between theory and practice. Following this path where theory serves to illuminate the practical processes they experience and which at the same time challenge them, because they are often processes where they are emotionally challenged. So, we would say that from this standpoint, we are also talking about *perejivanie*; learning does not come from something cold, but from discomfort, and this discomfort often occurs because they go into a context where boys and girls challenge them, where they experience situations that can sometimes be violent for them, where they feel they do not know what

to do. All of this is reflected in the field notes and in the classes. You also saw that the other tool in the classroom was the dialogue with the professor. Thus, these tools are serving as a guide for their processes of critical reflection and learning, both in their field notes and in the classroom. And there we are, helping them to use theory as a basis for constructing their vision of what is happening, but note that it is often not a theory that becomes dogma. But this is the process that I think they should follow, especially today, when they are saturated with information. I believe that the important thing is not that they collect and reproduce information, but that they know how to analyze information and make sense of it in their own experience from an emotional point of view. Emotional, not just theoretical. So, of course, we have these tools; that is, the course is structured, and we took this structure from San Diego. In San Diego, it was already like that. The subject is assessed through the correction of field notes, and then there are also, well, we have several subjects that are taught. The one I teach is in English, and since it's in English, I have international students, and there are few students, so I can perfectly assess the 10 field notes, while the subject Vicky teaches is first-year Social Education in Spanish, and there are 60 students. Therefore, she can obviously correct all 60-field notes. So my English course is more like the original one in San Diego because for me this personalized feedback is significant, and I can do it with 10 students, but obviously Vicky, with 60, had to make an adjustment and doesn't correct all the field notes. Field notes help to make the connection between theory and practice. Look, I just remembered that another important influence of ours is Paulo Freire, who, for me, is very compatible with Vygotsky. The pedagogy of the oppressed, his idea, brings nuances, brings realities, brings freshness, and, above all, I think, a touch of reality, because Freire spoke from the knowledge of the communities with which he worked and, above all, appreciation and respect. But it is totally compatible with Historical-Cultural Psychology and Vygotsky, it is another of the great contributions that we also have, in addition to commitment, perhaps bringing

more commitment. The part of Historical-Cultural Psychology may have been more experimental or more academic.

**CTP:** I would like to ask you if the concept of Service Learning was taken from the San Diego structure, which was brought in when you were there, but now you see Service Learning in your practice, for example, now as a teacher, has it changed, has it become something else, or does it continue with that structure and a few minor changes? And how do you see Service Learning now that your students are doing it?

**BMGE:** Let me try to explain the concept. I'm not sure if I explained it well, but here's the structure of the methodology for the university and community to work together: they've got artifacts like the type of teaching, field notes, and so on. They got these from San Diego, from Michael Cole's The Fifth Dimension project and its adaptation for the minority community, The Magic Class of San Diego. But we would say that focusing on one part of this process, which is the university student body, is a new idea we bring to Seville. And from there, we get to learn about the Service Learning tradition. So, it's not totally accurate to say that Service Learning started in San Diego. What did come from there was the project, the collaboration between the university and the community through this triangle where research, teaching, and community intervention are all part of the same activity. The way we work together and the tools we use, like field notes, come from San Diego. After looking at how the university student body has changed, we'd say that Service Learning is more about teaching methods. We use it in Seville and Barcelona, and it's something I've been working on in San Diego with Virginia, who's been involved in Service Learning academic communities and university learning. Then we brought together an academic community that comes more from the area that does not have, that has not developed its own theoretical analysis of what is done, and Historical-Cultural Psychology with its implementation in the Fifth Dimension

and Magic Class projects, which provides a working structure and a theoretical approach. In fact, five or six years ago, we held a Service Learning conference in Seville, where this theoretical way of analyzing the process of identity change among students participating in Service Learning projects was presented. We would say that the tradition of Service Learning comes more from the field of Education and less from Psychology, so the learning process of these students was not analyzed in depth but rather considered a didactic methodology, and we bring the two together.

