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# Teachers Education for Living Together in the 21st Century

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The Twentieth Century was a Century of major contradictions. Never before humanity could educate so many individuals for such long periods of time. However, never before humanity had been able to kill so many of its members. In fact, during the Twentieth Century other human beings killed more than 180,000,000 people. Two World Wars and hundreds of civil and interethnic wars have taken place during that Century. Also violence on gender, violence issued from drugs use and abuse, and different forms of intergenerational violence were and are part of our everyday life. The great majority of wars and conflicts were initiated and conducted by highly educated leaders. These are men that have, for at least 12 years, visited different educational institutions: lawyers, engineers, and other university graduates. What happened? How can Humanity avoid it in the future?

In fact, one hypothesis is that education forgot the integrity of men and women and have instead concentrated only in some aspects of their education: the technocratic and disciplinary oriented contents and methods, with not enough consideration of education for peace and peaceful conflict management. Therefore, to humanise the new Century by avoiding war and to managing conflicts without such a high price, a different education should be guaranteed. But the 21st Century is not the same as the 20th. If we want to reshape education and to reorient it towards a more comprehensive process, different trends and priorities have to be analysed and taken into consideration. This should at the same time guarantee an access to instrumental knowledge; as well as the knowledge, practices and values that reinforce the need, will and capacity of everybody to live together. That is what this text is about: what are the major trends in social development that reinforce the need to revisit, reshape, reorient education; what are some of the current attempts to reform education and especially its heart: the curriculum; and what should be the new pillars to promote a paradigm shift in the current teacher profile to cope with a new curriculum and address the emergent needs for a peaceful Twenty-first Century?

We are aware that peace is not all about education and that education is not only a process aiming togetherness. But this is an exercise to educators and from educators. It is an argument to think and to rethink on our profession and in the field of our specialised competences. As citizens we might even be convinced that thanks to education there were 'only' near 2 hundred millions of death; or, on the contrary, that only education is responsible for the bad balance during those hundred years of history. Let us be educators who take complexity into consideration and who are convinced that we cannot change the world alone, but that we indeed can contribute to it.

1.  <u>Some major trends in social development and the need of a paradigm shift in education</u>

There are at least six noticeable trends in the demand for education: (i) changes in occupational profiles in the context of a world of work that is increasingly heterogeneous, in many cases shrinking, swiftly changing and ever more globalise; (ii) the need to counteract deepening social inequalities, leading to increased marginal and violence; (iii) the need to recognize that the diversity between individuals and communities is a valuable resource that is different from social inequality; (iv) the need to educate individuals so that they are able to satisfy their need for better forms of representation as citizens in society; (v) the increasingly broader spectrum of issues—arising, for example, from advances in biotechnology—on which individuals may take decisions; and (vi) the co-existence of advantages and disadvantages resulting from the impact of technical progress on the environment and the quality of life of individuals and communities. (UNDP 2000; 2001 and 2002; Stiglitz, 2002).

These trends are presenting education and education systems with different opportunities and new risks. The existing education system was created to cope with a society organized into different social classes, but at the same time giving opportunities for the majority to become integrated. It was modified to cope with an economy organized into different sectors and requiring different kinds of specialization. In that economy and that society it was expected that some people learned to think and thus to take decisions, while others acted without thinking too much. The non-specialized working positions could be filled by skilled trained workers who have less general knowledge and small interest in lifelong learning.

The current situation makes it necessary for all people to learn both to act and to think. Those who have not been educated in this way are probably not going to be able to hold down good jobs, to invent new ones or even to fulfil some fundamental aspects of their personal lives. The speed of economic and social change also makes it necessary to learn to cope with the stress of constant change and even to take advantage of it.

The current situation also makes it necessary to strengthen the teaching of values. It should be understood that the unequal and haphazard distribution of opportunity is a threat to the survival of all, and furthermore, that reactions against marginalization through violence do not lead to the solution of problems.

