



Strategic planning and teaching quality in the University

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ABSTRACT

Aside from the sort of discipline or specialty, universities should promote in their students a high-level thinking and make them self-sufficient trainees.

Quality teaching is defined as that which can reach teaching goals, the ones that stand out because of their ambition and complexity as to make students reach a critical thinking, be creative and develop complex cognitive skills. However, according to available information, most students of this level, will not reach these goals. It is remarked the important role of the teacher to obtain them.

Educative evaluation and particularly, that of students learning, constitutes in this context, a very interesting topic due to its importance, complexity and the validity of different problems pending to be solved.

The searching of high education excellence, is a current demand that compromises all those individuals implied in educative tasks, and the aspects of and components in the formation process of the future professionals. In our country that search shows in the willing of constant perfectionism of university teaching based on scientific support, which back up the decisions and day by day chores of educative institutions and promotes, at the same time, pedagogical investigation development as a necessity of the perfection itself.

Strategic planning in a higher education institution is a continuous process, technical-political, systematic, reflective, participatory, critical and self-critical, instructive, flexible, comprehensive and guidance, which promotes change, and precedes and presides the action for the decision making.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching is nothing more than a help for people to learn, this help may be adequate or inadequate and should be practiced responsibly. Learning needs ought to be planned so that each person approaches the optimum employment goals of their abilities, enjoy their life and integration with their physical and social environment. The planned teaching tries to help each person develop as complexly as possible, and in their own sense. (Hernández S., 2011)

Strategic planning in the educational field followed the course of its development in general, but with a lag of about 10 years from the rest of private organizations (businesses); This gap is even identified by comparing the evolution it had on public sector companies, where strategic planning found a rapid accommodation.

Planning is the action that guides and supports the teacher's proposal. It is a proper action of all teachers; it is inherent in their task. It is a mental activity that everyone performs. It can be understood as a journey of early learning that opens the possibility of a reflection that will result in an enrichment of the practice itself, by developing it and modifying it according to the specific situations of the room.

When planning the teacher, it is considered what teaches and for what, how they relate the new contents with the previous ones, how to organize them, what activities are pertinent, how to organize the task of the room according to space and work dynamics. Planning can be a space for discussing, thinking and establishing agreements from the institutional respecting diversity. (Anonymous, 2017).

To make strategic planning to be adopted in the field of educational management, specialists and scholars of education and international organizations, especially of higher education, contributed by arguing on the importance, pertinence and advantages of their use in the national systems of higher education and in the same IES (high education institutions). Above all because it influences an exogenous force: the increasing demand for higher education of higher levels of efficiency and the necessary consideration of new roles that society is demanding in the face of an accelerated social and economic evolution, propitiated by the internationalization of education. As well as at the end of the 21st century, strategic planning becomes a powerful instrument of university management at the planetary level (Asociación

Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior [ANUIES], 2000). (Ojeda Ramírez, 2013).

The didactic planning implies the organization of a set of ideas and activities that allow to develop an educational process with sense, meaning and continuity. It constitutes a model or pattern that permits to face in an orderly and congruent manner, situations the student will face in his professional or daily life and in the case of the teacher, to his teaching practice.

Didactic planning is understood as the organization of a set of ideas and activities that allow to develop an educational process with sense, meaning and continuity. It constitutes a model or pattern that allows the teacher to face his practice in an orderly and congruent way. Its elaboration involves analyzing and organizing educational contents, determining the objectives, intentions and educational purposes to achieve; In addition to establishing the sequence of activities in time and space.

Together, the information they contain forms a comprehensive plan of action, which clarifies the educational foundations that will guide the learning process. They are generally made up of a pre-established format that allows the homogenization of documents among teachers and between schools and faculties of the same educational institution. (Peralta, 2016).

Planning should not be carried out only as a technical activity limited to fill formats, but must be understood into educational intentions that are the result of the analysis of various components, including contextual elements such as culture and the socioeconomic conditions of the environment where students play the cognitive skills and previous learning that they have been able to develop in previous school stages or in their development. The elaboration and completion of this instrument must be considered as a primary aspect of academic quality assurance by educational institutions, so it is of paramount importance that the instrument has all the requirements needed to give validity and that users of it know how to fill it and apply it properly. (Peralta, 2016).

So, how to make a process a useful tool that reflects our praxis and includes the latest trends in education and the use of concrete and technological resources? It would be worthwhile to define or, rather, redefine “teacher planning” in the context of a current education, incorporating technologies and design it from the characteristics of each society. That is, to take planning as the guiding axis and keeping in mind that spaces of learning, resources or materials, plans and programs, as well as the time load are the variants and at the same time the inputs that allow us to design classes from the didactics of each discipline.

