

THE ADOLESCENT TOWARDS KNOWLEDGE

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Summary

The following article deals with knowledge, relationships, representations and values that pupils together with teachers perform daily at school. It includes our research project called "Adolescence and School" which has been implemented since 1995 in our Institution, subject called "Psychological Foundation on education".

Throughout its development, we have tried to get to know about in what positions teachers and students are towards knowledge. Our purpose is to make a critic- reflexive perspective possible on the part of university students who are to become teachers, as regards their knowledge on how students are formed on the E.G.B and Polimodal school levels. (1)

What plays one of the main roles on the student's career choice is their getting closer to the educative institution as well as to their teachers and the culture of the school.

We have chosen a qualitative perspective for this article. Our proceedings on the working field are focused on teacher's interviews and on the participation of two or three students that had access to the concretion of a semi-structured interview.

A central topic within teacher's and student's speeches were the topics dealt in class and their motivation, been there a convergence with respect to the effects that these factors have over learning. Therefore, there is no reflection by the actors as regards the role that intention and willingness play in teacher-student-knowledge relationship and its projection in the teaching-learning process.

Key words: School-knowledge; teacher-pupil-knowledge; intersubjective relationship; knowledge developing

“... We should place ourselves inside our students minds and try to understand as much as possible the source and quality of their conceptions...”

Howard Gardner(2)

Introduction

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perspective possible on the part of university students who are to become teachers, as regards their knowledge on how students are formed on the E.G.B and Polimodal school levels. (3)

The conception of our learning subject places us upon different theoretical perspectives that project into different didactic views performed on teaching practice.

The syllabus of our subject has been organized from the constructivism as a conceptual frame, where there are different theories with which we can explore and comprehend the learning-teaching process, particularly the socio-cognitive dimension.

This is another perspective in psychoanalysis, whose framework lets us get to the bottom of the link between teachers and students and their implicancies; its role in the value of knowledge and the connotations it has on the teacher performance over the attitudes building-up with respect to knowledge.

The teachers role is of great importance where he proposes the way of relating oneself to knowledge. It is here where his level of information on the topic as well as his development in class, his listening and speaking abilities take greater importance. We consider the teacher as the mediator of the social culture, getting unattached from the view of a teacher whose sole function is to transmit and explain concepts.

Development

The cognitive development and the breaking out of qualitative changes on the thought structure in adolescents places us upon an intellectual performance that gets closer and closer to the “academic model” proper of a scientist and logic human being. From Piaget’s perspective, the adolescent would be in the formal operational stage. Hence, experiences describe that most adolescents and some adults do not manifest a formal consolidated thought.

During the last years, many authors have stated that intellectual operations building the subjects in adolescence are very much attached to culture, consequently they acquire a very important meaning over implicit theories; previous individual and social knowledge, which is homogeneous with respect to a specific development level.

The adolescent’s abstraction ability allows a self-reflection about their own intellectual abilities, about the general nature of the knowledge expressed in metacognitive and socio-cognitive competences which are extremely important in the learning process.

Entel (1998) considers the narrow link between the formal thought build up, the school and social class from which the adolescent is coming from.

The cognitive level of school children undergoes the “determinations coming from individual maturation and class structure”(4) presenting substantial differences in the

cognitive maturation from school adolescents and those that do not go to school, and the social factors are what stimulate or inhibit these superior processes.

Duschatzky (1999) agrees with this point of view and states that since “the deficit theory” it is said that cultural handicap and verbal deprivation are responsible for the results on the students’ learning who come from popular areas, as a result of the state of poverty they live in.

Many students in the first grades in school and some in highschool very frequently show lack of interest, a decrease in their school performance and a rejection towards learning.

Among the authors that treat the adolescent problematic we have considered Tubert (1986)(5), being him who defines the adolescence as “a structure or configuration without a beginning or end in a specific moment in life, but a product of a story that begins with the birth of a child and even before then, when his life project gives rise on those who have created him. In this structure what has been built is written until the moment of its cristalization, and, at the same time it will persist, having a new meaning continuously and in different ways, in function of the subject and his relationship with the symbolic universe his part of”.

During adolescence, the rebuilding of the subject can affect his intellectual success, often associated with other manifestations.

