TEACHER INVOLVEMENT

IN EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

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Regional Bureau of Education
for Latin America and the Caribbean

TEACHER INVOLVEMENT
IN EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

PRELAC journal / Nº 1

PREFACE

This issue of the PRELAC Journal treats a controversial and recurrent theme: the situation of teachers. Those who discuss this subject often talk past one another. The debate has not been, and is not free of divisions as well as hope for the future.

A characteristic of this subject is that it is at the same time "old" and timely. Another is its provocative nature – its ability to polarize positions and alignments. It appears that here there is no room for indifference.

In this issue we offer for your consideration a spectrum of contributions from specialists who treat the theme from various perspectives: careers, roles, training, working conditions, assessment. They also delve into particular aspects of teaching dealing with the use of information and communication technologies, secondary education, intercultural-bilingual education, citizenship training, diversity, and inclusion.

The variety of contributions contains a connecting thread: giving new meaning for the role of teachers. This involves a vision that goes beyond the key role that teachers have in student learning. It complements the latter with the contributions teachers should make in school management and culture, on the one hand, and in participating in the definition of local and national education policies on the other. These present new challenges for moving from a role of task executor to being an active participant in all aspects of education.

This focus on teacher participation is a policy and technical imperative for OREALC/UNESCO Santiago. It is one of the strategic focuses of the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC). This project is the policy guide that ministers of education in the region, aware of the need to change education policy making and implementation in order to achieve the objectives of Education for All, defined in November 2002.

This issue of the journal provides information and knowledge on issues heretofore little discussed regarding the teacher question, offers new contributions to the analysis of well-trod dilemmas, and proposes new topics in the search for alternatives. It seeks to broaden the horizon of analysis and to aid in combating unilateral and reductionist views, lending new meanings to the rights and duties of teachers and to foster indispensable social responsibilities in order to progress toward quality and equity in education systems.

We realize that producing favorable conditions for the professional enhancement of teachers is vital for student learning, and a task that requires new allies. This is the objective of the present issue of this journal.
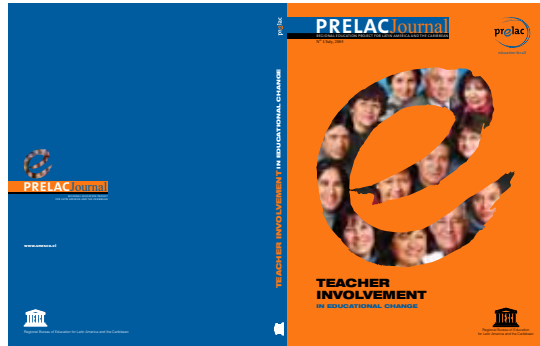
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"Teachers
make the difference"

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PASSIVE bystanders or ACTIVE participants?

THE DILEMMAS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS

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ESSENTIAL NATURE
of the theme in education

Without the participation of teachers, changes in education are impossible. This seems to be one of the certainties we can derive from the discussion about the results of education reforms carried out in most Latin American and Caribbean countries and in which the outcomes have been less than expected considering the resources and time invested [1].

It is true that important progress has been made during the last decade, especially in terms of increased coverage, more and better-constructed schools, support materials (textbooks, guides, and teaching resources), inclusion of cross-cutting themes in curricula, establishment of measurement mechanisms for achievement and qualitative assessment, and new forms of organization and management of education systems, among others.

[1] See "Reformas educativas en América Latina: balance de una década", by Marcela Gajardo, within the framework of PREAL (Education Reform Promotion Program of Latin America and the Caribbean). Similarly, reports on international measurement of student learning achievement, as well as the national assessments carried out in some countries show that the progress of education in the region is not coherent with the investment made and that many important issues still remain unresolved.

Similarly, there has been increased emphasis on the responsibilities of society and government in education, the participation of various social actors in the definition of policies, and the role of teachers themselves in the change process. In spite of this progress, evidence coming from studies on the quality and equity of education contribute to the general perception that neither education nor the reforms carried out have produced coherent and sufficient changes in regard to the societal, economic, political, and scientific demands of the 21st century.

Increasingly, and with greater force, we return to the key questions: What are the changes that must be made in the education systems of Latin American and Caribbean societies? Who has the social responsibility to decide what these changes should be? How should such changes be implemented and assessed?

Time and again, the teacher question is cited as one of the most important in order for changes to take place and for them to be expressed in improved learning of children and young people, better school management, and improved effectiveness of education systems. These are the trusts of the declarations of the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC), approved by the ministers of education of the region in 2002. The project defines as one of its five strategic focuses that action must be based on strengthening the active participation of teachers in order to meet student learning needs, fostering their involvement in changes, and contributing toward transforming education systems [2].

It is not the purpose of this article to reflect upon the entire set of themes surrounding changes in education. Our interest here is to contribute to discussion on the teacher question within a broader analytic perspective. We also wish to contribute to discussion of the relation between teachers and answers to the questions listed above.

New scenarios and content
FOR THE TASK OF TEACHING

The broad and rapid changes that have shaken the world during recent decades call into question the tasks that have traditionally been assigned to education, to schools, and to teachers. During much of the history of the modern state, socialization of new generations has rested on three supports: families, churches, and education.

With the advent of industrialization and urbanization, education has assumed an ever-increasing share of this responsibility, in contrast to the gradual weakening of the roles of the family and church. Some of the reasons have been the rise of mass communications, new family configurations, the entry of women into the labor market, various perceptions regarding values, expectations that people have of the future, and the furious pace of the development of information and communication technologies[3].

[2] The Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC) was approved by the Ministers of Education of the region in November 2002 in Havana and provides guidelines for education reform.

[3] Juan Carlos Tedesco and Emilio Tenti, in their work "Nuevos maestros para nuevos estudiantes", analyze current demands on schools and teachers. See the web page of IIPE, Buenos Aires.

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Without the participation of teachers, changes in education are impossible

However, since the demands of society on education systems – and thus upon schools and teachers – constantly increase, affirmation of the critical role of education in national social and economic development has not been accompanied by the changes necessary for this role to be fully exercised.

"Today's schools and teachers are expected to do everything that society, governments, and families are not doing" [4]. "The demands on education regarding quality, efficacy, and competition are not always accompanied by the necessary resources, autonomy, and structural changes in either education systems or school culture" [5]. However, the new demands on teachers have not been accompanied by systematic and comprehensive processes that permit teachers to fulfill these new roles, participate in changes, and assume co-responsibility for the results of their efforts. Moreover, there are clear signs that, on the one hand, education is not considered to be a priority on the political agendas of many countries. On the other, the prestige and social recognition of the teaching profession continues to deteriorate. Not only is education being questioned about its results; society is being questioned as well.

[4] Denise Vaillant, citing Juan Carlos Tedesco and Emilio Tenti, in "Reformas educativas y el rol de los docentes", in the same publication.
[5] See Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC).
[6] Op. cit. 5.

FOCUSES suspended in time...

Current changes have led to an end to the traditional role played by teachers in traditional education, associated principally with the uni-directional transmission of information, memorization of content, a lack of teacher autonomy in curricular design and assessment, a passive posture in the face of changes and innovation, and a working method that is more individual than cooperative [6].

The conceptual collapse of this role, however, has not resulted in significant changes in teacher training policies and strategies. Moreover, pedagogical practices themselves lag behind in regard to what is expected of schools and of teachers. The great changes foreseen by education reforms have not in general modified everyday activities within schools and classrooms.

Teachers are still thought of solely within the limits that circumscribe the classroom, occupied with teaching tasks, responsible for "implementing" the curriculum under the methodological guidance offered by "training", moving between hierarchical relations, reacting according to current norms and controls, and working within school management and culture that in many places are still suspended in time.

PRELAC]journal

The work of teachers
has student learning
as the central focus

Discussion still rages between those who argue that the function of teachers is basically pedagogical-didactic and those who defend a role more associated with the entire range of educational tasks. This discussion, the roots of which go far back to the philosophical difference between educational *activities* and the *act* of education, has practical implications for the everyday work of teachers [7].

Traditional schools, or the traditional model, still reign in most schools and education systems, limiting teachers to classroom work and not to the larger area of school and education system management and seeing the work of teachers as essentially pedagogical; that is, the role of teachers begins and ends with educational *activities.*

Viewing the role of teachers exclusively in terms of pedagogical-educational tasks, within and outside the classroom even under innovative criteria, relegates teachers to playing a passive role in regard to education management and policy. They still remain instruments of pre-designed curricula, mere executors of outside decisions but, nevertheless, as practically the only parties responsible for student learning. A paradox hangs over almost all of school life that is simultaneously the effect and result of country policies, particularly in regard to initial and in-service training and the assessment of teachers[8].

It is undoubtedly the case that the work of teachers has student learning as the central focus. Without being the only educational influence in constant interaction with students, the act of teaching is the only one that can be circumscribed under the same conditions, time frames, pedagogical and disciplinary bases, media conditions, and of course, that which is most important, the pedagogical intent to supply cumulative student learning [9].

It is essential, then, to recognize that the quality of teacher performance depends on a broad set of factors that include, but are not limited to, mastery of subject matter and teaching technique. For example, the degree of commitment to the results of their work and that of the schools, interaction with other education actors in and outside the school, personal and professional self-esteem, level of participation in defining policy, collective participation in over-all school projects, in defining the school management model, in the design of pedagogical projects, etc. This is to say that professional development also depends on how involved and responsible teachers feel they are in the development of their schools and of education.

The concept of the individual teacher closeted in the classroom, marginalized from family and community demands on the social responsibility of education and schools, is in crisis. In crisis as well is the classic division between those who think and those who act, between those who plan and those who carry out plans. This perspective has guided the role that education reforms have assigned to teachers and the efforts that have been made to improve teacher performance.

TENSIONS between traditional roles and new challenges

Most reforms and changes proposed by countries recognize the fundamental role of teachers[10]. This statement in itself shows progress, in contrast to other times during which the emphasis was on curricula, administration, norms, infrastructure, texts, etc.

But in tune with the traditional view of the role of teachers, within this recognition fall the so-called training components, up-dating or in-service courses. Moreover, most reform processes have been designed without the input of teachers and of other sectors involved and co-responsible for education. What do schools need in relation to their communities and students? What should teachers do in their day-to-day work? How should they develop their classes? What methodology should they use? How should they divide their time?

[7] Document developed by the Teacher Performance Group that supports OREALC. Members: Héctor Valdés, Ricardo Cuenca, Héctor Rizo, Magaly Robalino, and Alfredo Astorga.

[8] Op. cit. 7.

[9] Op. cit. 8.

[10] One of the principles of PRELAC argues that education policy models based primarily on changing inputs and the structures of education systems have proven insufficient for fostering significant changes in teaching practices and for achieving effective student learning. PRELAC urges the need to move toward policies that take into account the individuals who do in fact make up the structures and systems.