In this sense, planning or scheduling (annual, monthly and daily) should focus on teaching practice and in each of the spaces that exist for building learning classrooms, laboratory,

home, library, cultural visits, internet, chats, blogs. Therefore, the didactic planning recovers the experience of the teacher, the knowledge he has of his discipline and all those actions that he designs for each one of the moments that involve the construction of learning. In designing didactic planning, teachers are developing thought processes.

Planning is the set of decisions and actions that teachers implement before, during and after the school day. Then, The planning is the reflection of the activities that each teacher designs according to the time load, the sequencing and dosage of thematic contents as well as the criteria and evaluation processes that the curriculum itself determines. (Aguero, 2014)

One of the fundamental reasons that education needs to be planned is to ensure that no one is at “educational disadvantage,” that everyone has the same opportunity to maximize their capacities. (Hernández S., 2011).

1. The didactic transposition

The teaching process is a teacher’s strategy for the student to learn. Teaching is the responsibility of the teacher.

The learning processes refer to the construction that each student makes of what is taught. Learning is the responsibility of the student.

There is a double dependency on the process, because to learn the student needs someone to teach, and to teach we need a student who is able to learn with interest and motivated.

The learning content differs from the teaching content in the sense of the didactic transposition, that is to say, the way of transposing, of reworking the content to be taught.

A content has 3 logics:

- a. Disciplinary logic:** each scientific field has a method that is its own, the strategies are also related to the object of study and the content intended to teach.
- b. The logic in relation to the possibilities and capacities of the learning subject:** This refers to the need to adapt to the age and possibilities of the students to teach a content, it is the deepening and sequencing of the learning.
- c. The logic of the social aspect:** it implies to know whether a content is socially valid or meaningful for the group of students. A content is reproduced according to the framing and social context.

The didactic transposition is the adequacy or contents of scientific knowledge adjustments to be understood by students. Here the teacher must consider the group, the previous knowledge, the context, the age, the materials. (Aguero, 2014)

2. What kind of planning is contemplated to organize the task in the classroom and the room?

- a. Annual planning:** Usually developed at the beginning of the school year. It is at this time when you consider what you want students to learn and how to make learning easier. This planning must have a logical sequence and should be convenient, to do so it is necessary that the teacher has information of his group of children to be able to make it. Having an annual central idea serves as an organizer for the subsequent periodic task. The annual plan can have objectives or purposes, with broad contents planned for the year, with general strategies, institutional projects for that group of students, annual general room projects. It is important to foresee the dates of the school calendar that require a specific treatment such as holidays or didactic outings.
- b. Periodic planning:** it arises from the annual plan and takes a shortened period. It is more specific than the general plan. Its duration depends on the proposal and the rate of learning of the students. It can take form of didactic unit, project or sequences. The objectives, contents, activities, resources and forms of evaluation should be clearly considered. It should be structured in a simple and clear way, because what matters is its functionality and communication.
- c. Weekly planning and Daily Planning:** daily planning is the tool that will facilitate day-to-day organization. Both allow the teacher a better organization to consider the schedules prefixed in the grid of the institution, such as hours of music and physical education. This makes it possible to foresee the activities that will be included and avoid being too many or too few. (Aguero, 2014).

3. The teacher of higher education

It requires a profound change in ways of teaching, to help higher education students understand phenomena in the same way as experts in each discipline do. Hence the concern of universities for improving their forms of teaching, recognizing the scarcity of work on how to do it and aggravated by the fact that in universities research is valued more than teaching.

On the other hand, the context in which the teacher carries out his activity cannot be denied: universities are subject to different pressures, such as relating financing to performance; Another issue is that they should be held accountable about what and how they use the resources received. There is also the demand to attend a growing student population with different socio-cultural conditions and to deal with the problem of having fewer resources. What is also evident is that what was done at this level is part of the global trend to look for new ways to create and use knowledge. (Guzman, 2011).

One of the consequences of the above, is that the higher education teacher will have to become more professional, that is, he will have to formalize his preparation, especially as far as didactics are concerned, and start teaching only after showing the mastery of teaching skills. Currently, the university professor is considered a knowledge professional, with the same level and demand that large corporations have for this type of professional.

