



Teacher Training Via Debate on the Way of St. James as Controversial Heritage

Belén Castro-Fernández¹*, Guadalupe Jiménez-Esquinas² and Ramón López-Facal¹

¹Departament of Applied Didactis, University of Santiago de Compostela, Santiago de Compostela, Spain, ²Departament of Philosophy and Anthropology, University of Santiago de Compostela, Santiago de Compostela, Spain

This paper presents the results of an intervention proposal regarding cultural heritage based on active learning methods and carried out during initial teacher training. The social theme taken as a reference was the pilorim route of the Way of St. James declared to be the first Cultural Route of the Council of Europe in 1987, due to the fact that its controversial dimensions (conservation, use, management, authenticity, stereotypes and performativity) make it possible to develop critical thinking through research and debate. This study is set in the context of a prior line of research which aimed to stimulate investigative, ethical, reflexive and argumentation competences among future teachers. From the interpretive paradigm, it was attempted to verify, via questionnaires, narratives and open reflections, what effects participation in this experiment would have on the participating trainee teachers' perceptions of heritage and the educational potential thereof. The future teachers: 1) learned to value the emotional dimensions of heritage as catalysts for learning and resignification processes, particularly in relation to the Way of St. James; 2) highlighted active, student-centred, methodological strategies in order to discover and understand their social reality; 3) emphasised the value of a reflexive and critical model of teaching in order to develop a committed attitude towards the environment; 4) identified the fact that controversial issues are a useful tool with regard to civic education and the development of critical thinking.

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*Correspondence:

Belén Castro-Fernández belen.castro@usc.es

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INTRODUCTION

Different learning contexts can contribute to the formation of a critical and transformative citizenship. From the field of education, a model of teaching can be applied which, based on the local context and the development of social and civic skills (Santisteban, 2009), fosters the application of learning in the management of local problems. Independently of the factors which may be subject to the construction of this socio-critical attitude, schools have a great responsibility to their students from an early age in terms of "learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, learning to be" (Delors, 1996). As Theodor Adorno (1970) stated, education should, in these times of omnipresent conformism, tend more towards reinforcing resistance than to increasing adaptation [1998: 97].

It is desirable to implement teaching proposals aimed at moving consciences in order to promote cognitive habits of reflection and social thinking among children, which enable them to take

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decisions regarding their sociability guidelines and to intervene in their territorial sphere. Even more so when in recent years in Spain there has been a lack of research and experimentation published in relation to citizen education (Arroyo et al., 2020). As a starting point, initial teacher training should stress the capacity to build a well-founded opinion, particularly on socially relevant issues, as the basis for the construction of a democratic citizenship (Heimberg, 2010; McAvoy and Hess, 2013; Ho et al., 2017). This should not prejudice the fact that other issues may direct this methodological strategy. For example, heritage education, particularly in relation to its more controversial dimensions, contributes to the formation of civically competent individuals.

In accordance with a holistic conception and a symbolicidentity perspective, which are commonly employed in education (Cuenca, 2003; Cuenca, 2014), heritage does not merely consist of a set of assets, but also of the relationship that people establish with them (Fontal, 2003; Fontal, 2008). In other words, heritage is the selection of cultural points of reference in each historical context according to the perception, meaning and values which society attributes to them at that moment (Arévalo, 2004). In line with this approach, anthropology understands heritage as a performative act "that embodies acts of remembrance and commemoration while negotiating and constructing a sense of place, belonging and understanding in the present" (Smith, 2006: 3), compared to the traditional viewpoint which is normally mediated by expert criteria. This explains the fact that, in recent decades, participatory models of governance have become consolidated, which advocate the prominence of communities and individuals in their management (Aguilar, 1999; Cortés et al., 2017; Jiménez, 2020). A community which does not (re)build its heritage lacks the emotional connection which is necessary in order to manage, maintain and care for its heritage in the long term (Jiménez-Esquinas, 2021).

Heritage is a social construct which sustains the cultural identity of those who inherit, create or transmit it in any age. It gives rise to links which imply a permanent process of revision (Fontal and Marín, 2018; Fontal, 2020). Education plays a key role in strengthening this human and relational dimension of heritage and the process of identity construction created by the subject (Gómez, 2012). Through education, the learning sequence proposed by Fontal (2003) can be applied, which she defines as awareness-raising: knowing, understanding, respecting and appreciating heritage in order to care for, enjoy and transmit it. These dynamics become the heritagisation process, taken to be the symbolic appropriation of assets (Calaf and Fontal, 2004), which demands intentional and structured education in order to guide citizen behaviour (Fontal and Gómez-Redondo, 2016). People's emotional involvement with heritage should be sought via a reflexive and critical model of teaching: "If the individual constructs her/his idea of heritage and citizenship, and, through them, identity, then there has to be an approach that gives priority to personal experience, self-directed learning that gives ownership, empowerment, self-awareness, creativity and motivation" (Copeland, 2006: 28).

UNESCO has long advocated a greater presence of heritage in all levels of education and a greater relationship with professional training Faro Convention (Council of Europe, 2005): and has highlighted the value that heritage contributes to society (Jagielska-Burduk and Stec, 2019; Jagielska et al., 2021). In recent years in Spain, the amount of research carried out on heritage education has increased significantly (Cuenca, 2013; Fontal and Ibáñez, 2017; Cuenca et al., 2021). Tools such as the Plan Nacional de Educación y Patrimonio (National Plan for Education and Heritage) (Domingo et al., 2013) and the Spanish Heritage Education Observatory (Fontal, 2016b) support it as a discipline, both in social science education and in artistic education.

