

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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The role and work of the faculty are increasingly challenged and losing social value, however we believe it or not, the values of society or not their work is important because it serves to lay the groundwork or foundation of society the future. The teacher's role is teaching but this is linked to the learning process and we see that we mean by learning. In what follows will be a reflection of learning is, what is taught, why teach and what is taught in the University, mainly based on my experience over twenty years in different educational stages.

LEARN ABOUT

The society is taught directly influences the content and especially the teaching style and the so-called information society include communication networks and continuously updated data in the knowledge society, the importance focuses on the value of data generated and the power of knowledge as a generator of new knowledge and the ability to create, change and transform society. However, we have taken a step further and speaks of the learning society where what emerges is a system in which individuals must learn throughout life, so that individuals must take responsibility for their own progress and competence.

Such a society is characterized by:

- 1.- Be highly permissive and permissive society are blurring the lines and contours of the forbidden and permitted, what can and what cannot, what is good and what is bad. When this happens, obviously, the students are not educated. We've gone from a society based on the principle of authority, a society where the prevailing principle of negotiation.
- 2.- As a society that lives the culture of this, we are interested in pleasure travel easy, quick success, enrichment immediately, thus blurring the horizon of the future, and we're leaning more towards the plane of having that of be. In such a culture, what is sought is what one likes, what interests, what satisfies, and if you have to go over something or someone, is passed. Clearly, this is an element that can contribute greatly to the breakdown of cohabitation.

All this begs the question what is learning? We define learning as "the change in behavior as a result of practice." The problem is that all understand the same for behavior. Learning is select, organize, develop, implement and evaluate.

- 1.- Select. The ideas of a book, a kind of a conversation,....., should be selected according to our interests.
- 2.- Organize. We must organize our minds when we find a very intelligent person say that his head is well furnished. That is, learning is put each idea or knowledge in every place, and how to use those ideas or knowledge.
- 3.- Develop. Ideas should be developed to become knowledge or personal construction.
- 4.- Apply. We must implement, test, knowledge or skills learned. We cannot forget that learning and knowledge construction do not mean only a state-of passing from not knowing to knowing, but a capacity that is, to do something with what they learn: to relate, explain, compare, criticize and, special changed and the reality referred to self-knowledge. Each learned knowledge is acquired a capacity not previously had, so it is rightly said that knowledge is power.

There is an anecdote that reveals the meaning and power of knowledge is due to Bruner. A student of his, very concerned about the stagnation of a part of his thesis, he asked what I could do with something that was substantial for their work but did not quite understand. Bruner suggested implementing it. The student, puzzled, he said - how can I apply if I do not understand? And Bruner replied emphatically: - how will you understand, if not used?. It is good practice to try and apply it allows discovering the meaning and power of knowledge and skills.

5.- Finally there will be to assess the degree or level of knowledge will have to be achieved and a measure of the state of the goal we had previously formulated.

These aspects of learning are different ways to describe the activities of human intelligence, and the first three learning skills: selecting, organizing and developing correspond to analytics, the application with practical intelligence and the intelligence assessment on synthetic that we have the creativity and critical thinking. So learning is nothing but put intelligence into contact with informative data, that is, learning is thinking and learning is not simply the result of thought or otherwise, learning means nothing to pass the information different filters of human intelligence, but all of them, not only for the pure and simple repetition of the same, leaving the house unoccupied intelligence, but inhabiting.

WHAT IS TAUGHT

To teach is to present curriculum, values, skills, processes and strategies. The profession of teaching requires, as in any other office, three conditions acquired specific connotations in practice according to the characteristics of education: competence, efficiency and personality.

1.- Competence: The first condition is that the expert teacher is competent. This competition has three reference areas: academic competence, pedagogical and technological. The teacher has to be a knowledgeable expert in a particular scientific field, and that's where the teacher manages his real authority. It is well known expression that someone is an "authority on the subject". When a teacher reaches this domain is able to summarize or expand knowledge, to theorize or down to specific situations, using one or several different teaching methods, but above all, know who knows and who does not know. The teacher has the authority to make day to day. How is it available? The teacher's authority comes from the attitude expressed in the class, their attitude to teach what he knows and dominates honestly, recognizing its own limitations, and even gaps and errors within the areas of knowledge in their specialty, and In particular, interpersonal relationships in the classroom, the recognition of ideas and beliefs of their students, they are unique and different from one another and their belief about effective ways to improve student learning. The teacher cannot flaunt the authority or insist on it. If forced, students immediately find its roots in insecurity or lack of authenticity, that is, the absence of the sense of self that underlies all genuine authority.

2.- Efficiency: Efficiency is the ability to solve classroom problems with imagination and creativity. The teacher has to make a class every day, until a few years, the teacher found it easy to get to class because it was supported by the principle of authority, but not now. The problems you may come to the teacher of the class group as a whole, of any of the students who constitute the very structure of the classroom, leadership, or even the same content, but a teacher knows how to solve efficiently these problems and therefore have a good neighbor in the class.