The repercussions of the above in the professor of higher education is the requirement to play various roles. Ramsden (2007: 4-5) summarizes them as follows: He is expected to be an excellent teacher, who designs courses and applies appropriate teaching methods to meet the requirements of a heterogeneous student population that knows how to deal with large groups of students. Use appropriately new information and communication technologies, which inspire students with zero tolerance for frustration and whose mind is more concerned with their next part-time job than for the pleasure of learning. At the same time, it is expected that teacher will be highly productive in research, that he will be able to obtain new financial resources, that he will juggle new administrative demands and render accounts to a wide variety of managers. (Guzmán, 2011)

4. What should the University professor be skilled at?

The most cited classification on the domain of the university master is that of Shulman (1986, CIT. in Hativa, 2000), since for them to be a university teacher implies the following:

- a. Broad and specialized expertise of the discipline it teaches. It is related to knowing how to handle the facts, concepts and principles of it. It also covers the use of the best ways to organize and connect ideas, as well as the way in which discipline is conceived. However, it is considered an indispensable condition for being a good teacher, but not enough.
- b. General pedagogical expertise. It allows to apply the general principles of the teaching in order to organize and to teach well; it includes the ability to use pertinently different teaching strategies and tools. Among them are those necessary for the management of the class and to create an atmosphere suitable for learning. It is a broad domain that transcends the specifics of a subject or subject.
- c. Content-specific pedagogical expertise. It allows to apply the concrete strategies to teach a specific topic, what is now called “the didactic of the discipline”. It has to do with how to organize, present and manage the contents, the subjects and problems of the subject considering the needs and interests of learning, as well as the epistemology of the discipline and what is expected to make a professional of it. In doing so, the teacher will be able to adequately present the material following the pedagogical

guidelines in order to make it comprehensible to the students. Both pedagogical expertise (general and specific) can positively influence a better understanding of disciplinary knowledge. The pedagogical expertise, or “teaching ability”, is one of the main shortcomings of university teachers and the least concerned.

- d. Curricular expertise. It is the ability to design study programs where the set of actions you will take to adapt your teaching to the characteristics of the students are specified, considering the type of content and the goals of the program. It includes the selection and use of the relevant didactic materials (textbook, videos, use of ICT, etc.).
- e. Clarity about the educational purposes. It not only includes the concrete purposes of its subject, but also the ultimate goals of the entire educational act. It encompasses goals especially of attitudinal type and personal transformations; that is, asking if what he is teaching will have a positive impact on the lives of the students and on the social usefulness of what they have learned.
- f. Consideration of the context or situation where you teach. Teaching is a highly contextual activity; This expertise refers to the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the teaching behavior. For example, the rules and the “environment” are very different if the institution where it is taught is public or private, traditional or liberal, with many years of existence or new creation, and they differ even depending on the place where it is located. This implies that the teacher must be very aware of the “rules of the game” explicit or implicit that govern the institution where he teaches. Much of the pertinence or inappropriateness of the teaching behavior will depend on the context in which it occurs, or on the “school culture”; and for the specific case of higher education, it is essential to consider the so-called “disciplinary culture”, which includes the traits, ways of acting and being of each discipline, the behaviors that favors, appreciates or punishes and makes it different from another.
- g. Knowledge of students and learning processes. He needs to master the different psychopedagogical theories that explain learning and motivation. Also, be aware of the diverse physical, social and psychological characteristics of his students; that is, it requires knowing who the learner is and how the learning process occurs. From this knowledge, he can promote understanding in his students more than the passive reception of knowledge, help them self-regulate their learning, motivate them by explaining the benefits they will obtain if they acquire what they have learned, correct their achievements, teach them to work cooperatively, to be critical, to become self-motivated and to empathize.

- h. A personal trait of the good teacher, and no less important, is an adequate knowledge of oneself, understanding by this the ability to be fully aware of what their personal values are, the recognition of their strengths and weaknesses as a teacher and person, to have clarity about their educational goals and use their teaching as a means to achieve such purposes. It implies having an adequate emotional balance, knowing how to handle interpersonal skills pertinently to promote adequate relationships with students, which is an important feature of good teaching in our environment.
- i. Another key quality that has been identified is the importance that the teacher feels self-effective, understanding this. “The belief in one’s own personal abilities to organize and execute a course of action required to achieve a given achievement. It has two components: one is “the expectation of obtaining results” or the estimate that the person makes about which certain behavior will obtain the desired effects, the second is “the expectation of effectiveness”, or the conviction that he has the ability to execute the required behavior to produce the expected results. It is the confidence of knowing that it is possible to achieve the students’ learning. This belief is important because it affects diverse teaching actions, such as the decisions made, the efforts made, the ways in which adversity is faced, feeling responsible for the learning of students and, in general, the affective part of teaching.