Along the same lines as proposals on heritage and territory, which foster the intercultural relationship and formation of a socially committed citizenship (Carrera Díaz, 2005; Cuenca, 2014; Cuenca and Estepa, 2017; Trabajo and Cuenca, 2017; Cuenca et al., 2020), the present study analyses to what extent an awareness-raising experiment based on the Way of St. James (declared in 1987 by the Council of Europe to be the first Cultural Route of Europe) contributes towards developing the professional skills of future primary education teachers, particularly in terms of research, ethics, reflection and argumentation.

Although the Camino is a heritage asset which has become consolidated in the collective imagination of the Spanish people, the coding of its monumental image as an open-air museum (Castro, 2010) and its transformation into a touristic product since the middle of the 20th century eclipse its educational potential (Castro et al., 2016; Lois et al., 2016; Lopez et al., 2017). Even more so if it is taken into account that in primary education in Spain there is a disassociation between the integration of the school curriculum (Gobierno de España: Real Decreto 126/2014, 2014) and initial teacher training (Fontal, 2016a; Fontal et al., 2017). The presence of heritage in the legal framework has increased since the 1970s, although it is still insufficient (Fontal, 2011; González, 2011; Pinto and Molina, 2015; Ponce et al., 2015). In some regions, such as Andalucía, the Canary Islands, Asturias and Navarra, heritage has a greater presence in education than in other regions as, due to the decentralisation of the education system, each region makes its own adaptation of the national law (Martínez and Fontal, 2020). In university study plans, there is a considerable lack of subjects relating to heritage and, when they do exist, they are normally optional (Fontal et al., 2017). A similar situation can be observed in Portugal (Pinto and Molina, 2015) and Turkey (Ocal, 2016), where heritage education is practically absent in relation to teacher training. This explains why the participants in this research are students of the optional subject "Historia, patrimonio y educación en Galicia" (History, heritage and education in Galicia), in the primary education degree of the University of Santiago de Compostela, during the 2020-2021 academic year. The University of Santiago de Compostela is one of 13 public universities of a total of 50 in Spain in which teacher training has a subject with the term "heritage" in its title. Indeed, in the private universities in Spain, no training is offered on this subject (Chaparro and Felices, 2019).

In a constant process of emotional re-signification, the Way of St. James can be understood as the sum of anonymous experiences which support a polysemic experiential route. Unlike other pilgrimage routes, the Camino offers a

TABLE 1 | Study dimensions on the Way of St. James.

Study dimensions	Description				
Multifaceted pilgrimage route	Integrates a diversity of elements in constant use (route, monuments, traditions, infrastructures, etc.) which interfere in its systemic conservation (rubbish, lack of safety, vandalism, etc.) and in its authenticity value				
Cross-border pilgrimage route	Passes through territories with different administrations which complicates its heritage management				
Timeless pilgrimage route	Connects ancient aspects with modern elements (route, hostels, infrastructures, services, etc.) which respond to contemporary needs				
Performative pilgrimage route	Brings together traditional cultural practices with stereotypes defined by historiography, literature and even cinema (fictionalised identity, symbols, rituals, ceremonies, etc.).				
Emotional pilgrimage route	Embraces intra-personal motivations whilst offering mass tourism with a high socio-economic impact all along its route				
Sustainable pilgrimage route	Tackles the impact of mobility restrictions deriving from the Covid-19 pandemic				

combination of feelings of otherness to everybody who walks it. At the same time, it is a collective experience and a key element of identities and feelings of belonging to a community, be it ephemeral or long-lasting.

Given that the main subjects of education are people and that the Camino has a wealth of heritage topics and dimensions, the approach of this educational experiment advocates its relational component with those who walk, sustain, care for, maintain and transmit it. This plurality of perspectives also entails a multiplicity of interests and conflicts. It is precisely the controversial nature of the Camino, which is complex but socially accessible, which favours understanding of its immediate historical and social context and the heritage recognition involved in the construction of cultural identity (Teixeira, 2006). This controversial perspective, by way of active teaching methods, reinforces other fundamental skills, such as the access to sources, reflection and debate (Pagès and Santisteban, 2011), thus demonstrating the development of historical thinking (Domínguez, 2015; Sáiz et al., 2017). All of this serves to foster an attitude of respect for the environment and makes it possible to appreciate the heritage of the local and cultural context in question. In such a way, it is possible to build a critical citizenship based on heritage education and historical education (Pagès, 2000; Pinto, 2013; Van Boxtel et al., 2015; Gosselin and Livingstone, 2016; Miralles et al., 2017).

From a constructivist and dialogical approach, the future teachers addressed some of the most socially relevant controversies around the Way of St. James (its conservation, use, management, authenticity, stereotypes, performativity) (Table 1). The aims were to stimulate interest towards the Way as a heritage asset, to reflect on its educational potential and to foster a feeling of shared responsibility which can be taken into the classroom in the future and to create learning communities outside of the classroom. In other words, heritage education is to be understood as a tool for fostering an attitude of respect which leads to social intervention (Ávila and Matozzi, 2009). Via significant and collaborative learning, based on research methodology (Gómez and Rodríguez, 2014; Gómez et al., 2018), the participants addressed real problems in order to learn to manage them (Soley, 1996), to build a reasoned opinion (Santisteban, 2012; Santisteban, 2019) and to promote a democratic citizenship (Heimberg, 2010).

Working on social thinking through controversial issues contributions towards the preparation of competent people in the civic dimension; even more so if it is carried out via an emotional approach which promotes teaching and learning processes associated to elements of memory. This approach, which we have employed in three recent studies, makes it possible to frame and justify this research. The aforementioned studies focused on an emblematic stage of the Way of St. James situated in the town of Portomarín (Galicia, Lugo), a particularly conflictive context in terms of heritage. Portomarín is a small rural town of medieval origin which was flooded by the construction of a dam in the 1960s. A short distance away, a new town was built which was very different to the original and to which certain elements of the old site, such as its churches, were relocated. The current depopulation of the area and the ageing population lead to the fact that the memories and experiences associated to the old town and its traumatic past only persist in a few buildings (the ruins which emerge out of the reservoir when the water level decreases in summer or its decontextualised churches). As time goes by, there are fewer and fewer people who experienced the forced removal and, without them, it is complicated to keep the town's recent history alive (Castro et al., 2021).