Everything, or almost everything, is predetermined by "manuals" or "teacher guides" and "workshops". Although one hears of the need to have innovative teachers who carry out research and who systematize new knowledge, although there is still a consensus that we need new teachers able to perform within complex scenarios and who seek out and employ new information and communication technologies, when it comes to considering the preparation, career development, and participation of such teachers, the same old paths are trod: training and more training, with in some cases the introduction of some type of performance assessment.

The concept of the individual teacher closeted in the classroom, marginalized from family, and community demands on the social responsibility of education and schools, is in crisis

A *BROAD LOOK* at performance and roles

The same logic of the traditional role of teachers has led to considering training as the only, or at least the most important factor influencing professional performance. One merely needs to consider the investments and efforts carried out by countries in this field, and contrast them with education outcomes in order to see that something is wrong. This is not to say that the quality of teacher performance may be measured exclusively by student learning achievement [11], but undeniably, it is a determining factor, or the one that can make the difference in education and pedagogy management [12].

From a renewed and comprehensive perspective, teacher performance may be understood as "the process of mobilizing (teachers') professional skills, personal dispositions, and social responsibilities in order to: express significant relations between the components that influence student learning; participate in education management; strengthen a democratic school culture, and participate in the design, implementation, and assessment of local and national education policies in order to foster student learning and the development of life skills" [13].

The above definition sees the role of teachers in three dimensions: student learning, education management, and education policies.

[11] Analysis of the results of international studies such TIMMS, PISA, The First International Comparative LLECE Study, national measurements, etc., show that student learning depends on a set of complex factors. Among these are: teacher performance, family social and economic level, the cultural and education capital of parents, school culture, classroom climate, among others.

[12] Various studies make reference to the added value of schools on student learning, even under difficult conditions, due to a set of positive factors such as the quality and commitment of the work of teachers. Evidence on this subject may be found in works such as the qualitative study carried out by LLECE, the Latin American Laboratory for Assessment of the Quality of Education of OREALC/UNESCO (1997), and the study on schools within contexts of poverty sponsored by UNICEF and the Government of Chile "Quién dijo que no se puede? Escuelas efectivas en condiciones de pobreza" by Christián Bellei, Gonzalo Muñoz, Luz María Pérez, and Dagmar Raczynski, Santiago de Chile, March, 2004.

[13] Document prepared by the Teacher Performance Group that supports OREALC in discussion of this theme. The members include Héctor Valdés, Ricardo Cuenca, Héctor Rizo, Magaly Robalino, and Alfredo Astorga.

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The first, **the learning dimension**, is key. The mission and *raison d'être* of teachers is to facilitate student learning. One cannot understand their work outside of this objective. At the same time, the degree of responsibility over the outcome of this task, expectations for student achievement, are closely associated with the following dimensions:

The **education management dimension**, utilizing the new concepts of participation, relevance, shared school decision-making and leadership, refers to teachers who take ownership of the realities of the school and community in which they work, who translate the demands of their surroundings and education policies into strategic projects for their schools, while at the same time doing so in their pedagogical practices.

This dimension refers to teachers who plan, monitor, and assess their work together; who review their practices and systematize their progress; who feel strengthened within their teaching teams and relate with other colleagues and other schools in teacher learning networks; who are both critical and able to make proposals and who process guidance from higher echelons according to their own realities and knowledge [14].

The **education policies dimension** refers to policy formulation, execution, and assessment. Typically, education systems have operated using teams of "planners" who define, based on their academic experience, what it is that society, communities, and schools require.

There are interesting experiences that show how participatory processes can be created in order to design consensual national policies that can be converted into local policies and orientations accepted by all of those involved in education [15]. These processes are not without their difficulties, and although "difficult" doesn't mean "impossible," one must recognize that democratic consultation and decision-making processes shake the very foundations of systems built upon the principle of verticality.

Collective consultation and decisions require mechanisms that make possible the participation of all those involved, that bring discussion and decision closer together at everyday levels in order to integrate schools, teachers, and families. This involves assuring that opportunities are available at local, provincial, and state levels so that national policies have meaning for those who, in the final analysis, will be responsible for carrying them out within diverse conditions and contexts.

> The mission and raison d'être of teachers is to facilitate student learning

These roles can be assumed by teachers who possess professional, ethical, and social skills and who feel prepared and able to take on a new participatory role and who see themselves and their schools entering into alliances with other actors so that their students learn more and learn better. This requires cooperative management of schools. It requires carrying out local and national policies that reflect the developmental demands of communities and societies [16].

From this perspective of the roles of teachers, creating new meanings for their work and recuperating their key role involves recognizing that there is a set of inter-related factors that determine teacher performance. Among these are: initial training, professional in-service training, working conditions, health, self-esteem, professional commitment, institutional climate, social recognition, cultural capital, salaries, stimuli, incentives, professional career paths, and performance assessment.

[14] See experiences such as the *Escuela Nueva* of Colombia, that show the enormous potential of teachers who work in networks, learn together, assess what they do, and feel valued by families and communities.

[15] The *Social Contract* in Ecuador is a citizen-based movement that has produced opportunities for multiple strategies of discussion and participation between wide sectors of society in order to define policies to which all are committed. As a result of this effort, Ecuador decided to promote universal coverage of the first year of basic education (called pre-school or kindergarten in many countries). Actively participating in this task are the Ministry of Education, local governments, the mass media, politicians, business people, and unions.

[16] Op. cit. 11.

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There cannot be significant changes in schools if in-service training activities are not accompanied by technical support, in-place guidance, reflection, monitoring, assessment, and feed-back

INITIAL TRAINING: the backbone of performance

Teacher training is a critical question in most education systems in Latin America and the Caribbean. "In all too many cases, traditional training methods and future professional tasks do not coincide. But there is also strong evidence that it is not easy to determine what changes are necessary, and harder still to put them into practice" [17]. For this reason, the themes and questions placed on the table for discussion are many.

Conceptual focuses provide a point of departure upon which most initial and in-service teacher training systems are structured. Teacher training institutions have a high degree of responsibility for the pedagogical practices of teachers and for the manner that teachers engage in their work in schools. Professionals trained for teaching rather than for learning, for transmitting rather than for communicating, for memorization rather than for reasoning, will merely reproduce that which they have learned from their professors and what they have experienced in normal schools, colleges of education, and pedagogical institutes.

On the other hand, education changes linked to current problems focus on in-service training even though it is initial training that has the determining role on teacher performance. Paradoxically, teacher training institutions have been absent from education reform in most countries, or have been only secondarily involved. Resources have been invested to introduce new curricular models in schools, but teachers continue to be trained based on old models [18].

Most teacher training institutions have not even expressed what key changes need to be made in order to produce teachers with new kinds of skills. In general, current teacher training is a mirror of the very problems of traditional education, reinforcing the passive role of teachers, and contributing toward maintaining hierarchical and closed education systems.

National programs must be created that strengthen the participation and co-responsibility of training institutions in education change and that support significant innovations in order to guarantee the performance quality of their graduates. There are significant examples of the fostering of research, creation of competitive funds for improvement projects, accreditation of pedagogy courses, and professional development of teacher trainers, among others[19].

[17] Inés Aguerrondo, during the conference "Teacher performance in Latin America and the Caribbean: new priorities". Brasilia, June, 2002.

[18] Magaly Robalino Campos. Presentation at the international meeting "From training to professional and human development of teachers" organized by OREALC/UNESCO and PROEDUCA/GTZ-Peru. Lima, November, 2003.

[19] In Chile, for example, projects to foster changes in initial university-level teacher training are carried out con government funds. Similarly, in Colombia there are special competitive grants available for research projects carried out by universities. Also in Chile, obligatory accreditation of pedagogy courses is in the process of becoming law, placing them on the same level as courses in medicine. This is a clear sign of the importance given to initial training within the framework of a comprehensive policy aimed at improving the quality of education.

FROM FRAGMENTED TRAINING
to professional development

Although there is a recognition that teacher performance depends on various factors, traditionally the strategies used for improving this performance generally fall into the category of in-service training. This is the area in which the most resources have been invested, in spite of the recognized fact that the hoped-for results have not been achieved [20].

"Training" understood as a sum of events, has had no or little impact on school practices and on student learning outcomes. There cannot be significant changes in schools if in-service training activities are not accompanied by technical support, in-place guidance, reflection, monitoring, assessment, and feed-back. Professional development processes must be on-going, incorporated into school planning and organization with external support for teaching practices that draw upon and systematize the knowledge of the teachers themselves, stimulate work among peers, and utilize the best teachers as professional leaders within the educational community.

In addition, a key challenge is to discover a balance between scientific knowledge and updating and the mastery of methodology. Workshops and seminars (the modalities most employed in teacher training) have more strongly emphasized a methodology of "how to teach" than of content, or "what to teach".

Two problems have resulted. First, reaffirmation of the executor role of teachers, rather than emphasizing their skills for research, discussion and reflection on teaching practice. Second, little attention has been given to the scientific updating of the knowledge of teachers regarding their own discipline. Moreover, the introduction of new content planning and development techniques through focusing on problems and projects has not guaranteed by itself the strengthening of updated scientific content, particularly for the learning of science [21]. The balance between quality and content and the best way to communicate it are indispensable conditions for generating meaningful learning for students.

[20] The case of Chile is illustrative. It has been one of the countries that has carried out a reform process through time, together with measures contained within a national-level project. However, some teachers argue that, among others, two factors are the major causes of the still disappointing results: their lack of participation in the design and application of reforms, and training that is not always in line with the demands of schools.

[21] OREALC has carried out important work related to science education for supporting the formulation of new curricular proposals, contributing to changes in teacher training, fostering computer literacy, and encouraging the creation of school networks in the area of science education. See OREALC/UNESCO Science Education Network: www.unesco.cl

SCHOOLS:
where teachers learn

On-going learning by teachers takes on meaning within schools and networks of schools under new kinds of leadership[22] and not from a teacher acting alone. Only within this context is change charged by internal motivating forces. "In order for change within a school to take place and be satisfactory, it is necessary that the impulse, coordination, and follow-up come from the school.

"Experience and research have shown that changes imposed from outside, and not internalized by the education community do not lead to real improvements in schools. If, however, schools are aware of external pressures, accept them, and make them their own, truly satisfactory changes in school efficacy can be obtained" [23].

Moreover, changes can be profound and lasting if, coming from within the school itself, they are in harmony with system policies that support and strengthen local initiatives and combine internal motivation with external incentives.

It is these processes that make it possible to recognize the experience and knowledge of teachers, systematize the contributions produced in classrooms and schools [24] and make it possible to articulate them within the larger arena of professional development. Similarly, there exist within countries outstanding experiences in the use of alternative methodologies and space for teacher development through: systematic programs using new communication technologies, strengthening school networks, work among peers, study grants, and exchange of information through teacher meetings [25].

The traditional and fragmented view of teacher training is being replaced by a broadened concept of professional development understood as life-long teacher learning, and that includes initial and in-service training (with formal programs directed at those responsible for these areas) and self-training of teachers. This is a process that develops social, ethical, and technical skills incorporating the use of information and communication technologies within the framework of a profession involved in its own on-going development [26].

