

A common idea of Teacher Professional Development Research within the Centre for Educational Research on Teachers as Professionals (CERTP)

Teacher Professional Development Research (TPDR) involves carrying out empirical research by means of a variety of methodologies with the aim of promoting the professional development of teachers and early years education caretakers by building common research pathways within the framework of inter-institutional collaboration.

TPDR can be considered as both a political and a methodological choice to do research together with teachers and caretakers in order to promote professional learning for all involved and produce an effective impact on and gain for schools and teacher education. Such a choice by the researcher is designed to:

- characterize, accompany and give substance (in terms both of aims and procedures) to the specificity and rigour of the various methodological approaches employed within empirical educational research;
- furnish common ground that can be adapted to the multiple and particular methodologies employed by the researcher in order to enable the building of a given pathway while maintaining the essential characteristics of that framework.

In this way, as well as delineating an area of interdisciplinary study drawing on various theoretical and epistemological contributions, TPDR proposes a methodological characterization of carrying out research within schools and together with teachers so as to promote educational innovation and professional learning based on reflective practice.

The following methodological characteristics can be considered both as binding principles for researchers in the field of TPDR and open questions in search of answers.

1. Render explicit the aims of the research in terms of the professional learning and development of the teachers involved together with the procedures for documentation and evaluation of the outcomes and impacts.
2. Define the composition of the TPDR group in terms of researcher/s and teachers, clarify their roles and negotiate and specify objects and objectives, values and methodological choices.
3. Delineate and maintain a clear focus on the specificity of the institutional and non-institutional contexts in which the research is carried out through constant analysis of the constraints and the resources present and which are crucial in all phases of the research.
4. Systematically discuss ways of experimenting and gathering data during the research, so as to enhance the development of a scientific approach to educational praxis on the part of teachers, and of evaluating and documenting products and processes within the specific contexts involved and the professional development promoted.
5. Maintain emphasis on the outcomes achieved by and for the school in terms of educational innovation, teaching praxis and professional development.