

diàlegs

NOVEMBER 2020 N° 1

Resilient educational systems

Solutions and opportunities to face the Covid-19 storm



THE REPORT Personalizing education, a possible challenge Delphi Report

Carles Monereo · Richard Gerver
Juan Ignacio Pozo · Paulina Bánfalvi
Begonya Oliveras · Conxita Márquez
David W. Johnson · José Bernardo · Anna Forés

editor's letter

"At this time when education is undergoing one of the greatest crisis in its history, it is time to grow, to seek solutions and take advantage of opportunities. "



Education, a worthless diamond

Dear reader,

They say that long ago in a faraway country... *"A prince possessed a magnificent diamond, of which he was very proud of. One day, in an accident, the precious stone was totally scratched. This fact saddened the prince, and he decided to put all his efforts in getting the diamond back to what it had been. To do this, he called in the most skilled specialists so that the jewel would recover its original state. But, despite all efforts, they could not erase or cover up the line. Then a brilliant lapidary appeared. With art and patience he carved a magnificent rose into the diamond and was skillful enough to make the scratch the very stem of the rose... in such a way that the precious stone appeared, later, much more beautiful than before."*¹

Today, as the world struggles to overcome a storm called Covid-19, this little story can help us reflect on the current situation of education, a precious diamond that is priceless, but with an imperfection that horrifies us and we need to correct. In this situation of prolonged uncertainty that we live in, society needs a table of salvation that is light and hope for a better future. Experts from all over the world realize that that table or diamond, even if it is grated, is education. But, I ask myself, is it enough to fight to keep your educational centers open against all odds, as most countries are doing, or can we do something else?

In our story we see how the traditional methods to repair the mess are not effective, and it is then when our great forgotten "creativity" appears in the hand of a lapidary who is able to act out of the box and "with art and patience cut in the diamond a magnificent rose" creating a solution that exceeds all expectations.

Anna Forés in her book "Resilience, growing from adversity" tells us that "resilience is resisting, overcoming obstacles, learning from mistakes with humor... an immense human quality full of nuances". At this time when education is undergoing one of the greatest crisis in its history, it is time to grow, to seek solutions and take advantage of opportunities. This first copy of "Diàlegs" has that purpose and that is how our collaborators have understood it, education can be reborn after the storm *much more beautiful than ever*.



Ana Moreno Salvo
Directora de Impuls Educació

¹ www.humanizar.es

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a magazine reflecting on education

Diàlegs is a biannual publication edited with the support of the study center of Institutió Familiar d'Educació Impuls Educació; an institution with more than 50 years of experience in the service of society, in the education of thousands of young people in Catalonia and the Balearic Islands.

Diàlegs is a new digital magazine that was born with the desire to generate an enriching dialogue on current educational issues. Diàlegs aims to facilitate debate in a modern, dynamic and informative format with rigorous and quality content. Each copy will have a central theme and will have the collaboration and analysis of prestigious national and international experts through articles, interviews and reports that have a clear interest. The magazine is open to the participation of everyone who wants to collaborate. Each magazine number is prepared in advance and, after choosing the theme, a "call for papers" is broadcasted to give a large number of experts the opportunity to participate.

What moves us. We are inspired by the poet's words "the child is the future of man", highlighted by Jacques Delors in the emblematic UNESCO report, *Learning: the treasure within*. Like Delors, we have hope for a better world where human rights are respected, mutual understanding is alive, and advances in knowledge are used for the advancement of humankind.

Education in the 21st century

should be a means to serve all people, "realizing the ideals of peace, freedom and justice, which are necessary to create a global civilization where poverty, marginalization, ignorance, oppression and war have no place".

Our commitment is to society as a whole. We seek to empower teachers, schools and parents to *ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*, as recommended by ODS number 4 (*Quality Education. Sustainable Development Goals. UN*).

What we do. Our work is centered around three core areas that we believe are fundamental for quality education in the present and future of the digital age: personalization, thinking and technology.

PERSONALIZATION

Educating people requires taking into account their uniqueness, talents, interests and needs. Posing the student in the center makes the learning process meaningful and personally valuable and promotes

A new digital magazine that was born with the desire to generate an enriching dialogue on current educational issues





new learning. Personalization is a pedagogical proposal that brings quality to educational inclusion and equity.

CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING

Educating citizens to live in a democratic society, in a globalized and changing world where information is omnipresent, implies promoting critical and creative thinkers capable of lifelong learning, of finding good solutions to complex problems, and of questioning things by seeking the truth freely.

TECHNOLOGY

Nowadays technology has become an essential tool. Educating in a highly automated society offers the opportunity to harness the potential of technology to achieve educational goals more effectively. A way to bring the world closer to the classroom by making learning more real, autonomous and cooperative, promoting good use.

Institució Familiar d'Educació is an educational group with thirteen schools in Catalonia and the Balearic Islands that has more than 700 professionals, 5,000 families and 7,000 students. Its project is based on Christian humanism and personalized attention and provides an innovative vision of education because its students become people with integrity, caring citizens and competent professionals.

project

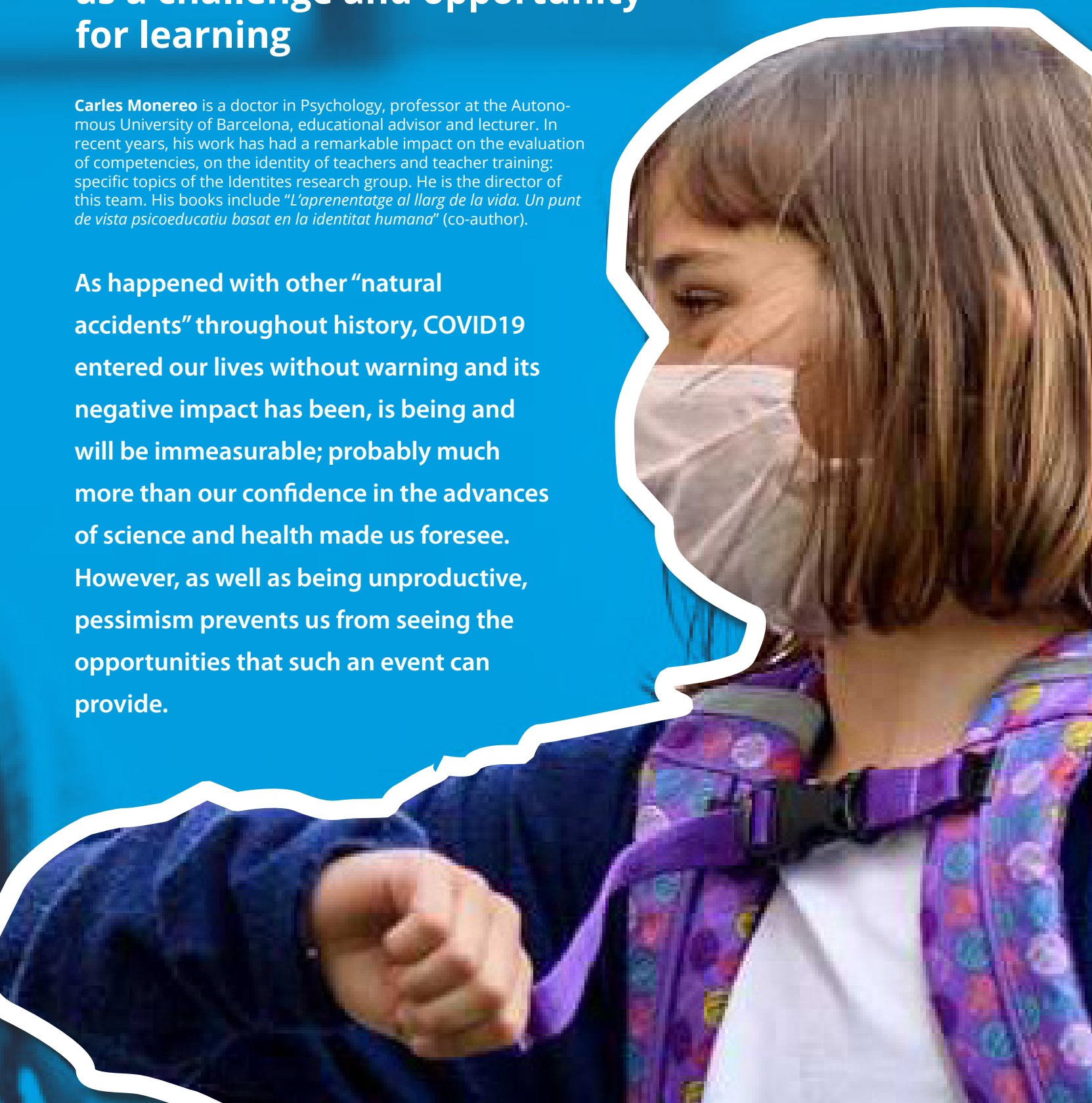


The COVID pandemic19

as a challenge and opportunity for learning

Carles Monereo is a doctor in Psychology, professor at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, educational advisor and lecturer. In recent years, his work has had a remarkable impact on the evaluation of competencies, on the identity of teachers and teacher training: specific topics of the Identites research group. He is the director of this team. His books include *"L'aprenentatge al llarg de la vida. Un punt de vista psicoeducatiu basat en la identitat humana"* (co-author).

As happened with other "natural accidents" throughout history, COVID19 entered our lives without warning and its negative impact has been, is being and will be immeasurable; probably much more than our confidence in the advances of science and health made us foresee. However, as well as being unproductive, pessimism prevents us from seeing the opportunities that such an event can provide.





by Carles Monereo

"The pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity and the optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty".
Winston Churchill.

An accident is, according to dictionaries, an unforeseen event that alters the normal or expected course of things and that, in principle - beyond conspiracy theories - does not obey a will or intention to produce a certain effect. However, accidents cause problems, i.e. circumstances that make it difficult to achieve some end and these problems are usually evident or manifest through incidents.

An example may illustrate what we are saying: the massive appearance of COVID19 has caused the population to be confined on a massive scale and so it has led to problems of isolation which are at the origin of various incidents, such as non-compliance with the rules of conduct prescribed by the Administration.

Unlike accidents, incidents are voluntary, and yet they can also occur unexpectedly and have a great emotional impact, destabilising people in such a way as to force them to make drastic changes in their habits and behaviour. Therefore, these problems and their respective incidents are important drivers for change.

Avoiding the naivety of thinking that problems and incidents created by the pandemic are going to promote positive innovations which, in the educational field and just by themselves, will result in the quality



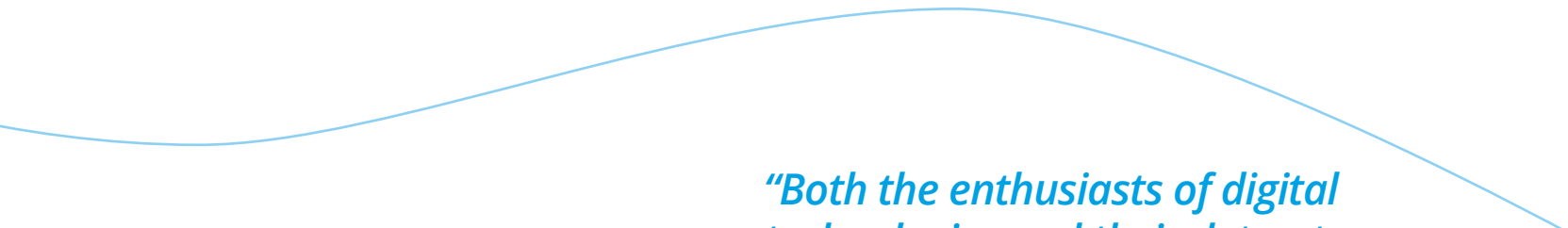
of learning, we do believe that these contingencies can constitute a good excuse to propitiate proactive changes in certain directions.

Trying to be concise, we propose that these changes should be oriented towards three key areas, at least: digital education, the management of emotions and the development of a curriculum based on challenges.

Putting digital education in the right place

With the advent of the pandemic and the situations of confinement, both the enthusiasts of digital technologies and their detractors have had to increase the time dedicated to telematic teaching. For the majority, this might have meant stimulating discoveries about its advantages, but also a greater awareness of its limitations when it is compared with face-to-face teaching. The underlying concepts of what teaching means to each teacher may condition their use; some might add even more fuel to their already boring master classes,





“Both the enthusiasts of digital technologies and their detractors have had to increase the time dedicated to telematic teaching.”

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turning them into unbearable monologues on a screen, while others will introduce new applications that will make what is taught more dynamic and attractive, but which will hardly complete all the objectives and be sustainable in the long term. This situation will cause problems and incidents for both, and an opportunity to: a) share difficulties and needs and b) cooperate to respond to them.

We cannot guarantee that this experience will be equally shocking and revealing for everyone, but we do think that it will put most people in a more sensitive position to reflect on when, how and why to use these technologies and when, how and why physical presence in the classroom is preferable. We should not waste it.

Placing the importance of learning to self-regulate one's emotions at the centre

Another evidence COVID19 and confinement are offering us is that we are quite incompetent when it comes to managing emotions. At the height of the pandemic in March 2020, the psychological emergency services in our community asked us for help face the flood of conflicts and incidents taking place inside private homes: There were situations of extreme apathy and addiction to screens and series, of isolation and anger for not being able to leave the house, of stress to control the children and their disputes, of guilt for not being able to take care of dependent relatives, of insecurity when helping the children with their homework, of alarm for the

contradictory news and, often too, the lack of security, the media's apocalyptic nature, fear of not having support in case of infection, tension due to conflicts with partners, anxiety due to the fear of losing one's job, frustration due to not taking advantage of the long-time available, or anguish due to having people with disorders at home who would have been attending specialized care centres.

In each of these contingencies, the twelve most frequently requested, children, adolescents and young people of school age suffer directly from the consequences of these conflicts, and their development and learning are clearly affected.

The demand for emotional training for pupils already has a certain tradition and, in fact, some school curricular projects have made this desire explicit through some objectives and content. It is, however, obvious that this has not been sufficiently translated into educational practice. As these “general or transversal competencies” are shared by everyone, are not generally taught by anyone.

Once again, we believe that the present moment exerts a desirable pressure to integrate once and for all the teaching of these competencies, so essential for mental health and social coexistence, into the curriculum. The use of problems and incidents can be a first-rate pedagogical device to deal with this demand. In our case, it was the trigger for the creation of the Psicofight¹ portal, a digital freely accessible site, which offers training on situations of emotional conflict through dramatized scenes, questions

“The pandemic has only made each of these challenges more visible, that affect the most vulnerable, with less access to education.”



to users and the advice of expert advisors concerning each topic.

Stimulate the need for a challenge-based curriculum

Many of us have long been committed to a new competence-based curriculum framework based on social challenges. In contrast to the current curriculum in Spain which presents a multitude of fragmented skills focused on traditional areas and contents, in places such as Finland, Scotland or Quebec, a simpler and more open proposal has been designed, based on very general values and skills: they converge in problem-situations, so that centres and teachers have a great deal of autonomy to create their projects, adapted to their respective contexts. We believe that UNESCO’s “Education 2030” agenda, has set a clear and exciting horizon, the ultimate aim of which is to train responsible citizens who are capable of facing, on a personal, local and planetary level, the seventeen challenges that lie at the heart of a sustainable world.