3.- Personality: There are three essential features today in the teacher's personality. The first concerns the pedagogical optimism, the teacher's ability to cope with their students. The second character trait must be the teacher's enthusiasm is contagious *pathos* of the teacher because he believes in what he does. When the teacher really believes in something, transmits, and lives in its class, the same enthusiasm communicates to students that they will not discover values found in other social situations. The important thing is that the teacher from getting students the passion for learning.

The third character trait is that of leadership. Leadership is not imposed by authority, but is achieved when students appreciate the moral, authority, scientific excellence, dedication and interest of the teacher, together they can become a real leader. Unamuno said that the course that all teachers must take and pass before turning to teaching, was to "teach to see", a subject that never found among educational programs. They say that one of the most evident features of the creative and the gifted is precisely that are always working to the limit of its capacity. The leader can not allow students shoddy work, poorly, to do the work in any way, on the contrary, should raise the level of effort and the requirement in its class. That is the true leader.

WHY TEACH

The first good reason is the impact that the teacher, good teacher, makes the lives of their students. It is true that many of our students leave school, college, and not return to see again in life. It's the same. We firmly rooted belief in the soul, or rather the certainty that our passage through their lives has not been in vain. Our beliefs and they are part of our life, our being.

We teach, too, because we believe that our task, hidden, silent, ignored, it is important to society.

Third, we teach because teaching satisfactions we get possibly the best we can bring life.

Fourth, teach, and may be the most powerful reason of all, because we believe in education.

The satisfaction of teaching is not comparable to any other. It is a surer guide than the norm or duty. It's allowing us to distinguish and choose between what to do and what not. It is also a criterion of educational quality. If teachers and students learn together and experience feelings of satisfaction, something goes wrong. When teachers enjoy teaching, students also enjoy the satisfaction and return to work with teachers. But the real pleasure of the teacher is when students perform well as the results truly creative and original work. The deeper meaning of teaching, being a teacher is to engage honestly with some specific ideas. Teacher is not providing information, but he who believes in what he does because he identifies with it. Students are smart and know how to find out if a teacher likes or not what they are doing. If the teacher does not feel the pleasure of teaching, the student thinks that what he teaches is not worth learning it. And if all teachers teach only because they are obliged to, think it not worth learning. You can learn to enjoy teaching, but cannot enjoy learning to teach. The intimate processes: learning, knowledge, love, to be discovered for themselves. These processes can only be "provided" when considering the satisfaction of someone who lives daily in its class.

TEACHING AT THE UNIVERSITY

Today everyone accepts the idea that academic work should not only consist in the transmission of accumulated knowledge to date but should be extended to the creation of new knowledge, and therefore, it is inevitable that in the future be held by any university unless it demonstrates that an active presence in the circles where it expands the frontier of knowledge. What is not clear, however, is to what extent should a university professor and, more realistically, you can assign its intellectual resources and work time to each of these tasks: teaching or teaching and research, therefore, is also unclear how best to organize such activities at the institutional level. In what follows we make some reflections about it. It is, as it cannot be otherwise, merely personal reflections whose value is to contribute to the ongoing debate on the issue.

The university must pursue two goals: first, to give students the analytical tools required to analyze the facts on which they are interested and secondly, to instruct them in managing them. Therefore, the success of teaching is that both objectives are achieved, it is of little help acquaint students with the analytical tools if at the same time, do not know how to use to solve interesting problems, namely those posed by everyday life. The success of the teaching and learning depends on many factors, some completely beyond the control of the teacher as for example, class size, the number of hours and/or subjects to be taught, and so on. Matters which generally lacks decision-making power, others, however, usually rely on their own view of the good organization of their teaching: thus, for example, how to teach their subject: a detailed explanation of each topic, or just guide and protect the personal work of each student? Do you attribute a central role of the examinations, or secondary to other rating instruments, such as performing regular jobs, etc.?

The first group of questions, namely those relating to class size, the number of hours and/or different materials to provide, any analysis is pointless if not done taking into account the needs of time, training and resources to support teaching research work required by the university professor. Therefore we focus on the second group of questions: those concerning the organization of teaching. Since these are matters of trade, that is the fruit of the experience of every teacher in university teaching professional, little can be said to have doctrinal value. Therefore, in what follows I will discuss opinions, not theories, organizational aspects of teaching that, according to personal experience, I think is important. These aspects refer to the rules and examinations.

"Rules of the Game" We define the set rules of academic standards designed to facilitate the orderly development of university teaching, for example, the criteria for correction and revision of examinations, dates for completion, the hours students, etc. It is important that they be clearly defined at the beginning of the course, and from that time all parties respect them. The failure of such standards or the breach thereof once they have been exposed will hinder the orderly development of teaching or teaching and leads directly to its failure.