Learning error is presented not as a casual effect of a meaningful articulation between an affected “intellectual potential” and the subjective unconscious drama where the subject is limited. (de Lajonquiere, 1996)

The subject can not give up facing the maturation imperatives. It is necessary to grow up, become an adult, and it is then when the desire to go on and the fear to the unknown fuse.

The update of edipic desires is produced during adolescence, with a superego deconstruction, where parental narcissist wounds are reborn following a reconstruction of the ideal self.

School failure arises occasionally as a edipic repetition. Crisis get worse with the introspection about the identity, and it is here where the ideal self comes into doubt, copied very frequently from the father’s image. (Cordie, 1994)

In all his works, Freud takes into account the concept of sublimation to explain a certain type of activity held by a desire that does not manifest itself towards a sexual aim, within these we find the artistic creativity, intellectual research and generally those activities that are valuable in a certain society.

The term “sublimation” introduced in psychoanalysis by Freud, comes from the word “sublime” which has been used especially to designate a production suggesting greatness, elevation, in chemistry sublimation has to do with the process that makes possible the transformation of an element from solid to gas states. (Laplanche y Pontalis, 1981)

The desire to know, which Freud takes as the epistemophilic pulsion, can be inhibited and there can be a stop in the cognitive inversions knowledge.

Providing the learning difficulties that adolescents experience, we ask ourselves: Do they have the chance to express their will to “know”?

Being the school where knowledge is transmitted and acquired, based on the intellectual activity performed by students, it is necessary to ask oneself about what makes a person want to know, the destiny of the libidinal impulses linked to this will, the way in which sublimation takes place.

The intellectual activity depends on sublimation, and at the same time it depends on an idealization task, identifying oneself with the teacher.

Going back to Laplanche and Pontalis, we consider idealization as the psychic process in which the qualities and value of an object are driven to perfection.

Identifying oneself to the idealized object contributes to the building up and enrichment of the ideal stages of a person (ideal self, the ideal of oneself) (6)

The necessity taking over the adolescent of stop being, “through” parents, so as to be oneself, requires a dis-attachment of the idealized image of parents to find out new ideals in more adequate figures of reality. (Kanciper, L., 1985) During that search, is the adolescent going to take the teacher as a pattern to follow?

Considering the adolescent subject from this perspective, it is possible to think about a particular educative attitude that each teacher can have. Throughout the relationship teacher-student and considering the teenager as an active subject capable of forming and reconstructing himself, the teacher will then turn up to be a possible ideal person with which the teenager will be identified to.

This relationship implies a dialogue between the unconscious. The unconscious representations are with fantasy shapes, imaginary scripts where impulses are settled and they can be thought of as true scenarios of desire. (Laplanche y Pontalis, 1981)

From this point of view, we try to understand the relationship between the teacher and the student, taking into account the teaching desire and the learning desire.

In those situations where one subject is calling another, supposing there is knowledge, a transference phenomena is encountered. It plays an important role in this relationship, generating different effects depending on whether it is positive or negative.

The teacher does not interpret the transference as an analyst would, he uses it for the transmission of knowledge.

On this basis, this relationship of transference generates an intersubjective link with the teacher. It is through the other's look where one can recognize oneself as a subject. The intersubjectivity is linked to speech, to a process of "dialectic of return around oneself" and the struggle for reciprocal recognition. Vicissitudes round this process allow an analysis of the power relationships inside the classroom and its effects.

The relationship student-teacher-knowledge and the failure that is generated in the knowledge transmission can be approached from other perspectives.

Duschatzky (1995) in "*Evidences about school knowledge sense*" states that the result in teaching should not be taken as subject flaws but as what analyses the real sense of school speech, highlighting the "institutional impossibilities to turn the social and cultural changes into pedagogic clues".

Facing a school becoming poor not only as a symbol but also as an institution, which cannot give a more attractive offer than mediation culture does ; the author states as an answer, the possibility that "the school could be constituted in a sense nucleolus and its authors could be perceived and recognized as an enunciation subject".

The educational institution has in many occasions denied in its demand the cultural environment and history of the student, neutralizing any linked motivations to his personal and cultural success.