The pandemic has only made each of these challenges more visible, that affect the most vulnerable, with less access to education and fewer

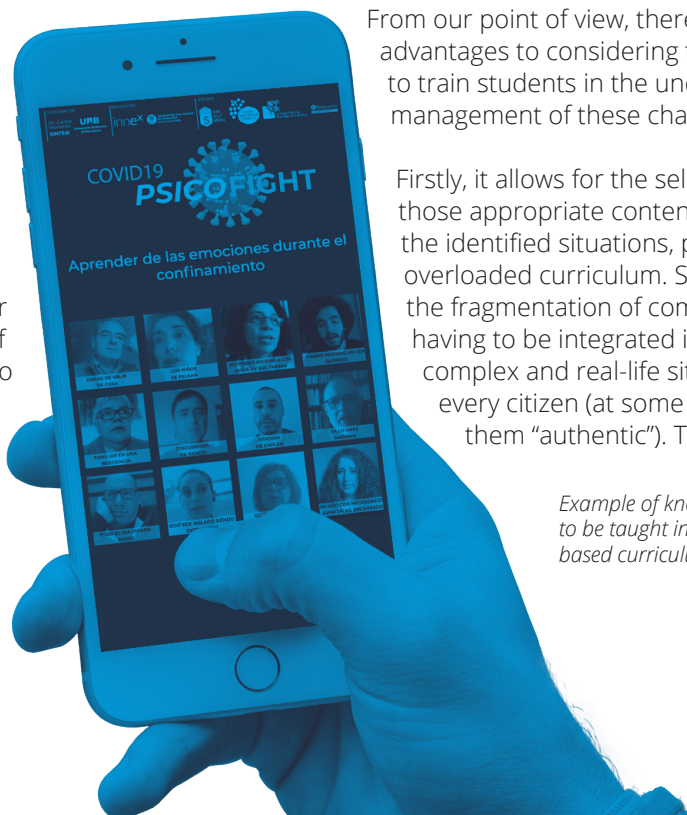
health resources, and also bringing to the fore the type of production and prevailing economy, which reveals political interests over health needs, showing the negative impact of our habits on the ecosystem, etc.

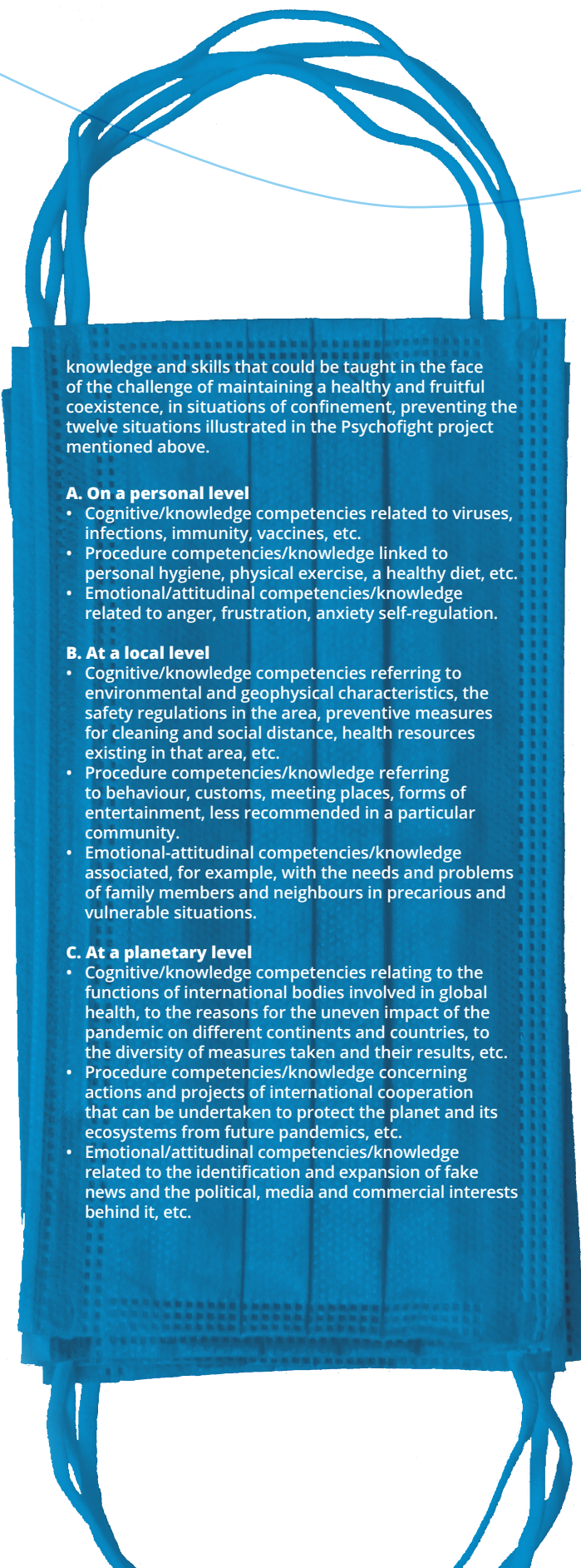
Why don’t we be brave and set these challenges as goals to be achieved by the end of compulsory schooling? This could be the exit profile of every schoolboy, being able to explain and manage, on a personal, local and global level, this set of challenges.

From our point of view, there are many advantages to considering teaching that aims to train students in the understanding and management of these challenges.

Firstly, it allows for the selection of only those appropriate contents and skills for the identified situations, pruning a currently overloaded curriculum. Secondly, it avoids the fragmentation of competencies by having to be integrated into complete, complex and real-life situations of every citizen (at some point we call them “authentic”). Thirdly, teaching

Example of knowledge and skills to be taught in a challenge-based curriculum proposal.





knowledge and skills that could be taught in the face of the challenge of maintaining a healthy and fruitful coexistence, in situations of confinement, preventing the twelve situations illustrated in the Psychofight project mentioned above.

A. On a personal level

- Cognitive/knowledge competencies related to viruses, infections, immunity, vaccines, etc.
- Procedure competencies/knowledge linked to personal hygiene, physical exercise, a healthy diet, etc.
- Emotional/attitudinal competencies/knowledge related to anger, frustration, anxiety self-regulation.

B. At a local level

- Cognitive/knowledge competencies referring to environmental and geophysical characteristics, the safety regulations in the area, preventive measures for cleaning and social distance, health resources existing in that area, etc.
- Procedure competencies/knowledge referring to behaviour, customs, meeting places, forms of entertainment, less recommended in a particular community.
- Emotional-attitudinal competencies/knowledge associated, for example, with the needs and problems of family members and neighbours in precarious and vulnerable situations.

C. At a planetary level

- Cognitive/knowledge competencies relating to the functions of international bodies involved in global health, to the reasons for the uneven impact of the pandemic on different continents and countries, to the diversity of measures taken and their results, etc.
- Procedure competencies/knowledge concerning actions and projects of international cooperation that can be undertaken to protect the planet and its ecosystems from future pandemics, etc.
- Emotional/attitudinal competencies/knowledge related to the identification and expansion of fake news and the political, media and commercial interests behind it, etc.

based on of these situations means giving meaning to what is learned, increasing the motivation of both the trainees and the teachers involved.

Finally, starting from the challenges proposed by a supranational institution such as UNESCO, it should facilitate -at least as far as the general framework is concerned- an agreement between the various political, trade union, educational and social forces and associations. This is absolutely necessary if we want to give coherence and continuity to our education system, preventing each new political party that comes to power from introducing a new law.

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¹ Josep Maria Monguet from UPC and Alex Trejo from Onsanity company also collaborated on this project, apart from the autor of this article.

the report

Personalizing education, a possible challenge

Experts in education exchange ideas and personalization strategies
to respond to the needs of each student and their unique context

by Jordi Viladrosa i Clua

Currently, personalization occupies a prominent place in any educational proposal that has a special interest in addressing the unique needs of each student, whether to include all students in the classroom or to seek educational excellence. However, there are almost as many conceptions about personalization as there are proposals. It is difficult to get an idea of what is really meant and even more so what methodologies or strategies should be used when implementing a truly personalized model.

In view of this situation, **Impuls Educació** study center promoted the study *“Personalization, a model for quality education in the 21st century”* in order to seek and take advantage of synergies through a dialogue between experts with diverse views and experiences, with the aim of building a common framework of consensus on the following questions:

- what is meant by personalizing in education;
- why should one personalize in education?;
- what is the goal of personalization and what can we expect from personalized learning?;
- what are the principles that an educational model should have in order to be considered personalized?;
- how to do it, that is, what methodologies, strategies, or ways of acting favor an effective application of personalization?; and finally,
- what will the personalized education school of the future be like?

What methodologies, strategies or courses of action favor an effective application of personalization?

The research was done using the Delphi method of experts because it allows consulting a diverse, international and extensive group of professionals and academics with experience and extensive training in the field. Experts that took part in this study can be seen in the table at next page.

Seven key points of personalization

Despite the divergences that arise in any study when the starting points and the conceptual and experiential framework of each expert are different, we highlight some relevant points that were the result of a broad consensus.

REGARDING PERSONALIZATION

- Personalized teaching is different from individualization because, despite being student-centered, it recognizes the student's own identity, and aims to develop or foster skills while empowering the student in the design of his or her personal path.
- Personalized learning has to be experiential. It implies the use of inquiry methodologies, as well as motivation and personal responsibility.

AS FOR THE CONCEPT OF PERSONALIZED EDUCATION

- It is an educational model aimed at educating unique, autonomous, open, responsible, supportive and resilient people who are able to overcome and persevere on their own.
- Its purpose is to educate people with integrity,

EXPERTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD WHO TOOK PART IN THIS STUDY

IN PERSONALIZATION

PROFESSIONALS



Barbara Bray



Kathleen McClaskey



Paulina Bánfalvi



Coral Regí

ACADÉMICOS



Neus Sanmartí



César Coll



Antonio Bernal



José Bernardo

IN EDUCATION



Richard Gerver



John Moravec



Francesc Torralba



Nacho Pozo



Javier Tourón



Arturo Galán

committed to personal and social improvement. It is necessary to favor the knowledge of oneself, the configuration of one's identity (values and dignity) and openness to others and to the world (solidarity, commitment), in order to consciously and critically decide on one's personal life project.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE, THE MAIN CHALLENGES THAT WOULD HAVE TO BE FACED FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF PERSONALIZATION ARE:

- Educating people who are adaptable to change, globally minded, knowledgeable and respectful of differences with other people (other cultures or other values), aware of the resources and care of the Planet. Supporting students to become innovators, capable of using their own imagination and creativity to achieve new results for society.
- Establishing cooperative work and planning dynamics among teachers that include the design of projects and learning environments, the choice of measures to meet the needs of each student and progress information.
- The personalized school of the future will be an open, flexible and welcoming school, where students feel accompanied and are autonomous in their learning, follow their own pace and according to their needs.

Sparks from a very suggestive round table

Moderated by **Gerardo Meneses**, this table posed, in a first round of interventions, a first question to each

speaker according to their area of specialization and a second part with more generic questions so that everyone could intervene freely.

Neus Sanmartí was asked for her opinion on the current curriculum by relating it to personalization and she compared the one prescribed by the administration with textbooks that often present something different. Sanmartí defends that: "there must be some basic minimums established for the whole population, trying to achieve that each student can deepen in specific aspects". Establishing key content is the role of educational administration, and it is up to each school to ensure that each student has the opportunity to expand this fundamental content with others that they can choose for themselves.

César Coll answers the question: What sense does it make for him to talk about personalized education and what are its characteristic notes? undoing the possible confusion of terminology: "It is education that is personalized; learning, on the other hand, is personal because it has a meaning for them, it is relevant to them". We must be careful, he said, because "learning can be personalized but it may not be personal". He specified the role of educators by stating that they had to implement a series of personalization strategies that have the purpose of involving students in their learning.

Paulina Bánfalvi was asked how can personalization help integrate students with special educational needs in the case of both difficulties and high abilities and what does an inclusive school that works and pursues equal

opportunities for all students require? She responded by arguing that “in a personalized context all students are different, without having to be labeled”. And also that “what we have to do is understand the student’s profile in all its complexity and respond by making the curriculum and their interests coincide at a meeting point”.

What features do you think are most characteristic of a teacher in personalized education? Why do you think they are important? were questions addressed to **Antonio Bernal**, who said that “changes in the generic sense are very complex and we must avoid ending up with the exhaustion of the people who try to carry them out; we must set sustainable milestones”. Bernal opts for a style of teaching that bets on processes of real personalization that have to start by identifying the unique people in front of them, leaving them space to be really unique.

Coral Regí responded, in turn, to the questions: What organizational aspects do you think are most relevant to personalize education? And how do you see the school-family collaboration in relation to personalization? affirming that “there is no quality education if it is not personalized” and that “resources and time are two key elements in school organization to make it possible”. This implies devoting part of the teachers’ available time to prioritize these areas in order to make the creation of personal links between teachers and students a reality and to accompany their personal growth through tutoring or mentoring. For Regí it is also important that class groups are as heterogeneous and diverse as the society in which we live. In the school she directs, she argues, time



Sparks from a very suggestive round table

“What I love about this report is that it focuses on students body and its perspective, since personalized learning means being compromised with what you want to learn.”

Barbara Bray

“The most relevant thing in education is what we teach and how, and the way we teach teachers to teach, how we create a learning environment, a curriculum and an evaluation.”

Richard Gerver

“There must be some basic minimums established for all the population trying to achieve that each student can deepen in specific aspects.”

Neus Sanmartí

“Education is what is being personalized; Instead, learning is personal because it has a meaning for them, it is relevant for them.”

César Coll

“In a personalized context all students are different, without having to be labeled.”


Paulina Bánfalvi

“Changes in the generic sense are very complex and must not end with the exhaustion of the people who try to carry them out; they have to be sustainable milestones.”

Antonio Bernal

“Theres is not a quality education if it is not personalized. Resources and time are two key elements in school organization to make it possible organización escolar para hacerlo posible.”

Coral Regí



must also be devoted to coordinated and joint work with families, since it is important to share everything that is done.

Among the open interventions, it was stated that too often a lot of time and resources have been invested in working on contents that end up being forgotten (Bernal); it was argued that the evaluation should be personalized (Regí) and it was defended to evaluate what the curriculum asks for and not other aspects (Sanmartí). Coll proposed that the interests of the students should be the starting point to work on them and not to understand them as a menu of options. He also defended the contents as the basis for developing the curricular competences in context in each particular case. Finally, Regí believed that beyond the minimum content there is an even more key element: self-improvement and the ability to self-regulate the effort that must make lifelong learning possible.

A new investigation is opening its way

Impuls Educació carries out an annual study on one of the main axes on which the quality of education should pivot according to this center of studies: personalization, thinking and technology. The theme being studied in this new edition is: Delphi Competence of the 21st Century "Critical Thinking" in the school stage.

Objective: to agree on a statement for the Critical Thinking competence in the school stage and to offer some principles and strategies for its development and evaluation in the classroom.

Critical and creative thinking skills are part of the key competencies of the 21st century and are present, in some ways, in most school curriculum. Impuls Educació proposes to carry out a scientific and systematic study, with the participation of experts from different countries and fields, which will allow us to take a step forward and achieve the maximum consensus in the conceptualization of the critical and creative thinking competencies that the school curriculum should contemplate, as well as the specification of which would be the most relevant skills and cognitive dispositions for the current times and the most adequate method to achieve their transference to the real life of students.



panorama



Richard Gerver is a recognized educator, communicator and expert in educational innovation, leadership and organizational change. He has been a teacher, educator and director of schools. His research is related to the development of human potential, educational innovation and the vital role that educational leaders play as a mechanism for social and cultural transformation. He regularly advises major corporations around the world: Google, UK Sport, Visa, Microsoft, among others. His books include "Education: A Manifesto for Change".