[22] The Leadership Network of OREALC/UNESCO seeks to strengthen technical and institutional leadership skills of school principals and their staffs, recognizing the key role that they have in education reforms.

[23] Javier Murillo Torrecilla in his article "Claves para la mejora de la eficacia escolar", published in *Crítica*, 1999, available from the on-line library of RINACE: http://www.ice.deusto.es/rinace/index.htm

[24] Teachers in a school who are able to create a team generate changes through their own initiatives, in spite of difficulties, working conditions, and norms imposed by hierarchical education systems. A large sample of innovations generated by schools and by teachers can be seen on the web page of the INNOVEMOS network, coordinated by OREALC/UNESCO: www.unesco.cl/innovemos

[25] Among outstanding experiences is the Expedición Pedagógica Nacional in Colombia, which is considered to be one of the most significant teacher training and research processes in the country. The program has involved national mobilization of Colombian teachers in order to make available innovative contributions to work within classrooms and schools, the exchange of teachers from different schools and regions (even in areas of difficult access), their recognition as education professionals, and a return to the joy of teaching.

[26] OREALC/UNESCO is preparing a publication entitled "The challenges of teacher training in knowledge and information societies", a study on achievements, tensions, and challenges that involve the incorporation of information and communication technologies in teacher education through the review of 23 experiences in ten Latin American countries.

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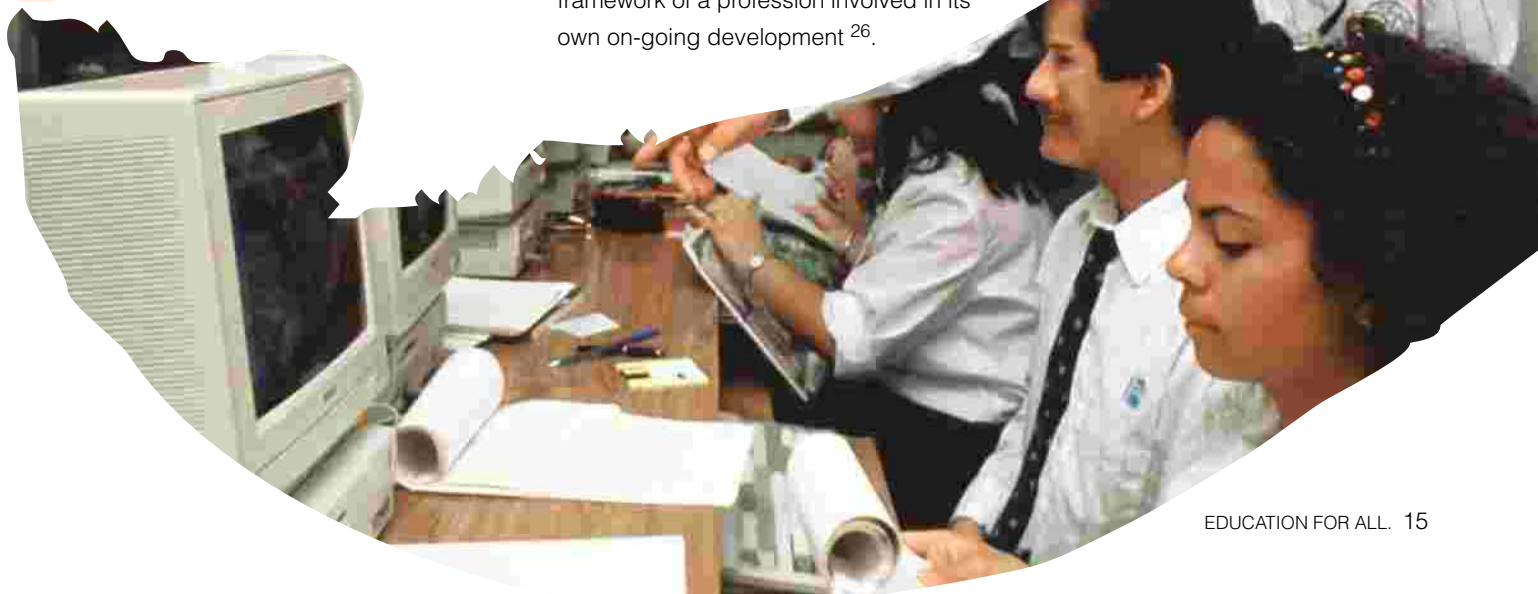
What is lacking are large concerted efforts within countries that combine political decision, participation, pressure, and cooperative effort [27] in order to construct professional development systems that combine different levels of training, taking advantage of significant experiences that exist within the continent. This, undoubtedly, is one of the greatest challenges faced by education systems.

TEACHING CAREERS and professional development

"Very few actors appear to be be satisfied with current salary structures and professional career paths in Latin America. Dissatisfaction encompasses nearly all dimensions. For this reason, the debate over teacher salaries and career paths crosses (or should cross) almost all important variables of the sector: financing and forms (centralized or decentralized) of resource allocation, school organization models, teacher education and training, and in general and, in spite of the multiple meanings of the term, the quality of education" [28].

Teaching careers, understood as the system that controls the professional career paths of teachers from their entry until their retirement, has changed little in most countries. Requirements for entry, contractual conditions and mechanisms, professional development, career ranking, salary regulations, incentives, assessment, and retirement, besides being mutually unrelated, have seen few changes.

A set of factors conspire against modernization in this area. Four are of particular note: the traditional concept of the role of teachers; the weight that salaries exercise on the distribution of resources for public education (typically, they represent 90% of national education budgets); the complicated process involved in changing education legislation; and corporative interests within the sectors involved. For these same reasons, dissatisfaction regarding themes related to the teaching career (especially salaries, incentives, and contracting) is the major cause of social conflict within education systems.

In particular, teacher income and incentives (monetary and non-monetary) are among the most serious problems of the sector. Low salaries within the teaching profession are a recognized fact and something that reaches extreme levels in some countries. Nevertheless, in general there are no policies and actions directed at discussing this theme in depth. Due to antiquated education legislation, improvement of the economic status of teachers is generally linked to time in service, without regard for professional development and performance [29].

[27] Beatrice Ávalos, referring to the project developed under her guidance for reforming teacher training in Chile. Document available from the on-line library of the "Red Iberoamericana de Investigación sobre Cambio y Eficacia Escolar".
http://www.ice.deusto.es/rinace/index.htm

[28] See "Carrera, incentivos y estructuras salariales docentes", by Alejandro Morduchowicz, published by PREAL within the framework of the project "Sindicalismo docente y reformas educativas en América Latina", 2003.

[29] There are countries in which only the possession of degrees of bachelor and doctorate permit access to the salary scale and economic recognition, in contrast to other degrees that are not even considered within education legislation.

Beyond the discussion on whether the value of a working hour of teachers (time within the school) is less than or equal to the value of a working hour in other professions [30], it is clear that there has been a dramatic deterioration of the purchasing power of teacher salaries, resulting in double and triple employment (not always carrying out same educational tasks) and domination of women in the profession, given the fact that in some households the salaries of women are seen as complementary to the principal income.

Moreover, the salary structure is highly complex, due to successive additions of bonuses and monetary incentives resulting from negotiations between governments and teacher unions. Far from establishing long-term salary policies, the tendency has been to opt for immediate short-term solutions that have had little or no impact on the quality of life of teachers and on their professional performance.

This is one of the most complicated and persistent problems within a scenario marked by: structural crises confronted by some countries, lack of attention given to education, and conflicting interests that come to bear on negotiations. Discussion is at hand, and although in few countries processes are underway, social pressures point toward definitions in this field.

The risk lies once again in reacting by responding to immediate problems at a time when one should reach agreement with teachers and their organizations from a standpoint that brings together comprehensive policies in order to have a positive impact on the system as a whole.

In any case, the salary question cannot be put off. It should be approached from a systemic and long-term perspective, discussing and agreeing to creative solutions with teachers and their organizations. For there can be no certain future for projects of changes in education without finding concrete solutions to the concrete everyday situation of teachers.

In spite of everything, some progress should be recognized. In Chile, the legislature (with great difficulty) approved appointment through public examination every five years of school principals, with those principals who have been positively assessed having the right to participate in the examination for a second five year term. Mexico has in place its Teacher Career Program that, although the subject of conflicting opinion, represents a unique experience compared with other countries[31]. Some countries have created monetary and non-monetary incentives for schools to recognize and stimulate teachers who work in teams.

Currently, OREALC/UNESCO is carrying out a comparative study of teacher career systems and assessment in Latin American and European countries. The purpose of the study is to survey current conditions, identify interesting national experiences, and provide support in the formulation of comprehensive proposals for a problem that as of yet has found no solution in education systems; one that requires an intense process of social dialogue and agreement.

Very few actors appear to be satisfied with current salary structures and professional career paths in Latin America

[30] See, among others, the study carried out by Xiaoyan Liang "Remuneración de los docentes en 12 países latinoamericanos: quiénes son los docentes, factores que determinan su remuneración y comparación con otras profesiones", within the framework of the Program for Fostering Education Reform in Latin America, PREAL, August 2003.

[31] In 1993, Mexico began its Teacher Career Program, the result of an agreement between the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP) and the National Education Workers Union (SNTE). This is a nation-wide incentive program for the professional development of Mexican teachers through a promotion program in which teachers participate voluntarily. Promotions take place through an assessment process that assigns points to: time in service, academic degrees, professional preparation, accreditation of courses, and professional performance. Its impact is part of the current debate within the Mexican education system, but beyond this, it represents one of the most consistent efforts to link performance, professional development, and pay, which requires in-depth assessments.

Teachers are generally in favor
of establishing assessment processes,
but disagree on orientation
and implementation mechanisms

TEACHER ASSESSMENT
for professional enhancement

The use of "school inspectors" employed by the central office has been the traditional assessment mechanism. In many cases this has been reduced to verifying that school administrative responsibilities are carried out: that planning books are updated, forms completed, and occasionally, classroom observation.

With implementation of education reforms in recent years, and the introduction of national and international student learning assessments, the above concept has been broadened, with the addition of the idea of teacher assessment. It was thus implicitly assumed that that teachers were the only factor involved in student learning and consequently, that they are responsible for poor education outcomes.

In response to this position, teachers, and particularly their unions, have generated strong opposition against teacher performance assessment mechanisms, associating them with sanctions. This has reached the point of such assessments becoming one of the causes of conflict within the system [32].

It is important to note that, in general, teachers are generally in favor of establishing assessment processes [33]. The debate arises in regard to the orientation and implementation mechanisms.

"The strong influence of a concept focused on measurement has made it difficult to suggest integrative views. The cost for this has been high because discourse and assessment practice have been converted into something so, so ambitiously objective, that the flesh and blood human beings end up disappearing". On the other hand, assessment has been considered a watchdog strategy imposed upon teachers more than one for improving education management and pedagogy [34].

In this sense, the Cuban case merits study because that country maintains an assessment system linked to teacher training plans which are evaluated by all those that receive their services and accompany their work.