Telma Barreiro (2000) in "*Conflicts in the classroom*" incorporates the concept of pedagogic non-variants, fact structures which as a sort of scaffold allow the development of an educative process.

She assigns the concept of pedagogic non-variant when they experience daily educational activity. The author starts with the concept of structure since the non-variants can be treated in different ways, having the possibility to be more or less successful to the learning process, depending at the same time on what kind of link is there with the pupils.

In connection to these pedagogic non-variants she sets some questions that enrich our own inquiries.

On this basis we consider that the role teachers play towards knowledge puts into play their exercise of authority, being in some cases focused on the power that knowledge gives, generating motives and making students be interested; and configuring different dynamics.

It is the relationship to the teacher what legitimates his presence in the classroom, manifested in a momentaneous asymmetry between a consolidated subject and one in formation.

The didactic dimension is realized in the organization and hierarchical arrangement of the teaching contents, as well as in the configuration of space within the classroom; the selection of strategies, together with the gathering of the group in class. It also involves the attitudinal area, having a strong impact in the establishment of links with pupils.

Cullen (1997)(7) approaches the relationship held by the teacher with knowledge highlighting the needed “critic, contextualized and hopeful” attitude so as to legitimate the view of a teacher as who “teaches”; making possible for his students to not only acquire certain knowledge, but also learn from and with their classmates.

The teacher is more than the mediator to knowledge, it is him who presents it, transmits its particular relation, and even gives reasons to justify the link, which at the same time has an effect on students as the transmitter of interests, expectations and abilities, generating a positive, negative or even neutral will towards knowledge.

It is around these relationships where a deep, subjective or intersubjective plot is formed, having a flow of images of the actors in the learning build-up process.

Cullen⁷ points out the need to ask oneself, Why should I have a relationship with knowledge?, it is at this point where a question about intentionality comes up, referring to the multiple faces within which we find: the different meanings of knowledge, the interests that guide the reasoning job, present in logic and argumentation; the obstacles that lock the will to know, the challenge to face them, the self thinking about knowledge. “The reason why” we choose to acquire knowledge finds another solution in the subject it was directed to.

Methodology

We have chosen the qualitative type of methodology to approach this study. Our proceedings on the field were focused on interviews to teachers so as to have a perspective of the classroom, with the voluntary participation of some students that had access to the concretion of a semi-structured interview.

These interviews were performed by students and in this way, it turned to be part of a learning process. On the one hand, through talking to their future colleagues and students, they could get closer to their training discipline teaching, leading to an analysis of representations, values and practices put into play in the classroom activity.

On the other hand, we have encouraged the students to express their thinking to the interviewed teachers as a way to analyze their performance.

The interview was focused on the student and on the teacher, the learning-teaching process describing how the teacher teaches and how students learn, trying to understand how does the learner learn. This stage is considered to be very important since teachers from the institution, students and we ourselves will have the chance to think about the necessary mediations to encourage learning.

In our piece of work we have taken into account a number of contextual markers such as: characteristics to the educational institution, geographical place, school population, socio-cultural level. Etc.

What has a big importance is the institutional context affected by the reorganization of the educative system. It was divided into E.G.B and Polimodal levels, imposing a change in the system and generating doubt and expectations in the population for what this levels proposed.

Our study includes an approach on the teaching aspects and contents, being the teacher in an institution, he will have the chance to know every teaching content on the subject he will be dealing with as well as its organization during the year.

We are focused on the relationship teacher-student-knowledge taking into account the linkage relations that are part of the system. One of the reflection shafts in the interview goes straight to the relation teacher-knowledge in his epistemologic dimension and didactic-organization.

School group and institutional profile

The students have oriented their job towards public and private competence, prevailing the former. Since the schools that belong to the UNLP (8) give their students the possibility to get into college directly, they were included. Likewise, different public schools of our city were included too. Moreover, there were three private schools where some of the students had finished their highschool studies or where they were working as teachers, these were also taken into account. School groups comprise the third level of E.G.B (9), Polimodal and the last year belonging to the old system, they were focused on the following subjects: Language and Literature, mathematics, physics, chemistry, English, French, biology, philosophy, sociology, history, and geography.