While it could be the case that a bad teacher can feel better teacher than it really is, the difference with an effective teacher is that he would know how to recognize his failures and limitations, he would be sensitive and open to the feedback received from his students; On the other hand, the former would be overbearing and act with arrogance, preventing any criticism and, therefore, any improvement to his work. (Guzmán, 2011)

5. Didactic evaluation: characteristics and moments of evaluation

The evaluation refers to the set of activities scheduled to gather information on which the teacher and his students reflect and can make decisions to improve their teaching and learning strategies.

Evaluation Characteristics:

- Integral.
- Continuous or procedural.
- Regulating the educational process.
- Criterial.
- Guiding.

- Shared or Democratic.

The evaluation has 3 moments to be continuous and regulatory:

- a. Initial, predictive or diagnostic evaluation:** it serves as a diagnosis and prognosis to adapt the planning, to become aware of the starting point, knowing the previous knowledge, the level of its skills, abilities, attitudes, values, etc. And thus, avoid unnecessary recurrences in proposals or misalignments.
- b. Process or formative evaluation:** adapts the process to the progress and achievements of the students and to the difficulties or conflicts encountered by both the group and each pupil in particular; It also allows to regulate the proposal.
- c. Product or summation evaluation:** enables the integration of actions carried out; Obtain relevant information and establish reliable balances of the results obtained in terms of the degree of learning of the students and their impact; finally, it is possible to check whether the capacities envisaged are acquired to raise subsequent learning.

Some of the instruments that the teacher can use in order to evaluate and monitor the teaching and learning processes of his students are:

- Direct observation of work and play in the room.
- Individual or group works and productions.
- Assisted reflection and self-evaluation of the production itself.

The evaluation should be understood as a constant process that should be applied to all the elements that constitute the educational situation. Its aim is to provide information for the constant decision-making of different actors in the educational situation.

The evaluation of the task itself allows to take reflections on what has been done to anticipate new proposals. It implies considering the aspects that were appropriate and those that presented difficulties. (Anonymous, 2017).

6. Strategic Planning

Strategic planning in a higher education institution is a continuous, technical-political, systematic, reflective, participatory, critical and self-critical, instructive, flexible, comprehensive and guiding process, which promotes change, and precedes and presides over action for decision-making. The methodological structure of strategic planning in a higher education institution is composed of several moments linking the past, the present and the future; This structure is based on relevant external and internal information flows, and seeks to achieve certain institutional

objectives, using adequately available resources, and considering the organizational culture, among other elements.

Strategic planning is considered to favor positive change, which orients institutions of higher education from a real stage towards a desired and feasible to achieve, identifying the *raison d'être*, weaknesses, strengths, opportunities and threats as well as the main stakeholders.

In order for the learning and the way to solve problems to be effective, the information is required to be accessible, it can be made available to the student as part of the communication given to them when stating the problem; The student can look for it in appropriate sources of reference. Certain information can be remembered and recovered at the time of learning. Some other may communicate as part of the description of the problem. Other things can be consulted and stored in memory for the duration of the act of learning. Because of all these viable options, teaching planning, as far as objective information is concerned, seems to be a course of action for all inappropriate concepts.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

It is necessary to think that each of the ways of preparing lesson plans is due to the institution for which the teaching function is performed. In some of the cases the teacher focuses only on his traditional way of preparing the class and does not focus on the student's learning; That is to say, it is considered a partial view of the knowledge that student should develop and assimilate for personal life.

The process to carry out a good thematic preparation must conceive the basic tasks of research, methodology and learning, in order to obtain the knowledge in the students. With the foregoing, a teacher must work on personal aspects and develop the socialization of knowledge, i.e., to educate for life.

A teacher must understand that education is an act for life itself; it should answer the simple questions of why educate? Let us not forget that there are factors that prevail in the response that are concerned at this moment: there are institutional roles, who makes the academic-administrative decisions, to what extent the personal values can be expressed and in what way teacher appropriates environment and the social organization he belongs to.

It is a fact that many who have become as teachers in each of our days must establish the analysis of the experiences as a rule and compel ourselves to a permanent reflection of the knowledge that teachers have been assimilating in their own task; In other words, to involve themselves in a permanent updating to carry out an integrative planning with quality of the areas of congruence, empathy and unconditional acceptance of the task of a teacher, facilitator,

educator, teacher or any concept that they have designate in the relationship of the teaching-learning process.

In counterpart, the teacher-pupil relationship must be established within the framework of the personal development of the second; However, there is a need for congruence, empathy and positive interest with the strategies that teachers 'impose' on learning. Individual perceptions and attitudes should not prevail because the only thing that would be provoked is a distrust of the personality and knowledge of the teacher.

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