With regard to the components of educational processes, there are also at least four important trends to be considered: (i) the constant acceleration and restructuring of scientific and technological knowledge, and the emergence of an authentic scientific and technological system that is rapidly making obsolete educational content based on the provision of information; (ii) the growth of institutions and experiences outside the school designed for the cultural creation and consumption of children and young people; (iii) ever wider use of the new information and communication technologies; (iv) the decline in the effectiveness of the teaching and school models developed in previous centuries.

Special attention has to be paid to the first of these four trends in the framework of the need to shift the educational paradigm concerning one of the fundamental principles of education. Education was supposed, 'to transmit the culture of adult generations to younger generations'. Behind this principle there is a hypothesis of stability and homogeneity that is not longer relevant. This hypothesis of stability involves each generation and each culture. During the past centuries it was assumed that: (a) young generations do not have any

culture of their own and willingly accepted that imposed by adults; (b) that young people formed an homogeneous group, where the only differences were biological or attributable to social class and the adult culture; and (c) the way in which knowledge was produced and structured was stable over time.

The speed of current changes has led to the discovery that each generation possesses its own culture, that there is wide diversity within each generation and that the way in which knowledge is produced and structured—but especially knowledge as 'product'—is unstable over time. This rediscovery and parallel evolutions in educational psychology have resulted in the acceptance that children and young people must be active participants in the educational processes and even that diversity should be encouraged. Increasing evidence about the instability of knowledge has added elements to the challenge of learning to learn.

As a result of the concurrent action of these trends, there is a growing contradiction between progress in incorporating more individuals into formal education and shortcomings in its quality, understood as its capacity to respond to new educational demands. In fact, net enrolment ratios have increased rapidly in all the regions of the world, even in the poorest countries (UNESCO, 1999). Some of the above-mentioned trends—for example, the demand for new profiles for economic, social and political participation, greater recognition of diversity, and the new dynamics of knowledge production—are posing renewed challenges to the issue of the meaning of education. In any event, this issue concerns the content of education, defined in the broadest sense of the term. The content of education is, in fact, all that should be taught or which is effectively 'contained' in educational practices: values, concepts and procedures for learning, being, doing and living together.

Contradictions between quantitative advances and problems in the quality of education, the increasing use of the new information and communication technologies (ICTs), the growing demand for children and young people to learn actively and creatively, and a deeper understanding of the importance of links between education and the community, so that education may be of better quality and more effective, also present new challenges to the issue of teaching methods and school organization.

Increasing interconnections and the globalisation of many economic decisions and processes, intensified migration, and the international scale of many communications media provide populations with new standards and parameters. There are attempts to counterbalance these through local and national production, and there are also signs of resistance. This context produces tensions reflecting different attempts at achieving membership and constructing identities. These tensions also make demands on education in terms of acquiring skills to facilitate their peaceful, creative resolution.

The new scenario at the beginning of the Twenty-first Century thus provides both more opportunities and more risks facing each and every individual to have access to a living wage, for the redistribution of the benefits of economic growth, for social cohesion, democracy and cultural diversity. It also provides more opportunities and risks for peace at the international, regional and local levels.

Education can be a powerful tool for exploiting the opportunities and avoiding the pitfalls of this new scenario. But not the same education as in the Nineteenth Century that is still widespread today. This type of education has offered all that it could in integrating new social and age groups to an international and peaceful community.

2.   Some current attempts to reform education and especially curriculum

In the 1980s and 1990s many national States, provinces and municipal councils throughout the world introduced educational reforms focused on the above-mentioned concerns. But other governments have not yet done so. In the current context, there is no guarantee that carrying out a number of unconnected national, provincial or local reforms are a sufficient strategy for social cohesion and world peace. For example, even countries with a high degree of educational development and well supplied with resources are dissatisfied with the quality of education and are uncertain about the way it should be improved (UNESCO/IBE, 2001; Torney-Purta, 2001; OECD, 2001).

It is possible to say that these feelings do not concern difficulties in finding the direction of change, but difficulties in finding ways to manage those changes.