“What teachers have achieved this year has been truly remarkable.”

by Ana Moreno

INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD GERVER

Recognized educator, communicator and expert in educational innovation, leadership and organizational change.

It has been barely a year since your last book, *Manifesto for Change*. However, the world has changed a lot since then. The pandemic has changed our lives and our future. The world has changed its priorities and relevant things have become urgent. Would you modify anything in your *Manifesto*?

It's a really interesting question. No, I don't think I would change what I wrote; I think part of the purpose of writing the book was to get people to understand that the world was moving into an increasing level of change and uncertainty. And when I wrote the book, I used the example of the global financial crisis in 2007-2008, because if you think about it, that had a massive impact on us: the workplace, our children, the global economy, etc. and in a way, that was an example of what I was arguing about, that change in uncertainty was growing and growing.

And then we move into the crisis, and we have Covid and Covid has taken it to a whole another level. But

in many ways, all it's done is amplify the challenge that I've been talking about. The fact that even before Covid, our children were going to be inheriting from us some really big global challenges. They were going to be taking on an environmental crisis that could threaten our planet, an economic crisis, socio ethnic strife that would be causing problems, the issues of globalization and health care right now, etc. In a way, what the pandemic has done is just show us how urgent it is that we help prepare our children differently.

One of the core themes of the book was to argue that education had traditionally prepared children for certainty. And what Covid has taught us is there's no such thing anymore as certainty. And it means we need to be prepared not to just survive but thrive in a world of uncertainty, of constant change and transformation.

And that means we can't simply run education systems where we teach children certain knowledge in certain ways, and we then push

them out into the world to seek out jobs that match their knowledge and understanding. I think the book is perhaps more relevant now than it was when it was published a year ago.

We have been trying to change the educational system worldwide for a long time, but the countries that are taking the risk of change are still very few. In your book, you often talk about creating a culture of excellence, security and collaboration. These seem vital pieces of this change. So, how to go from the current situation to a position with favourable conditions for growth?

Where we are seeing innovation in the world in education are in countries which would be considered less traditionally strong economic countries. So, developing countries. For example, in Latin America, there's a huge amount of innovation going on. In countries like Colombia, where there is no tradition that they're fighting against. In countries like Spain



and the UK and the US, we have very traditional methodologies that have been developed over hundreds of years.

So, in order to create change in traditional organizations, you're fighting against a culture of tradition before you can break through and create innovation. One of the reasons why we see innovation in developing countries is because they don't have to fight tradition. So it's new. They're like a start-up business in new technology. They have the freedom and opportunity to think differently. What's really interesting about the problem with the traditional systems of education is that they are built on an assumption of incompetence.

This is where my comparison in the book comes from. So in other

words, policymakers and politicians believe- because it's a very traditional methodology, that people will only do their best work if they manage to do their best work, that nobody will do their best just because they want to. And in education, this is a real problem because policymakers think that schools and educators will only do their best if they're made to do their best, if they're managed all the time, managed top-down.


Now, what that does, which is really interesting: removes teachers' feelings of professionalism. They don't feel like professionals anymore because all of the control is taken away from them and they feel more like robots where they're just told what to do. And if they believe the people above them don't trust them,

then that's how they behave. But even more tragically. The same thing is true of the way we regard children. People think children are lazy and they will only learn if they're made to learn, and they're over-managed.

So, what happens is we create a culture where children are over-ruled, where teachers are overregulated, and therefore you can't have a culture of innovation because people are so suppressed by the system that they are delivering on. And what we need to do is we need to create a culture of greater trust. When I talk about the assumption of excellence, that's from what I've seen in really dynamic and exciting, innovative organizations outside of education that I've had the privilege to spend time in the last 14 or 15 years.

And all of those organizations are founded on a culture of absolute trust. They trust their employees to deliver excellence. So what they do is, rather than focusing on managing everybody, they create an environment where people are able to express their professional understanding, their skill, their knowledge, their ability, their instincts. And what that creates is a really

“What's really interesting about the problem with the traditional systems of education is that they are built on an assumption of incompetence.”



dynamic, inclusive and collaborative culture of learning.

In your trajectory, you repeat that the people are the key and not the resources or structures. We need teachers who do not need management, with vision and leadership. To paraphrase Gandhi, “they should be the change they want to see in the world”. So if you were leading a school today, what skills would you ask your teachers to have, for example, in times of pandemic so they could build a better future?

I think this is a really important and powerful question. I did run a school, which was a long time ago now, but I don't think things have changed that much actually in the system. I think what was really important for me to do was to generate a culture of collective vision with my teachers. So what was really important was the teachers didn't feel that they were just delivering what somebody else told them to, that they felt an ownership of the vision for the school, the values for the school that they had co-created. That vision and those values meant that actually, they felt

“What was really important by working that way with teachers was you develop a culture of trust.”

really part of engaging in the process of turning those visions and values into practice.

Also, what was really important by working that way with teachers was you develop a culture of trust.

My trust came from the fact that I looked at my teachers with trust; they were incredibly experienced with huge amounts of knowledge and skill and also a passion. The one thing we know about teachers anywhere in the world is people choose to be teachers because they're passionate about children and making a difference for young people. So for me, it was about creating conditions to tap into those passions and that experience and that knowledge by creating a sense of collaborative ownership so that everybody in the school felt they had a stake in the development of the

school and that I trusted them.

And also that they stopped waiting for me to tell them what to do or to give them the answers. And what that's about is telling teachers themselves to find responses and find solutions. Also, it's about creating a culture where you want teachers themselves to have space and time to research and explore the world around them and their own profession.

So they have an ability and opportunity to develop their professional skills, knowledge and experience. For me, it's about inclusivity, it's about collaboration, and it's about trust.

As you say, educating optimism opens up infinite opportunities for the future. We think that's what we



"All too often teachers spend too much time worrying about what they've not achieved rather than what they have."

need most at this time. Could you share your optimistic ideas with us?

First of all, I think we're conducting this interview at a really interesting and challenging time for the whole of the global society and actually a huge challenge for educators and schools. We have to acknowledge that what they've lived through in the last seven or eight months and what they continue to live through for possibly a year more, and the way they've coped with what they've done, the way they've kept a focus on their children and the children's well-being and learning has been inspirational.

One of the things that's really important right now in the middle of this tsunami, is to allow teachers to take a step back and realize what they've accomplished; all too often

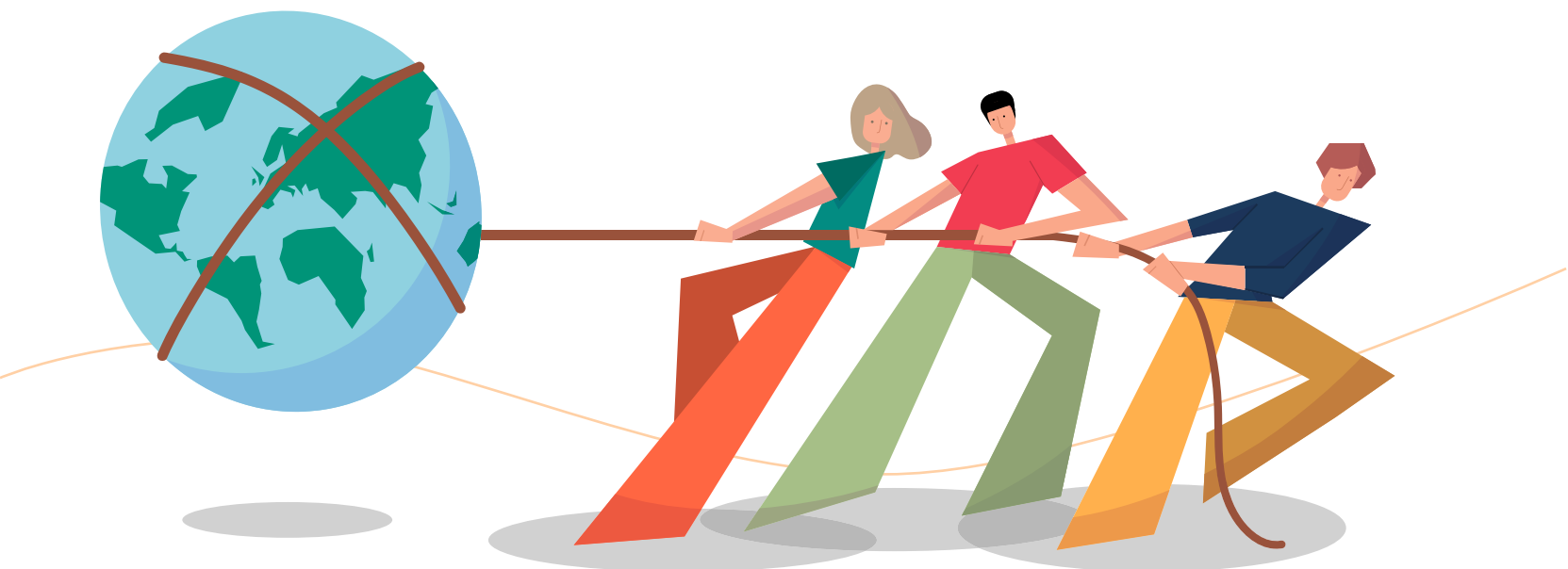
teachers spend too much time worrying about what they've not achieved rather than what they have. And I think it's really important that we all acknowledge right now that what teachers have achieved this year has been truly remarkable and is a testament actually to their courage, their ability and their commitment.

But in a bigger sense, I think what's really important to think about in terms of optimism is this. In many ways, the Covid pandemic is the final point of what I think has been a very dark few years in global history. These are very dark times. And I think they've ended really with Covid, this global pandemic, almost like a biblical flood. But I think we need to remember a couple of important things. Firstly, educators have to be optimistic because it's our job to help

prepare the world for the future. The future begins in our classrooms, in our schools and our lessons. The current leaders of the world, the current inventors, the current artistic guides of the world, were created in our schools 20 or 30 years ago.

And I think we need to remember that our role is significant and we have to be optimists. But here's the thing that I think should make us most optimistic. When you look at human history, every period of human history, every dark period in human history, every awful moment in human history; has been followed by an explosion in creativity, in human innovation, a renaissance, every period of darkness has been followed by a human renaissance. And I believe that the generations in our schools right now will be the generations which lead the next great human renaissance, the great, great explosion in human capacity and creativity and innovation, in scientific discovery, in a recalibration of the global socioeconomic position, in a new form of politics, in a kinder world.

And I think what's really exciting, and I say this to my daughter, who, by the way, is a teacher now; is that I



envy her because as a young teacher leading that generation, now is the time to create the next great special moment in human history. And that's what I say to all teachers right now. You are in the place to create the next great renaissance in human history.

Innovative people are needed to generate innovative results; it is clear that leadership and culture of innovation are decisive to transformation. But change is not easy and even less so if you have to move a whole system. What would be the keys to change the system for you? And how can the current situation help?

I think the first thing is that the current situation, the crisis around

the pandemic, has changed everything in a way that we would never have achieved without it.

It's an awful thing to say because this thing has created such misery, such poverty, such suffering in incalculable ways around the world. But I mentioned before, almost half joking, this is almost like Noah's flood in the Bible. Because we were so busy running just to try and keep up that the world would never have stopped for a pause for long enough to be able to take a breath, look around it and say; What needs to change and how do we change it? So I think we're in a really interesting space and place now to do that. I think we have time now to ask big questions, which is what we need to do. For so many years, the education system has been

hampered, and has been blocked really from development because of our constant focus on efficiency. How do we get better exam results? How do we climb the international league tables? How do we get better at doing what we've always done? How can we be more efficient? And as a result, and I don't blame the profession for that, they've been running so hard just to keep up that now what we've got in this pause is it time to say: is efficiency really the answer? And I think in so many ways, not just education, what we've realized is actually that efficiency isn't the answer. And this constant belief that if we just do everything we've always done as hard as we can, things will get better is simply not the case. How do we stop another pandemic? Well, it's not from just delivering medicine the way we've always delivered medicine.

It's about systemically changing the way we see the world and particularly how we interact with the natural world. So people have been talking about it for years, but now we have an opportunity to really make a difference. And the same is

"I believe that the generations in our schools right now will be the generations which lead the next great human renaissance."



true of education. If what we do is we continue to prepare our children for a world that simply doesn't exist, we're going to continue to see a fragmented planet where people become less and less happy with the world they're living in because they don't find a way to control it. So we have to move away from this idea that the future is about control and about efficiency. And we have to move into a space where we ask the big questions and the big questions start with: what do we need our children to look like as human beings if they're not just to survive, but thrive in the future?

We need them to be deeply collaborative. We need them to be creative and innovative. We need them to be capable of self-leadership and self-management. We need them to be able to be lifelong learners. We need them to have the tools to understand how to access learning, not just during their time in formal education, but through their lives because the nature of the world of work and the social environments in which they live are going to change faster and faster.

So that's what we need to do. We need to take a step back from focusing on efficiency and really start looking at evolution.

We believe that the idea of leaving a legacy, living with purpose and educating for life with meaning are great ideals that would fill the future of humanity with hope. But to do this, we need to promote understanding of the world that will be used as a motor

for this hope, opportunity and optimism. What would you say to those responsible for educational policy in different countries to understand that change pays off for all of us?

When you look at the evolution of humankind, human desire and human success has been founded and built on our deep desire to be curious, to explore, to look for the new and the different, to embrace change, to see the world and grow the world and be in the world in new ways and new forms, constantly. On drive through evolution from early man through to industrialization, through to advanced technologies and artificial intelligence, the pursuit of knowledge, through religion and then through science and through the arts and culture.

These are the things that define humanity and human beings. And therefore, what we need are policy makers and politicians and people in control of education to do is to realize that education has to reflect that human dream, that human desire, the things that define us. And we need to stop believing that education should only be defined over a three, four or five-year political term. We need to have a deeper, bigger, broader vision for it.

And secondly, that we need to look far, far deeper than just making sure the system in its current form works. We need to be explorers. We need to be adventurers. We need to be able to set the agenda and change the world rather than just reacting to the world. If there was one great lesson

we have to learn from the Covid crisis is that the countries that have dealt with the crisis best are the countries that were innovating around the potential solutions for pandemics before the pandemic hit.

Countries like the UK, Spain, most of Europe, the US are so far behind because we've never lived in a public policy culture where we try to get ahead of the curve. We spend our lives reacting to circumstances; and with education, if we continue to do nothing more than react to the world we're currently living in, we will never be able to prepare our children for the world they will be living in. And more than anything, I ask politicians and policy makers to be cognizant of what I've already talked about.

Our children face one of the most challenging legacies in human history. How do we protect and preserve the natural world and the environment? How do we develop a sustainable global economy? How do we make sure we bring humanity back together across the diverse cultures of the planet we live in?

And how do we ensure that the world is capable of living a healthier, happier existence? Those should be the conversations that policymakers and politicians are having now in order to create a system that's worthy of our children and worthy of our future.

"The education system has been hampered, and has been blocked really from development because of our constant focus on efficiency.."