Similarly, there are examples of progress such as those in Chile. There, after an extended period of discussion, the Ministry of Education, the Association of Municipalities, and the teacher union agreed to a set of mechanisms for implementing the Teacher Performance Assessment System. The proposal was submitted to an open public referendum with teachers, who approved it by nearly 70%. Currently, there are problems with implementation due to strong feelings regarding job stability, assessment mechanisms, the values of indemnifications in the case of firings due to negative assessments, as well as other operational aspects of the system. There is, however, the will to carry out adjustments necessary for moving forward with the program.

[32] Assessment system implementation has generated active debate within countries. Chile and Colombia are two recent examples.

[33] IIPE, the Institute for Education Research and Planning of UNESCO, with headquarters in Buenos Aires, carried out a survey of teachers in Argentina, Peru, Uruguay, and Brazil. Data published to date show that the teachers surveyed, although almost all claim that assessment mechanisms are inadequate, the majority say that their work should be evaluated and consider student performance to be an important component of assessment. (2002-2003).
Similarly, in Chile, as part of the process to establish a performance component within the system entitled "Program for Assuring the Quality of Education" the teacher union carried out a national consultation and, according to the vote, 70% of teachers were in agreement, although implementation includes 60,8% of teachers in Argentina, 75,6% in Peru, and 47,6% in Uruguay.

[34] Héctor Valdés, in his doctoral thesis on performance assessment. Cuba, 2003.

It is essential to move toward an assessment system that is transparent and objective, that gains credibility, that re-establishes confidence, and that is training-based, guiding the professional and personal development of teachers. Such a system must be associated with mechanisms linked to promotions and incentives. It should guarantee the participation of those assessed, of their colleagues, students, families, and external evaluators [35]. It should be a system that emphasizes and lends meaning to self-assessment.

In summary, what is required is a system that fosters a culture of assessment within education systems and that touches upon all of those responsible for education, including high authorities. It should send a clear signal regarding the commitment to be accountable to society. Thus understood and integrated with other factors, performance assessment is a requirement for improving education and for contributing to raising the social status of the teaching profession.

UNKNOWN FACTORS
regarding teacher working conditions and health

Much has been written on the importance of working conditions and health on worker productivity. All countries have, within their ministries of labor, departments that deal with these issues.

We understand by "working conditions" the entire set of aspects that make up the surroundings where the professional activity of teachers takes place: physical aspects, infrastructure, equipment, school climate, characteristics of the surroundings, nature of relations with others (authorities, principals, colleagues, students, parents, the community), and recreational and cultural activities, among others.

The nature of these conditions can either convert work into a source of growth and personal and professional well-being for teachers, or a source of frustrations and threats to their health. These have been called the "positive pole" and "negative pole" of employment.

From this perspective, health is a social process that has as a basic component the social and working conditions of people. In the case of teachers, for various reasons [36], this discussion has been lacking. Nevertheless, there are indications still little-studied [37], of a strong inter-action between working teacher conditions, health, and professional performance.

Stress, psychosomatic illness (gastritis, ulcers, high blood pressure), depression, laryngitis, varicose veins, and respiratory problems, are among the most frequent occupational hazards of teachers. It is notable that most of the recurrent afflictions are in the area of mental health [38]. More research needs to be carried out in order to support intervention processes under the responsibility of all of those involved, including teachers themselves and their schools.

In this area, OREALC/UNESCO is carrying out research on the working conditions and health of teachers in five countries (Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay), in association with teacher organizations, universities and schools. Teacher health is a subject that should be included in discussions about the quality of education.

[35] See "Nueva Docencia en Perú", a proposal resulting from the work of various teams of consultants coordinated by José Rivero Herrera that takes a comprehensive approach to three themes: the career of the public school teacher, profiles, selection, and incorporation of new teachers, and creation of an accreditation system for teacher and education professional training institutions.. Published by the Ministry of Education of Peru. Lima, January 2003.

[36] During decades, teaching was seen as a "calling", a mission for which it was sufficient to have a vocation, an intellectual activity without the determinants that are in general identified with productive and work activities of human beings.

[37] CTERA: Argentine teacher health survey, 1996. CENAISE, Research on the working conditions and health of teachers in Ecuador, 1998. Universidad Católica de Chile, Occupational health study of Chilean teachers, 2003.

[38] See José Esteve and Manuel Parra in the same publication, who look further into the health situation of teachers and argue that it is not only a public health problem, but an education quality and student learning problem as well.

CONFLICT
and the teacher question

Conflicts occur in social environments that are crisscrossed by relations of power and force, and in which various actors pressure and negotiate in order to defend their interests. A conflict that produces a rupture does not necessarily have negative connotations. Depending on its nature, it may be a source of growth and development. In the field of education we see confrontations between governments and teachers (the latter generally expressed through their organizations) due to unsatisfaction with working and living conditions. These have direct repercussions on education systems and on schools and on student learning.

Most Latin American countries face increasing conflict in their education systems. This is the case even for those that have traditionally managed differences between government and teachers through negotiation and dialogue. For these reasons, OREALC/UNESCO [39] sponsored a study in 18 countries of the causes, nature, and expressions of conflicts, including actors involved, trajectories, management, and outcomes.

The study produced alarming data on a situation that was known, but not fully measured, and showed the fragility of education systems and their inability to offer responses to the structural problems of education.

Merely as illustrations of this problem, consider the following:

➡ During the months of May and June 2003, 14 countries of the region simultaneously faced open conflicts that included: suspension of classes, total and partial work stoppages, and violent confrontations. In Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia (to cite three examples) national work stoppages of teachers closed schools for periods of from four to six weeks.

[39] OREALC/UNESCO sponsored a study on conflict within education systems in 18 countries of the region. The study included the participation of the LLP (Public Policy Laboratory) and a team of consultants who developed a chronology of teacher conflicts between 1998 and 2003. This study is available at www.unesco.cl, and explores in depth the cases of Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Mexico, and Peru. The systematization of the study will be published on the second semester 2005.

➡ In Ecuador, between 1998 and 2003 there were 11 national teacher work stoppages, totaling 173 school days lost (the school year has 200 days).

➡ In Argentina, every year during the years studied, there was at least one conflict somewhere in the country, resulting from the demands of teachers, parents, and students.

➡ During the years studied, the conflicts in education systems within the 18 countries considered covered 4,802 days.

➡ Conflicts are recurrent. Generally, agreements reached are followed by short periods of calm because they are short-term solutions that leave deep-rooted problems untouched.

➡ Conflicts take place within closed circles made up of ministries of education and teacher unions. Others, including key decision-makers such as finance and labor ministries and legislatures remain outside.

➡ Salary and specific professional demands of teachers are the major causes of conflicts. Agreements reached do not touch upon structural problems of education - themes related to the participation of teachers in changes, school management, student learning, and others of this kind, are not part of the agendas of teachers and their organizations.

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The climate of permanent confrontation is one of the greatest impediments to carrying out sustained, long-term change. Those involved in these conflicts are not able, or do not have the political will, to identify the real causes of the conflict and generate long-range solutions that are democratically constructed through dialogue and negotiation.

Most countries in the region are experiencing a deterioration of the conditions that support governability; that is, a set of basic political and social conditions that democratic systems require in order to function, foster consensus, and facilitate change. This governability crisis, which is particularly intense within education systems, is an obstacle that should be examined as an indispensable condition for making real progress in improving the quality and equity of education for all of the population. This is even more the case when conflict, as we have noted above, is largely related to the situation of teachers.

COMPREHENSIVENESS
and the multi-sector nature of policies

"The treatment of teacher issues as subjects of public policy is one of the most complex challenges faced by governments, given the strength of the interest groups involved, the mistrust accumulated over the years from neglect or inappropriate solutions that hinder transparent and widely agreed upon resolution of the differences between various actors, the considerable financial implications of many of the proposed solutions, and, of course, the fact that many of these alternatives have not been convincingly tested in practice" [40].

What seems to be clear is that none of the teacher performance factors taken alone can significantly improve the quality of teaching practices. Neither training conceived from a traditional standpoint, nor salary increases alone, nor high-tech equipment in schools, nor teacher performance assessment mechanisms will produce improvements if taken alone.

It is necessary to approach the teacher question from a comprehensive perspective, which leads as well to fostering inter-sector intervention within education policy frameworks for the short, medium, and long-term.

A comprehensive perspective involves considering together the various dimensions of teacher performance: personal, professional, and social. This can only be achieved through inter-sector intervention: ministries of education, obviously, but also including teacher organizations, finance, health, housing, and welfare ministries, legislatures, training institutions, the mass media, citizen movements that support education, etc.

A comprehensive view and multiple actors require agreed-upon processes that recognize the key importance of the teacher question and place it as a priority on education and political agendas. Only thus is it possible to seriously carry out changes in the quality of education.

Transformation of public policies on the teacher question involves, therefore, changes in management policies, in curricular design, in system management, and in labor and social security policies [41].

This new view also changes the limited one on teachers and their role at different decision-making levels in order to move toward strengthening, and in some case construction with teachers of participatory forums so they may have their own voice with active participation in changes and shared responsibility in the results of schools and student learning.

Similarly, this conception presents the challenge of learning and working between sectors in order to formulate policies, strategies, and programs that touch upon the whole range of teacher issues. Even more so when these must be carried out over time through social consensus within scenarios in which formerly there has been dispersion of effort and confrontation; especially between ministries of education and unions, as described above.

40 JUAN CARLOS NAVARRO, "Quiénes son los docentes?". Inter-American Development Bank, 2002.

41 PRELAC, Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Society, understood
as a set of all those
involved, including
teachers themselves,
is called upon to
guarantee that education
systems have the very
best teachers possible

FROM APOSTLE
to professional rigor

There are two forces behind the changes we have mentioned. One is intrinsic and comes from within the education community (teachers, principals, researchers, planners, policy-makers, etc.); the other is outside the system and comes primarily from "evaluators" of education.

The first of these forces finds expression in the attempt to treat and train teachers as professionals. The second seeks to foster responsibilities for results, the development of quantitative standards, performance measurement, and teacher training according to these standards [42], always from a unidirectional perspective, conceiving education within the logic of the market.

The first force is associated with the search for renewed meaning within the teaching profession, guaranteeing that teachers are trained for the exercise of their profession within the framework of democratic participation with full rights to intervene in decision-making, in the definition of education policies, with a view toward linking their work with local and community development without losing sight of the more general social context.

This new meaning of the profession involves moving from the concept of teachers as "apostles" or "martyrs" motivated by a "vocation" and "training", toward a concept of professional teachers with cultural and social capital who hold places where decisions are made in schools, communities, in forums for public discussion and agreement; professional teachers who take responsibility for the results of their tasks within the framework of a society that also assumes responsibility for education.

TEACHERS:
actors, authors, or participants?

If, as stated by the ministers of education who signed the PRELAC agreement, teachers are among the most important factors in the organization and delivery of educational services, part of the response should be: changes with teachers; not for teachers! ...

Teachers who are co-authors and participants, armed with social and cultural capital that permits them to be active social subjects able to participate in thoughtful decision-making and dialogue.