There are many people who practice Service Learning and do not do so from a Historical-Cultural Psychology perspective, and there is a lot of research in Historical-Cultural Psychology engaged in the community that does not require this service learning, although it could. Thus, the combination of both traditions in Seville and Barcelona did not exist before, and it has been a matter of opportunity or collaboration. Virginia and I worked together; she knew about this idea of service learning through her work at Polígono Sur, and I knew the structure of this course in San Diego in depth, all the theoretical part, and we put it together. José Luis Lalueza, from the University of Barcelona, joins the project. Well, he doesn't join, but José Luis Lalueza also didn't initially come from the tradition of Service Learning, but from the historical-cultural tradition. His project in Barcelona also comes from the UCLinks line. Somehow, what we found was that in the Spanish scenario, also for subsidies, working with minorities no longer has a place, and working with university students has more space and, at the same time, interests us. And it came from there too, so we started to develop that part. So, it's not so much that they come together, but that these two traditions come together in our work.

**CTP:** It is interesting to know a little more about this distinction because, for example, I see that sometimes there are practices that are similar to Service Learning here in Brazil, but they are not called that, although the assumptions are

the same, the foundations are the same as a professional stage at the end of psychology training, for example. So, it is interesting to hear you talk about this difference and also learn how researchers are uniting and bringing these concepts and practices closer together. I would like you to make a final statement or add something you did not address...

**BMGE:** Yes, yes, absolutely, yes. Look, well, well, I, what you say, for me, at this point in my career, I think, and precisely last year when I got my degree, I had to make a recap of my career, which I can share with you if you'd like, because it also has my entire trajectory and may be useful to you. I came to the realization of the human aspect of doing science, right? In everything you're saying, there are people, and there are networks of people, and that is being lost, and I'm not talking about networks of people we're friends with; no, what I'm talking about is exactly that part, that is, in our activity and in our practice as scientists, we also have to consider that motivational, emotional, and social part, and you see that there, right? In other words, it's not a theme; my research theme is coherent, it makes sense, but it has been following paths that have been related, well, to the collaborations I have established in the situations of opportunity. I have Virginia by my side so that this collaboration can make sense. And not only, shall we say, with the pure theoretical idea, but there are also traditions of knowledge; let's say that they are not some cold taxonomic categories but also occur in relation to people who feel and do science. And I think it's important to take that into account, that is, to see scientific construction also as an activity, as a scene of activity that also has its human side, right? So, well, with all that this implies... How women do science, how people who don't come do science, or who, for example, recently, look, a colleague recently, Vera da Silva. She is Brazilian; I met her recently at a conference on Language, Culture, and Minds. She is a language anthropologist who works with languages from the Brazilian Amazon. It's very interesting. She is now in Brazil and recently sent me an article about indigenous women from the Amazon who are

currently doing PhDs or talking about their culture at Western universities. So, the science that these people do has another role. And I believe it is important to take this humanity into account.

**CTP:** Yes, yes...

**BMGE** To give you an example... This is also why I work with the idea of the hybrid subject, the hybrid agent. In other words, the transformative potential of those who do science or intervene from different positions, not just from the dominant position that has been the majority, right? In addition to feminism, I'm also talking about communities, right? I talk about gender in the same way that I would talk about different communication scenarios. The socialization of gender as a communication scenario. That is, not only a feminist perspective, but also moving away from hegemony, we might say, from the construction of knowledge mainly by Western subjects, which includes myself.

**CTP: Beatriz,** I don't know how to thank you. I think we expanded the conversation into many topics, all of which were very interesting. It was a pleasure!

**BMGE:** Thank you very much for listening!

## Aprendizaje Servicio, Psicología Histórico-Cultural y otras trayectorias: diálogos con Beatriz Macías Gómez-Estern

### RESUMEN

Beatriz Macías Gómez-Estern es profesora de la Universidad Pablo de Olavide, UPO, en la ciudad de Sevilla, España. Es psicóloga, trabaja en varias áreas que relacionan Psicología, Educación, Ciencias Sociales, estudios de migración, alteridad, entre otras. La profesora tiene una vasta trayectoria de estudios e investigaciones en Europa, Estados Unidos y América Latina. Esta entrevista retrata brevemente este recorrido y ilustra algunos intercambios de conceptos, formas de actuar e interlocución entre conceptos de la Psicología, la Psicología Histórico-Cultural y la relación con otras áreas del conocimiento.