In an initial study of this place of memory, it was shown that if a community does not foster intergenerational dialogue about its past, which, in this case, is painful, it is difficult to bring about a process of resignification and heritage identification (Ibid.). The narrative regarding the conflict experienced is interrupted, probably with the justification of not reopening old wounds. Most of the local population has developed a feeling of rootlessness towards the two towns (the old people towards the new town and the young people towards the old town) due to the fact that no strategy of restitution or reflection of the culture has been applied, making it impossible to share feelings of ownership and assign values from the present (Cruces, 1998).

Having identified the heritage conceptions of the inhabitants of Portomarín, this conflictive issue was addressed in university classes with trainee teachers (Castro and López, 2019). Two groups of students were organised in order to verify whether the immersion of one of the groups in Portomarín would modify their perception of heritage education compared with the other group, which did not have this experience. All of the students had to design a teaching proposal which, if carried out, would contribute to repairing the rootlessness felt by the community. The group which relocated to Portomarín proposed an endogenous restitution based on their experiences with the local population. On the other hand, the other group offered impersonal discourses based on heritage stereotypes which were devoid of contextual references. This research has made it possible to prove that an experiential approach to a problematic context contributes towards the development of the capacity for empathy and argumentation on the part of future teachers.

The next study analysed the perceptions of trainee teachers regarding the inclusion of this controversial issue in their teaching practice via heritage education (Castro et al., 2021). Based on the case of Portomarín, places flooded by the construction of reservoirs and dams were studied in which other conflicts were caused between local interests and social benefit. Again, it was noted that working on controversial issues associated to elements of memory and heritage stimulates critical consciousness, promotes respect for opposing opinions and the capacity for analysis.

Based on these prior experiences, the present study broadens the theme of study to the whole of the Way of St. James in Galicia. The objective is to arouse interest in its educational use via a controversial dimension which will make it possible to carry out a study of a rational approach to knowledge via seeking and contrasting information, pondering different alternatives and taking consensus-based decisions. That is to say, the trainee teachers assume a similar methodology to that used with them in their university classes, via active learning methods from an ethical orientation of education.

In order to measure the scope of this educational approach, the following objectives have been formulated:

- 1) Specific Objective 1 (SO1). To identify the perceptions of future primary education teachers regarding the Way of St. James and its educational potential.
- 2) Specific Objective 2 (SO2). To analyse to what degree the future primary education teachers assume the usefulness of heritage education for addressing the Way of St. James in the classroom.
- 3) Specific Objective 3 (SO3). To evaluate the teaching experiment implemented in order to foster the raising of heritage awareness among future primary education teachers towards the Way of St. James.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Hypothesis

The design and implementation of a teaching experiment in initial teacher training which deals with relevant social problems relating to the Way of St. James via active learning methods (research and debate), contributing towards the critical resignification and educational analysis of this pilgrimage route among future teachers.

Tools

Five Tools Associated to the Proposed Objectives Were Used During the Teaching Experiment

Tools 1 and 2 are pre-test and post-test questionnaires which seek to measure the achievement of Specific Objective 1. These tools

were designed for a prior study carried out with a group of trainee teachers which verified the transformative capacity of heritage education from an experiential point of view. On that occasion, the traumatic past of a community which was forcibly removed to a new location due to the construction of a dam was addressed (Castro and López, 2019). Later, their validity was confirmed in another study regarding the perceptions of trainee teachers on the inclusion of relevant and socially conflictive issues in heritage education. In this case, a strategy was designed based on collaborative learning and research methodology oriented towards the development of critical thinking (Castro et al., 2021). For the present study on the Way of St. James, the two questionnaires have been adapted to the topic, both in the method of word association with the concept of "Camino" and in a section dedicated to its presence in the primary classroom by way of seven questions (one multiple choice, three open questions and three on a Likert scale).

Tools 3 and 4 have been designed to verify Specific Objective 2. The first consists of the problematisation and guided debate of the different study dimensions related with the Way of St. James (Table 1). The students collaborated to investigate the proposed issues and, subsequently, put forward opposing viewpoints on controversial issues, which made it possible to generate discussion until reaching a consensus in the classroom. This pooling of ideas was carried out over two videoconference sessions via Microsoft Teams, which were recorded for later analysis. The second tool consists of the drawing up of an educational proposal for each study dimension aimed at primary schoolchildren, in which, in addition, the dimension is identified within the primary education curriculum, along with an explanation of its social relevance, a critical selection of 4-6 representative images and a critical evaluation of its educational scope. The resulting work was presented in class by way of a video presentation of around 5 min for each dimension and was also completed in written form. The students were able to fill in an online form in order to co-evaluate the presentations.

Tool 5 is a semi-structured questionnaire for individual critical reflection, with seven questions (one multiple choice question, two open questions and four on a Likert scale) which seek to verify Specific Objective 3. In the same way as with tools 1 and 2, a partial adaptation was made of a tool employed in a previous study in which the perceptions of trainee teachers regarding conflictive heritage and its use in the classroom were analysed (Castro et al., 2021).

Characterisation of the Sample

A non-probabilistic intentional sample (Deslauriers, 2004) was employed, consisting of 16 participants, with a majority of women (56%). The size of the sample is small because it corresponds to a group of students of an elective subject of the Degree in Primary Education. As far as age groups are concerned, three quarters of the participants were under 25 years of age, while 25% were aged between 25 and 30. Although only 25% of the participants stated that they had, at some point, walked the Way of St. James, 94% claimed that they would like to do so, or would repeat the experience.