Spotlight

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by Juan Ignacio Pozo

The hybrid school as an opportunity to transform education

Juan Ignacio Pozo is a Doctor of Psychology and Professor in the Department of Basic Psychology at the UAM. His research is based on the learning of concepts and procedures in different specific domains of knowledge and on the development of learning strategies in students. He has worked on orientation and curricular assessment, compiling the book *"La práctica del asesoramiento educativo a examen"*. Among his publications, *"Psicología del aprendizaje humano: adquisición de conocimiento y cambio personal"* stands out.

As Carles Monereo (2020) points out, the abrupt closure of schools last March can be considered a critical global incident that, overnight, disrupted all educational planning. Face-to-face education suddenly moved to the screens, which in our educational system, to be sure, have never been trusted. And so it was not prepared for such a sudden transformation, with the known consequences for teachers, students and families (see Luengo and Manso, 2020; Trujillo-Sáenz et al., 2020).



“The most frequent teaching activities have been centred on a one-way use of digital spaces.”

WHAT CONFINED EDUCATION HAS STRIPPED

We should not fool ourselves either: many of the limitations uncovered in those months were not only due to the strange circumstances of a confined education, but that critical global incident unearthed, revealed some of the deepest, endemic, chronic pathologies of our teaching system. The emperor suddenly showed himself naked in the eyes of all (Pozo, 2020). The closure of the schools revealed the enormous educational inequalities or the marginal role of families, who were suddenly forced to manage the day-to-day running of the school learning process. We were also able to see the lack of training for teachers in order to deal with this digital education and, what is even worse, the scarce and disorganised digital resources that the administration could make available to these same teachers. These made it necessary to implement multiple support initiatives for teachers, students and families, such as EducamosContigo, a volunteer and advice platform promoted by a group of teachers and students from the Autonomous University of Madrid.

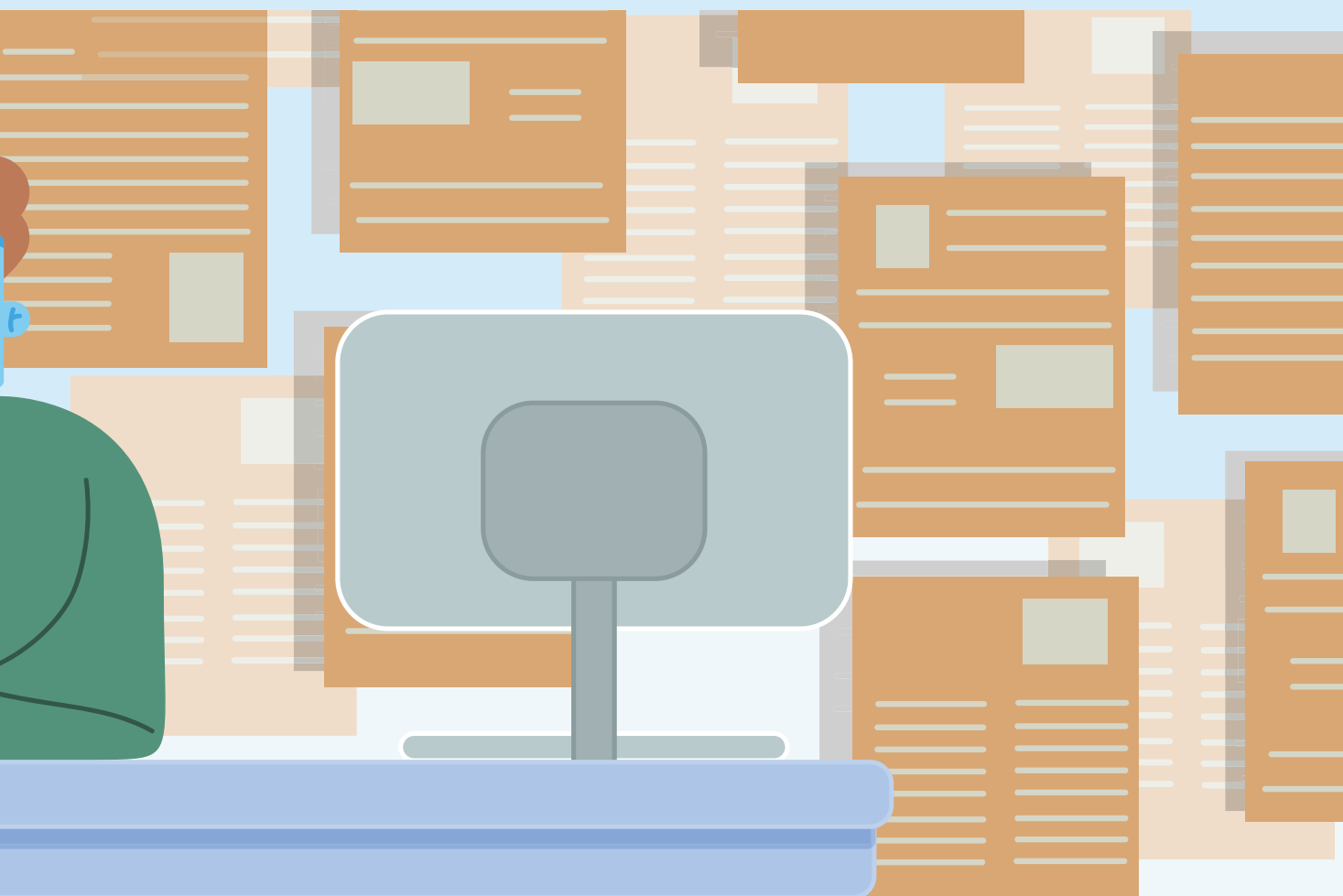
This situation also revealed obsolete forms of teaching and evaluation that do not respond to the training needs of the society we live in (Pozo, 2020). The most frequent teaching activities have been centred on a one-way use of digital spaces: teachers transmitted information to the students who could afterwards return tasks in order to be marked. On the other hand, spaces for interaction and collaboration have been scarce (Devitt et al., 2020; Pozo et al., 2020). In other words, the confined school has perpetuated traditional teaching models: teachers handled the entire flow of information instead of helping students to better manage their interaction with digital technologies in their daily lives.

These times of pandemic have, in fact, revealed that our school forms for a society that no longer exists, oblivious to digital culture. It is necessary to rethink these habits and conceptions, these deep-rooted beliefs and practices in order to transform them (Pozo, 2020). We have a unique opportunity to incorporate the digital culture that flows beyond the walls of the classroom into the whole of society. But genuinely integrating

digital technologies requires transforming the school culture, thinking about new ways of teaching and learning, some new and more open, fluid educational projects which respond to the training needs of what is now called the Global Competition or the competences for the 21st Century (Ertmer et al., 2015), collected here by Monereo (2020).

The truth is that despite all the possibilities of digital education (e.g. Coll and Monereo, 2008), schools continue to resist assuming that we live in a digital society and training citizens requires providing them with resources to move around these spaces critically and fluidly, as clearly reflected by the father of the so-called PISA studies.





There are indeed many reasons to distrust digital technologies as vehicles for the dissemination of information, emotional education, training in values or learning good social relations. The personal, social and cognitive activity that Facebook, Instagram, Google promote behind the screens is not the most desirable (Melo et al., 2019). But precisely for this reason the less we like the use that children and adolescents make of the screens, the more we will have to incorporate them into education to transform these uses, promoting epistemic goals, aimed at generating knowledge instead of simple fun, immediate reinforcement, or nurturing harmful or inconvenient relationships (Pozo, 2020).

THE RETURN TO THE CLASSROOM IN A HYBRID SCHOOL: TRUE CROSSBREEDING ALWAYS ENRICHES

For this reason, this after summer new scenario of “hybrid education”, that mixes face-to-face with virtual lessons, can be a privileged opportunity to incorporate this digital culture, not only as technology but above all as a way of relating to others and to the knowledge that cannot be reduced to the mere traditional didactic formats. In many cases, both in university and secondary schools, this hybrid education has been called “mirror teaching”: part of the students attends their classroom every day, and rest follow the class from their homes on the screen. This model of streaming classes, which has been

defended as a panacea by different administrations, is only viable if the activity remains teacher-centred. Once again digital technologies are being used to maintain traditional teaching formats whereas all the research on their educational use highlights that virtual teaching is a particularly suitable space for promoting autonomous and cooperative learning, which requires activities centred on the student and not on the teacher (Hall et al., 2020; Sangrá, 2020; Trujillo-Sáez, 2020).

Fortunately, there are alternatives to these streaming classes, choices that not only produce better learning but also help promote classroom transformations that bring us closer to the education we want.

“We have a unique opportunity to incorporate the digital culture that flows beyond the walls of the classroom into the whole of society.”

These alternatives are based on principles such as the authenticity of tasks and contexts, student autonomy, collaboration, flexibility and the use of digital materials (video games, simulations, etc.) adapted by students (Hall et al., 2020).

It is a question of taking advantage of this cultural symbiosis to change the dose of activities, to do less teacher-centred tasks and more student-centred ones, facilitating the opening of the classroom to other physical and social spaces, breaking down the walls that usually surround the school (Fernández-Enguita, 2017), but also

the walls of the disciplines, to encourage Project Based Learning or those challenges proposed by Monereo (2020). This requires a change in goals and priorities, rethinking the ways of evaluating (confined education has made it so evident: what is the point of assessing by asking for knowledge that can be retrieved from Google or Socratic instead of evaluating how this knowledge is used to face specific challenges, problems or decisions?) It is also about encouraging cooperation rather than individualism -an endemic evil in our educational culture-, promoting autonomous learning, etc. etc. Principles that are not new but which may become necessary with proper incorporation of digital culture into the classroom.

Hybrid education must lead to a fusion school that, without losing sight of its essential goals, knows how to integrate these possibilities offered by digital technologies, promoting an epistemic use of them (Pozo, 2020). Let's turn hybridisation into a true crossbreeding, because, let's remember, only by reconstructing the services of these technologies from the school can we teach students not only to live with them but above all to transform them and themselves.

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10 ideas to renew the ways of teaching and learning in a hybrid or mixed education



"More cooperative or collaborative activity, based on supervised dialogue between equals"

"More responsibility for learning transferred to students"

"More experiential, inductive, embodied learning"

"More in-depth study of a smaller number of topics"

"More attention to cognitive, affective and social needs of each student"

"Less passivity of the students, dedicated to listening and receiving information sitting and standing"

"Less overloaded curricula trying to cover all the themes"

"Less emphasis on competing in grade 6."

"Less memorization of facts or details"

"Less teacher-centred instruction for the whole class"



It's time to cultivate...



by Paulina Bánfalvi Kam

Thirty years ago a young teacher came to my school. He taught us to think, to debate, to reason, to explore, to relate. Lessons with him were different because of an important principle. They made one feel better. They led one to understand what had to be done to improve, what the reasons were for not reaching a particular performance or knowledge, and offered the tools to go further.

That young teacher is Joan Vaello, author of the book "How to teach those who don't want to". His book is not a utopia; it is not a theoretical proposal. It details what he has put into practice over many years in the classroom. He believed that all his students could achieve it, and that

was the reason why he did it. Joan Vaello, without knowing it, perhaps without remembering it, is "guilty" of me discovering my talent and my vocation. The day he spoke to us about subliminal psychology, human behaviour, persuasion and thought, a new window opened in me. I still remember that moment.

We cannot know who we are impacting in our classrooms, nor the weight of our actions on the future lives of our students, what our positive influence is, but neither can we know what our negative effect is. Teaching is not a job for everyone. Teaching requires taking responsibility for the fact that your actions, your words, your decisions, your criteria, can mark the lives of many young people.

Crises always reveal strengths and weaknesses. This one has made it clear that teachers are willing to stand firm and endure. Still, it has also shown the shortcomings of a system that does not yet understand the needs of its students and where the differential value of a teacher lies. In our present context, none of the

taken measures reveals the teacher as something more than a simple guardian or a dispenser of "canned" content in textbooks.

But they have understood this. And the families, many of them, are demanding it. Education is finally at the centre of the analysis; families, the press, society has clamoured. We want an education that will allow our children to perform with confidence in this turbulent 21st century. We want an education that personalises.

And what is this personalisation? Do we need more resources, lower the ratio, reduce the curriculum, eliminate standards? Personalising is nothing more than organising our educational

"We want an education that will allow our children to perform with confidence in this turbulent 21st century."



structures, times, forms and objectives around our students, their needs, those of them and putting our work as teachers at the service of the student and not the system. It should be obvious to say that we do not work for our pupils. Yet, it is tragically necessary to point it out: many have never conceived any education other than adapting and shaping students to the system and not the other way round.

“This crisis has made it clear that teachers are willing to stand firm and endure.”

The following phrases are often heard concerning students in the first years of primary school: “that child has to understand that the class has a rhythm”, “this girl does not finish when she should”, “he is smart, but his handwriting is illegible”, “he is distracted by drawing in class”, “I must continually scold him to sit down”, “his answers do not fit what we ask”, “he asks a lot”, “he asks little”, “he is slow”... None of these comments refers to rebellious teenagers: despite them being that young, we have already forgotten that our job is not judging or labelling them, nor certify that they conform up to a standard someone designed, probably sitting in an office, with the sole objective of squaring a template in which to distribute and place learning standards.

Our job is to drive their development. Just as the work of a doctor, a sports trainer, a farmer or a cattleman. A winegrower periodically visits his vineyards but not “disdaining” those grapes that do not develop according to fixed growth and ripening marks, nor of neglecting those that go “too fast”. The winegrower does not cut



down a vine if the first month has not developed as expected, nor does he neglect those “above mature average”. He knows that there are many things to be done to improve development conditions. Still, the time to make decisions about the fate of each bunch will come when the grapes have reached maturity.

Vineyards are visited to observe their fruits, analyse their needs and the reason for those requirements: Has the time come to move on to the next phase? Does it need to be pruned or harvested? Does it get less sun? Does its part of the land receive less water? Does it need an additional dose of fertiliser? Has it been attacked by an insect and needs to be protected? What would happen if I did a graft here or pruned this or that part? What if I added this or another fertiliser? Despite his experience, he analyses and learns by observing how his plants react: he knows that he can be wrong, that dozens of factors can vary and affect the development of each of his vines every vine, harvest, or year. He knows that he is a good grower not only because he gets everything right, and when his vines develop entirely on their own according to the expected ripening at any given time. But he is a better farmer as he observes his vines ripening, treats each one differently, understands it from its starting point, its particular circumstances, and the development it shows as a reaction to those conditions he has created and which he continuously adapts to ensure the best possible outcome.

“However, we have forgotten to ask ourselves what can be done in education in order to favour the development of a student, to adapt the context so that other student can develop his or her potential.”

The winegrower makes an extra effort on specific conditions of the land: when there is a complicated situation; when environmental conditions are adverse; in years of drought; when the cold has not been enough; insects have been more voracious; the wind has blown too soon. He knows that this is when his vines need him most.

However, we have forgotten to ask ourselves what can be done in education in order to favour the development of a student, to adapt the context so that other student can develop his or her potential, the tools placed at his or her disposal, to accompany him or her in the complex task of growing up. From their early years, students are told to have “deficiencies”: certifications are often offered at the beginning of their process; they are assessed and said whether they are suitable or not at each step, but generally without a clear idea of how much of their development depends on the context and tools that we put at their disposal.

Growing, learning and developing our potential are processes for which we are co-responsible together with the families. What tools are there in our hands? What part of that context can we modify so that our “vines” develop in the best conditions?