There is, in fact, general agreement about the need to educate young people and adults in competencies and identities empowering them to find their own best solutions to existing and known problems, as well as to new and unknown problems that will emerge. There is also general agreement about the fact that, in order to do this, it is necessary to deal with both old and new knowledge, to be ready today to learn unknown knowledge and to have an awareness of the consequences of actions in the short, medium and long term. In other words, there is general agreement about the need of learning to know, to be, to do and to live together (UNESCO/IBE, 2001). Relevant education is going to be the one that can promote these general competencies.

Ongoing reforms tackle the challenges concerning the educational structure, the curriculum, and the education system and school governance.

Concerning educational structures, many countries are trying to move from what can be called a 'pyramid for the pyramid' invented in the Nineteenth Century, to a more flexible one, structured according to the stages of life and admitting different ways of using educational opportunities. They are also trying to move from streams or tracks aimed at different sectors of the economy in a modern industrial society (primary, secondary and higher), to a diversity that accepts and caters to different identities without aggravating social inequalities. They are trying to preserve spaces for lifelong basic education and to offer supplementary training for skills that may become rapidly outdated.

But it seems clearer every day that curriculum reform is becoming the key issue for the next reform period. Many countries are trying to move from rigid programmes to flexible frameworks. In fact, after years of being obsessed about keeping information up to date, the educational community has realised that to achieve permanently information-oriented up-to-date curriculum is impossible, and that if we are to improve the quality of education it is much more important to reform the whole concept and structure of the curriculum.

It is quite impossible to refer in a short presentation such as this to all the aspects involved in this new approach. We are also jet still gathering the information to do it systematically. But it is possible to anticipate at least five trends of the new curricula for achieving relevant education: (i) they are really trying to orient the selection of contents so as to make possible the promotion of the competencies of 'to do', 'to learn', 'to live together', and 'to be'; (ii) they update information but favour accurate approaches; (iii) they try to change the logic of subject integration at the primary level and differentiation by 'academic disciplines' at the secondary level, going into a logic of a tension between integration and differentiation

throughout childhood and adolescence, allowing schools to combine disciplines, workshops, projects, etc.; (iv) they suggest replacing teaching methods oriented towards transmission, by methods favouring the 'construction' of 'competencies' and the use of knowledge in context as a way of learning; (v) they include proposals to evaluate the child's 'competencies' instead of measuring the amount of information learned.

Eight trends can be emphasized concerning attempts to change the discipline approach in order to face the needs of relevance: (i) a shift to a communicative approach in language learning; (ii) a shift to data gathering and processing in mathematics; (iii) a shift to a multiple perspective and a controversial approach in the social sciences; (iv) the inclusion of historical and ethical issues in the natural sciences; (v) the reinforcement of sports instead of traditional physical education; (vi) teaching in mother languages; (vii) reform in the performing arts; and (viii) attempts to include contents related to technologies (not only to ICTs).
(Consult:
http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/Publications/FreePublications/freehome.htm)

There are two main changes that are being introduced in relation to the system and school governance. The first one concerns internal processes. It consists of a shift from the top-down control of well-established processes to the promotion of the institutional capacity to learn through networking. The second one concerns external processes. It consists in a shift from an isolated way of doing to partner-oriented action. All these reforms, aims and well-documented intentions will never turn into reality if the current teachers profile does not considerably change.

## 3.   Five pillars to promote a paradigm shift in the current teacher profile

In the nineties most governments have proposes the professionalising of teaching as a goal for improving the quality, performance and efficiency of education systems.

However, here we will suggest that such a perspective is not enough guide for devising current teacher education. The demand for the professionalization of teachers is undoubtedly due to the awareness of a process of de-professionalization. Indeed, to sustain a professional structure on the same terms as when teaching first became a profession, there are certain indispensable conditions (Perrenoud, 1996; Goodson, 2000). First of all, undergraduate education must be of high quality; secondly current education must be held at reasonable intervals or even be ongoing and also of high quality; thirdly, there should be adequate supervision; and fourthly, at least part of the professional corps should be involved in what could be called mediation mechanisms between knowledge and school knowledge.