TABLE 2 | Procedure of the educational research carried out.

Phase	Description				
1. Starting point	- Pre-test questionnaire (Tool 1)				
2. Heritage education based on the Way of St. James	- Classroom work: 1) Teaching of contents on heritage, heritage education and the emotional dimension in teacher training; 2) The Way of St. James as a heritage asset: didactic support for the work and comprehension of key				
	 concepts Access to and consultation of different materials in order to promote personal involvement regarding the topic of the Camino 				
3. Case study	 The students are organised into six work groups, each consisting of 2 or 3 people. Each group investigates one of the dimensions of the Way of St. James 				
	- Debate and presentation of the assigned topics (Tool 3)				
	- Educational reflection: cooperative work on the assigned dimensions (Tool 4)				
4. Evaluation of the project	- Defence of the work created by way of a video presentation and co-evaluation				
	- Post-test questionnaire (Tool 2)				
	- Semi-structured questionnaire for individual critical reflection (Tool 5)				
	- Analysis of results				

Category	Description			
Teaching on heritage	Reflects the putting into practice of teaching on heritage and its application to primary education. It is identified via the presence of theoretical aspects, such as the very definition of heritage, and methodological aspects, such as the use of data sources			
Type of heritage	Identifies the characterisation of different types of heritage, from structural categories (tangible/intangible) to others closer to the subject (personal/cultural/natural)			
Elements of contextualisation	Evaluates and identifies the types of approach employed by students when contextualising their work dimension. This i partly dictated by the instructions of the teaching team, but an attempt has been made to characterise the depth with which students describe the situation associated to their dimension, ranging from emotional and historical aspects to economic value			

Participation in this teaching experiment is as close as the group has come to studying the topic of the Way of St. James as, when asked about any courses or seminars they had done on this pilgrimage route, none of the participants claimed to have attended any courses on the issue and only one of the 16 students stated that she had carried out some work on the Camino during her university studies.

Procedure

This research has been divided into four consecutive phases which define the procedure employed for the development of the specific objectives and the application of the tools designed in this regard (**Table 2**).

As the data collection ranges from questionnaires to narratives or open reflections of a qualitative nature (Bisquerra, 1989; Pérez, 1994; Flick, 2007), a data processing approach was proposed in order to make good use of the results obtained in each of the phases from the interpretive paradigm. The data obtained from tools 1, 2 and 5 have been included in a database. They were analysed using the SPSS statistical program. Following the recoding and recategorisation of the open questions, a comparative analysis was carried out of tools 1 and 2 in an attempt to reveal the contrast between the beginning and the end of the project, thus giving an account of its impact in terms of heritage awareness. The reduced size of the sample makes $\ensuremath{\mathsf{TABLE 4}}\xspace$ | Top ten words with the highest incidence related with the Way of St. James.

Pre-test	Post-test			
Pilgrim	10	Heritage	10	
Cathedral	8	Culture	7	
Pilgrim's scallop shell	8	Conservation	6	
Culture	7	History	6	
Nature	6	Symbols	6	
Hostel	5	Link	6	
Experience	5	Education	5	
History	5	Emotions	5	
Religion	5	Pilgrim	5	
Friendship	4	Authenticity	3	

it difficult for any comparison to be statistically reliable. A word cloud was created for the words on the Way of St. James based on a count of the contents of the responses. A representation was produced with these frequencies in which the size and shade of colour corresponds with the importance of the words in the set.

For the analysis of tools 3 and 4, the content analysis method has been employed. This makes it possible to find valid inferences for the context of the research (López, 2002). These productions show in a more detailed way the expression of achievements and are based specifically on the topic of the Way of St. James. Word clouds have been created, counting





the words and grouping those of the same semantic family together in order to assist in their identification. To facilitate the analysis of the written work, three categories have been defined: teaching on heritage, types of heritage identified and elements of contextualization (**Table 3**). From the critical viewing of the audio-visual presentations and the debate, a series of conclusions have been drawn.

RESULTS

Objective 1: To Identify the Perceptions of Future Primary Education Teachers Regarding the Way of St. James and Its Educational Potential

The teaching experiment contributed towards modifying the perception of the Way of St. James, which changed from a specifically touristic characterisation to one of a more heritagebased nature. "Culture" and "History" were the only words repeated among the ten with the highest incidence (**Table 4**). A total of 170 different words were collected in the pre-test and 159 in the post-test, which were represented graphically by word clouds to facilitate the comparison of these two phases of the research in semantic terms (**Figures 1**, **2**).

The dominant overall conception of the Camino was strengthened by the importance attributed to its elements of a natural, tangible and intangible nature. In overall terms, the most valued aspect was the habitat which constitutes its natural environment, an item which hardly experienced any variation between the stages of analysis and, in fact, improved slightly. Within tangible heritage, the category which increased its score most was that referring to the places located along the route, followed by two intangible elements (festivities and testimonies). The intangible components were those which, in general, improved their mean evaluation (**Figure 3**).

The view was held that the presence of the Way of St. James in the primary education curriculum was practically inexistent. The chance to carry out in-depth work on the route during this experiment contributed towards the fact that the teachers' consideration of the Camino as a teaching resource increased its mean value by more than double compared to the decrease in its integration in the curriculum (**Figure 4**).

The view of the high educational potential of the Way of St. James was reinforced, particularly due to the fact that it makes it possible to gain knowledge and comprehension of the environment, as well as to acquire attitudes of defence and conservation. In fact, the latter item was that which increased its score the most (**Figure 5**).