Learn about them. The first step is to forget about labels and the ideal student that one expects them all to resemble. Some teachers may still follow a pattern where the needs of the students are outlined by asking



themselves “I have a child with ADHD, or lazy, or with high ability, or with dyslexia, or who has difficulty reading: what can do?”. If only a variable defines a student, the richness of the picture is lost. The answer to any of the questions is in their profile. Analyse their fortitudes and offer them the most significant challenge possible. Because developing strengths gives the required self-esteem and confidence to work through and overcome difficulties. Discover their interests (stimulating them) because passions are like “the wind that blows the sailboat”, it helps to flow, to go through the challenges of learning with ease.

Offer continuous feedback. It is one of the tools with the most significant impact on students (Visible thinking, J. Hattie). Suppose we observe how our students perform during the process of learning and carrying out tasks; we will be able to: understand where their difficulties lie, what their gaps or blocks are, which areas of their strengths and learning strategies require specific tools and application, what the origin of their behaviour or attitudes is, and act on them in time.

“We cannot decide what challenges our students will present each year, but we can decide how we are going to respond to them.”

- Carol A. Tomlinson

Expand the why. The causes of poor performance, inattention, lack of involvement or motivation, restlessness, anxiety, or rebellion are multiple, and almost always the result of a combination of many factors. However, we are often quick to judge and reduce the causes to two: the family and the child. If he does not pay attention, it is the learner who “has” attention deficit. However, the most frequent reason is a bored student and that the content does not challenge his curiosity, his imagination or his ability to think in a complex way. If the student does not finish the tasks, he or she is “lazy”, but “lazy” is a reaction to a context, not an innate quality. Learners may disconnect from learning because of negative experiences, either because they did not have tools to perform as expected or because the challenge was beyond his or her capacity. We will find a way to modify the context if we check their reasons, history, if we ask questions and get closer to their reality. By doing so, their attitude and involvement will change.

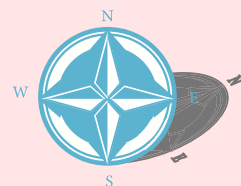
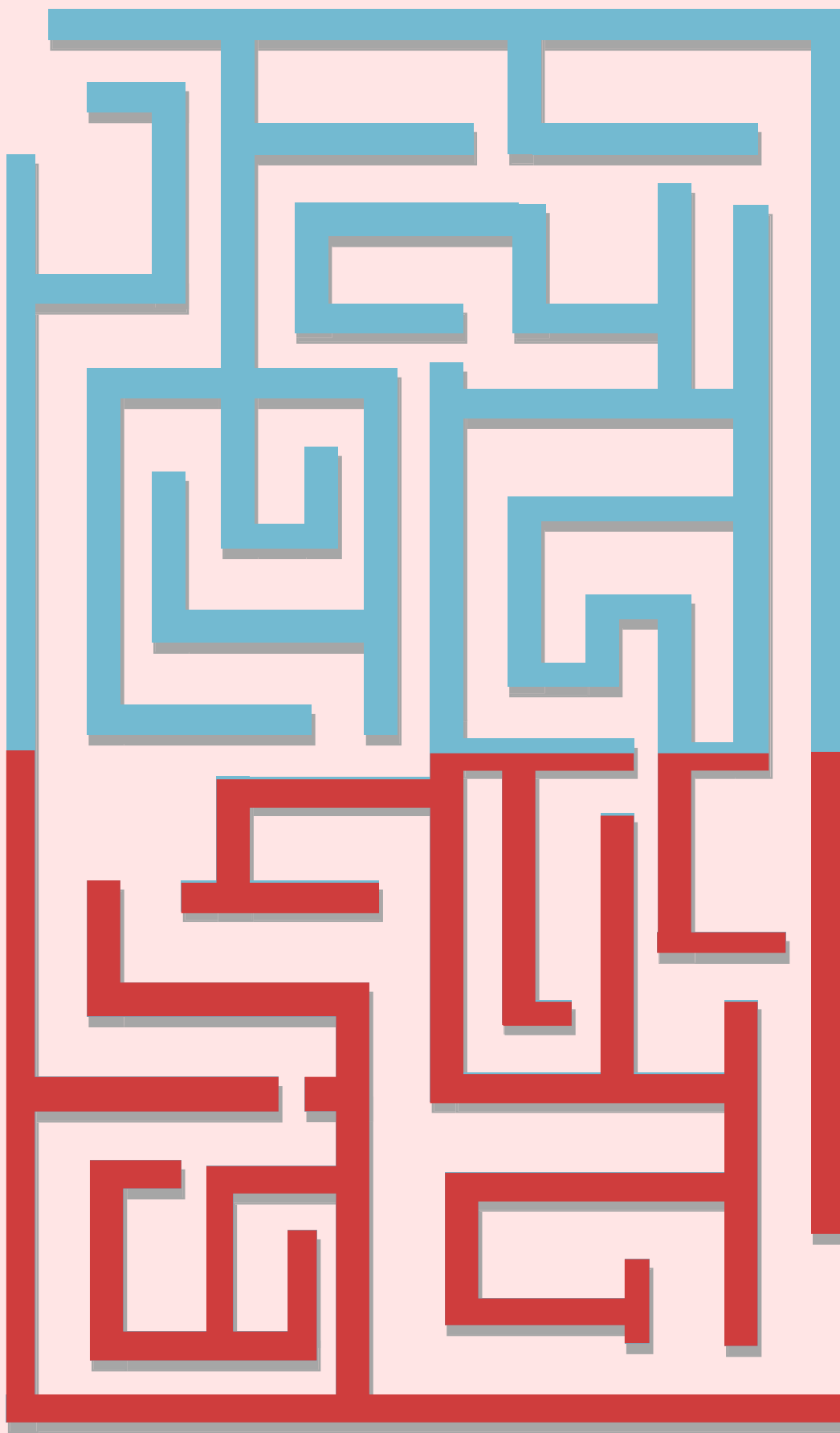
Commitment to deductive learning. We have heard for a long

time that the student must be the protagonist and that we need active learning models. For many, this has translated into the incorporation of project and/or cooperative learning in its different aspects. Still, not so many have understood that this does not only refer to the student doing something more than listening in the classroom but mainly thinking and deciding. Two verbs which, if accompanied by imagination and curiosity, undoubtedly lead to motivation and significant and lasting learning. We need to get used to the fact that it is they who learn and not we who teach. Two verbs which, if accompanied by imagination and curiosity, undoubtedly lead to motivation and significant and lasting learning. We need to get used to the fact that it is they who learn and not we who teach. Generally, questions and the student’s contributions, debates and reflections offer students more than endless presentations. It is also the case when we gain time and space for the observation of their profiles and needs, for diversity, for the different rhythms of learning, to let each one go as far as they wish and that their impulse, now without

brakes or limits, drags and stimulates the rest of their companions.

There are many more elements in which we can go deeper to shape a personalised education. Still, these four pillars are the starting point to regard our “vines” as developing crops, and our work as that of a hard-working farmer who observes growth to support it, looking for where he can intervene to improve, as he is convinced that every one of his vines has the potential to form part of the exquisite broth that will bear his stamp.

Paulina Banfalvi is an expert in AACC and Talent Development by UNIR. She is a professor at the AACC Expert of the UIB. Speaker and trainer in various congresses, conferences and educational centres in personalized learning, creativity, critical thinking and talent development. Her field of study is on multilevel and creative learning strategies for personal and talent development; as well as creativity and critical thinking in special need students. Banfalvi is the author of “*La Rebelión del Talento*” and founder of the Blog aacclarebeliondeltalento.com.



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SPOTLIGHT
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Thinking and education

Challenges and opportunities in times of pandemic



by Begonya Oliveras
and Conxita Márquez

Begonya Oliveras is Doctor in Didactics of Mathematics and Experimental Sciences by the UAB and Extraordinary Doctorate Award (2013-2014). Associate Professor of the Department of Didactics of Mathematics and Experimental Sciences of the UAB. Member of the LIEC research group at the UAB (Language and Teaching of Science). She has been one of the authors of the book *"Aprender ciencias aprendiendo a escribir ciencia"*.

Conxita Márquez is an associate professor at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. She has taken part in several research projects, most of them focused on scientific practices. She has been part of research groups, such as the Grup de Recerca Consolidat LIEC.

Schools, like the rest of society, have been fully affected by the pandemic. The pandemic has generated a great deal of information, often contradictory where it is difficult to discern the fundamental from the accessory, and the contrasting data from the increasingly frequent fake news. It has also led to an avalanche of rules and slogans that call for concrete actions in our daily lives and cause a certain amount of confusion and mistrust. This situation has once again made clear the need to develop strategies for citizens to think in terms of assessing the credibility of information and making informed decisions.

The school cannot be isolated from the real problems that affect our society. The crisis that the pandemic has generated should be used to highlight the need for activating critical thinking in the classroom, which cannot be dissociated from creative and careful thinking (Lipman, 2016). In order to understand, decide and act in complex and controversial situations, students must have a set of knowledge, strategies and

dispositions (attitudes) which they must acquire throughout their schooling.

CRITICAL, CREATIVE AND CAREFUL THINKING

There are different views on the meaning of critical thinking and how to promote it. Critical thinking is a competence that involves reviewing and evaluating ideas and arguments to make judgements about different problems or situations and to be able to make decisions and take action. These judgements are to be based on specific criteria: ethical, scientific, social, economic..., are activated with the development of skills: interpreting, analysing, evaluating, inferring, explaining and self-regulating (Facione, 1990), plus thinking

"The school cannot be isolated from the real problems that affect our society."

“The pandemic allows us to work from school on the coherence of our actions, which are often closely linked to emotions.”

dispositions: open-mindedness, flexibility, empathy... Critical thinking needs to be self-correcting: detecting errors in the way others think and in the own thinking itself (Lipman, 2016), and also should take into account relevant knowledge (McPeck, 1990) and metacognitive competencies

(Kuhn and Weinstock, 2002). Critical thinking is sensitive to context.

Creative thinking is the ability to think in an original, genuine and effective way, seeking alternative solutions to problems or situations that arise. Creative thinking cannot be dissociated from knowledge; generating new content requires prior knowledge. The creative possibilities increase according to the information and data available to us. Critical and creative thinking is closely linked to careful thinking, linked to values. A careful thinker is perceptive, observant, caring and interested in the world around him, and this translates into higher, more precise and elaborated creative, critical thinking.

ENCOURAGING THINKING FROM THE SCHOOL

The impact of the COVID-19 offers us the opportunity to rethink how to contribute from the school to promote critical thinking, which is essential for active and committed participation in our society.

Confinement is one of the consequences pandemics has caused, and with it, among many other things, a decrease in student interaction and participation in the life of the classroom. Communication and the exchange of ideas and opinions are fundamental for learning, and therefore, for developing critical thinking. Traditional models based on transmission do not allow for this much-needed interaction.



Conversation and dialogue are essential in the classroom. So the school must encourage this dialogue by helping to formulate open and productive questions such as: “what do you base yourself on to say, to believe...? Why do you think your reason is better than that of...? How have you reached this conclusion? What criteria have you used to justify your choice? What are the implications of your decision?” We teachers must not forget the essential role of interaction, seeking, if necessary, original and creative strategies to promote it in any format.

The pandemic is clearly a learning context. We understand “context” as a real situation/problem that directly involves students and allows them to connect the different knowledge to make decisions and act. Real issues are always complex, interdisciplinary, and require real choices. From the school, we have the opportunity to escort the students understanding, analysing and evaluating the pandemic by identifying and treating the aspects of the pandemic linked to each area of knowledge and looking for connections between them. It will be necessary for students to ask the right questions, make hypotheses and thus be able to develop good arguments.

The avalanche of often contradictory information generated by the

“Each school will have to agree among its teachers on how to promote thinking and decide on the method of instruction best suited to its context and needs.”

pandemic highlights the importance of knowing how to select input and analyse it (a vital element of a critical thinker). Teaching critical reading must be done in schools, using news items from the press or information from the internet. Students must be helped to identify the main statements of the discourse, the assumptions and the author’s point of view, the credibility of the sources... (Oliveras, Márquez and Sanmartí, 2013) to be able to argue opinions in a well-founded way, and with the capacity to debate and negotiate points of view.

The pandemic allows us to work from school on the coherence of our actions, which are often closely linked to emotions. Training critical citizens requires training people to make judgements that are consistent with their way of acting. It is necessary to have a highly developed interdisciplinary knowledge to make these judgements, and also to activate skills (interpretation, analysis, etc.) and dispositions (empathy, open-mindedness, flexibility, etc.) in thinking. For example, in the face of the avalanche of rules and instructions with which students feel directly involved, they must be helped to identify different criteria because they themselves may acquire a position that will have to be consistent with their actions. The school could promote questions to activate critical, creative and careful thinking on such a complicated issue (“Why is the use of the face-mask so crucial at school?” “And outside the school?” “How does wearing face-mask affect others?” “Should I take this into account?” “What criteria do I need to prioritise to make a decision?” “What effect does the face-mask have on the transmission of the virus?” “Interpret the chart of confirmed cases of infection and explain it?”). Answering these questions must activate metacognitive skills (thinking about what one assumes) to be

aware of one’s own thinking and acting. It is imperative to verbalise these metacognitive competences.

There are different research lines on the methodology of teaching thinking: some question whether it should be worked on explicitly (verbalising actions) or implicitly (working on it in the classroom students will acquire it naturally); and whether it should be unlinked or included in the areas of knowledge (Ennis, 1989). Each school will have to agree among its teachers on how to promote thinking and decide on the method of instruction best suited to its context and needs.

We still have a lot of work to do and many challenges to overcome, but a door has been opened for us to bring the school closer to life.

Acknowledgements

To the LIEC group (2017 SGR 1399) and PGC2018-096581-B-C21 project

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experiences

Cooperative learning and the COVID crisis19



by David W. Johnson

Because of the global pandemic of COVID19, it could be tempting to isolate students by having them do their schoolwork by themselves, either at home or in classrooms where they are at least two metres apart. Even school can become an individual activity with teachers guiding students through the Zoom and other computer programs. However, in times of emergency, social interaction and support are needed more than ever. In schooling, this means that cooperative learning is essential. Some of the benefits of it are promoting higher levels of social support, more positive peer relationships, more personalised learning, healthier social and cognitive development, higher moral reasoning, and healthy levels of psychological health.

Cooperative learning is not incompatible with social distancing. It is possible to do both simultaneously. Online collaborative groups can be established through Zoom and other Internet programmes. Within the classroom, students wearing face-masks can be assigned to pairs or trios sitting two meters away. Teachers can find creative ways to get students to work together, cooperatively while

maintaining a safe distance between them.

Understanding how to use cooperative learning in the pandemic requires discussion of the nature of collaborative learning, the essential elements of cooperative learning, the types of cooperative learning and the outcomes of it.

NATURE OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Cooperation is working together to achieve shared goals (Johnson, 1970; Johnson & Johnson, 1989). Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups for students to work together to maximise their own and others' learning (Johnson, Johnson & Holubec, 2013). Any learning task, in any subject area, with any curriculum, with a student of any age, can be structured cooperatively.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Five basic elements are required to structure a lesson in cooperative learning: positive interdependence, individual responsibility, promotional interaction, social skills and group processing. The core of collaborative efforts involves a positive interdependence: i.e. the perception that one is linked to others in a way that he or she cannot succeed unless they all do, and vice versa. (Deutsch, 1949; Johnson & Johnson, 1989). Each lesson may contain positive interdependence of goals, while positive interdependence can also be structured through mutual rewards, distributed resources, complementary roles, a joint identity, an external enemy, participation in a fantasy situation, environmental limits and a division of labour (Johnson, Johnson & Holubec, 2013).