Even though there is not enough empirical research, the hypothesis can be forwarded that none of these four conditions has persisted over time and that in same cases they never existed. Although some teacher education institutions in high-industrialised countries have preserved a certain level of quality, others have never enjoyed such quality or have failed to maintain it. Current teacher education opportunities have been very much weakened in less developed countries or in countries with authoritarian governments. Supervision has disintegrated, never existed or has become a gerontocratic mechanism of corporate control. Finally, curriculum design, the preparation of textbooks and the technical advice required to produce a minimum linkage with the changes in knowledge and institutional organization

have remained in the hands of other professionals and not those of primary and secondary teachers themselves (Sacristan, 1997; Attali, 1996).

Consequently, this situation of technical de-professionalization has led to the 'intellectual disarmament' of teachers (Sacristán, 1997). There has been in fact a Taylorisation of teaching by which the teacher no longer has available certain reasonable skills for interacting with other professionals who provide him with inputs he is obliged to use, among other things because he is not in a position to create alternatives ones (see a similar argument in Apple, 1983).

The loss of meaning of the objectives due to the change in demands that were not dealt with for years, the need to take on a heavy load of administrative work, to stick to outdated programs and curricula and use textbooks written by others, these are all part of this de-professionalization process; which could be characterised as the loss of effectiveness of the standardised old skills, even when these have been well learnt.

But in our opinion, the demand for professionalization is inadequate for this situation. It could lead to the belief that what is needed is to guarantee the better acquisition of those Nineteenth Century standardized skills for dealing with certain needs and demands submitted to schools in the profession's early years and which, even if they had been mastered by all teachers in service, would be inappropriate today. The issue goes much further than that. It is a question of constructing a new field of professions (in plural) that has been given new meaning, re-visited, re-thought and re-conceived. This is the fundamental change that will make it possible to deal with the structural challenges facing teachers (in plural not only because they are many, but because they have differentiated profiles), and of which we are often not yet aware in all parts of the education sector.

The re-invention of the teaching profession can only be achieved by restoring seeds of the profession as conceived in the early years of modern schools and education systems; but avoiding the effects of de-professionalization and its shortcomings in order to guarantee the kind of education required in the Twenty-first Century. This cannot be done by courses or peer interchange activities, but rather requires an arduous, systematic medium term process that will include periods for evaluating and even reconstructing some standardized classroom teaching skills and for the exchange of experience and practice-based learning; but within a framework that will allow a profound review and re-signification based on many different disciplines. It is precisely this specific approach that graduate and systematic postgraduate studies should adopt as a method of current teacher education. We can provocatively say that we don't need in the world more traditional masters and doctoral programs. We need new processes for a joint reinvention of current teacher education, involving teacher colleges, teachers unions, individual teachers, parents, students and representatives of the academic and civil society.

Reinventing the teaching profession requires a degree of clarity so as to reflect on the direction to be taken. Teachers do what they know about how to do because that is what they have learnt when they were pupils at school and when they were trained; teacher trainers too. In fact, what is needed is a thorough consideration of the desired teacher profile and how to achieve it., developing distance and criticism in front of the own experiences to set them in the historical and cultural context they have taken place.

We suggest that the key to promoting the reinvention of the teaching profession lies in finding a focus for educational efforts. At the same time, it is necessary to guarantee certain

competencies (rather than skills, see Rychen and Hersch Salganik, 2001, and Perrenoud, 2001) for a better performance in the short term and greater participation in the reinvention of schools and education systems. This means, the recreation of meanings both for teachers themselves, and – more specifically – for the children in society. It is through this recreation of meanings that keys to structural solutions will be found.

We define competence as 'a roughly specialized system of abilities, proficiencies, or skills that are necessary or sufficient to reach a specific goal (in this case educating in a humanistic sense in the Twenty-first Century). This can be applied to individual dispositions or to the distribution of such dispositions within a social group (for instance teachers) or an institution' (Weinert, 2001). We suggest that the main competences to be promoted by teachers education are five: They are: i) citizenship, ii) wisdom, iii) empathy, iv) pragmatism and v) institutionalism.