**Palabras-clave:** Beatriz Macías Gómez-Estern; Aprendizaje Servicio; Sevilla; España.

**Brief bibliography of notable works****On identity and migration**

MACÍAS-GÓMEZ-ESTERN, B.; DE LA MATA M. Narratives of migration. Emotions and the interweaving of personal and cultural identity through narrative, *Culture & Psychology*, 19 (3), 348-368, 2013.

MACÍAS-GÓMEZ-ESTERN, B. And now I am here..., but then we were there”: space and social positioning in Andalusian migrant’s narratives. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, 8 (3), 195-212, 2013.

MACÍAS-GÓMEZ-ESTERN, B.; ARIAS-SÁNCHEZ, S. Yo soy lo que tú no eres: la alteridad en la definición de la identidad andaluza. *Avances en Psicología Latinoamericana*. 36(3), 493-509, 2018.

**About On-the-Job Learning**

MACÍAS-GÓMEZ-ESTERN, B.; ARIAS-SÁNCHEZ, S.; MARCO-MACARRO, M., CABILLAS-ROMERO, M.; MARTÍNEZ-LOZANO, V. Does service learning make a difference? comparing students’ valuations in service learning and non-service learning teaching of psychology. *Studies in Higher Education*, 46 (7), 1395-1405, 2021. DOI: 10.1080/03075079.2019.1675622.

LALUEZA, - J. L.; MACÍAS-GÓMEZ-ESTERN, B. Cruzando la frontera. *Una aproximación al Aprendizaje Servicio desde el Aprendizaje Transformativo y la Psicología Histórico-Cultural*, *Culture and Education*, 2020. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/11356405.2020.1792755>.

**On multicultural schools and diversity**

SÁNCHEZ-MEDINA, J. A; MACÍAS-GÓMEZ-ESTERN, B.; MARTÍNEZ-LOZANO, V. The value positions of school staff and parents in immigrant families and their implications for children's transitions between home and school in multicultural schools in Andalusia. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction*, 3, 217-223, 2014.

MACÍAS-GÓMEZ-ESTERN, B.; ÁLVAREZ DE SOTOMAYOR, A. Percepción y construcción identitaria del profesorado ATAL: Una aproximación empírica. *Gazeta de Antropología* 34 (1). Artículo 5, 2018.

MATSUMOTO, M.; MENDOZA-PÉREZ; K.; MACÍAS-GÓMEZ-ESTERN, B.; POVEDA, D. Families at social risk and access to 0–3 Early Childhood Education and Care in Spain: a model to understand diverse conditions in the current system (Familias en situación de riesgo social y acceso a la educación preescolar de 0 a 3 años en España: Un modelo para comprender las situaciones diversas en el sistema actual). *Culture and Education*, 1-34, 2023.

## **Latest epistemological and applied constructions: hybrid psychological agent and music as an instrument for socio-educational intervention**

MACÍAS-GÓMEZ-ESTERN, B. "Hybrid psychology agent": Overcoming the about/for dichotomy from praxis, *Theory & Psychology*, 30 (3), 2020.

MACÍAS-GÓMEZ-ESTERN, B. Chap 2. "Critical Psychology for community emancipation: insights from socio-educative praxis in hybrid settings" In Machin, Raudelio (Ed.) *The new waves in Social Psychology* (25-54). Palgrave-McMillan, 2021.

MACÍAS-GÓMEZ-ESTERN, B.; RAMÍREZ-GARRIDO, J. D.; ALONSO MALLÉN, R.;

TORRES-IGLESIAS, F. "Multicultural education through music remixes: a situated approach. IN: SANDERSON, L.; STONE, S. (eds.), AMPS Proceedings Series 22.1. Teaching – Learning – Research. *Manchester School of Architecture*, UK. 02 – 04 December (2021). pp. 328-335, 2021. ISSN: 2398-9467.

Received on march 2023

Accepted on august 2023