Teachers who are proud of their profession, valued and committed to the results of their work, accountable to families and communities and who receive the recognition of society [43].

[42] See the article by Elenora Villegas-Reimers, regarding the changes occurring in the United States in the area of teacher training. Published by OREALC/UNESCO, Santiago de Chile, 2003.

[43] Teachers believe that their profession is important and that it is valued by students and their families, but that it is society that does not value them. See the study in Peru: "Actitudes y valoración de los docentes en servicio hacia su profesión", by Ricardo Cuenca and Carlos Portocarrero, published by the Ministry of Education of Peru and PROEDUCA/GTZ. Lima, March, 2003. Similar results are found in a study carried out by IIPE in Argentina, Brazil, Peru, and Uruguay, 2003.

Teachers who make a difference, defending their ideas and their rights without impinging on the rights of children and young people to a good education, having opportunities to learn and to develop.

Education continues to be called upon to "establish a balance between economic growth and ethical principles such as equality, justice, and living together with mutual respect." For this reason, society, understood as a set of all those involved, including teachers themselves, is called upon to guarantee that education systems have the very best teachers possible.*e*
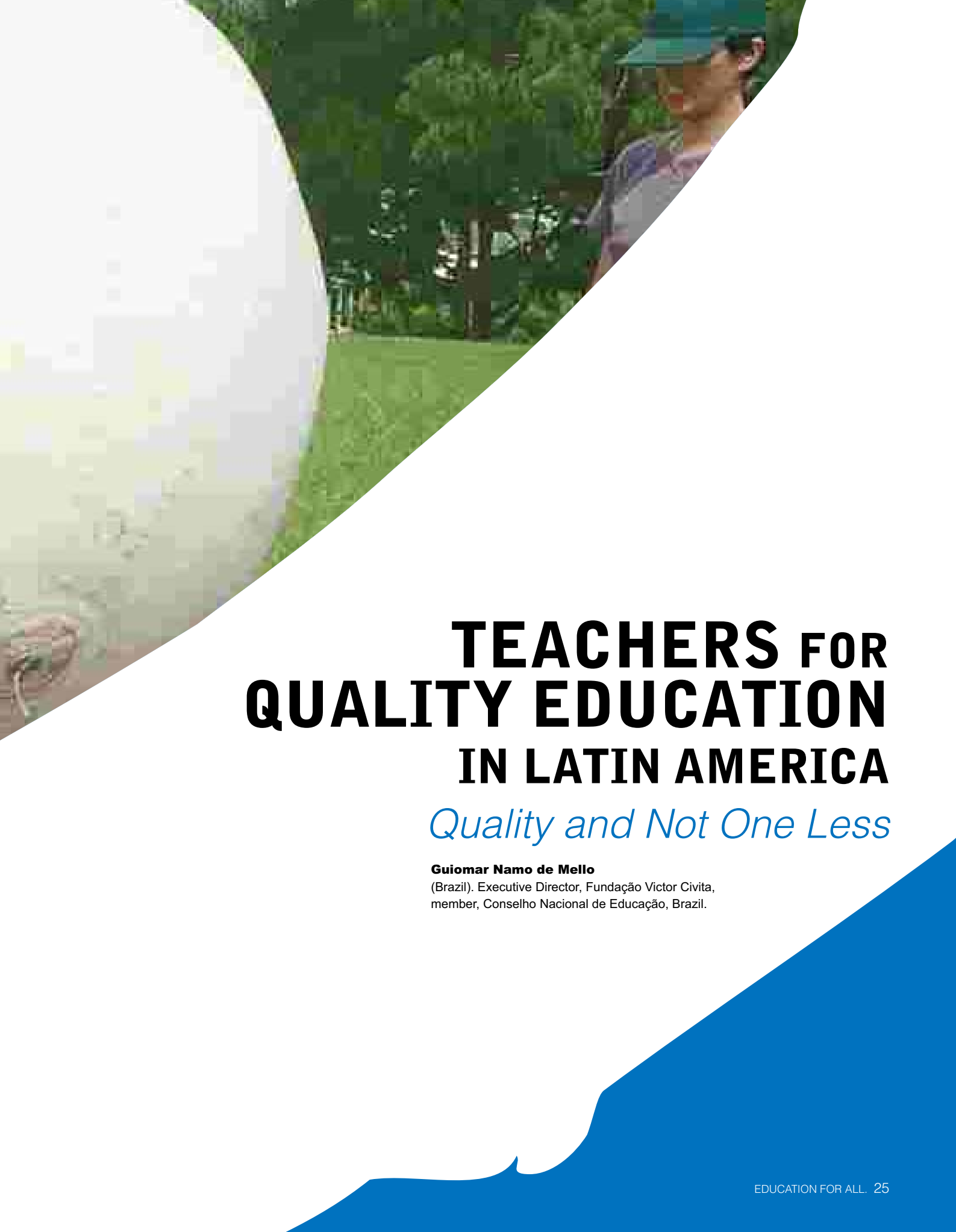
TEACHERS FOR QUALITY EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA

Quality and Not One Less

Guiomar Namo de Mello
(Brazil). Executive Director, Fundação Victor Civita,
member, Conselho Nacional de Educação, Brazil.

The great challenge for education in Latin America at the beginning of this century is to overcome inequality. The more access to education becomes universal the more serious the quality crisis becomes for schools programmed for a homogeneous minority. Schools in which children enter but from which many leave without learning - or even worse, believing that they are unable to learn.

And not even those schools for the minority have been quality schools. Schools seeing all students as equal, as empty recipients that teachers are to fill with data, facts, long arithmetic formulas, and rules of grammar, all repeated until students feed back information identical to that which was impressed upon the emptiness of their intellects. Curricular packages, some pieces of which might gain meaning later, cultivated by the academic and cultural experiences of the well-born. This may have been of some value in building a lettered elite preparing to live in societies far from democratic, in countries with economies unable to compete and that exported raw materials and imported products with added value.

In unequal and culturally diverse societies, universal access to education means including the excluded. But to include for what? To do more, or even to do the same better, is out of the question. No one wants this. And no country can extend to all the old type of school that, nostalgically, many believe was good. In order for learning for all to be quality learning it will be necessary to give new meaning to the curriculum, make learning a meaningful, pleasurable experience that is directly connected to the lives of students.

The challenge is to learn to do, and to do well, that which has never been done on our continent: offer schools whose central focus is to provide learning for all; a pedagogy able to inspire and unite teachers around a coherent project with clear objectives; teaching methods based on more modern learning concepts in which objects of knowledge and objects of teaching finally coincide.

The strategy to meet this goal can be nothing else than to establish homogeneous levels of excellence to be achieved by all. It will be necessary to move forward as much as possible with each generation of students, to foster diverse, lasting, and sustainable quality for a population that, besides being heterogeneous, needs to learn to add value to their skills throughout life.

The teacher work force of Latin America must engage itself in learning and in teaching students who challenge the pedagogy of uniformity. It is as simple as this; and it is very difficult

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The inequality of education in Latin America has been debated for the last three decades. During these more than 30 years the world's political geography has changed. Economies have globalized. Technology has produced a society in which knowledge and information are no longer the privilege of schools. The organization of labor has changed the professional profiles of many careers. The end of history has even been proclaimed. And Latin American schools continue to face the difficulty of teaching the basics that are necessary for survival - to read, to write, to work with *grandeur*, to listen, speak, think, and articulate language and thought.

The diagnosis and prognosis of this situation have everything to do with Latin American teachers. They are part of the problem because of their lack of preparation, their corporativism, and accommodation to a profession that expunges the best. But they need to be part of the solution, for without the participation, commitment, and dedication of teachers it will be impossible to overcome inequality of education. The teacher work force of Latin America must engage itself in learning and in teaching students who challenge the pedagogy of uniformity. It is as simple as this; and it is very difficult.

KNOWLEDGE is power

We know more about the teaching profession in Latin America than we did two decades ago. A recent survey of current knowledge of the subject points toward problems that are well-known by those who work in school-based education: outdated initial teacher training that doesn't link theory and practice; hierarchical career paths without effective incentive systems in which promotions depend upon time in service; school management lacking in result assessment instruments, force, sustainability, and political will to carry out necessary changes; low salaries and professional prestige, the strong influence of *esprit de corps* on government employees in general and on teachers in particular [1].

Education reforms have been underway in various Latin American countries since the 1980s. Almost all have seen the multiplication of innovative experiences involving the training, careers, and professional development of teachers. Although few of these experiences have been evaluated in terms of the impact on student learning, they do constitute interesting hypotheses to be tested with more rigor [2].

On the conceptual level, during the final decades of the 20th century, Latin America had more systematic contact with the work of pedagogues and psychologists, especially those from Europe, regarding teaching skill profiles, teaching methods, and strategies for organizing learning conditions [3]. In general, these efforts were developments of the theories of Jean Piaget, including the most recent expression, the constructivist theory of knowledge that greatly benefited from the contributions of Latin American scholars [4]. Some of

this conceptual work focused specifically on education inequality. This was due, in the case of Europeans, to the growing ethnic, cultural, and religious heterogeneity within schools on that continent - schools that were much more homogeneous 50 years ago. In the case of Latin America, constructivism and overcoming inequalities have always been linked, even though the results have not always been auspicious.

In the United States, the 1990s produced a wealth of strongly policy-oriented empirical studies on the influence of schools and of teachers on student learning. Recognizing the need to close the "achievement gap" between middle-class white students and those belonging to ethnic minorities, these studies are of particular interest for Latin American education.

Schools make the difference

Many education scholars, contaminated by the pedagogical pessimism that marked the second half of the 20th century, claimed that schools were merely reproducing social inequalities. Studies as distant as those of Bourdieu & Passeron in France and Coleman in the United States, reached identical conclusions from opposing methodological paths: students leave school as socially unequal as when they arrived.

[1] Vaillant, Denise (2004).

[2] Please refer to the papers presented at the Regional Conference "Desempeño de los profesores en América Latina y en el Caribe", published in Portuguese by the Fundação Victor Civita (2004) and in Spanish by PREAL (2004).

[3] Included in this case are the works of sociologist Philippe Perrenoud, a professor at the School of Psychology and Education Sciences of Geneva, Switzerland; Salvador Cesar Coll of the Universidad de Barcelona, Spain; Léopold Paquay, Psycho-pedagogue and professor of the School of Psychology and Education Sciences Louvain, Belgium; Isabel Alarcão, Ph.D. in Educação and Chaired Professor at the Universidade de Aveiro, Portugal.

[4] Headed by Emília Ferreiro and researchers of the Department of Education Research, CINVESTAV, Mexico, DF.

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All children are able to learn, as long as they are provided with an appropriate environment

In order to respond to questions posed by pedagogical pessimism, theories were formulated and assessments and empirical studies were carried out. Using methodologies that were more rigorous than the functionalism of Coleman and more dynamic than the structuralism of Bourdieu and Passeron, this new "defense" of the school has produced consistent proof of the positive impact that education can have on the professional and social future of at-risk populations. Some recent surveys of work on this subject have been produced since the 1990s [5]. These guide the assumptions adopted in the present article. They are:

➜ All children are able to learn, as long as they are provided with an appropriate environment. That is, a well-prepared teacher, time, space, and didactic and/or technological resources.