Teachers' Profile

Most teachers got their degrees in the UNLP on their specific areas, two of them were engineers having degrees for teaching and the rest had graduated from private institutions.

Students perspectives about the school

We got very different answers from the students, and we have chosen the most striking ones considering their points of view.

"...A school is the mean of learning that makes possible for us to get knowledge for our lives, as a first step to higher levels of studies."

"... To go to school is an obligation, it is the place in which we are taught and where supposedly we sometimes learn."

"... The school contributes to social and intellectual development, being in the streets gives you some kind of knowledge and the school gives you another."

"... School makes a learning model possible, at an individual and group level, it helps us gain study habits".

"...It gives the chance to acquire a learning model whether in groups or individually and it helps us acquire a studying custom..."

"...It gives us general culture so then we choose what we eager to study, to have a profession." "... There is a proposal of teaching for the future, so that we can make this country go better..."

"... It nurtures us, it opens different ways of thinking, of acquiring reasonableness; to build up our own opinions without depending on anyone."

"... The school gives you the chance to be free, it gives you freedom to express what you think."

"...You can tell by the way someone is talking, if he went to school or not, the school is a place that allows you to think about what you do, as well as to express what you need, it helps you develop your moral side, esthetic."

"... It allows you to grow as a person, to have the elements to face up the problems that come up in our lives, and to have a stable job"

"... The school helps you relate and choose the people around you, those who will be with you in your life, you meet your best friends at school."

"... Schools transmit respect to your elders and to the institutions."

Ideas about knowledge

Our starting point at elaborating questions was to encourage a deeper way of thinking about the connotations that knowledge had on teenagers. Our main idea was to dive in the imagination of children around the production of knowledge. We tried to visualize the epistemologic fractures that had come up during their educational period.

By asking: "How does knowledge generate?" there was a tendency to give a broad explanation about it, including previous ideas, systems of beliefs and daily knowledge.

Students refer knowledge to school knowledge in their answers giving details about the ways and/or strategies they follow to have it. They highlight interest and motivation for that knowledge. Among this logic, they point out that from this interest they study the topic and it is then when they feel in the position to answer the teacher's inquiries.

In this sense, they give priority to the teacher as the mediator, either to cause interest in knowledge and so give the chance to understand that knowledge and acquire it. In some cases that mediation is regarded to their classmates, they say: *"you learn talking to others, listening, and doing things."*

There are students that regard knowledge as repetition, others as construction, depending on the model that sustents the practice of the teacher. Moreover, there are some references to learning that go beyond the school field, giving priority to the family contribution, friends and social environment. They recognize the accumulative value of learning through experience and they give value to their curiosity, their amazement facing new things, problem arising, search and choice of solving alternatives.

Trying to get answers, observing the others and self-thinking are the ways that students follow: *"you acquire knowledge all the time"*. These types of answers are not casual, since some students attended philosophy classes.

Students recognize technology as the main source of knowledge and Internet as a source that substitutes books.

Concepts holding the teaching practice

We find certain aspects of the students asseverations reflected on teachers' conceptions.

There is a convergence in the search for motivation and interest, in some cases it is regarded to community contribution; making reference to the need for being involved in the classroom project either on the part of students or teachers. Both parts consider practice as the source of reflection and theory reconstruction put into play in the

didactic triad (teachers plan to improve the relationship with students and then with the teaching contents)

Most interviewed teachers have stated their feeling of sustenance with the constructivism, referring to working with the previous knowledge they may have together with daily knowledge.

Around the knowledge teachers consider for teaching, some answers refer to that knowledge that was part of their formation as professionals and from experience. Others have mentioned knowledge from their area and pedagogic-didactic knowledge, and some others take as a starting point all the contents of the subject and the interests of the students.

In this context, the question comes up as the way to organize the class, triggering search for information and knowledge production. A number of teachers consider that a diagnostic exam systematizes a way to explore previous knowledge.

There is a constant in all the opinions that interest and motivation is the preferable way in which students are receptors of knowledge, considering each case. Round this context we find different skill levels to perform school tasks alluding to the situations where there is a deficient knowledge acquisition. There appears a lack of reading habits influencing content settlement which obstaculizes the theoretical development when getting related to real life topics.