When teaching about the Camino in the primary classroom, there was a preference for activities encouraging student participation, such as intergenerational workshops and visits to places of interest, rather than those of a more passive nature, such as talks by specialists and explanations given by the teacher. Furthermore, recovery and awareness-raising campaigns regarding the Camino underwent an increase of 0.91 points in their mean score (**Figure 6**).

As the sample was small in size, the cross-variable analysis between the study stages prevented any type of affirmation from being sustained with a sufficient degree of statistical support. The only question of interest regarding the research



which has revealed (albeit in a restrictive way) a correlation was the experience of the students as pilgrims on the Way. In the pre-test, only 4 out of 16 students claimed to have walked the route. In relation to the presence of the Way in the primary curriculum, no differences were found. However, some elements seemed to indicate some kind of influence of the experience as pilgrims, although never against the general trend. The campaigns for the recovery of the Camino appear among the most notable differences with a mean value which increased by 2 points among those who had walked the route and only 0.4 points among those who had not had this experience. In order to support this crossing of information, a comparative table was produced with the differences in the mean scores of each of the elements, with the most significant variations highlighted in bold (**Table 5**).

Objective 2: To Analyse to What Extent Future Primary Teachers Assume the Usefulness of Heritage Education to Teach the Topic of the Way of St. James in the Primary Classroom

The participants applied the key concepts worked on in the subject on heritage and education, particularly for supporting arguments, although they hardly demonstrated that they knew how to handle secondary sources. The acceptance of the fact that





heritage is a cultural element, both in its tangible and intangible facets, is identified. The participants did not always bear in mind its construction, but, when this was shown, an emotional contextualisation was also made:

"Emotions play a key role in the creation of links with heritage. For this reason, children should be educated from an early age, using a methodology which promotes the development of Emotional Intelligence, thus generating feelings, in a gradual way, in children and teenagers. Positive emotions towards heritage, both tangible and intangible" (Conclusions D5).

They contextualised the dimensions of the study from the field of legislation and the interest of the proposal which they designed was socially accepted, although they did not always pay attention to aspects such as history and economics (**Table 6**).

The participants were in agreement with regard to the educational potential of the Way of St. James and recognised that this topic provides students with elements for a better understanding of their environment, of themselves and of the culture in which they are growing up. In this regard, when characterising the problematic issue of the heritage associated to the different dimensions of the Camino, they also identified education as the best and most effective solution to the dilemmas posed. Thus, the participants considered that, thanks to studying this topic in the classroom, the heritage evaluation of the Camino would improve, always seeking the best possible diversity in the identification of their heritage, but, above all, developing a civic consciousness which fosters conservation:

"It is our job as future teachers to change the direction of this situation towards a circumstance in which it has the importance it deserves, and to understand the educational scope it may have" (Conclusions D2).

"School also has a key role to play in instilling social responsibility in students in terms of the conservation of heritage" (Conclusions D3).

The conclusions of the written texts enable us to identify that the participants gave priority to the conception presentation of heritage and its contribution to education, while they did not necessarily dedicate themselves to the main aspect of the



dimension assigned (**Figure 2**). Thus, it can be observed that "students" and "heritage" are the words which stand out most, whereas the key concepts of these dimensions appeared with lower overall weight. In any case, the participants unanimously recognised the educational value and potential of the Way of St. James, which points towards an improvement in heritage knowledge and conservation. They also highlighted the inherent complexity of the task implying heritage education and agreed on the consideration of heritage in its multidimensionality.

The debates held during the sharing of information have been analysed and contrasted with the materials and tools reviewed up to the present time, identifying a limited relationship with teaching aspects. As the different dimensions were presented via audio-visual recordings, all of the groups included, in one way or another, their educational application, although the debates focused on the general theme of the Way of St. James and on the different controversies surrounding the dimension studied. This can be explained by the personal involvement of the students and by the fact that they are general approaches in which social debate tends to be active. In this regard, it was precisely in these sessions of debate and idea-sharing that the awareness of students with regard to heritage consciousness linked to the Camino become clearer.

"It helped us to gain more in-depth knowledge of what surrounds us in our daily lives. We live in Santiago de Compostela and thought we knew what the Camino was but after everything we have learned, both in the project and in the classes of the subject, we have discovered that it is not what we thought it was" (Conclusions D4). The debate generally focused on the defence of aspects of ownership when faced with possible loss. The Way of St. James was defined as a heritage asset subject to different risks, ranging from the profanation of its authenticity brought about by mass tourism, to the transformation of its elements (routes, landscapes, monuments) as a consequence of giving priority to touristic or economic interests:

"Preserving heritage assets is a complex issue, above all something as complex as the Way of St. James, due to its great scope which is impossible to control as a whole and to, thus, avoid vandalism or other types of destruction due to its use" (Conclusions D1).

The principle of authenticity was put forward in a conflictive sense, in line with the review carried out from the perspective of the anthropology of heritage and tourism (Cohen, 1988; Bendix, 1997) and from the conservation and restoration of monuments (García Cuetos, 2009). On the one hand, it promotes essential historical conservation, but, on the other, it can result in an obstacle to the improvement of infrastructures and the accessibility of the experience of the Camino. With regard to the latter issue, debate was held on the experience of the Camino and the new ways in which this takes place: from cycling to new forms of tourism which simplify the pilgrimage to its minimum expression. Perhaps due to the presence of the teaching staff, the students proved to be averse to proposals for the renovation of certain heritage aspects of the Camino, such as the primitive routes, as they tended to give priority to conservation in terms of purity, rather than proposing or reflecting on a renovation which could co-exist with its authenticity.

The roles or capacities of the social agents involved in the Camino were perceived as complex and extremely difficult to

TABLE 5 | Comparative table of means according to experience walking the Way of St. James.