➜ There are differences in outcomes between schools that cannot be explained merely by variables related to the backgrounds of students, although this does have explanatory weight. Controlling for initial differences and for environmental factors, schools have a specific impact, producing substantial differences among their students.

➜ Differences between schools are systematically associated with the characteristics of internal educational processes and with the organizational climate within which each school operates. These are factors that can be modified by schools themselves, by policy, and by political/institutional actors. There is a strong relationship between social and environmental factors and student achievement.

➜ Differences between schools are stable and can last for long periods (more than a decade) if conditions are kept relatively stable.

➜ What happens at the beginning of schooling is a good predictor of success or failure during the school years. Children with the same family backgrounds and conditions can do better or worse in the other phases of schooling, depending upon success or failure at the beginning of the process.

➜ Differences between schools indicate the importance of thinking about the "value added" by schools. In this sense, the publicly-available information of results obtained by students of a school in standardized tests as a way of comparing schools, can be deceiving. It would be more relevant to report the range of results within a single school and the persistence of this range.

[5] Mello, G.N. (1993) and Alvariño, C. et. al. (2004).

Given that schools make a difference, it is important to look inside this "black box". Two components of internal school processes stand out as those that most influence a school's effectiveness: management, personified in the figure of the principal - leadership style, ability to create a positive school climate, among others; and teacher practice - their training, classroom management, and other personal and professional characteristics. Most studies focus on one or another of these components, since the empirical procedures are quite different.

Studies on management have focused on schools as a whole, their organization, climate, and ways of relating with their social surroundings. Generally, these studies seek to identify the characteristics of effective schools – those in which successful learning takes place. The conclusion is that these schools have traits in common. Among these are the following [6]:

1. **PEDAGOGICAL LEADERSHIP.** Professionally competent, firm, pro-active, that values performance of school staff and students.
2. **INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY.** Ability to develop their own pedagogical projects and responsibility for being accountable.
3. **SHARED VISION AND GOALS.** Clarity and unity of proposals, collaboration, and consistency.
4. **FOCUS ON BASIC CONTENT.** Unscattered and well-defined objectives with the greatest possible degree of precision.
5. **POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT.** Ordered and attractive, where the use of time, space, and resources is aimed primarily at learning objectives.
6. **HIGH EXPECTATIONS.** Indispensable in order to create a culture of success. They should be communicated with clarity and conviction that students are able to attain established learning objectives.
7. **TRACKING STUDENT PROGRESS.** Continuity of information feedback and of strategies for overcoming difficulties.
8. **INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION.** School assessment and study of student schedules.
9. **POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT.** Clear and shared rules, with rights and responsibilities well-defined.
10. **PRACTICE-CENTERED TRAINING.** Focused on results and difficulties, involving the school team as a whole and with a measure of control of the school over training content and methodology.
11. **SUPPORT FROM CENTRAL LEVELS OF THE SYSTEM.** Technical assistance and support in implementing decisions and initiatives taken by schools or with participation and follow-up for assuming responsibility for results.
12. **COOPERATION WITH FAMILIES.** Clarity in communicating objectives. Parent participation and support.

Teachers make the difference

It is not easy to assess the effectiveness of teachers. The most rigorous way is to look at the added value that the students of a particular teacher acquire in learning measurements, comparing where they were at the beginning and at the end of a school period, usually a school year. This is the way to evaluate while recognizing the difficulty of the teaching task. But up to the end of the 1970s it was difficult to obtain the data necessary for this kind of assessment.

By the second half of the 1990s, some U.S. school systems had been carrying out annual standardized achievement tests for at least a decade. The historical series of assessment results and the availability of high data storage computers finally made it possible to track the results of annual achievement tests of hundreds of thousands of students for eight or ten consecutive years and to compare these results with the individual teachers who had taught these students.

[6] Alvariño et. al., op. cit.

One of the pioneering studies was carried out using data from four states – Tennessee, Texas, Massachusetts, and Alabama[7]. The data provided evidence that a good teacher makes a difference. A large difference. In the four states, students of good teachers advanced more than students of bad teachers. Teacher ability was a variable that, by itself, most heavily influenced student achievement. It is notable that it was more important than any aspect of economic, family, cultural, or ethnic status of the students. It is worth citing the comment of the author regarding why the importance of teachers had not been studied previously.

"The advent of academic parameters, of consistent annual testing, and of powerful computers made it possible to do what we had never done before – measure the effectiveness of individual teachers in fostering student learning. And this, in turn shed light on the critical importance of teachers in closing the academic gap. The phantom of banality that clouded education policy debate for decades – the idea that schools and teachers have a limited ability to help students – particularly underprivileged students – was finally buried. Poor black students can learn in accordance with the most demanding standards, just as well as any others, as long as they have competent teachers" [8].

Proof that teachers make a difference demanded arriving at a concept of what it means to be a good teacher. The path chosen by recent American studies was empirical. In short, the process is the following: the education system sets learning standards and applies these standards to results obtained by students in standardized tests. The difference between the achievement of students at the beginning and the end of the school year is taken as a measure of teacher efficacy. Depending on the type of student that a teacher has – good, average, or weak – the standards to be met are adjusted [9].

With empirical proof that teachers make a difference, and with the profile of a good teacher at hand – even recognizing its imperfections – studies were carried out to discover where the good teachers were. The conclusion is both melancholy and predictable. Students from wealthy and predominantly white neighborhoods had the best teachers. A study of this kind in Latin America would certainly arrive at the same regressive findings, according to which, "he who has shall receive".

Many studies recognize the limitations of the method used to construct the concept of a good teacher. While recognizing the value of the American empirical tradition, other studies have been carried out in which teacher efficacy is correlated with the results of assessments of personal and professional skills. Preliminary results show at least two characteristics common to effective teachers: high verbal and numerical competence as well as a solid mastery of the content to be taught.

In Europe, various researchers are developing the pedagogical and didactic implications of Piaget and constructivist theories. With a strong emphasis on practice, these studies make use of the pedagogical and didactic experience of their authors as well as continuous observation of training situations and teaching practice. Using these studies it is possible to establish a quite consistent set of skills needed to be a good teacher [10].

The skill profiles outlined by these authors include, among others: relating theory to practice or reflecting on practice; moving easily from understanding as object of knowledge and understanding as object of teaching, or, in other words, interface the content of pedagogical and didactic knowledge; and recognize and utilize differences as a pedagogical resource.

When we consider that the exercise of skills such as these cannot be done without mastery of verbal language, the studies from both research traditions join together in very important conclusions.

> **Proof that teachers make a difference demanded arriving at a concept of what it means to be a good teacher**

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[7] Haycock, K. (1998).

[8] Carey, K. (2004).

[9] For a more detailed description, see Haycock, K., op.cit.

[10] Perrenoud, P. (1999) presents a quite simple and complete list of teaching skills.

Non-cognitive aspects
are important

At least two studies supply interesting conclusions about non-cognitive factors that influence the effectiveness of schools and of teachers. The first of these is a case study of 16 schools with economically underprivileged students who presented excellent academic performance.

Although confirming almost all of the conclusions of the others, one aspect of this study presented very different results. It was noted that strong pedagogical leadership within schools is very important at the beginning of the quality improvement process. In schools with high quality, mature pedagogical processes, it is possible to maintain good academic performance with a leader facilitator, even if the person does not have a pedagogical background. The most convincing explanation for this fact is that good pedagogical leaders are those who construct pedagogical skills within their teaching teams. This reinforces the importance of skilled teachers for learning, even with different management styles [11].

The second example is not a study, but a report by a national working group -*Study Group for the Affirmative Development of Academic Ability*- [12]. It involves a thorough and updated survey of research on school and teaching conditions that foster the building of cognitive skills necessary for good academic achievement. The report adopts a cognitivist and constructionist approach, and presents an impressive number of studies the empirical design of which are guided by this theoretical perspective.

These studies demonstrate that the ideas of Piaget are alive and well in the United States, especially the theoretical hypotheses of Emilia Ferreiro that guide the search for pedagogy and teaching techniques consistent with Piaget's concepts of learning and development. For the purposes of the present article, two conclusions of the report are important:

(a) the enormous theoretical and investigatory effort being carried out by American cognitivists and constructivists in order to produce knowledge on teaching and learning in at-risk and/or low income and ethnic minority schools;

(b) the number of studies that see affective relational aspects to be decisive for creating a favorable climate for the learning of at-risk students.

The existence of a climate of trust in the relations of children with each other and with adults is seen as just as indispensable as mastery of content to be taught and of learning processes. Threats, stereotypes, and bullying are identified by various authors as obstacles to learning that have a greater weight that eventual limitations of the family setting.

The non-cognitive dimension (re)visited by recent studies is not identified with the "maternalist" conception associated with the teacher as maternal figure. Nor does it suffer from the knee-jerk impulse to psychologically or medically analyze anything that deviates from what is expected of the average student. Understood with the subtlety that affective questions merit, this new concern with feelings is learning focused. It seeks to identify non-cognitive obstacles to learning so that teaching can attain its objectives.

[11] Kannapel, P. (2005).

[12] *All Students Reaching The Top – Strategies for Closing Academic Achievement Gaps* (2004).

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> We know that teachers can make a tremendous difference, principally for low income students and/or ethnic minorities

The concept of resilience may provide a key to this new perspective. A growing number of studies are being carried out in regard to how people overcome traumas, violence, situations of abuse or of risk. The results obtained challenge the notion that these situations inevitably lead to the development of psychopathologies or to cycles that perpetuate poverty, abuse, school failure, or violence[13].

From this research emerges the idea of resilience, or as the author states *"that people can overcome negative life experiences and frequently become stronger in the process"*. These writers state that it is possible to make this happen with students and teachers. The latter can learn to teach strategies for surviving and surmounting difficulties. If this is proven to be the case, there is no doubt that any activity for reducing education inequalities would have to consider the development of resilience.

Some conclusions

Concluding this overview of what is already known, one sees that knowledge of the importance of schools and of teachers in student learning and on the future of their education has progressed not only in terms of empirical demonstrations. It has been theoretically developed by European and American scholars that have dedicated themselves for almost three decades to responding to the pessimism of the middle of the last century.

Without returning to the ingenuous pedagogical optimism dominant during the turn of the 20th century with Claparède, Dewey, Montessori, and others, neither have education thought and research succumbed to the disillusionment that followed the hasty conclusions that schools and teachers could do nothing in the face of the social background of their students. Today, one can recommend actions to make schools be more effective. Moreover, we know

that teachers can make a tremendous difference, principally for low income students and/or ethnic minorities. In addition, we have at our disposal skill profiles that effective teachers possess or need to develop. This in itself is considerable progress.