The strong reference to the interests of the pupil is manifested in the correspondence that teachers visualize between students and learning results. Following this line of analysis, teachers give an important position to students, now as a chance or obstacle, in the reception of knowledge.

The place of the school in the social imaginary scene is a factor that influences learning, it is an aspect where one can face the devaluation the school as an institution suffers, considering the multiple tasks it must carry out in the deterioration of its function, production and transmission of knowledge.

Specific Knowledge Value

Teachers give a hierarchy to knowledge taught in their own areas, highlighting their particularities, as follows:

Math: the teacher considers a valuable knowledge for daily life. There is a distinction between concepts and reasoning structure, this would allow a particular subject teaching as well as transference to other fields.

Geography: The contribution knowledge has is highlighted for the understanding of different contexts, due to the involving characteristic of this subject it would make possible the relationship between micro and macro contextual variables.

History: In this subject the teacher aims to build a critical judgement, learning to think and understand real life. Selected texts and other sources are the tools to encourage analysis and reflexive attitudes.

Biology: Its importance is considered since it provides knowledge concerning our health, prevention and first aid among other fields. The subject deals with nowadays discoveries such as the human genome and other scientific topics pertaining the biological field.

English: Knowing a second language is important when looking for a job and for one's professional development. It is high priority in the development of daily life as part of our integral formation.

Philosophy: For it tries to give birth to a critic self-reflection, teaching to argue in a philosophic manner and identifying oneself with something, giving reasons and answers; this subject is considered important as well. It encourages dialogue as a tool of reflection, in-group activities.

The teacher and his relationship with his area

Among the answers we got concerning the link of the teacher with his subject, some interesting things came up. They were related to the beginning of their career, their intellectual curiosity and their interest in research.

Some of these answers have to do with their family roots, daily practices alluding to their participation in debates and group reflection about real life topics. Allusions concerning personal developing has been very evident in some teachers, since they had studied during military dictatorship and they tried to find answers in the areas of study they chose.

Those teachers on exact sciences recognize their first motivations on the subject at the University, where they finished their professional careers; economical reasons pushed them to practice teaching.

Through exception and inside each personal story, there are certain "experiences" they went through or activities they did as highschool students such as note taking, that even their own classmates needed as a scenario for learning developing.

What most of the teachers considered relevant in their speeches about childhood was the role of "good teachers and good teaching" as one's identification pattern.

For foreign language teachers, their relationship with their area was established at an early age with the beginning of courses of studies other than those provided in school. The moment teachers recalled those times; they expressed their deep satisfaction on teaching everytime they feel a correspondence on the part of the students, showing interest and motivation.

Subject Value on Students view

The influence of the teacher is evident, in some cases there is a correspondence of thoughts between the teacher's explanations about the knowledge that a particular subject supplies in the forming students, and the concepts involved in the subject which is shown when answering a question about the item.

We have faced a strengthen of the relationship between the intention of the teacher and the will to learn, the children give a hierarchy to knowledge alluding to its importance for the future, in work development, social development and for the following higher levels of studies.

There was a striking case for the students of Language and Literature, who emphasized the value of the subject since "*it gives you the tools for a correct communication whether oral or written*", considering these skills highly necessary and transferable when "*reading and comprehending texts for any subject*"...

Regarding the contribution of Literature, they considered poetry as part of the learning contents that provokes reflection, the *innerthinking* and within that logic; they recalled some pieces of writing as "generator of opinions", point of inflection for their professional formation.

The appraisal of knowledge is tied up to the mode of teaching, the ways of accessing knowledge that the teacher makes possible through his labor, this is evident in Sociology where students recognize its formative characteristic. They stated it from a personal point of view, developing discourse skills, as much as it encourages participation and debate, generating a general consent or assent and accepting somebody else's opinions.

The teacher's orientation is essential when they have to give meaning to knowledge, at least that is the way students have manifested in philosophy classes facing a teacher who organized the class taking the mayeutic dialogue as epistemological and didactic shaft. The students considered the subject important in the development of the reflective skill, mutual understanding, discerning of ideas, and the search for reasons to fundament their judgements and opinions.

In the case of geography, the teacher emphasized on her personal motivations to choose that career and pointed out at the transcendental aspect of knowledge on the area towards globalization and other issues; the students give a new meaning to these knowledges and project them to their own lives.