		Pre-test Yes	Post-test	Diff.	Pre-test	Post-test No	Diff.	Diff. Pre-post
			Yes		No			
Heritage	Historical buildings linked to the Camino	4.0	4.5	0.5	4.7	4.4	-0.3	-0.1
components	Places located on the Camino	3.2	4.5	1.3	3.8	4.4	0.6	0.8
	Works of art, videos and photographs related with the Camino	3.2	5.0	1.8	4.6	4.3	-0.3	0.3
	Legends of the Camino	4.4	4.3	-0.1	4.2	4.4	0.2	0.2
	Testimonies of pilgrims	3.8	4.3	0.5	4.3	4.5	0.2	0.2
	Testimonies of people who live along the Way	3.2	4.3	1.1	4.3	4.6	0.3	0.6
	Festival events on the Camino	2.8	3.8	1.0	3.3		0.4	0.6
	Traditional artisanal techniques linked with the pilgrimage	4.0	4.3	0.3	4.2	4.1	-0.1	0.0
	Ecosystems on the Camino	4.0	4.3	0.3	4.0	4.1	0.1	0.1
	Natural parks along the Camino	4.2	4.5	0.3	4.4	4.2	-0.2	-0.1
	Habitats of animal and plant species on the Camino	4.8	5.0	0.2	4.4	4.4	0.0	0.1
Educational	A talk by a specialist on the Way of St. James	3.0	2.3	-0.7	3.3	3.9	0.6	0.3
activities	The teacher's explanation of the Way of St. James	3.0	3.0	0.0	3.8	3.7	-0.1	0.0
	Visit to a museum or interpretation centre on the Way of St. James	3.2	3.5	0.3	4.5	4.6	0.1	0.2
	Simulations and decision-taking related with the Way of St. James	4.2	4.8	0.6	4.6	4.5	-0.1	0.1
	Visits/field trips to an archaeological site or place of interest on the Way of St. James	4.6	5.0	0.4	4.9	4.8	-0.1	0.0
	Viewing and commentary of videos and pictures on the Way of St. James	3.2	3.8	0.6	4.1	4.2	0.6 -0.3 0.2 0.2 0.3 0.4 -0.1 0.1 -0.2 0.0 0.6 -0.1 0.1 -0.1	0.3
	Campaigns for the recovery and appreciation of the Way of St. James	2.4	4.5	2.1	4.2	4.6		1.0
	Debates on controversial issues concerning the Way of St. James	4.6	5.0	0.4	4.0	4.5	0.5	0.4
Educational	An intergenerational workshop on the Way of St. James	4.2	4.8	0.6	4.7	4.8	0.1	0.3
potential	Knowing and understanding the environment	4.6	4.8	0.2	4.9	4.9	0.0	0.1
	Recognition of the Way of St. James as a factor of identity	3.6	4.5	0.9	5.0	4.9	-0.1	0.2
	Adopting attitudes of defence and conservation towards the Way of St. James	3.6	4.8	1.2	4.8	4.9	0.1	0.5
	Fostering a critical attitude towards commercial/touristic uses of the Way of St. James	4.2	4.8	0.6	4.3	4.4	0.1	0.2
	Participating in popular movements in defence of the Way of St. James	3.0	3.3	0.3	4.3	4.7	0.4	0.4

coordinate and agree upon, although the objective may be clear and unanimous with regard to the conservation of heritage. In overall terms, the students linked the solution to education, as, in such a way, citizens will be able not only to know how to actively participate in social debate with regard to the conservation of the Camino, but their decisions will also be more critical, precisely due to the fact of having received an education based on interpretation, reflection and debate. This emphasis on education was accompanied by a way of understanding teaching by way of research methods and cooperative and pro-active models in which knowledge is built in a meaningful way, extending beyond the mere memorisation of contents. Overall, it has been observed that the participating students gained an awareness of the Camino and perceived it as an element with a great deal of teaching potential.

"It doesn't make sense for learning about this key element of our identity to be based on the memorisation of data or descriptions in textbooks along with pictures of tangible objects and places." (Conclusions D5).

"We want students to identify themselves as part of this heritage, as without people, there is no heritage. We also want them to transmit it both intergenerationally and in their daily lives, as this heritage is also an extremely important part of our identity." (Conclusions D6).

Objective 3: To Evaluate the Teaching Experiment Implemented in Order to Encourage Heritage Awareness Towards the Way of St. James Among Future Teachers

The participants evaluated the teaching experiment positively. They highlighted, above all, three aspects: interest in the Way of St. James as a teaching resource; awareness of the Way of St. James (the main objective of this study); and reflection on heritage education (**Figure 7**).

As far as the work proposed in order to address the different dimensions related with the Camino is concerned, the section referring to the design of an educational proposal unanimously obtained the highest score (**Figure 8**). Although, in general, the mean evaluations are high, the selection of representative images of the particular topic of analysis was the least valued aspect.

The students also unanimously manifested their intention to carry out activities related with the Way of St. James in their future teaching careers, in order to contribute towards its reasoned evaluation in a broad sense, which includes conservation, and to promote its recognition as a fundamental element in the construction of identity (**Figure 9**).

		D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6
Teaching on heritage	Definition of heritage	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
	Characterises and distinguishes types of heritage	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
	Secondary sources of data	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
	Discusses educational usefulness	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Type of heritage	Personal	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
.)	Cultural	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Tangible heritage	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Intangible heritage	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Natural	No	No	Yes	No	No Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes No Yes Yes	No
Elements of contextualisation	Historically	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
	Emotionally	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
	Sociologically	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes s No Yes s Yes	Yes
	Economically	No	Yes		No	No	
	Legally	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

TABLE 6 | Comparison of the written assignments on the Way of St. James.

"They should learn the importance and relevance of the Camino on their surroundings. They should learn different stories about different villages with relevance in terms of heritage. They should be aware of the evolution of the Camino as a reflection of the different elements of heritage." (Response from one of the students to Tool 5).

