

## A CRITICAL-REFLECTIVE LOOK AT THE ROLE OF THE INNOVATIVE TEACHER

GLADYS CECILIA GARCIA CORONEL. Bachelor of Science in Education. Specialist in Psychology and Education, Externado University of Colombia. Specialist in Family Social Processes, University of Cartagena. Education Specialist in the Development of Autonomous Learning from National University (Distance Learning). E-mail: gcoronel@unicolombo.edu.co.

**Abstract:** This analysis is relevant to the teacher training process, in those circumstances where teachers wish to bring about a pleasurable encounter between knowledge and students. It is therefore necessary that in each of our classes we implement innovative strategies, in order to generate enthusiasm and motivation in the learners. They, in turn, become interested in what they are going to learn and explore, investigate and consult so as to foment creativity and production. To this we add autonomy that is encouraged or developed in the students during this process, as well as excellent opportunities for healthy interpersonal relations both in and outside the classroom.

The objective of this analysis was to uncover the innovative teacher's pedagogical methods which allowed us to observe the pedagogical actions of innovative teachers. During the research we observed how some teachers are dynamic and creative, while others are routine and monotonous in their educational tasks. Because of this, some students in the latter group of teachers are disorderly in class, show no interest in asking questions and participating, and do not do homework. This generates low academic performance and discipline problems. On the other hand, students of the teachers that make each class interesting, are well-behaved and participate. They are productive and are eager to learn and do their work.

**Key Vocabulary:** Teacher, Innovation, Teaching, Learning and Creativity.

The task of teaching is of paramount importance in child development. This suggests that the docent organize, plan and implement the learning process in an appropriate manner. The teacher should also make use of needed resources so that necessary objectives are carried out. Innovation must be present not only in methodology, but also in content, assessment and the parental-student- school relationship.

The concepts of progress and innovation should be an integral part of the academic process, as their inclusion facilitates it. Progress invites teachers to research on a daily basis and to consult new sources of knowledge, so as to not be wedded to the textbook. That is, to go beyond the routine, to be at the forefront of all scientific developments and findings. This implies innovation in teaching strategies in order to captivate the student. It is necessary that the teacher establish a harmonious environment

that encourages the student to see, learn, discover and construct his own learning, and to enter into the magical world of research and science.

In this dynamic, the teacher ceases to be the main actor in the learning process. This allows the student to see the teacher as someone who is in a constant search for truth, like himself, and not as someone who dictates or rules. The skilled teacher is passive in the construction of knowledge. Ideally, the student doesn't view learning as a tedious chore, but rather as a good time; something which allows him to grow intellectually and also facilitates cognitive, language and thought development to the fullest.



When speaking of innovative teachers, one must take into account their logical thinking, necessary for developing concepts, theory and knowledge. Everything that is mental in nature is considered thought, whether it is abstract, rational, creative or artistic. This indicates that one cannot improvise to "innovate" since this action is coordinated with the "Self" of the teacher; his

conception of knowledge, world view, values and his commitment to new ways of learning. It means ceasing to be absolute and a prisoner of old knowledge and a methodology petrified over time. It means breaking with old paradigms established during his formation as a teacher and becoming an education professional with a relativist position, dynamic, autonomous, proactive visionary, forward-looking, and responding creatively to the reality of the classroom and its actors. The teacher does not discover truth, he transforms realities. As such, this transformation requires a being in a constant state of internal renewal; someone who is determined to face the challenges of everyday life in a macro-world of school, family and society.

The good teacher is confident of his abilities and takes his responsibility seriously as a human engineer or builder of new men. He is committed to his work and vocation, thereby ensuring excellent results in the overall education of his students regarding the cognitive, social-emotional and behavioral areas. This requires patience, creativity and a personal style, as the teacher attempts to satisfy the academic needs of students and as he interacts with students of different temperament and character.

It is important to know about those participating in the learning process. That is, to know the limits and scope of students and their cognitive and learning styles, among other factors. In this way the teacher defines his style of teaching, taking also into account their or his? experience and personality. Innovation

requires analysis and reflection in order to know what strategies are relevant to the student population and to meet the overall needs of this population and each individual child.

The relevance between what they are learning and its transfer to new situations indicates that students are building an autonomous knowledge base used to solve not only immediate but also medium and long term problems. Learners are not afraid to face the challenges of new knowledge. On the contrary, they like to consider and resolve issues, propose new ideas, discover new solutions, and tinker with materials to build new structures. They are open to change and ready to participate in it.