Individual accountability exists as each student performance is evaluated, and the results are returned as feedback both to the group and the individual (Johnson and Johnson, 1989). Personal accountability can be structured by: (a) observing students as they work together and documenting each member's contributions, (b) having each student explain what he or she has learned to a classmate, or (c) giving each student individual feedback.

Students promote the success of others by helping, assisting, praising, encouraging, and supporting each other's efforts to learn (Johnson & Johnson, 1989). By

“Cooperative learning is not incompatible with social distancing. It is possible to do both simultaneously.”

THE COOPERATIVE MODEL IS THE LEVER OF CHANGE BECAUSE WHAT WE HAVE WE HAVE BUILT IT TOGETHER.

The International Center for Cooperative Learning is the Organization that, with David and Roger Johnson, “parents of educational Cooperative Learning” provides training and CERTIFIES people and educational centers as a guarantee of their qualification and commitment to the Culture of Cooperative Learning.

2.300



Teachers we have
trained in its center

350

Certified specialists
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Aprendizaje Cooperativo**
Cooperative Learning International Center (CLIC)



doing so, cognitive processes occur, such as: discussing the nature of the concepts being learned, explaining orally to others how to solve problems, teaching one's knowledge to one's peers, challenging one's reasoning and conclusions, and connecting the present with past learning. Promotional interaction also includes interpersonal processes such as supporting and encouraging achievement efforts, jointly celebrating group success and modelling appropriate use of social skills.

Contributing to the success of a cooperative effort requires interpersonal and small group skills (Johnson & Johnson, 1989). Leadership, confidence-building, communication, decision-making and conflict management skills must be taught with the same determination and precision as academic skills.

Group processing can be defined as the examination of the process effectiveness that individuals use to maximise their own and others' achievements and so, ways can be identified to improve the process (Johnson and Johnson, 1989). Students need to describe which actions are useful or not to ensure that all students achieve and maintain effective working relationships.

These five essential elements enable instructors to:

- a) structure any lesson, in any subject area, with any set of curriculum materials for cooperative learning,
- b) refine and adapt cooperative learning to their specific circumstances, needs and learners, and
- c) intervene to improve the effectiveness of any group that is malfunctioning.

TYPES OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Four types of cooperative learning can be identified (Johnson, Johnson and Holubec, 2013).

Cooperative learning can be used to teach specific content (formal cooperative learning groups), to ensure active cognitive processing of information during direct instruction (informal cooperative learning groups), to provide long-term support and assistance for academic progress (cooperative base groups), and to use intellectual conflict (constructive controversy) to enhance achievement and creative problem-solving.

“Leadership, confidence-building, communication, decision-making and conflict management skills must be taught with the same determination and precision as academic skills.”

Formal cooperative learning. Formal cooperative learning consists of students working together, over a class period of several weeks, to achieve mutual learning goals and to jointly complete specific tasks and assignments (Johnson, Johnson and Holubec, 2013). Any course or assignment requirement in any curriculum or subject area for a student of any age can be structured to be cooperative.

To structure formal cooperative learning the instructor:

1. Makes a series of decisions about how to structure the learning groups: what size groups, how learners are assigned to the groups, what student roles to assign, how to arrange the materials and how to organise the room. The instructor also specifies the objectives of the lesson (one academic and one social skill).
2. It teaches the academic concepts, principles and strategies that the students should master and apply. It explains (a) the task to be performed, (b) the criteria for success, (c) positive interdependence, (d) individual responsibility, and (e) the expected behaviours of the students.
3. Supervises the functioning of learning groups and intervenes to (a) teach cooperative skills and (b) assist in academic learning.
4. Evaluates student performance against pre-set criteria of excellence and ensures that groups process the effectiveness with which members worked together.

Informal cooperative learning. Informal cooperative learning consists of students working together to achieve a joint learning goal in temporary and ad-hoc groups lasting from a few minutes to a class period (Johnson, Johnson and Holubec, 2013). Students engage in three to five minute focused discussions before and after direct instruction and three to five-minute discussions among peers, interspersed throughout the direct instruction.

Cooperative-based groups. Cooperative base groups are long-term, heterogeneous cooperative learning groups with stable members in which students provide each other with support, encouragement and assistance (Johnson,

Johnson and Holubec, 2013). The use of base groups tends to improve attendance, personalise the required work and school experience, and improve the quality and quantity of learning. Base groups have a permanent composition (i.e. a semester or a school year), and provide the long-term care and the support relationships between peers which are needed to help students develop cognitively and socially in a healthy way.

Constructive controversy. Constructive controversy exists when one person's ideas, information, conclusions, theories and opinions are incompatible with those of another. And they both try to reach an agreement that reflects their best-reasoned judgement (Johnson & Johnson, 2018). The constructive controversy involves discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of proposed actions to synthesise novel and creative solutions.

When used in combination, cooperative, both formal and informal, base groups, and constructive controversy provide an overall framework for school learning.

OUTCOMES OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Cooperative efforts result in numerous effects that can be subsumed under three broad categories (Johnson & Johnson, 1989, 2005):

1. Effort to achieve: Cooperation to accomplish a common goal results in more significant achievements and higher productivity than competitive or individualistic efforts.
2. Positive interpersonal relationships: More positive, committed and supportive relationships are developed in cooperative situations than in competitive or individualistic cases.

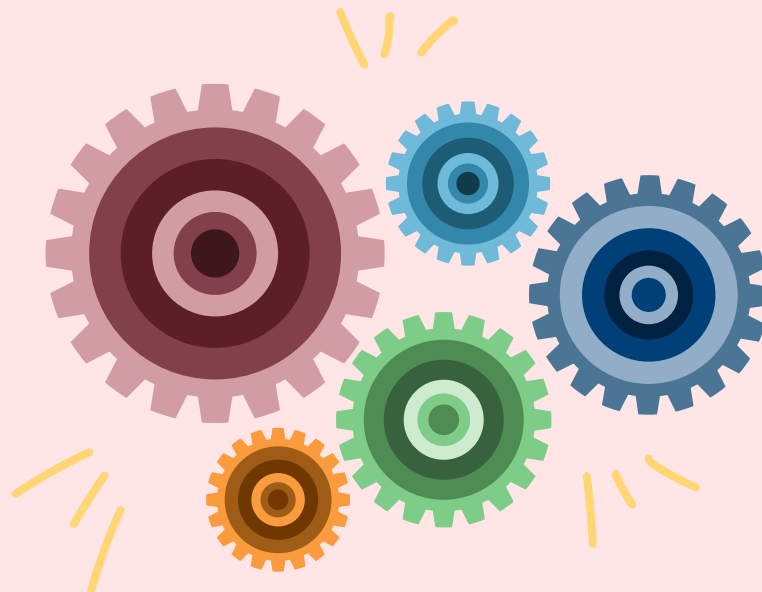
3. Psychological adjustment and health. Working in cooperation with colleagues and valuing cooperation results in more excellent psychological health and self-esteem than the competition with colleagues or independent work.

This research has considerable generalizability, as: a) participants in the study have varied in terms of economic class, age, gender, culture and country, b) research tasks and measures of dependent variables have varied widely, and c) many different researchers with markedly different orientations working in different countries, settings and different decades have conducted the studies.

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David W. Johnson is a professor of Educational Psychology and Co-Director of the Center for Cooperative Learning at the University of Minnesota. Author of over 40 books and more than 400 research articles and book chapters. He has received several awards for his research and teaching. He has been an organizational consultant to schools and businesses in North America, Central America, South America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the Pacific Region.



Personalized learning, an emergent model

by Jordi Viladrosa i Clua

INTERVIEW WITH JOSÉ BERNARDO CARRASCO

Benardo has a doctorate in Pedagogy, has been a teacher and director of primary, secondary and university education centres, and a pedagogical advisor to UNIR. He is the author of numerous publications, and currently collaborates with IDENTITAS and gives teacher training sessions. He has proven experience in the study and practice of personalised education

We are not only dealing with an expert in personalised education theory but also with a personality who has put it into practice in many contexts and realities.

What stands out about his long career in this field?

What is essential?

First of all, I think it is appropriate to clarify that everything I have set out here is sufficiently detailed in my books *Cómo personalizar la educación. Una solución de futuro*, by Ediciones Narcea, and *Educación personalizada: principios, técnicas y recursos*, by Síntesis.

To answer the question, studying and experience have led me to the conviction that, strictly speaking, "education" can only be personalised, since the only educable being is the person. The problem arises when the person is understood in very different ways - even opposites- depending on the ideological currents on which he or she is based. Therefore, the question would be: where can we find a concept of person that genuinely expresses his reality? This is an essential point for me. I am deeply convinced that personal reality is made up of some constituent principles (uniqueness, openness and originality) that are manifested in four dimensions that express the principles (body, affectivity, understanding and will). So, that personalised education must consist of the perfecting or harmonious development of these

principles and dimensions.

Has the contribution of Víctor García Hoz as a pioneer in personalised education been sufficiently valued?

Highlight a couple of achievements that do him justice, in your opinion.

García Hoz shook the dormant conscience of many educators with the publication in 1970 of his juicy book which he called *Personalised Education*. And he did so to such an extent, that the Spanish General Law of Education that passed that same year included for the first time many of his contributions (tutoring, cycle, personalising teaching, Parents' Associations, etc.), and were maintained by all the subsequent educational laws.

He is still a reference point in Latin America as the following anecdote reveals. I was teaching a Master's degree to Peruvian executives in Lima, and the director of a public school approached me and asked for a few minutes of my attention during break time. When I spoke to him, he told me that he only wanted to express his admiration because he knew that I had worked alongside García Hoz and that his school bore his name. Afterwards, I was told that there were many schools with his name in the different Spanish American countries. Personally, I saw that there were hundreds of schools that received

"Studying and experience have led me to the conviction that, strictly speaking, "education" can only be personalised."

advice to personalise the education they provided, both public and private.

Do you think that technologies are currently a good ally for the practice of personalised education?

Technologies have always been a good ally for personalised education when considered as means or instruments. This is shown by the use of the slide projector or the opaque body projector in past times. The important thing is the use made of them, that is, to consider what end I am aiming for and how they can help me achieve it. In my opinion, it is a matter of doing so in a metacognitive way as "personalisation" suggests: knowing what to do and why, learning how to do it, and controlling it while doing it (self-regulation of use).

What, in your opinion, are the key indicators for the implementation of a personalised education model in an ordinary educational centre?

A previous clarification: the expression "Personalized Education" is due to García Hoz, so that any educational concept - as he called it - different from the one he conceived, should be called differently. For this reason, I believe that personalised education has only one model, within which many educational systems fit.

To answer the question, in my opinion some key indicators for creating a personalised educational system based on these would be:

- The possibility that schoolwork and relationships allow the development of each student according to his or her capacity, interest and learning pace and the family and social circumstances of his or her personal history.
- Opening of the school institution to the family and social community.
- Determine the contents based on the personal experience of the students and orienting it to the systematic culture and the professional world.
- The organisation and programming of activities must allow schoolchildren to exercise their freedom of acceptance, choice and initiative.
- Use of the elements that technology offers in the service of education.

- Explicit programming of guidance for schoolchildren, in which technical factors are linked to the human factors operating in all educational situations.
- Action by the teacher to stimulate, guide and control the work of the students, so that what the students can do on their own, they do without the intervention of the teacher.
- Flexible grouping of students, alternating individual work with teamwork by the students.
- Student self-evaluation and demand for responsibility for the decisions taken and for the fulfilment of the activities initiated.
- Permanent evaluation of all the conditioning factors and elements of education to discover new stimuli and methods that make the task of the educational community increasingly useful.

What do you think should be done to bring order to an educational system such as ours that lacks the necessary consensus to move forward?

Spain is a relatively centralised country in terms of education, either by the central state or by the autonomous communities. The compulsory education laws go down to the smallest details about what schools must do and how they must do it, and include a series of values that must be obeyed. As such, it is tough for the existing political options to be agreed upon because they do not coincide in the concept of a person or the values inherent in his or her nature. All of which, if we join it to other types of interests specific to each political party, the question becomes impossible.

That is why the General Education Act should propose, in my opinion, generic aspects referring to the different fields of education, for example. I think that everyone would agree on most of the indicators I have set out above, because they refer to concepts that are easy to share. From this point on, each school should propose its own educational system, which is none other than the Educational Project or Design of the Centre which, in turn, the Departments and Educational Teams would adapt to each cycle.

This would require the necessary autonomy of the educational centres.

“A person is only moved in life by his or her values, whatever they may be. Whatever he does, he necessarily responds to a motive.”

Can we teach people to learn and think for themselves? How?

In my opinion, the key is metacognition. The main task of the teacher is to teach his or her students to learn. That is to say, to teach them to read, write, memorise, pay attention and understand in a metacognitive way. This does not include any added difficulty, as many things that teachers and students do are done differently. For this reason, the mastery of both standard and individual learning strategies (unique, appropriate to the particular way of learning) should be a priority in the work of teachers and students.

As far as forming one's own criteria (thinking for oneself) is concerned, metacognitive learning itself makes things much more manageable, helped by the correct use of learning situations called “colloquial group” and “teamwork”, as well as in personal interviews, in the development of which students freely express their ideas and can be guided accordingly, with the greatest respect for their freedom.

You claim that there can be no education without motivation. To what extent is it important?

A person is only moved in life by his or her values, whatever they may be. Whatever he does, he necessarily responds to a motive, conscious or unconscious.

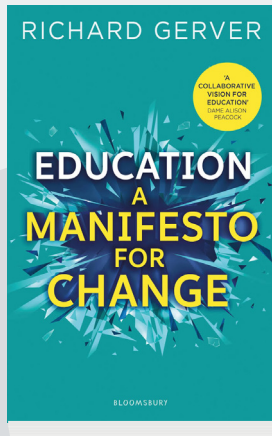
For me, the key phrase is this: “Motivation is always a consequence of a value. Everyone is motivated by what is important to him. Therefore, the question is that schoolchildren assume objective values following human dignity. By doing so, if they are convinced that helping a needy person is essential, they will feel motivated to do so, even if it costs them.

In short, nobody does anything without a reason to do so.



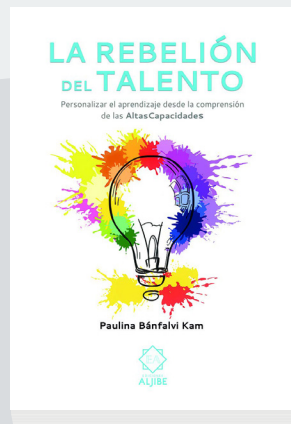
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new books



Education: A Manifesto for Change
Richard Gerver
Bloomsbury Education, 2019

This manifesto claims for a change in education, encouraging teachers to leave their closed school environment and collaborating with the outside world; to see innovators as a reference for their students. In this book, Gerver calls for a collaborative vision for an education called to prepare society to 'grow in uncertainty'. The tone with which it is written is optimistic. Still, it is an optimism based on the experience and trajectory of its passionate author.