### *Citizenship*

It seems essential for teachers to be able to understand and intervene as productive citizens in the world they live in, now and in the future. The endogamic culture in schools and teacher training colleges has led to constant mutual interaction between these institutions but not to a strong interaction with other institutions or areas, nor to self-questioning or a search for alternative responses beyond the confines of their immediate sphere of action. Even criticism is repeated from decade to decade without taking into sufficient consideration the changes in the outside world.

This closed circuit has prevented them from keeping up with the pace of change in the world. But no-one without an understanding of the world can really guide children and young people and foster learning in the Twenty-first Century. This means that a basic challenge for current teacher education is to broaden the cultural horizon of teachers. Consequently, all teacher educational opportunities should envisage several periods of time and diverse areas for re-establishing and re-defining open minded attitudes to the world by using a wide variety of sources: literature, cinema, visits to museums, excursions to different geographical contexts, visits to scientific institutions, short secondments in factories and hospitals; among other alternatives.

Various ways of opening up to, and cooperating with, the outside world can be used to develop this competence, from invitations to users and providers of new knowledge, to analyses and studies of demand, systematic evaluations of the individual's own courses and those of colleagues, visits and secondments to factories, companies, hospitals and different geographical contexts. All these activities are already being carried out in diverse contexts and ways, but they are still not adequate.

One of many examples of citizenship building in teacher education is the promotion of internships for short periods of time for teacher trainers of college teachers in private enterprises or public services other than educational ones. I remember such a programme to promote this type of internship in the principal teacher training institution in Argentina. The college teachers were incredibly enthusiastic, because at the age of 40 or 50 they had their first opportunity to become involved in a private enterprise and to know more about production in branches related to their disciplines. Biology teachers did internships in the pharmaceutical industry. Physics teachers were involved in engineering enterprises. Social science teacher trainers were attached to applied research teams connected with new

settlements. They could not believe that the discipline they were supposed to teach to future teachers was somehow related to 'the real world'.

The bias of this competence will naturally vary depending on the teacher profile in question. It is always possible to have the real world as a point of reference, but the kind of understanding and intervention sought will be different depending on the particular level and area this competence is exercised in: the social, natural, artificial or symbolic world. Whatever the case, when considering specifications for this competence, it is not advisable to reproduce the traditional division into disciplines used in academic spheres.

*Wisdom*

One of the most frequent demands posed to teachers in the past was to possess the right answers. They had to show – even if it was actually not true – that they were able to 'know everything about everything'. This demand was linked to traditional pedagogy and was one of the main pillars of root learning. From the pedagogical point of view it promoted a contradictory effect. On the one hand, it allowed a broad first approach to some aspects of instrumental knowledge through public schools and national school systems, but on the other hand, it promoted not only stagnation in the way of teaching, but even a diminution of respect for Socratic learning practices usually developed at Faculties of Arts, and in the preparatory schools for middle and higher classes, before the emergency of the modern education system.

Socratic teaching and learning enabled young people to build arguments and develop rational thinking. In that framework, young people were encouraged to pose and to ask questions and to analyse different points of view. On the contrary, learning by rote promotes the acceptance of a unique point of view and may be behind many negative phenomena of the first decade of the Twentieth Century such as totalitarianism, racism, etc.

Does it mean that we have to advocate a return to Socratic teaching and learning, only now for everyone and not just for the elite class? In some ways, yes (Nussbaum, 1998). In fact, what seems to be needed in a very controversial age full of uncertainties and a lack of satisfactory answers is to be able to construct better questions and to search for new answers. In the curriculum of Latvia, it is stated that the need is 'how to transform information into wisdom', using the word 'wisdom' in the sense of being able to ask the right questions so as to find new answers (Ministry of Education and Science of Latvia, 2001, p. 58). But ... are teachers really in a situation to contribute to the development of this kind of curricula?

Research on teachers seems to show that as a result of the old, prescribed, unified, standardized ways of teaching they are often afraid of being challenged by open questions and frequently also afraid of revealing a lack of answers. The key question is: how to encourage the capacity for questioning and the ability to accept the lack of answers, as an opportunity to find new, unknown, and better questions and answers.