Although the majority of studies mentioned have not been carried out in Latin America, it is undeniable that their conclusions are, in general, in tune with thought in the region, imbued as it is in the Piaget pedagogical tradition and the American school of empirical research. In summary, there is sufficient knowledge available for making decisions and for putting into place teacher policies in Latin American countries.

WHERE we want to go

If the knowledge about the importance of schools and of teachers is valid, and if the challenge is to attenuate inequalities in education, one should ask what is needed in order for carry out policies and forms of institutional management of teacher resources that channel the best professionals toward schools and students that are at-risk.

Political decision and technical management

Decisions regarding the teaching profession almost always involve conflict. This is not a Latin American phenomenon. It occurs in the United States and in various other countries as well. Decisions taken on this subject have a "strong political and ideological charge, strong financial impacts, little expert consensus, and always incite feelings of threat" [14].

[13] Henderson, N. & Milstein, M.M. (2002)
[14] Aguerrondo, I. (2004).

The most important thing, however, is to create a teacher performance assessment culture

The recent history of some countries in the region shows that there is unlikely to be an initiative, however carefully taken, regarding teacher training, career paths, recruitment, or contracting, that does not provoke fear, insecurity, mistrust, misunderstandings, and resistance of at least a group or sector of education.

These are the dimensions of the problem. In order to face it, a motive is necessary that makes it worth while. Most certainly, overcoming inequalities in education is one of them. Is it sufficient to mobilize politicians, commentators, decision-makers, and teachers themselves? That is the question that only an analysis of the forces present in each country can answer. Independent of the response, what one can state is that without a political decision, no other condition will be sufficient.

To serve as inspiration, it is worth noting some initiatives that are underway in the United States, such as the *National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools* the president of which is the Governor of the State of Virginia. Launched in 2005[15], it has as its objective and mission to:

"...confront and begin to solve the problem or problems of the unpreparedness of teaching teams in at-risk schools, through clear identification of problems and proposal of solutions; through careful examination and systematization of existing research; through development of solutions using policies, resources, and strategies. The National Partnership will serve as the recourse par excellence of the nation for strengthening the quality of teaching in at-risk schools" [16].

In recent years there have appeared as well non-governmental organizations dedicated to the recruitment and training of teachers specifically to provide instruction in at-risk schools and regions. One of them states that it is:

"... building the movement to eliminate education inequality in this country. Since 1990, more than 12,000 exceptionally gifted individuals have come together in Teach for America, assuming the commitment to teach for two years in low income rural and urban communities. Based on this experience, many of them became leaders in the effort to broaden opportunities for quality education for all children" [17].

Political decision is not enough. The literature is unanimous in stating as well that technical support for and permanent observation of teachers in their working environment are crucial in order to improve the quality of teaching. This statement should have even greater weight for those teachers who teach in low income communities or at-risk schools.

To monitor, support, and hold accountable are teacher resource management tasks that, together with political decision, can guarantee that good teachers serve in schools most in need of them and that they produce the difference we expect of them.

[15] The initiative is the result of partnership of thre institutions: ETS, Educational Testing Services, the most important education assessment agency in the United States (www.ets.org); the Education Commission of the States, a group composed of politicians and education leaders (www.ecs.org); and Learning Point Associates, a non-profit organization dedicated to education (www.learningpt.org).

[16] *National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools*, (2005).

[17] www.teachforamerica.org

National Learning
Measurement Standards and Systems

In spite of their limitations, the objectivity of these measures is the only defensible basis for informing and negotiating with teachers, principals, parents, and interest groups. They are the indispensable data base for carrying out assessments of the work of teachers.

Methodologies for verifying the added value that the teacher effect produces on students; adjustments for family and social-cultural conditions of students; and the use of long historical series of measures are essential elements for understanding and consensus regarding teacher effectiveness [18].

Many Latin American countries already have national learning assessment systems, some of which are well-consolidated. In other countries of the region, measurement systems are under development. It is important to be aware of methodologies for measuring the value added by schools and teachers and to incorporate this objective into national assessment systems. It is also important to maintain continuous measurement procedures so that those data are comparable and involve many school cohorts.

The most important thing, however, is to create a teacher performance assessment culture that legitimates the use of results in order to establish training, recruitment, and contracting policies for improving quality and fostering equality in education.

Revising initial training systems

In most Latin American countries, teacher training takes place in higher education. It is important that there be clarity in terms of the role of the State in this area. Without such clarity it will be difficult to balance teacher resource management policies with policies for overcoming inequalities in education. In most national contexts, teachers are prepared in public or private institutions of higher education and are absorbed into primary and secondary school systems maintained by national, provincial, or local governments. Therefore, the State's role is to regulate rather than to impose.

Guidelines must exist to steer the curricular and institutional organization of university level training courses. The content and methodologies of these courses must to incorporate specific training needs so that teachers may work in poor regions and in at-risk schools. One of the objectives should be to train resilient teachers [19]. The profile outlined in the studies cited in this article can be a point of departure for establishing national guidelines [20]. These in turn need to be coherent with learning assessment standards for primary and secondary school students.

To government and to those responsible for education policies falls the responsibility of furnishing:

(a) the over-all goals of education, such as overcoming inequalities;

(b) the observance of national guidelines for teacher training; and

(c) the organization of courses within teacher training institutions.

These guidelines can come from groups or other levels of accreditation or certification in which various interested parties are represented. Such levels can function in order to accredit courses or certify skills, all closely associated with learning standards for primary and secondary school students.

Models of this kind already function in various countries in Europe and in the United States. In Latin America there is also at least some form of course accreditation. Certainly, in federated countries such as Brazil, Argentina, and Mexico, the process requires mechanisms for establishing consensus and agreements on policies. In general, accreditation is recognized nationally, but the teacher employment and functions are managed by provincial or local entities.

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[18] Haycock, K. (1998); Carey, K. (2004).

[19] Henderson, N. e Milstein, M.M. (2002).

[20] Among the various countries that are attempting to establish national standards for teacher training, the experience of Brazil may be consulted at www.mec.gov.br/cne/, "*Diretrizes Nacionais para Formação de Professores da Educação Básica em Nível Superior*"- Parecer n. 09 /2001.

Analysis of the functioning of these mechanisms in different national contexts, especially in Latin America, would be of great interest for policy decision-making and forms of teacher resource management.

In conclusion, it is worth calling attention to the risk of accreditation and skill certification becoming hostages of conflicting pedagogical concepts or to corporative interests. In fact, it should be precisely the opposite. Certification should be an instrument for recruiting and training high level professionals from other areas in order that they can teach in at-risk schools, as in the *Teach for America* experience cited above.

In the United States, where state and national certification has existed for practically two decades, both types are replicating a dispute between education institutes (colleges of education or pedagogy courses) and specialist training institutions (institutes of various sciences, liberal arts colleges, and of linguistics) [21].

This dispute, well-known by education scholars, produces in the area of teacher training a dichotomy later reproduced in the workplace between mastery of the object of knowledge (content) and mastery of the object of teaching (what should be taught and how to teach it).

Continuing education
for success in at-risk situations

Increasingly understood as a continuous process preferably taking place "on the classroom floor" through observation, monitoring, guidance, support, and technical assistance, continuing education is at the noble center of teacher resource management.

Considerable literature has been produced on continuing education. In the area of school efficacy studies, as we have mentioned, the most frequent statement is that the more efficacious the school, the more control it has over training programs of its teacher team. If we analyze continuing education from the perspective of overcoming inequalities in education, we should remember that the more adverse a teacher's working conditions, the more he or she will need technical support and assistance.

A serious program for overcoming inequalities perhaps should be managed by specific teachers. On the agenda would be experiences of establishing periods for teams of excellent teachers to work within poor schools with many learning problems. As these schools become stronger, veteran teachers would train their replacements until the latter are transferred to new problem schools.

Latin America makes little use of the experiences of its best teachers. Those who survive with great success in very difficult situations should be models and coaches for their colleagues. Sharing experiences is one of the best of all kinds of in-service training.

Working with at-risk schools and students is a difficult and arduous task. The school team is continually submitted to pressures and stress. Continual education of these teachers should include not only professional technical matters, but personal matters as well. Discussion groups, socio-therapies, counseling, and other forms of reinforcing self-images should be among the tools of teacher resource managers for overcoming education inequalities. Perhaps an indispensable characteristic of teachers of at-risk students is to be able to encounter solutions within adverse conditions. That is, resilience. And this can be learned in a serious continued education program [22].

Recruitment,
contracting, and incentives

Overcoming education inequalities must be a national imperative for some Latin American countries - Brazil included. This imperative should guide recruitment, contracting, and incentive policies, a subject so politically sensitive that it is unlikely that the experiences of other countries can serve as more than general indications or remote inspirations.

With this caveat in mind, it is worth while citing the IIEP/UNESCO-Paris report on teacher contracting in three countries - Cambodia, India, and Nicaragua [23]. Some of the conclusions of the study are suggestive:

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[21] Ballou, D. and Podgursky M.(1999).
[22] Henderson, N. and Milstein, M.M., argue that good teachers are also resilient.
[23] Duthilleul, Y. (2004).

➡ When there is accountability and the local community is involved in teacher contracting, satisfaction increases, there is a decrease in teacher and student absenteeism, and student drop-out, and academic performance improves.

➡ The existence of adequate incentives for successful teaching efforts creates a climate favorable for professional development. This does not depend on whether teachers are tenured or contracted.

➡ One of the most important incentives is the opportunity for career growth. This must be offered to contracted teachers as well.

Conclusions such as these reinforce some of the ideas that are being put into practice within education reforms in some countries. Among these ideas are:

➡ Time in service is the worse incentive that can be used for any career. In teaching it has been a disaster.

➡ Any policy that seeks to focus financial and human resources on at-risk schools needs, besides a transparent teacher assessment process, must have power to contract and to manage incentives, including salaries, that foster trustworthy accountability.

➡ Professional development depends less on job stability and much more on learning opportunities, facing new challenges, and transfering to more stimulating contexts.

➡ We have had sufficient time to gauge resistance, especially that of teacher unions. It is now time to meet them face to face and, if necessary, to pay the political price necessary for placing good teachers in the classrooms of the poorest students – a cost that is worth paying.

➡ It is possible, as has happened in other countries, that faced with a calm but firm political decision, teacher unions will encounter in the crusade for education equality an opportunity to change their image and modernize their strategies [24].

Responsible political decisions and competent technical management can transform Latin American primary and secondary schools into schools where all learn.

Literally all. **Not One Less** [25]. *e*

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[24] Duthilleul op cit. Also Carey, K. op. cit.

[25] This expression refers to the film of the same name directed by Zang Yimou, China 1998. Based on facts, the film takes place in a very poor rural Chinese school, in which a 13 year-old girl, Wei Minzhi, is charged with substituting for a teacher going on leave. She hasn't a single book and must avoid student absenteeism - a critical problem in her country.