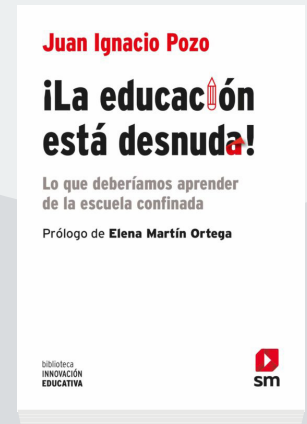
La rebelión del talento: Personalizar los aprendizajes desde la comprensión de las Altas Capacidades
(just available in Spanish)
Paulina Bánfalvi Kam
Aljibe, 2020

This work shows a deep commitment to the personalisation of learning. It assures that the motivation of talented students and their creativity is not only protected but also encouraged by personalisation because the school has to be a positive and stimulating experience. The author states that "a deep understanding of the complexity that high skills add to the development of a child will allow not only to attend to them but to respond to the whole classroom".



La escuela no es un parque de atracciones
(just available in Spanish)
Gregorio Luri
Ariel, 2020

In this essay, Luri analyses the current situation of the so-called educational innovation and bets on recovering a school where the "powerful knowledge" and the practices supported by empirical evidence are really the key elements.



¡La Educación está desnuda! Lo que deberíamos aprender de la escuela confinada
(just available in Spanish)
Juan Ignacio Pozo
SM Fondo, 2020

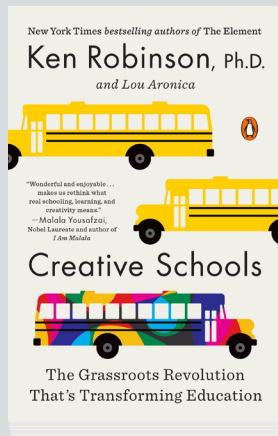
The book offers an analysis of the learning the confined school has provided and makes several proposals for the future of hybrid education.





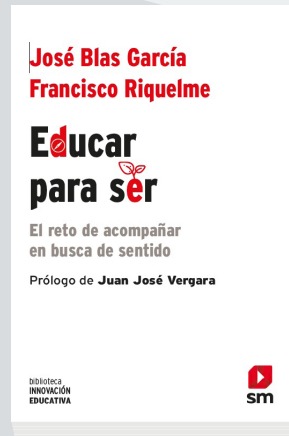
Evaluar y aprender: un único proceso
(just available in Spanish)
Neus Sanmartí
Octaedro, 2020

"No one who has worked on a formative assessment framework ever takes it back. Although it is not easy to promote, everyone stresses it is very gratifying in the medium term", the author advocates in her book's foreword (p.12). This statement of intent that invites to read this essay.



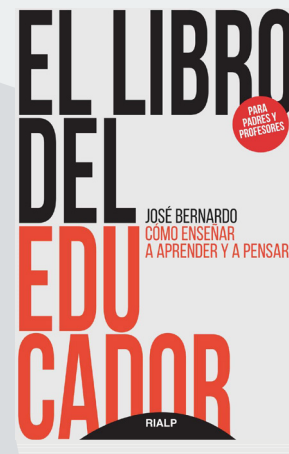
Creative schools
Ken Robinson
Penguin Random House, 2015

This book full of anecdotes, research and advice from various professionals may encourage us to review some of the most deeply rooted postulates in the field of education. It can also help us think about what the true meaning of teaching is today. This work is a commitment to making appropriate use of technology and personalised learning, with the underlying idea of transforming the education system.



Educar para ser. El reto de acompañar en busca de sentido
(just available in Spanish)
José Blas García y Francisco Riquelme
SM, 2020

A good handful of teachers put on the board their reflections on education understood as a transformative action on the social, community and also a personal level. According to them, the role of the teacher is to create the right framework for students to find the best conditions for their learning. There are fifteen chapters which ponder essential aspects from different and complementary perspectives.



El libro del educador: cómo enseñar a aprender y a pensar
(just available in Spanish)
José Bernardo Carrasco
Rialp, 2017

In this book, we find useful tools and strategies for those who are in the position of having to teach others. The book is aimed at teachers but also parents. The information that a student processes need to be converted into knowledge to minimise error, and so through their criteria, they end up knowing how to think. The transfer of this knowledge is done in a personalised way. It will so facilitate its rendering into a work based on technical, symbolic and ethical expression strategies.

author

“We are sick of ideology, of the desire to place the real under the dominion of the possible”

Gregorio Luri Medrano was born in Azagra (Navarra) in 1955 and studied teaching in Pamplona. He has been living in El Masnou, Catalonia, since 1978. He has a doctorate in Philosophy from the University of Barcelona and a degree in Educational Sciences. Luri was awarded the Extraordinary Prize for the Degree in Educational Sciences and the Prize for the Doctorate in Philosophy. He has worked as a primary school teacher, as a teacher of Philosophy in secondary school and has also been a university lecturer at the Complutense University of Madrid.

Luri has published many books on philosophy and pedagogy, including *La escuela contra el mundo* (2008), *Por una educación republicana* (2012), *Vale más educar. Consejos para los padres, a favor del sentido común* (2014), *Elogio de las familias sensatamente imperfectas* (2017), *El deber moral de ser inteligente: conferencias y artículos sobre la educación y la vida* (2018) and his latest book *La escuela no es un parque de atracciones* (2020).

> He is the author of the blog
<https://elcafedeocata.blogspot.com/>



by Jordi Viladrosa i Clua

INTERVIEW WITH GREGORIO LURI

At *Vale más educar* you offered advice to parents in favour of common sense. Has the current school lost its common sense?

My intention - which I may not have always conveyed well - is not to offer advice to parents, but to help them value the common sense they already have; to encourage them not to rent out their responsibility to a specialist; to make them see that we have not invented the family. As for your question, I believe that there is a permanent attempt in modernity to subject reality to the schemes of particular theories that have an instrumental conception of human beings. Common sense is the attempt to respect reality to respond to its challenges with prudence. We are sick of ideology, of the desire to place the real under the dominion of the possible.

Your latest book, *The school is not an amusement park*, is an optimistic critique of the current educational system. You state that the gap between ignorance and powerful knowledge must be reduced as much as possible. What do you mean by “powerful knowledge”?

As long as my intention with families is to help them appreciate the common sense they already have, my cooperation with teachers is to suggest developing reflective practices. There is no better approach than a teacher who knows why he or she does what they do at all times and is willing to learn from their reality and the reality of their peers. As for powerful knowledge is concerned, it is precisely the one we expect the plumber, the dentist, the surgeon or the mechanic to have in an emergency. In such situations, the right attitude is not enough for us. We want rigour and guarantees. It is the knowledge that the expert possesses and that the ambitious apprentice intends to achieve. Ultimately, powerful knowledge is evident in a person's linguistic competence since our language is our culture in action.

Is didactics or, even more so, pedagogy currently in crisis? Has neuroscience taken its place?


Modern pedagogy suffers from a complex that seems incapable of being cured. It would like to be a science not taking into account that it is something else: it is an art.

To reach the category of science, pedagogy has been surrendering to psychology, economics, technology, neuroscience and anything else that promises guarantees of good results under the appearance of axiological neutrality. But such warranties do not exist. There are no methods that ensure success in a hundred per cent of cases. A suitable way could, for example, be successful in 80% of cases. This would mean that generalising the statistical data, in a classroom of 20 students, the teacher would have to find alternative methods for four students. In the end, the crisis in didactics highlights its lack of serious anthropology to support it.

Who builds in terms of education what in other areas is called a “story” in Catalonia and Spain?

If we dare to look at reality face to face, we will immediately realise that the difference between pedagogically correct discourses (the fashionable stories) and effective practices is enormous. There are examples worthy of attention in Catalonia: the sense of reality is lost when the desire for the possible moves away

“Powerful knowledge is evident in a person's linguistic competence since our language is our culture in action.”



“New teachers arrive in the classroom knowing many innovative methodologies, but with little knowledge of the students and the forcefulness of human beings.”

from the doable, and so one ends up falling into hypocrisy. We are living in a time of splendour of educational hypocrisy. But in pedagogy, whatever impossible is immoral. So why have specific New Age educational stories become fashionable? For various reasons: as a consequence of the strength of “novolatri” (i.e. the cult of novelty that replaces the respect for the good); for the need to individualise schools in times of steep demographic decline; because of the fear towards the future (nobody wants to be left behind); as a result of the dream of providing an education that exempts the student from effort; through pedagogically suicidal disrepute of memory; at the hand of overvaluation of knowledge (which never defines what exactly is a pedagogical experience), etc.

Can we say that educational innovation in our schools and institutes is in good health? Is experience sufficiently taken into account before validating a new methodology?

I have very little concern about anything that is just new. I am interested in good things, whether

they are new or old. I think, for example, that the Socratic dialogue is still an efficient methodology if we want to achieve a reliable representation of our ignorance. I have met teachers who do wonders by handing out a blackboard to each child, and I know highly specialised centres to which I would not take my grandchildren. The critical question is whether anthropological permanency exists or not. I believe that they do and that, in fact, technologies are anthropological prostheses and that amplify what we already are. Human beings have more stability than some people suspect. Innovation makes sense when the model of the person who guides his or her actions is clearly known, and the school has a very defined path; it makes no sense when it becomes an end in itself, and the school is stumbling along in its research of the newest things.

At some point, you have stated that “it is not the methods themselves that generate confidence or mistrust, but the teachers who apply them”. Don’t you think that many teachers face reality in classrooms for which

they have not received enough training?

I have the feeling that new teachers arrive in the classroom knowing many innovative methodologies, but with little knowledge of the students and the forcefulness of human beings. I’ve talked to many teachers who are surprised because the students do not live up to their pedagogical ideal. Teaching is a demanding profession; very challenging. That is why the first duty of a teacher is being learnt of their job.

There’s a transversal angle in many of your works: a humanism that drinks from the source of family context values rather than those within the school environment. What imperfections would the current school have to polish?

The school is a noble and imperfect institution. It can lose its nobility, but not its deficiency. That is why our commitment should be trying to make it less and less limited. That is impossible if it limits itself to evaluating itself not by the height of its pretensions, and ignoring the reality of the behaviour of their students. School values are either



seen in the actions of its students; otherwise, they are just rhetoric. And if there are no values, there is no school. Take, for example, what happens with emotional education: emotions cannot educate themselves. We need principles that order them, give them a hierarchy and also suppress them. Without the leading role of ideals, emotional education soon drifts towards emotivism.

Many pedagogues give importance to evaluation, and I think you are no exception. You state in your book that “we lack a systematic culture of evaluation and transparency”. Could you explain this to us?

I have a clinical view of pedagogy. That is why I rely on the right diagnosis to establish the correct treatment of each student which also allows them to visualise their highest possibilities. But evaluation is a professional task. Just as one does not pay a visit to the doctor to learn that he or she is a lost cause in his health, we don't go to school to be notified that we have failed in those questions and that we have a 3 in mathematics. What we must demand from the teacher is

that he or she makes explicit to the students the logic inherent in their mistakes. A child always gives the correct answer to the question he or she asks himself. The difference between the question asked by the teacher and the student's understanding of it shows the cognitive load of a specific learning process. We cannot know what we are talking about if we do not have data on all this. Another example: a student's reading speed is a detailed index of their reading competence. Can we afford so not to evaluate it?

One last question: is Covid-19 pandemic an opportunity to rediscover what is essential in education?

The pandemic has shown some essential and relevant things; for

instance, that there is no substitute for the direct relationship between teacher and student. That is why the most useful online resources have been those that have best visualised this co-presentation: by telephone, for example. We have also seen that telematic teaching affects both students of different ages and from different cultural backgrounds in very different ways. We should carefully evaluate all of them because the next course is quite likely to be similar to this one.

“Emotions cannot educate themselves. We need principles that order them, give them a hierarchy and also suppress them.”

Tribute to Sir Ken Robinson, a knight to the rescue of education

by Ana Moreno

TRIBUTE TO SIR KEN ROBINSON

Covid-19 has put the world in check, every system is wobbling, including education. Old dynamics and ways of thinking no longer work to get out of this. And so, innovation is required, i.e, doing things differently. This will be possible thanks to a great old friend though still quite unknown to many: creativity. According to the recently deceased Professor Sir Ken Robinson, who is our protagonist today, it is the most abundant and also most necessary natural human capacity for the survival of the human being.

In 2006, in the TED conference in California, Sir Ken gave a death knell to the educational world: "schools are killing creativity". His cry was heard all over the planet: over 60 million visualizations, an estimated 380 million people in 160 countries listened to his words. No one was left indifferent; he seemed to be a visionary to some, a madman to others, and not a few saw him as a provocateur seeking popularity. However, our opinion will surely be different if we tackle the same lecture again today. In his 20 minutes talk, he recalls three aspects in a pleasant and sympathetic way: the extraordinary evidence of the creative capacity with which each human being is born, that we have no idea what will happen in the future and, finally, the interest education awakens at all levels.

But who was Ken Robinson? He was a Knight of Queen Elizabeth II

of England since 2003; why did he deserve this honour and how did he come to lead such an educational revolution?

Ken Robinson was born in 1950 to a working-class family of seven children. At the age of four, he contracted polio, which left him with significant consequences and forced him to attend a special needs school. When he was still a child, his father had an accident at work that left him a quadriplegic. However, thanks to his determination and the support of his family, he managed to study at university and end his doctorate. His doctoral thesis studied the possibilities of drama and theatre in education.

Amongst his many consultancy, teaching and research projects, he was the director of "The Arts in Schools Project", one to improve

the learning of the arts in schools in England and Wales. He taught Art Education for 12 years at Warwick University, serving as spokesperson for the department itself and ending up as Professor Emeritus at the same university.

In the late 90s, the British Minister of Education and Employment appointed him to a national advisory committee on creative education and culture. This commission carried out the largest national research on the importance of creativity in education and the UK economy. It published the so-called Robinson Report, whose real title was "*All our futures: creativity, culture and education*". The article highlighted the limited role that creativity had hitherto played and the importance it held in the future, both for the country and humanity itself. The Times published the following about the report: "*This report raises*



some of the most important issues facing business in the 21st century. It should have every CEO and HR director banging on the table and demanding action”.

He used creativity to resolve conflicts of all kinds and worked with ministers; he became the central figure in creating a strategy for the development of creativity and the economy that was part of the Peace Process with Northern Ireland.

Ken Robinson was one of four international advisors to the Singapore government in creating their strategy to become the creative environment for Southeast Asia. He was acclaimed by Fast Company Magazine as one of the “elite thinkers in creativity and innovation”.

In 2003 Queen Elizabeth II knighted him for his services to the arts. In addition, Sir Ken was happy to support charities.

His thoughts are recorded in three of his major books. The first of these was published in 2001 “Out of our Minds: Learn to be Creative”. John Cleese said, “Ken Robinson writes brilliantly about the different ways in which creativity is undervalued and ignored in Western culture and especially in our national education systems”. His second book “The Element: How to find your passion, can change everything” was published by Penguin in 2009 and translated into 21 languages. The element refers to the experience of the moment when personal talent meets personal passion. In this encounter, he argues, we feel more ourselves, are more

***Why creativity is
the most important
competition for the
future of humanity and
the planet?***



"Creativity is the natural human capacity, more abundant and also more necessary for the survival of the human being."



inspired and achieve the best. The book is based on stories of creative artists. "Creative Schools" was printed in 2015; it is inspired by his famous TED talk "How School Kills Creativity". He sought to offer an answer to all those who did not understand the revolution he was talking about in his session.

All his work takes on a special dimension at times like the current ones, as his reformist proposals on education and the role of creativity are no longer merely ideas but have become a matter of urgency for all the world's education systems.