Besides taking into account the characteristics of the child-student, it is necessary to link the parents to the process, since they assist children with their homework. It is necessary to incorporate active, parental participation in each and every innovative event in order to know a little more about the kind of parents the institution is dealing with. Your or their? suggestions are important and can make significant contributions to the programmed activities or open doors to other innovation-enhancing institutions such as libraries, educational institutions, museums, be they local, regional or national.

The research was done from a qualitative standpoint. This methodology made observation and analysis of the teacher in the classroom possible and encouraged

thought about his innovation or traditional pedagogical practices.

This research is descriptive as it is pertinent to the problems being researched and also because it alludes to human reality and the situations that are being experienced at educational centers. The target subjects, or population for this study, were the students and teachers assigned to the research group.

The techniques employed were the interview, observation, and survey. The observation guides and survey and interview formats where the instruments chosen to obtain the information.

It was found in the observed teacher group that the teaching-learning process was carried out in a very routine manner by some teachers, resulting in apathy, discouragement, indifference and indiscipline in the classroom.

With regard to the innovative teachers, they demonstrated a positive attitude in their pedagogy, a love for their profession, and a joy in their life's work.

Innovative teachers foster meaningful learning in their students by generating the interest of learners in building knowledge, by giving meaning and significance to what they learn, and by helping them relate it to their daily lives. This develops independence, a healthy self-concept and self-worth and encourages responsibility for the assigned tasks.

Regarding this process, it was active with mass participation. The strategies consist of activities that are out of the ordinary, such as games, rounds and songs, questions, problems, didactic materials, new information technologies, and image reading. From this point, the children constructed their oral speech. When they have had difficulties, they engaged in dialogue to overcome them.

The teacher and students are interactive, creative, productive, autonomous, responsive to real situations and constantly searching for new knowledge. The children are self-assured, calm, tolerant and reach consensuses.

During the investigation there was evidence that teachers used different teaching strategies. They took into account the chronological and emotional age of students while respecting differences in learning styles and promoting autonomy.

One can see that an innovative role by the teacher significantly influences learning. A single innovative strategy does not suffice; it requires a range of creative activities to stimulate the desire to learn and improve cognitive development in children.

Contrary to the warm classroom atmosphere of the innovative teacher, we find the tired and bored counterpart due to the apathy of his students and their lack of respect and discipline. Learning is seen by students as something very emotional and they miss the

opportunity to create, recreate, discover and propose. We must not forget that children are the product of what parents, teachers and adults make of them.



The role of the innovative teacher is essential for meaningful learning by students and the application of knowledge in problem solving.

Values are implicit in the teaching-learning process and are important in the integral formation of every human being. Respect for the differences and learning pace of each and every one of the actors allows for tolerance and empathy, along with team work and solidarity.

Being an innovative teacher involves research, consulting, adapting, recreating, producing and being in a constant search for truth, in addition to serving the educational community and being an agent of change for a better quality of life.

It is important to take into account the characteristics of the student population while implementing innovative strategies. Issues and innovations go hand in hand, with no need for improvisation.

Educational institutions and parents or guardians must support innovative teachers and create opportunities for innovative and enjoyable learning.

**"Teacher: Give Wings to Your Imagination."**

GAGNE, R., 1971. Learning Conditions. Ed. Aguilar, Madrid.

NISBET, R. y otros 1976. Social Change . Aliaza Editorial. Madrid.

NOVAR, J. y GOWIN, B., 2.008. Learning How to Learn, Ed. F. C. E., México.

SZTOMPKA, P. 1995. Psychology of the Social Change. Madrid. Alianza Editorial .

## BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES.

AUSBEL, D., 2000. Educational Psychology: A Cognitive Vision. Ed. Trillas, México.

BRUNER, J., 2000. The Educational Process. Ed. Paidos, Buenos Aires.

DEWEY, John, 1960. Experience and Education. Ed. Losada, Buenos Aires.

EINER, E., 1998. The Illustrated Eye. Ed. Paidos, Barcelona.

EYLON, B. and LINM, M., 1988. Learning and Instruction. In Review of Educational Research, Fall, vol. 58, No. 3.

FLOREZ, R., 1995. Towards a Pedagogy of Knowledge. Ed. MacGraw-Hill Interamericana, S.A., Bogota.