In physics and math there is the belief that the world teenagers are living in, is related to teacher's convictions and enthusiasm.

There are students considering math as the most important subject of highschool. This is because it constitutes a basic knowledge to understand economical problems, to deal with daily life issues and also to work in any field. They regarded the reasoning structure where it had its basis and its dynamics as its operational process, pointing out that "...knowledge is acquired in step fashion..."

Students reflections regarding teaching and learning.

When they were asked: How do you "learn" this subject, or what is the way you "learn" this? Students agreed in stating that beyond the different areas, the most important fact is the explanation by the teacher together with the use of material and didactic resources, which could help them, develop the topic.

They appraised the chance to ask, to express their doubts and difficulties in their comprehension, giving greater importance to class participation. The students agreed in the fact that the learning process should be accompanied by home activities including reading of biographic material, written pieces and other homework either individual or in group.

They considered the positive side of room activities contextualizing the teaching content and favoring the approach. There are other practices considered, as they permit a recreation of happenings, which generates an environment making them learn easier. With regard to this topic, they told us about a foreign student from England. She helped them acquire and improve their second language through talking and spontaneous linguistic exchanges. About this, they appraised the knowledge about cultural background and means of life.

What is more, when they were asked about the mode and style of the teacher, favoring the learning-teaching situations, they gave importance to the role of the teacher organizing the class.

The teacher's attitude, manifested through norms dealing, regulation and interchange between students and students with teachers, together with the organization of activities to develop in class and out side the school; were part of the teenagers' opinions when assessing the teacher's model.

In some cases the teacher was part of an ideal, whereas in other cases the answer took into account certain characteristics of more than one teacher, towards whom there is some affection and a solid formation of a teaching area, driven to a “cozy” environment with interesting proposals.

Teacher’s considerations on teaching

History: Knowledge acquisition process by the student constitutes the axis that articulates the teaching activities. On an explanation basis, problems come up, questionnaires and activity guides, mostly group activities, to be done in class or at home, seeking to recreate the topics pertaining to the social sciences. Students are encouraged to read and write comments and text summaries

Schematic and synoptic table planning mark temporal lines, analysis basis of the socio-historical processes, leading to debate and ideas interchange. The teacher organizes text material available for the students. He uses specific texts for a topic such as manuals, dictionaries, magazines, newspapers, maps and videos.

Philosophy: It encourages the student to get closer to written sources with reference to original texts as well. Moreover, it is concerned with the student understanding of a philosophic text, his recognition of problems and his way of solving them; argumentation and cross argumentation.

The teacher uses oriented reading as a didactic resolution tool, with practice activities, suggesting topics involving the use of a certain text to look for the answers, to clarify what was suggested, writing a chronicle of the class individually, reading it to a classmate, commenting and integrating.

If the students come up with a topic, it helps the teacher with his own work in his explanations, problem bringing up, and philosophic basis. It has been mentioned the use of videos and films as didactic resources.

Physics – Math: Taking into account the previous knowledge of the students, the teacher proposes an activity to be done in small groups. Induction is used with the purpose of concreting the topics. The teacher establishes that every content has to be taught and shown. The activity has to be performed on a conceptual framework towards problems and the understanding that the knowledge build up requires, which is more than just the practical solution.

In physics, particularly, they work with daily life examples which through didactic approach are related to main topics of the subject. The teacher exhaustively chooses the material.

Chemistry: it is very important to give expositions to complement the theoretical development evidencing the implicatures of this subject in real life.

Biology: It gives teaching an orientation from exposing the students, information research and perform of activities with different materials in small groups. Theoretical content is always summarized by an explanation on the blackboard for the whole class.

English: the teacher emphasizes on reading comprehension and dictionary use. Incorporating translation of informative articles chosen by the student. Oriented text reading followed by group activities, use of different texts such as poetry, text fragments, lyrics, magazines, videos etc, and during the last year the teacher has included certain activities related to the course of studies each student will choose. These are some of the activities organized by the teacher in this subject.

Due to the fact that in foreign language subjects the students have to do some activities outside the school, tutorials are at hand for students and given by advanced students.