Tests University education aims, first, to give students the analytical tools required to analyze the facts that are interested and second, to instruct them in managing them. In this sense, it seems obvious that it is possible to learn the tools and not knowing how to use, but not knowing how to use them without knowing them. Therefore, it seems essential that the tests are designed so as to appraise whether the student has acquired the necessary skills to use the analytical tools of the profession for the university, supposedly to prepare them. In other words, the university should not be a theoretical and practical preparation, independent of one another and apparently unrelated.

To solve such problems that a university graduate must face in their work, it is imperative to be armed with a sophisticated analytical instruments, ie, "theoretical" because, just as an example, one thing is running a kiosk Newspaper and quite another, directing the complex economic and institutional framework of a modern corporation. To do the former, it is necessary to have an extraordinary analytical baggage that is, no training is needed to be acquired at a university, for the latter, yes. In today's world, think of a director "self" of a large multinational company based here has come from a messenger job at sixteen and only based on "practical experience" is inconceivable. In fact, one of the recent discoveries of modern economic growth theory is that the much-used example of learning by doing is in part a fallacy: in reality, this kind of learning has well defined boundaries and well below the knowledge necessary to build aircraft, open heart surgery or designing a new international monetary system. For that and even for other tasks much less difficulty, it is necessary to have analytical tools that provide only university.

Naturally this does not mean that knowledge of these tools is sufficient to perform these tasks and, therefore, that the university provides to society of graduates capable of undertaking ipso facto, that is, the day after graduation. It just means that those tools, and therefore the theoretical training that gives the university, are the necessary condition, with subsequent "learning by doing" someday be in a position to address many of the problems that facing the modern world. Well, while recognizing that the university cannot provide both the analytical tools such as "learning by doing" necessary to produce complete professional, we think, at least, should strive to educate students far as it can within its limited possibilities in the management of these tools. Therefore, we think the tests should not respond to the following scheme: "Prove Theorem 6, Lesson 8". For what is intended by this, that the student knows how to answer that question without notes? Do not remember the teacher when he realized that demonstration of its kind had to hand their "notes" and then only need to retain in his memory a lesson in your program? How do you intend, then, that students can demonstrate, not the "Theorem 6, Lesson 8", but all theorems of all the lessons of the program, and no "notes"!?

But besides, what would achieve it? Suppose the student is able to respond to such devilish question. Does it show that something about his ability to use this "theorem" in everyday life? Certainly not, so, by this procedure, it is perfectly possible to graduate with an "excellent record" and then be a mediocre career. In fact, this occurs with extraordinary frequency. Therefore, I do not think that's the proper way to evaluate the academic performance of college students. If one day in a professional, need to remember how it shows "Theorem 6, Lesson 8," could read without any book. Another thing, very different, is to require knowledge, to obtain his degree, that this "theorem" there, says so and it is useful to solve this, this and that, for example. This does not rule out, of course, the teacher, to prove the "theorem" has not "fallen from heaven," to prove it. Surely this course of action the student will find it more useful. It therefore seems reasonable that reviews issues raised by the daily life of the professionals in the field whose resolution requires the use of analytical tools of the profession itself, in preference to questions concerning the instrumental itself. Thus, the person who correctly solves shows that, in essence, learn about tools and also can use with the ease of a professional emerging, we should not because it would be reasonable to expect more than that: the ease of a fledgling professional, to whom he is a lifetime ahead to keep learning.

Interestingly, however, the Spanish university doesn't like these tests. In fact, despite their usual protests against the traditional model, the end always prefer other, more "practical", here exposed. This makes sense: while the traditional model seems completely absurd I have the suspicion that, deep down, it is easier to memorize the analytical tools and nothing else, prove that they have understood its meaning and who have some fluency in their use. Therefore, it is our responsibility to convince them that, first, good things are never achieved effortlessly, and second, that even so, worth changing. In contrast, the academic authorities must understand that this kind of teaching is much more difficult for the teacher and therefore more time consuming and energy than traditional. So if you really want a more practical education, they might start by adjusting the number of teaching hours of teachers, because as Anglo saying goes, You Cannot Have the cake and eat it too. As stated in the Delors Report (1996), there are four pillars on which to build the education of XXI century. First, "learning to know", combining a wide culture with a rigorous specialization, second, "learning to do," acquiring skills and capabilities to deal with many situations, third, "learning to be" developing one's personality and enabling autonomy and judgment, and finally "learning to live together," respecting plurality and fostering solidarity. The etymology of the word education means that there is no education without due process of transmission of knowledge and to be available, then, certain principles that allow setting the broad objectives to be achieved in teacher development.

To all this must be added the task of knowledge creation, knowledge can be transmitted only to the extent that you are in possession of it, and you can only create knowledge as you are willing to explore new avenues of study, that is, attend the investigation. Being a professor at the University is attempting to give a satisfactory answer is threefold: education, communication of knowledge and knowledge creation.

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