

Towards a critical pedagogy in today's education

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ABSTRACT

The formation of critical and reflective citizens is one of the main objectives of current education, however, for various reasons within the teaching profession we leave aside these axes, focusing more on protocol aspects within educational institutions. The present essay has the intention of reflecting on the importance of the teacher's work in the formation of competencies inside and outside the classroom, considering the student as an active entity in the educational process, giving more importance to his reasoning than to pedagogical formalism.

Keywords: Planning; Learning; Reflection; Didactics; Didactics; Education.

Introduction

At the beginning of the teaching journey, it is clear to us that one of the main objectives that we must consider is the generation of meaningful learning in our students, an aspect that may seem simple but requires the construction of hybrid, relevant and contextualized educational environments, where the mediator must propose activities and real situations, in addition to the implementation of various cognitive resources, that is, the creation of scaffolds that facilitate reflective thinking.

Therefore, the design of authentic tasks is essential, which require a complex level of thinking, being motivating and challenging for students, the same that favor the academic performance of the learner, transforming the information acquired into an

ability and skill that will benefit him/her in his/her daily personal, social and professional development. When implementing authentic tasks, it is important the selection of formative contents to avoid mechanization or the so-called banking education (Freire (2006), called this way the process where the educator deposits contents in the student's mind, the latter having a role as a passive entity).

Development

Klafki (quoted by Paredes, 2017) focused his educational philosophy on the reduction of disciplinary contents, giving more importance to formative contents and the linking of these with the current and future condition of students, aspects that today we must latently consider in our didactic planning. It is not that disciplinary knowledge is inadequate, but that it is important to project it from a transversal axis, where there are balanced connections between theoretical and practical training.

Beforehand, we know that it is common to hear in classrooms that this subject is theoretical, that one is practical... which is unacceptable. The teacher is committed to maintain a harmony between these axes, because "any human practice is a rational activity that has theoretical components..., therefore, no practice can be maintained as such, if it is not supported by a solid theoretical construction" (Fernandez, 2007, p. 23). In short, there would be no practice without theory and no theory without practice.

In addition to the above, Dewey conceives education as an integral process, where the development of the learner "is not achieved only through the study of the world, but through action on it" (as cited in Suárez, 2014, p. 85). Likewise, he rejects all fragmentation, separation and alignment of contents and tries in his philosophy to avoid any dichotomy, such as theory and praxis, where in any educational process, they will have to be intertwined, synchronized, having a pragmatic and experimentalist ideology, as Emmanuel Kant said, practice without theory is blind and theory without practice is useless.

Montaigne condemned rote learning that forgets virtue and the formation of judgment, taking up Seneca's phrase: we do not learn for life, but for school. Likewise, he emphasizes that the student should not retain precepts in memory, but reflects on them, where he can make them intimately his own, it is not enough to temper the soul, it is

necessary to strengthen his muscles (as cited in Mastache, 1962, pp. 37-38). Therefore, it is important to promote reasoning in our learners, regardless of our professional profile.

This invites us to rethink that didactic knowledge is not the mere application of a particular method, but the implementation of conditions to develop a dialectical exchange between teachers and students, which will lead to the formation of competent entities inside and outside the classroom. Therefore, the planning process is important, however, in many occasions pedagogical formalism can be a limiting factor, understanding it as the accumulation of conceptualizations and requirements that the teacher must consider and comply with in his school work, that methodological recipe book which, beyond propitiating a reengineering of the curriculum, turns it into a traditional, memoristic and mechanical activity.

Moran (2004) mentions that in the absence of technical-pedagogical knowledge, teachers should reflect critically and collectively on their role and development, having a researcher, facilitator or catalyst profile beyond the academic field, where they not only know their subject, but also develop the necessary skills, abilities and attitudes, generating a critical and collective reflection on their role and development, having a researcher, facilitator or catalyst profile beyond the academic field, where they not only know their subject, but also develop the necessary skills, abilities and attitudes, generating a critical and collective reflection on their role and development, skills and attitudes, generating environments where students learn to learn and have the pleasure of learning, highlighting their recognition of the social project they guide, giving meaning and significance to their work, developing in a critical, creative and sometimes original way. Brunner, quoted by Suárez (2014) stresses the relevance of productive and creative thinking, "for this, the student must have considerable freedom and, at the same time, enough elements and guidance for such exploration to lead to results" (p. 91), where the main concern of the teacher should be the active participation of the learner throughout the educational process, remarking that reasoning processes are more important than the accumulation of data or concepts.

The teacher's role is not only to teach a class. There are several activities with which he/she must comply, such as, for example, the development of curricula, lesson plans, evaluation instruments, attendance to meetings and extemporaneous events, compliance with some standards imposed by the institutions, just to mention a few, it is then that we come to the following dichotomy: do we invest more time in meeting certain guidelines

and protocols prior and during our intervention, or do we focus our attention on creating a critical pedagogy in favor of the students?

To give an answer to the above, would be somewhat dogmatic and subjective, however, we can occasionally observe at different educational levels, the teacher promoting a tension when trying to comply with all these protocols, which although they are useful, become very complex and tedious when it comes to address them, adding to this process, the pedagogical jargon with which they are handled and change continuously, destabilizing the teaching work. Terminology such as mindfulness, gamification, soft skills, peace in, peace out, among others, have been intruding in the educational field, being mostly borrowed from other areas, however, they are strategies that have been working (in an eclectic way) for years in the educational field.

To mention some authors, Zarzar emphasizes the importance of induction (peace in), Decroly emphasizes the relevance of playful activities (gamification), Freinet, emphasized the motivation by the student's desire to do and know, expression, pleasure, dynamism, cooperativism, autonomous thinking and participatory self-training, dialogue, among many other contributions (soft skills) and we can continue with an innumerable list.

In short, it is not that it is inadequate, everything is evolving, but we focus as educators on possessing a wealth of knowledge and pedagogical techniques, when it is more important to have a reflective, critical, searching, changing, transforming and intellectually free attitude. The modernization of resources or techniques is of no use without the initiative and creativity of the teacher, since their efficiency depends to a great extent on the teachers.

Conclusions

Let us direct our gaze towards the formation of critical people, for this it is important that there is a balance in school bureaucratization, assimilating it as an enrichment to the teaching praxis and not as a rigid process where there is satiety (the same that we could project to the students), generating transforming perspectives in which the student is not only capable, but also transforms reality, having a role, as Giroux said, of transformative intellectual (as cited in Fernández, 2007). Let us foster a critical attitude

in our students, but let us remember that, in order to achieve this goal, we must start with ourselves, let us be congruent and remember that "men are not made in silence, but in words, in work, in action, in reflection" (Freire, 2006).