Obstacles during the teaching-learning process

Teachers pointed out that lack of motivation for school activities, particularly reading will, and knowledge access, are their main concern. In some cases it was mentioned the economical problems that students face at home and even from the school.

Language: The teacher stated that there are difficulties in the use of texts for the limitations they face nowadays towards linguistic codes and the vocabulary of the subject. Since they do not recognize the text, they reject reading and reflection.

Likewise, the teacher pointed out that there is a negative influence from the ways and criteria of teachers, leading to a lack of systematization and learning follow up of the written language. Consequently, there is a deficient habit formation and lack of willingness towards text activities. In this sense, the number of hours for the subject does not make possible the encouragement of a school culture fracture.

English: foreign language teachers agreed with language teachers. Since there are problems in the mother tongue the second language acquisition suffers its consequences.

Physics – Math: Most students fail these two subjects. Teachers considered that there is not enough time to teach which is one of the reasons why children have to re-attend the course. They believe that there is a lack of interest from the students, and that they do not devote the time they should to the activities teachers propose. Therefore, the students assume a passive position towards knowledge without giving any possibility of building up learning strategies.

In some cases they attribute an intellectual deficiency as the cause of comprehension failure.

Social Sciences: it emphasizes the importance of family support to encourage student to study, which may be influenced by the socio-cultural level of their parents. This situation is shown by the proper topics of this kind of subject, on the social context, full of pragmatism.

Lack of motivation is what brings difficulties to the subject, leading to an atmosphere that interferes learning. Some teachers believe there is not enough material to work with in school.

Teachers opinions about classroom atmosphere

All the teachers agreed in saying that learning is encouraged through a smooth way of relating to one another in class, regulated by the norms of the school and those established in each group; under this conception the relation teacher-student-contents is built up.

The atmosphere in class translates the psychological change of the teenager (euphoria, anxiety, affective readily undergoing change etc) which corresponds to the fluctuations in their interests and goal establishment. Participation of students is the result of a hard pedagogic development, and in this context it is difficult to cause a debate, encourage a discussion and therefore acquire knowledge.

For some teachers behavior problems are one of the things that break the comfortable atmosphere in the classroom. There are other cases the sizes of the rooms are, according to the teachers, one of the difficulties they go through when doing an activity. Their answers give a description of the integration of the students, particularly between boys and girls part of a learning group. Under some circumstances, there are strong bonds between the students and in some others there is no connection between them at all.

Teachers believe they know their students well, although sometimes the room does not give the chance for them to be aware of the problems some students experience.

Considerations regarding learning assessment

Most teachers make use of the formative learning evaluation through oral and written tests, either individually or in groups. This included class participation, folder presentation with the topics dealt in class and all observations with regard to student behavior. In some cases teachers take into account other subjects evaluations. Generally, written tests are given everytime a topic has ended, and oral ones are more

informal instances which treat partial aspects. Attitudinal and conceptual aspects are evaluated as well.

In both exams they consider: reading comprehension, speaking production, orthography, calligraphy, and presentation.

There are only two cases of mid-term evaluations consisting of a topic the student chooses to develop from different perspectives.

Some of their proceedings are especial class lectures, involving production, exposition, and research; collage, practice and solving, tests with the use of their material such as a book, and some demonstrations in the blackboard.

Student follow up is emphasized together with the use of different tools and evaluation proceedings allowing a learning process flow in their students.

During the first grades, the productions are called low quality, making reference to the influence of some productions such as reading guides written by teachers which make the student be dependent on it and a lack of autonomy when they have to elaborate a piece on their own.

There are some problems when summarizing information, come to a conclusion, analyze a situation and understand a text. When they have to hand in their production, teachers face a deficit in writing skills and orthography.

There is a lack of will towards studying, beyond the differences existing between students as regards their interests for the topics. Based on this, activity performance should be constantly oriented and followed.

According to most of the interviewed teachers, except some isolated cases which will be treated later, between 60% to 70% of the students of the different groups would be in a good – very good average and the rest would be considered regular or insufficient.

In history and sociology, there is a high tendency of good averaged students with just a 10% of insufficient performances. However, in math, physics and chemistry, there is only a 75% of students who have passed in one of these courses whether in the other two there is only a 50%.