A good example of wisdom, as it is understood in the curriculum mentioned above, is the case of a school in a very isolated village close to Dakar, Senegal. The principal and the teachers were not able to use computers. Usually when principals and teachers do not know something, they do not find ways for pupils to learn. In this case, however, the school team discovered that some students were able not only to use but to promote computer use

among themselves and decided to create the climate to enable a very fruitful peer learning process.

The participation in open debates with high-level qualified representatives of other professions, organised with the contribution of professional moderators, familiarity with the history of science and the role of mistakes and controversy in it, and also with personal biographies of outstanding social leaders that shows how they doubt and hesitate when facing big challenges, could be of great importance.

*Empathy*

It is absolutely essential for teachers to increasingly learn to understand and feel for others. The other may be a pupil, a father, a mother, a secondary school student, a supervisor, or the Ministry's officials; but also whole communities: businessmen, social organizations, churches and political parties (Hargreaves, 2000).

It is a question of getting to know and understand the culture of children and young people, the characteristics of communities, the way society works and its relationship with the State; of exercising tolerance towards, and cooperation with, different people.

It is essentially a question of being able to learn and to teach how to discover that there are 'other' people who speak, feel, think and do things in different ways, but who, notwithstanding, have the same concern for, and right to, peace, well-being, justice and beauty.

I wonder if teachers who, for instance, have Bolivian children in their classroom know that in the Aymara culture the future is considered to be behind and not in front of the human being. Human beings might know how the past was and be able to look at it. But in that culture they consider that they have no way of knowing anything about the future and therefore cannot see it. Does every teacher know that in Japan and in many other cultures children have to keep silent and not talk to an adult unless they are personally requested to do so; and what are the consequences of this for day-to-day life at school? I also wonder if teachers are aware of the social role of Islamic institutions and the differences between religion and tradition in the Arab States. On the one hand, Islamic institutions frequently fulfil the role of the welfare state in Europe to provide health, education and social cohesion. Understanding that role is extremely important in order to comprehend the people's attitudes to Islamic institutions. On the other hand, the attitude to women in many Arab countries is more related to local traditions than to religious ones.

It is also a question of learning and being able to teach that the 'others' are not stereotypes. Those 'others' are heterogeneous, are in permanent interaction with others and are part of cultures that have humanistic values, and also weaknesses.

How can we contribute to a teacher's professionalization so as to be able to help him/her find in others the elements of him/herself? How do we prepare and reanimate the teachers' capacity to contribute to the creation of a 'multiple we' that respects diversity without promoting a ghetto mentality?

In order to develop this competence, different strategies are also being used: the use of practical or theoretical research, reading and critical analysis of books and the unrestricted use of films from varied sources and on a variety of issues. Also producing, administering

and analysing surveys for a better knowledge of various subjective and objective realities, to be able, to some extent, to understand different perspectives. Role-playing following the motto of being other has been used successfully in some teachers training institutions. One very well planned one week study visit to a different culture may be more important than one year of a traditional master degree.

*Institutionality*

One of the major risks of some of the new trends in the age of the new technologies is the death of public life due to the inherent weaknesses of all institutions, including schools (Dubet and Martuccelli, 2000). This will not be a 'natural process'. It will be influenced by high level and everyday decisions of many social stakeholders. From our point of view, such weaknesses within institutions are not desirable, as they can lead to a prolonged downturn in economic, social and political development. Institutions are places were people meet, think and work together. If the institutions get weaker, people will have fewer opportunities to learn to live together, which is certainly not good for society.

That is the reason why we suggest that teachers must have the will and the competence to construct and maintain institutions. In front of the home education movement we should ask to ourselves: do we really want to confine the children of humanity only to home life? Which would be the consequences?

It seems essential for teachers to know that what is decided in the Ministries has – or should have- a lot to do with what goes on in schools and classrooms, but that nevertheless, it does not fully determine what happens there. And, furthermore, that what happens in institutions and classrooms is really important for the present and for the future of everyone, including them-selves.