This article is dedicated to collecting part of his great legacy. Some of the most representative ideas on his passion, i.e. the improvement of education, have been chosen to this end and have been included in his book "Creative Schools".

SIR KEN'S BEST IDEAS FOR THE PRESENT TRANSFORMATION REQUIRED

Education needs a transformation. Education is indeed our greatest hope. However,

the old-style fruit of the Industrial Revolution is no longer an answer to our needs: a new educational system is required to help us face the current challenges and enhance the natural talents that we all have inside. It is not a question of repairing the system but of changing and transforming it.

Purpose of education. The first step for transforming school is to review what we understand by education. The purpose of education is to enable students to understand the world around them and to discover their natural talents. By doing so, they will fulfil themselves as individuals and become active and compassionate citizens. *"Education is our greatest hope. We need a new educational system that helps us face the challenges of today and that enhances the natural talents that we all have within us. It is not a question of repairing the system but of changing and transforming it."*

How can you be part of this change? We can start by distinguishing three forms of discernment: a critique of the current situation, a vision of how it should

"The purpose of education is to enable students to understand the world around them."

be, and a transformative theory for moving from one to the other. In his book, the author suggested bringing these three aspects together, based on his own experience and that of many others and drawing on research and some principles.

This revolution is based on faith in the value of the individual; on the right to self-determination; on the potential for evolution and personal fulfilment of human beings; and on the importance of civic responsibility and respect for others.

Education is an organic, non-industrial process. Education deals with living people who have emotions, feelings, talents and life circumstances. They are influenced by what happens and, in turn, influence the lives of others. They may oppose



or collaborate, become involved or disengage. It is therefore basic to understand that people develop under certain conditions, not others.

The four fundamental principles of their development would be:

- **Health:** well-being of the student as a whole: intellectual, physical, spiritual and social.
- **Ecology:** key interdependence of all these aspects of the development of each student and in the community as a whole.
- **Justice:** to cultivate the talents and potential of all students, regardless of their circumstances, and to respect the roles and responsibilities of those who work with them.
- **Caution:** creating optimal conditions for human development based on compassion, experience and practical wisdom.

The aim is to invigorate an organic culture within the centres themselves.

Eight core competencies. The four aims of education, in turn, suggest eight key competencies that schools should provide to their students in order to succeed in their lives:

- **Curiosity:** the ability to ask questions and explore how the world works.
- **Creativity:** competence to generate new ideas and put them into practice.
- **Criticism:** the capacity to analyse information and ideas and develop arguments and reasoned judgements.
- **Communication:** ability to express thoughts and feelings clearly and confidently in a variety of media and forms.
- **Collaboration:** skills to collaborate constructively with others.
- **Compassion:** the capability to put yourself in other people's shoes and act accordingly.
- **Calm:** capacidad de conectar

con la talent to connect with the emotional life within and develop a sense of personal harmony and balance.

- **Civility:** the talent to be constructively involved in society and participate in the processes that sustain it.

Leading with principles. Every great learning experience works on two fundamental figures: the learner and the educator. *For a school to stand out, a third figure is needed: a brilliant leader who brings ideas, experience, and a deep understanding of the kind of environments in which learners can and want to learn.*

High performance is driven by motivation and ambition, and great leaders know how to awaken both emotions in a human spirit. They can instil hope in those who have lost it, inspire determination in the desperate and guide the lost. As well as vision, a great leader needs support, means and skills.

AS CONCLUSION

Benjamin Franklin was aware that a liberal and effective education was fundamental to make the American dream flourish. He once said that there are three kinds of people: those who are immovable, those who are movable, and those who move. Some people do not see the need of change and do not want to do so: current and time play in favour of renewal, so it is possible that the winds of change will leave them behind. *Benjamin Franklin once said that there are three kinds of*

people: those who are immovable, those who are movable, and those who move.

Those who are mobile see the need for change. Work with them and stimulate their energy; create partnerships and forge dreams and plans.

Finally, there are those who move: they represent the agents of change who are able to imagine a different future and who are determined to make it happen by acting personally and collaborating with others. They know that they do not always need to be entitled to do so. As Gandhi said, if we want to change the world, we must be the change we want to see. Because, when many people move, that creates movement. And if this movement has enough energy, then it becomes a revolution. And that is just what we need in the educational field.

Dear Sir Ken, thank you very much for fighting to leave the world much better than the one you found it. May you rest in peace.

Redoing the pedagogical model for the school of the future

by Jordi Viladrosa i Clua

Our society is undergoing such sudden changes that it is always a good opportunity to ask ourselves again if we are facing a scenario in which many professions will end up disappearing. The advances in technology predict a substantial loss of jobs that will be replaced by others that are still to be defined or that are just beginning to appear. Robotics, for example, will take the place of humans in mechanical and repetitive tasks. On the other side, we have the consequences of Covid-19: is the teleworking factor, virtual teaching, structural? How does it affect the education sector now and how will it do so in the near future? Is the pedagogical model we have useful and is it the most appropriate for the school we need? Does the current model of educational center have a future?

A first aspect to consider is whether we should not empty the curriculum of all those contents that are not part of a corpus of basic knowledge (essential and agreed) and common (for all students) in the framework of an education as personalized as possible. The classic memoristic model, repetitive and out of context, so typical of the current educational model, must be replaced by another model in which the training of students makes them useful to society and not only to companies and their production model. Ken Robinson in one of his multiple TED talks and interviews reminds us that the purposes of education have to do with four fields: the economy, culture and tradition (values), active

and committed citizenship and personal growth and development. That is, focusing the tasks on aspects such as sustainability and the environment; knowing one's own culture well in order to better understand that of others and to be tolerant; civility; personalization open to others without forgetting the interiority of oneself.

A second aspect would have to do with the acquisition of those skills and techniques of intellectual work that facilitate autonomous learning and intelligent research of the information needed to solve small challenges or cases that make it essential to work interdisciplinary of the various areas of knowledge (linguistic, mathematical, knowledge of natural and social environment, etc.). Preparing these new student profiles involves teaching them to think and do it critically, to solve problems (with contributions from robotics, artificial intelligence, the sense of algorithms, etc.), to know and implement soft skills: communication skills, ability to manage information well, decision making and conflict resolution, collaborative teamwork, proper use of time, stimulate divergent thinking and creativity...

A third block to be configured should be that of the evaluation understood as a regulatory process of learning and not as a grade to be reserved for the end, when it is necessary to certify that the pretended objectives have been achieved. In fact, the underlying model in the current legislation centered on a competent vision



Balancing life

by Anna Forés

“The classic memoristic model, repetitive and out of context, so typical of the current educational model, must be replaced by another model.”

of education should not be ignored, but rather made possible by changing the methodology and the evaluation. And perhaps it is not superfluous to remember that competencies are not developed without the support of knowledge. Pedagogy and didactics can be more useful than ever. This is the challenge!

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I would like to share some reflections that have come out of these months of the pandemic and also, some thoughts and data that have been brought out from our research or spaces we shared with others. We verify that this shaking and dead-end experience leads us to balance life using different elements. They will make us aware of the process that we have lived and help us adjust what we are experiencing. We have chosen some points to rebalance, not all the existing ones, but those are a starting point for reflection.

The balance between noise and silence. We live in a society full of noises; noises from the city, from traffic, from engines, but from everything that distracts us from what is essential. As a counterpoint, we seek moments of silence, of calm, of feeling inside, of re-encountering ourselves. One of the most critical data out of research is the feed-back to the following question: “what have you learned from this situation lived?” The most relevant answer is: learning to prioritize, to have patience and be calm. Therefore, the need to stop, to reflect on what really is a preference in day-to-day tasks, in life and to dedicate wholly to it. This exercise of interiority cannot be done in a noisy context; we need silence. Without silence, there would be no music. The music of life needs spaces of silence to be able to listen to us thoroughly. There’s a need to listen to take control of our life.



The balance between ourselves and others. One of the great lessons we are living by is that we need each other more than ever, that what I have or decided to do has or may have implications in many people. The self and the others are blurred in a “we” that we all create. The great lesson we should learn is the importance of being part of a whole as one big network, and that the movement of one causes development in the rest or others. Tensegrity reminds us of this principle.

Therefore, we are part of a whole, and we should forget the EGO's and choose the ECHO, this call from Earth, where we belong to. Human beings are only a part of the world. In his book “Elegant Simplicity” Satish Kumar speaks about moving from these very selfish human beings towards an eco-friendlier society: more of all the living things on the planet. Us acting from the “we” to get out okay.

The balance between depth and superfluity. We live in a hyper-accelerated society where everything becomes superfluous because we do not have time to go deeper. Immediacy takes away that which is essential: urgency devours what is really relevant. Not having time to go deeper also implies not having time for friends or families. Still, every relationship requires time to bond, precisely because we have authentic and deep relationships. Rescuing space and time to weave strong relationships allows us to rebalance life.

Between vanity and humility. We humans as a species believe that we were the ones in control of everything: from DNA to the galaxies, but nature is now placing us in a non-control plan, reminding us of our fragility and our non-permanence, and vulnerability. This lesson of humility has also made it easier for us to savour every moment we live. Also, to enjoy life by becoming aware of miseries, of what we do and who we are, and of what makes us perfectible human beings.

The balance between saturation and assumption. We live saturated of information: so much data, news, and judgments that must be filtered since there is also a lot of false information around. Because of this, we may fall into presumption and disinformation, which makes us assume things or venture scenarios that do not help us be very informed, either. Therefore, we must rebalance having channels to contrast the information and not live slaves to the constant bombardment of news and information of little relevance. According to Humberto Maturana, the reality is “multiverse” where each world constructed by each observer is as valid as the others. Therefore, a sum of glances of the same truth. It is necessary to develop critical thinking to be able to discern the information without being saturated with it or assuming non-contrasted information.

The balance between fear and confidence. We are afraid, and it is a legitimate emotion: fear of uncertainty, fear of disease, fear of many things that are out of our control. Fear does not help us to move forward either as individuals or as a society; it allows us to survive but not to succeed. We have to create spaces and contexts where trust can be developed, where we can persist instead of resisting, as David Bueno says in his last book, “*El arte de persistir*”. Resisting sets us in a non-action but reaction plan, and what we now need is to persist and therefore, take action.

The balance between caregivers and people receiving care. One of the most expressed words during these months has been: “How are you?” or “We hope you are well”. We have enjoyed moments of much care from each other. And it is important to bond and have us all present. Sometimes there are people who are dedicated to taking care of others but forget to receive care from others. Or, at the other extreme, there are people who receive a lot of care but do not show any gesture of caring towards the rest of the people around them. So we have to take care of ourselves and let ourselves be taken care of. It is the sum of forces that make us strong when facing our weaknesses.

We could follow the list of balances that would never end: between tangible and intangible, between sustainability and eradication, between multiple binomials that are present in our lives. Balancing life happens in order to learn how to inhabit ourselves and move through this situation, without falling into any extreme but being able to balance the poles and continue learning. Here we continue, rebalancing.

Anna Forés is a Spanish educator and writer, a doctor in Philosophy and Educational Sciences and graduated in Pedagogy from the University of Barcelona. She is a member of the consolidated research group GREMA, Environments and materials for learning, of the ICE of the University of Barcelona, and of the close group of Innovation INDAGAT, Group of Teaching Innovation to promote research. She is the author of numerous books on social education, such as “*Nuevas miradas sobre la resiliencia*”.

The 2020-2021 course and HYBRID training

by Pere Marquès

Pere Marqués is Doctor in Educational Sciences, and he has a degree in Economics. Teacher of General Basic Education. At present, he is a professor of Educational Technology at the Faculty of Educational Sciences of the UAB. Director of the DiM-UAB Research Group. He has given a wide number of lectures and courses in universities, education councils, teaching and resource centres, associations and professional colleges.

In times of HYBRID TRAINING, there will be periods of time when the training will only be online at home, and there will be eriods when it will be possible to attend classes in person (often with reduced schedules).

To face this TRAINING, some key actions are recommended.

SCHOOL

Safety management

Distance, face-masks, ventilation, cleaning, other sanitary aspects, etc. at the entrance and exit, classrooms and the patio, in the dining room...

Timetable Organisation

(in the centre and at home), spaces and groups of students (shifts, splitting up...)

Re-organizing curriculum

Identify and prioritise essential learning, selection of tasks and training resources (for face-to-face and online activities -hybrid training-), correction systems, bimodal curriculum.

Support services for students and families

Ensuring ICT facilities
Ensure digital competence and study and self-learning techniques of students.
Provide tutoring and family consultancy.
Mediate with social services that help families who need them to care for their children when they are not in school.
Monitoring and evaluation of student learning (exercises, portfolios, rubrics, etc.) in both online or face to face sessions to facilitate the attention to diversity (reinforcements, recovery, talent enhancement) aimed at the success of ALL students.

Teacher training

Digital/educational platform, new resources, didactic updating) and "just in time" coordination and support for teachers in the centre, trying to reduce the overload of work that this hybrid training entails.

See full document at <http://peremarques.blogspot.com/>



TEACHERS TOWARDS STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Ensuring that students have the material and intellectual means necessary for learning

Home study environment and work schedules, ICT tools, digital study skills.

To provide training content

(explanations, books, videos, multimedia documents...) **so that students acquire new knowledge and skills** (general and specific), **and have a good personal development** (emotional, value system, attitudes...).

According to the programme of the subjects, the teaching staff directs the sequence and the rhythm of the learning processes.

It will not be possible to achieve all the learning that is usual in other years. Therefore, priority will be given to the teaching of essential knowledge and skills to ALL students.

When the training is mostly online, the teachers' didactic exhibitions are best served by video recordings so that everyone can watch them at their own time and their own pace.

To provide learning tasks that involve challenges where this knowledge and skills can be applied to consolidate learning.

It is necessary to ensure the correction of all the tasks and give the option to ask questions if they do not understand the revision.

It is vital that students develop self-learning skills, and to this end, they can consult multiple sources of information and, as far as possible, that the tasks are self-evaluable.

Some of these activities (e.g. projects) should be carried out in groups.

In the online training periods, teachers can call video conferences with their students to offer guidance, listen to their questions and comments and ask them some questions about the activities. The involvement of students should be encouraged.

To offer a consultancy and guidance service,

ensuring that when students have difficulty in studying or in carrying out learning tasks they can make a query (in the teacher's forum, email, etc.) which will resolve their doubts and allow them to continue with their learning activities.

Peer support techniques can be used (service learning in the classroom): consultation forums attended by "specialist students" in certain subjects, student "peer tutors" who sponsor others...

To monitor and evaluate the learning that each student is doing, which will allow "personalising" the tutorial and some of the learning tasks

(review activities, reinforcement, expansion of knowledge...) **in order to ensure the necessary learning that is essential for ALL the students and to promote the most outstanding possible development for each one** (attention to diversity, inclusive school)

All the activities that the students do will be monitored (formative evaluation) and those students who require it will be offered reinforcement activities. Complementary activities, sometimes optional, may also be offered.

The more formal evaluation activities (exam type) will be done "in person" as far as possible during the periods when the schools are open. These periods will also be used to explain difficult subjects and to develop more personalised reinforcement and extension activities.

During the online training periods, students will be offered personal tutorials by videoconference.

call for papers

Revolution 4.0 is already underway
A quality STEM education, a guarantee for the future

On the occasion of the preparation of the number 2 of “Diàlegs” we call for collaborations. The new magazine will be dedicated to the role of STEM education as a hope for the future in a complex world full of uncertainty.

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