Summing up, throughout our investigation where we approached the construction of the identity inside the school, we asked ourselves: Where are students situated in school? What is their participation focused on?, Are there any possibilities to build up a shared project?; We obtained answers showing a lack of formative path that the school is offering, students treat school contents as something not belonging to them, ignoring what goes beyond the teachers point. From this basis, we planned how to build up our goals, how to give meaning to the teaching contents, and how to feel the subject to be taught.

The following article has to do with the relation student-teacher and knowledge. Through the speech from the actors of the learning process and teaching, we aimed to settle down dialogue between already formed individuals and those on the path by means of a group job concerning analysis, reflection and reconstruction.

We have tried to make up an atmosphere of ideas going around the position of each subject influencing our children, an approach to the individual that is learning and to the school, a group construction about our purpose of study; the teenager facing knowledge.

The direct assimilation of knowledge from the students, depends entirely on our analysis. On the one hand it will reveal, the strong connotation the school still has as a place to get knowledge, likewise it shows limitations of concepts and visions, being responsible in this aspect, since it opens new perspectives during the formative path it should provide.

Some students recognize school acquaintance particularizing and opposing it to mundane knowledge. This could be thought of as a division of hierarchies concerning knowledges, giving value to the school.

Within teachers and students speeches, motivation and interests is the focus, being there a reciprocal correspondence: the teacher claims interest as the necessary condition for learning, considering it as an extrinsic factor on the teaching organization. Students have stated that motivation and interest is strictly dependent on the teacher's function, it should be him who should promote interest in them, either interest in the subject or any other content.

There appears a convergence with respect to the effects that interest and motivation have over learning, however there is no reflection on the part of the participants regarding the role of the teachers and students in the class organization as well as in the interrelationship on interest and motivation from which learning and teaching surge. Taking into account these topics, what should be considered is left aside, that is what is responsible for the construction of motives, interests, and attitudes that make them seize knowledge and teaching transferences.

Our hypothesis, is that interest could be generated through disinterestedness where the teachers participation in highly important. The teachers as expert grown ups have the chance to broaden the next development area, considering previous knowledge as interests source which constitutes the path where new information will be settled.

Our inquiries about the position of the teacher towards knowledge let us see how it affects the acquaintance flow in the pedagogic relation. In some cases the teacher the meaning the teacher gives to knowledge operates as a truth to get, as a strongly

consolidated system of ideas whose learning easily learned, necessary and constituted in a goal.

There are other occasions in which the teacher has a very good command of his area and through a correct didactic articulation, he supplies highly heuristic learning contexts, generating knowledge construction dynamics where the desire to learn and the power to teach fuse.

We could say at this point that the teacher could cause curiosity through his passion in teaching, therefore create and produce knowledge. This would happen only if he preserves his superior role towards the students, allowing confrontation, being willing to loose his leadership in the learning-teaching process.

Notes

1. E.G.B Polimodal: Our school system divisions. Which includes, primary school and secondary school.
2. Gardner, Howard: "La Mente no escolarizada" (*The un-schooled mind*)
3. E.G.B Polimodal: Our school system divisions. Which includes, primary school and secondary school.
4. Entel, Alicia: "Escuela y Conocimiento" (*School and Knowledge*)
5. Tubert, Silvia: "La muerte y la imaginación en la adolescencia"(Death and imagination in adolescence) Chapter 1.
6. The ideal self: "Intrapsychic build up" defined as the narcissistic omnipotent ideal based on the model of the narcissism on infants" Laplanche, J. y Pontalis, J. (1981)
The ideal of oneself: "Term used by Freud in his second theory on the psychic apparatus: A stage in personality resulting from narcissism convergence (idealization of oneself) and to identify oneself with parents, substitutes and collective ideals. As a differentiated stage, the ideal of oneself constitutes a model to which the subject is trying to be adequate. Laplanche, J. y Pontalis, J. (1981)
7. Cullen, Carlos: "*Crítica de las razones de educar*" (*Critics on the reasons to teach*)
8. UNLP: "*Universidad Nacional de La Plata*" (*Nacional Univeristy of La Plata*)
9. Third level comprises 7th, 8th and 9th grade.

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