"To talk about and transmit our heritage, particularly the Way of St. James. To recognise the Camino as part of themselves, as their identity. To have an emotional link with it..." (Response from one of the students to Tool 5).

Civic-mindedness has been the most highly value educational aspect in working on the Camino in the classroom. This evaluation is coherent with the discourse expressed by the participants throughout the whole experiment (**Figure 10**).

Of the learning dimensions on the Camino worked on in the classroom, its multifaceted dimension was the highest-scoring due to its teaching potential, followed by the emotional dimension (**Figure 11**). In the case of the former, although its breadth may complicate an in-depth treatment or even lead to a superficial approach to many topics, it is possible to put into practice teaching dynamics which foster curricular interchange. On the other hand, the emotional approach was generally pointed

out as the most appropriate for motivating the personal involvement of children and fostering a feeling of ownership, which often leads to favourable attitudes towards heritage conservation.

DISCUSSION

In accordance with the results presented, the initial hypothesis is confirmed. The teaching experiment carried out with future teachers on relevant social problems related with the Way of St. James has contributed towards the raising of heritage awareness. By way of active learning methods, particularly research, the participants were able to resignify this pilgrimage route via an involvement which involved identity, affective and personal aspects, in addition to contemplating a range of associated elements.

The primary objective of the study was to identify the participants' perceptions on the Way of St. James and its educational potential. In line with other research analysing the opinions of future teachers with regard to heritage (Estepa et al., 2008; Estepa et al., 2013) and its use to promote critical teaching





and the development of social and civic skills (Pinto, 2016; Miralles et al., 2017; Alves and Pinto, 2019; Chaparro et al., 2019; Gómez et al., 2020), our results appear to demonstrate that a large proportion of the participants learned to value emotional dimensions as triggers for learning processes associated to elements of memory and the construction of identity. By way of semantic enrichment, it has been demonstrated that the dominant touristic-commercial perspective (pilgrim, cathedral, scallop shell) has moved towards a symbolic-identity point of view (heritage, culture, conservation). This evaluation seemed to respond to a human approach to the concept of heritage which enabled the participants to understand their relational component. In other words, they recognised that it is people who signify elements, attribute values and confer contextual points of reference. In this way, their role is decisive in converting assets into heritage and, via education, heritagising them (Fontal, 2003). As a social construct, heritage is not a given, it is devised by hegemonic sectors for certain purposes and, therefore, undergoes changes in new circumstances (Prats, 1997).

The perception, both at the beginning and end of the experiment, that heritage and the Way of St. James are represented in an incidental way within the legal framework may be due to two reasons: 1) Before the experiment: we detected a distancing on the part of future teachers with this topic as they had hardly received any teaching on the Camino and heritage. Indeed, in the primary education curriculum in Galicia (Xunta,





2014), the context of our research, the Camino is only referred to in passing in the penultimate year of the six of which this stage of education consists. This deficiency also coincides with the results of studies which have identified a residual use of heritage in schools and universities, along with epistemological and methodological difficulties for teaching it in the classroom due to a lack of training in how to teach it (Estepa, 2001; Cuenca, 2003; Molina and Muñoz, 2016). The lack of specific teaching on heritage in teacher training in Spain (Molina and Muñoz, 2016; Moreno-Vera et al., 2020), seems to be due to the temporal distance between the approval of the requisites established for teacher training degrees in primary education (de España, 2007) and the current legal framework (de España, 2013). Thus, there is a maladjustment between the knowledge of teachers and the integration of heritage in the curriculum (Fontal et al., 2017). 2) After the experiment: having worked in depth on the Way of St. James made it possible to identify its presence in the curriculum as an educational resource, albeit in an incidental way. This result may have been due to the fact that, after having recognised the wide range of teaching possibilities offered by the Camino, the future teachers considered that its recognition in the curriculum was insufficient and did not fit with the experiential perspective

(link) worked on during the experiment. Indeed, the general legal framework in Spain presents heritage from an integral perspective but still does not stress its main dimension (the relational dimension) (Martínez and Fontal, 2020), as has been called for in the European context since the Faro Convention (Council of Europe, 2005).

The rediscovery of the study of the Way of St. James as an educational content indicated that the participants succeeded in becoming fully aware of this pilgrimage route. To work on the Camino in their future teaching, the participants highlighted active methodological strategies focused on students in order to help them to be aware of and understand their surroundings, become aware of the conservation of the Camino and incorporate it into the construction of their cultural identity. This attitude is in line with the need to design projects on heritage education and the revision of identities in non-formal contexts (Fontal and Marín, 2016; Garner et al., 2016; Rivero et al., 2018) which can foster social interventions in which people participate in the review and critical selection of the elements with which they wish to characterise themselves.

The second objective of the study analysed the extent to which the future teachers assumed heritage education as a strategy for



working on the Way of St. James in the classroom. In the debate and group work sessions, they expressed their position in favour of a model of teaching which is reflexive, critical and committed with the nearest cultural points of reference (Delgado and Estepa, 2017; Lucas 2018; Felices-De la Fuente et al., 2020), as a vehicle for acquiring context, evaluation and participation tools. All of these elements are essential in heritage education and in the education of citizens who reflect on culture and are civically aware. Along these lines, teaching experiments have been carried out which analyse the connections of people with their social reality through heritage and territorial intelligence (López-Arroyo, 2017; Trabajo and Cuenca, 2020).