There are numerous processes and events in institutions and classrooms that are determined with a significant degree of autonomy. The search for broadening the limits of autonomy, actually attempting to do so, and finding the limits of creativity, can encourage the exercise of responsible criticism of public policies rather than insults and abuse. Demands can thus be made from a position of action rather than inaction.

Understanding the articulation between the system's macro politics, the school's micro politics and the classroom, may enable the whole education sector to break the vicious circles of mutual demands, from governments to teachers and from teachers to governments, thus establishing a productive tension between self-assertion and self-discipline and demands on the other actors in the complex education process at all its specific levels.

Various strategies can be used to develop this competence, such as case studies, the follow-up of policies, the preparation of status reports and the comparative analysis of trends on the basis of statistics and comparative studies. It is extremely necessary for teachers to know hot to communicate, negotiate, work in teams and promote real institutional life. It is a priority to promote real institutional live in teacher colleges.

Some years ago I visited two teacher-training institutions in Mozambique. The first had a traditional curriculum. That curriculum was organized in disciplines, which were distributed in a homogeneous way throughout the year. The second one had a very innovative curriculum, organized in modules, which were very heterogeneous. Some of the

modules consisted of disciplines, but many others were projects. The second institution engaged student-teachers in diverse activities, such as sports and handcraft. The profile of the teachers from the second institution was doubtless very much more appropriate for working in conditions of poverty and learning to live together by promoting, for instance, the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

*Pragmatism*

But, it is of course, also indispensable for teachers to possess criteria for selecting among a number of well known strategies for intervening intentionally to foster pupils' learning, and for inventing other strategies where those available are inadequate or irrelevant.

It is currently said that a teacher should facilitate learning rather than present data or impose meticulously displayed arguments. By and large, this is correct. But sometimes it is interpreted as an invitation to non-intervention, to *laissez-faire* with no guidance. In fact, it is more difficult to facilitate, than to expose or impose knowledge (Meirieu, 2000). However, without guidance, pupils, particularly pupils from the lower classes, are less likely to learn. Teachers should, therefore, know how to select, evaluate, improve and create or recreate strategies for effective intervention. These strategies no longer consist merely of exposition. There is far more than that involved and different ways of teaching might have the same impact if the teachers who use them are convinced about their options.

Let us take some examples. Some years ago, I used to conduct a TV programme about schools. I visited many schools that were considered to be successful. Once I visited two schools which had both been very successful in reducing drop out. It was amazing to discover that they had independently decided to undertake completely different and even contradictory decisions. One school had decided to accept older students and to put them in the classes with other children of the same age so as to avoid the humiliation of putting an 8-year-old child with 6-year-old ones. The other school had decided to reorganize the whole school buildings into classes of heterogeneous ages but with homogeneous level groups in different disciplines. Both succeeded! Why? Because the principals and teachers had agreed on what to do and the core issue of self-esteem was preserved.

Various strategies can be used to develop this competence, such as peer learning through team work, institutional secondments and mutual observation, or the development of experimental projects for applying varied strategies with control or comparative groups. The Pennsylvania State University has a long-standing tradition in this direction. Already in the 1960s that university had organized different kindergarten options following a variety of theories and compared the learning results of the children attending them. Do we know enough about those experiences? Do we use them in the teacher-training programmes elsewhere?

Perhaps, the five competences proposed here have not been as well defined as they could be. But we have no doubt that this must be attempted. The old proposition of standardized skills was clear, simple, easy to communicate, understandable. That is why it was a lever for action. The same occurred with the New School movement. Spiritualism, positivism, and the critical theories of the ´60's and ´70's had a broad impact because of their clarity and simplicity, because they were in tune with the imagery of important groups of intellectuals, politicians and university students. Complex critical farragoes lacking a clear focus; elaborate technical proposals with no appeal to emotion, but simply based on reflexive interpretations. These will probably dazzle or attract, but they are not likely to have a real

and lasting impact on changing teacher education from within institutions, and furthermore with the commitment of each individual to seriously consider the new challenges of the Twenty-first Century together with the old, universal and always valuable ones of an international humanistic education.

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