However, difficulties were observed in the handling of sources to support arguments in interventions in the classroom due to limited knowledge of the Way of St. James and of the defining aspects of heritage. If this were not the case, greater depth would have been sought in the scope of the educational proposals presented at the end of the training sequence. When asked about the notion of authenticity, for example, it could be observed that the participants associated it with a static conservation of heritage, tending towards its fossilisation or, in other words, its denaturalisation and decontextualization, noting the processes of renovation as a threat. In order to understand that in living contexts such as the villages through which the Way of St. James passes, relative in themselves, authenticity moves towards the notion of integrity (Luxen, 2019), the trainee teachers assumed that to enjoy heritage, education must focus on a participatory approach, in such a way that the adaptation of these enclaves to the contemporary needs identified by their communities are kept alive. At the end of the experiment, when asked to what extent the study dimensions worked on should be employed in the classroom, this debate led to the participants highlighting the dimension of authenticity, followed by those of emotion and timelessness.

The initial difficulties detected in the sample connect with other research which shows that future teachers need greater methodological and epistemological training in order to teach heritage in their future teaching careers (Chaparro and Felices, 2019; Gómez et al., 2020). The improvement in professional skills implies carrying out a review of university study plans and legal texts which make it possible to integrate heritage in a more decisive way as a cross-cutting element for education in historical thinking, the understanding of the present, democratic decision-taking and critical participation in the construction of identity.

The third objective of the study evaluated the teaching experiment in terms of the heritage awareness of trainee teachers towards the Way of St. James. Evidence of the good result obtained was the unanimous evaluation with regard to the intention of integrating the contents and proposals designed into their future teaching practice. They highlighted that the theoretical and practical development of the project awakened their interest towards the Camino as a teaching resource and it was appropriate for raising their awareness and reflecting on the role of heritage education. They also recognised that an activity of this type contributes towards the reasoned evaluation of heritage and of the Camino to become aware of its conservation and relevance in terms of culture and identity.

Research, the active learning method chosen by the teacher (Gómez et al., 2018) for dealing with social problems relating to the Camino, contributed towards the development of the capacities to investigate, listen, reason and reach a consensus, applied, above all, in the debate sessions and in the audio-visual presentation of the group work. This strategy encourages the critical comprehension of social phenomena over traditional dynamics oriented towards memorisation (Oller, 2011) and their collaborative management from the classroom (Díaz and Felices, 2017; Jiménez and Felices, 2018). Learning based on real situations are in the local context, it is possible for students to understand and analyse their own reality and to be able to apply what they have learned in their own communities.

The fact of systematising controversial issues into different analytical dimensions (multifaceted, cross-border, timeless, performative, emotional and sustainable) made it possible to work with the procedure of the case study from a constructivist viewpoint of the teaching and learning process (Stake, 1998; Prats, 2005; Coll et al., 2006; Gil and Ibáñez, 2013; Gómez and Rodríguez, 2014).

Taking as a reference the study by López-Facal and Santidrián (2011) on tackling conflictive issues in the classroom, it was considered that this teaching strategy applied to the Way of St. James, on the one hand, shapes a civic-minded citizenship with the critical capacity to argue its opinions and leads to an interest in intergenerational dialogue and, on the other, contributes towards arguing and putting forward logical reasoning, doubting information, questioning stereotypes and managing conflicts in a peaceful way. This evaluation is coherent with the discourse shown in general by the participants throughout the experiment, in which education via heritage dilemmas is defined as a tool for civic education and forms the connection between the classroom and the environment. This coincides with the results of the research conducted by Moreno-Vera et al. (2020) with future teachers of Primary Education of Andalusia and Valencia, on intangible heritage, in which an identity element is related to the tourist-commercial perspective. Although in some contexts controversial issues are still not included with normality in the initial training of history teachers and, by extension, in their classes (Toledo et al., 2015), they constitute a fundamental approach for achieving the emotional engagement of students and, via dialogue, moving towards rational thinking (López-Facal and Santidrián, 2011).

In general terms, it has been observed that the future teachers developed a greater degree of awareness towards the heritage associated with the Way of St. James, learned to situate it in its heritage context and transformed their semantic Universe towards a symbolic-identity perspective which takes into account and applies the concepts of heritage education. Through this approach, an active role of communities is advocated in the correct conservation of heritage in all of its facets.

CONCLUSION

Limitations of the Study

- 1) A small-scale qualitative investigation without replication and with non-generalisable results (Bisquerra, 1989).
- 2) An intentional, non-probabilistic sample (Deslauriers, 2004) with few participants (16).
- 3) The research context was an optional subject in the third year of a primary education teaching degree.
- 4) Limited duration of the research, from 1st February to May 31, 2021, in line with the indications established by the funding institution. The teaching experiment in the classroom ran over eight sessions in order to handle and interpret the results within the deadline.

Educational Implications

- 1) An increase in heritage education in initial teacher training (Fontal et al., 2017).
- 2) The capacity for heritage socialisation in professional practice (Cuenca, 2016)
- 3) The critical resignification of heritage as a social construct (Prats, 1997) and as an emotional link (Fontal, 2003; Fontal, 2020).
- 4) The civic education of the citizenship via social problems and controversial issues (López-Facal and Santidrián, 2011) related with heritage (Castro-Fernández et al., 2021a; Castro et al., 2021b).
- 5) The educational use of heritage for the development of historical thinking (Gómez et al., 2020) and the development of critical thinking (Ross, 2017).
- Active learning methods from a constructivist approach: research and case study (Gómez and Rodríguez, 2014; Gómez et al., 2018).
- 7) The raising of heritage awareness (Fontal, 2003) and cultural identity (Gómez, 2012).

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8) The empowerment of communities to participate in the governance of heritage (Jiménez and Sánchez, 2016; Yan and Chiou, 2021).

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualisation, BC-F; methodology, BC-F and RL-F; formal analysis, BC-F; writing—original draft preparation, BC-F; writing—review and editing, RL-F and GJ-E; funding acquisition, BC-F. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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