Paying the political price necessary for placing good teachers in the classrooms of the poorest students – a cost that is worth assuming

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Education reforms

and the role of teachers

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The purpose of this article is to identify, in all of its complexity, the role of teachers within education reform processes in Latin America. One can say, and with reason, that teachers are important at any time, country, or region. Nevertheless, in Latin America, in view of problems apparent to all, today it is essential to include the theme among the priorities on government agendas. One of the major problems currently faced by public policies in the area of education is how to improve the performance of teachers. Diagnoses agree that traditional solutions are insufficient. But there is also strong evidence that it is not easy to determine what changes are the right ones, and much less, how to put them into practice.

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The opinions expressed in this article are the sole responsibility of the author and do not necessarily express the opinions of the institutions with which she is affiliated.

REFORMS and their results[2]

In the history of education all judgements seem to be either too late or premature. It is often a complex task to determine the influence or pertinence of a phenomenon or event because one does not always know what chain of consequences it has engendered. Even so, it does not seem too daring for us to arrive at certain conclusions that emerge from an analysis of the reform process in Latin America.

During the 1980s and 1990s, almost all Latin American countries carried out a series of changes that led to an education scenario very much more favorable than that of past decades. A first conclusion, from an institutional perspective, is that currently there is greater administrative decentralization and a resurgence of new agreements regarding education. On the strictly pedagogical plane, important curricular reforms have been undertaken. There are programs to improve the quality and equity of teaching at the primary and secondary levels. School days have been lengthened, and efforts have been made to focus on programs to benefit vulnerable groups in order to achieve equity goals. Also worthy of note is the beginning of acceptance of assessment of learning outcomes and the responsibility of schools for achieving these outcomes.

In practice, education realities have proven resistant to change

[2] This article is based primarily on: Vaillant, D. (2005). *Formación de docentes en América Latina. Reinventando el modelo tradicional.* Barcelona: Octaedro.

TABLE 1. KEY ASPECTS OF EDUCATION REFORMS IN LATIN AMERICA

Area	Strategy
Quality and equity	Targeting of primary schools located in contexts of poverty. Extension of school day. Affirmative action to benefit vulnerable groups.
Curricular proposals	Renovation of content. Work on projects. Distribution of texts.
Teacher training	Incentive for improving quality. Professional development programs.
Management	Administrative and pedagogical decentralization. School autonomy and local participation. Participation of parents and communities.
Learning assessment	Improvement of assessment systems. Application of national tests. Participation in international measurements.

Source: D. Vaillant, 2004.

Nevertheless, in spite of progress, the efforts made were not sufficient for guaranteeing sustained development of education for countries of the region.

PROGRESS is not sufficient

Unsatisfactory results led to questioning the direction of the changes or policy options adopted. In practice, education realities have proven resistant to change. Inequalities in regard to education opportunities have persisted, and achievement continues to be below par. Among the greatest problems are, without doubt, the phenomena of grade repetition and school drop out [3]. The negative effects of grade repetition are well known. In many cases they accumulate, leading to students being above age for their grade and to their abandoning school early. Moreover, they involve considerable costs for education systems [4].

At the institutional level, there are political obstacles that hinder moving toward modern and efficient forms of management and to new ways of financing education. Few countries in Latin America are able to adapt to the challenges of the emerging world context. We note that the last decade of the 20th century showed only a 3% growth - one percent more than during the "lost decade" of the 1980s. To the 44% of the population living in poverty [5], 19% in extreme poverty, and the worst income distribution of any region in the world, we not must add the emerging challenges of the technological revolution and globalization.

[3] According to the 2004 report *EFA Rapport Global de Suivi 2005: Qualité de l'Éducation*. París, UNESCO. In various Latin American countries, more than 20% of students who enter primary school do not reach the 5th grade. Grade repetition in primary school exceeds 8% in most countries, reaching the extreme of 25% in Brazil.

[4] According to Torres, R.M. (1999). "Nuevo rol docente, ¿qué modelo de formación, para qué modelo educativo?". En *Aprender para el futuro. Nuevo marco de la tarea docente*. Madrid: Fundación Santillana. Each year 32,2 millon students repeat a grade between primary and secondary schooling. This represents an additional annual cost of 5.2 billion dollars.

[5] See ECLAC (1999). *Social Panorama of Latin America*. Santiago Chile, ECLAC.

CHANGES do not live up to promises

Diagnoses of the state of education in Latin America agree that in terms of quality and equity, the changes have not lived up to the promises. Studies show: the distance that separates private and public schools in terms of the poor learning results, high repetition rates, high drop-out and low test scores of the poorest groups; excessive centralization and scant autonomy of schools; worsening working conditions of teachers and low social status of the profession; lack of linkage between what is taught in schools and what is required by the labor market and society; and insufficient financing [6].

During the first years of the 21st century, increasing poverty in some Latin American countries has had serious consequences and has obliged schools – and teachers specifically – to assume affective and social functions, thus diminishing the teaching function *per se* of schools. Schools have begun to be asked to provide that which families are unable to give: affection and ethical, moral, and vocational guidance. To be a teacher under this new socialization context – particularly in large cities – can either awaken the development of new and complex professional skills, or cause an impoverishment of the teaching task, by reducing it to a simple substitution of the family [7].

Countries such as Argentina and Uruguay, which not long ago were thought to be modern, egalitarian, integrated, and educated societies have gone through serious crises in recent years. What is the role of schools in this crisis? [8].

REFORM scenarios

Many qualified voices have been raised regarding the insufficient nature of the reforms. One of them is M. Gajardo [9]. This author has taken a critical look at education reforms on the continent and has reduced their difficulties to four clear hypotheses.

The first, and most pessimistic, is to assert that current policies are not the most appropriate for achieving the objectives of equity, quality, and participation sought by reforms. The second states that, although they are correct, current reforms have not bore fruit, either because they are incomplete, or because the necessary time has not yet passed for one to see their effects. The third hypothesis is related to a necessary consolidation and deepening of changes that have proven to be successful and the introduction of corrective measures for those that have proven to be the contrary in order to move forward in the design of a new generation of reforms. Finally, the fourth hypothesis links education problems with social and economic variables and concludes that current reforms are not sufficient for achieving desired objectives and that one needs to put in place other processes to accelerate the rate and results of changes.

[6] These are general statements that obviously do not reflect differences between countries, education systems, and schools.

[7] See, among others, *Oficio de Professor na América Latina e Caribe*, Fundaçao Victor Civita- UNESCO, São Paulo, 2004.

[8] See Dussel, I. and Finocchio S. (comp.) (2003). *Enseñar hoy. Una introducción a la educación en tiempos de crisis.* Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica.

[9] See Gajardo, M. (1999). *Reformas educativas en América Latina. Balance de una década.* PREAL, documento nº 15, Santiago Chile.

If the reforms carried out
during the 1980s and 1990s
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proved only partially successful,
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Any of these four responses, with greater or lesser intensity, define a scenario that is far from the global and systemic conception that one assumes must have been present in the premises and impulses of the reform process. The distance between will and fact, from ideas to events, has been larger that was imagined. Finding a connection between these two points, between theory and action, continues to be the controversial, weak part of this problem. Education reforms have only partially fulfilled the expectations and demands of the societies in which they were carried out. The big question is whether the current reform process has played itself out and there are no possibilities of continue working within the framework, or if this is merely a slow period of a process that perhaps can accelerate and qualitatively improve.

If the reforms carried out during the 1980s and 1990s in most Latin American countries proved only partially successful, this was because teachers were not adequately taken into account. If what one really wants is to change the way things are done in the classroom in order to improve the quality of learning effectively developed by children in coming years, education policies will have to place at the center of their agendas the question of professional enhancement of teachers from a comprehensive perspective [10].

TEACHER-RELATED policies

In Latin America, policies that relate to teachers cover a complex subject that includes the entire professional life of the work of teachers, including labor conditions, initial and in-service training, and school management.

Labor conditions refer to a pyramid-shaped career structure made up of a series of jobs that assume different functions, with only one way to obtain a salary increase which is to ascend the hierarchical scale of the education system. For a classroom teacher, the only way to substantially improve one's income is to become a school principal, and from there a supervisor. That is, moving to other posts is only possible by leaving the classroom, which has as a perverse consequence abandonment of the teaching task by those who are good teachers. In most countries, the major factor that determines salary increases is time in service.

[10] See E. Tenti Fanfani (1995).

Although recognized as essential in education reforms, changes in initial and in-service training have had spotty results. Short programs with highly theoretical content tend to sacrifice in-class practice and preparation of materials, which are key to training good teachers. Training course subject areas have low prestige, are taught by badly-trained instructors, give too much emphasis to a method based on lecture with very little attention to teaching methods appropriate for underprivileged students. This deficit is worsened by the poor quality of primary and secondary education that many - if not the majority - teacher candidates receive before they begin studying pedagogy.

School management is based on teacher assessment systems that do not function objectively, since there are few real indicators and a lack of an assessment culture. As if this were not enough, the professional support that teachers receive is generally very weak. The system is generally based on the old system of inspectors, the purpose of which is more bureaucratic than technical. There is a lack of true institutional and systemic support that could provide feedback for the different challenges faced by teachers in their daily tasks.

The situation of teachers is one of the most difficult problems faced by governments and societies due to its political, ideological, and financial implications. To this is added the fact that frequently, traditional technical solutions have been weak and have produced few positive results.

A quick review of the literature provides an extremely simplistic perspective of how subjects regarding teacher-related education policy are approached. This means that, in spite of the fact that experiences are vast, the variations are few. The key is how to go from repetition ("more of the same") to putting into place systematic policies that foster improvements in the situation of teachers.

> Moving to other posts is only possible by leaving the classroom, which has as a perverse consequence abandonment of the teaching task by those who are good teachers

TEACHERS and the schools of tomorrow

In order to respond to the new demands currently faced by our education systems we continue depending on teachers of whom we require increasingly complex abilities, skills, and commitments without the providing them with the necessary training, motivation, or salary. We have here a paradox.

New social demands and knowledge require a re-definition of the tasks of teachers, their training, and their professional development. It is very apparent that the roles that teachers have traditionally played, conservatively teaching a curriculum of academic content, are inadequate. Students receive information from various sources: television, radio, the internet. Teachers cannot remain outside of these new modes of constructing daily reality. Evidently, the solution does not lie in a mere change of the "teacher's role", but rather in a profound change in the school model itself.

Everything points to the fact that, in order to transform schools and school systems, it is essential to change the strategy - to modify traditional ways of thinking about and carrying out reforms and innovations that involve teachers. No matter how much curricula are updated, no matter how many equity and quality improvement programs are implemented and management modalities are decentralized, if we do not recognize teachers as the central factor in change, such change will not take place. Therefore, it is necessary to achieve significant, effective, and above all sustainable reforms in the professional practices and work culture of teachers.

INITIATIVES
for improving teaching

During the 1980s and 1990s, most education quality and equity improvement programs in Latin America at the primary and lower secondary levels included: establishment of incentives and professional development programs. The following table shows some of the proposals that have been tried in the region [11].

Evidently, the solution does not lie in a mere change of the "teacher's role", but rather in a profound change in the school model itself

TABLE 2. INITIATIVES FOR IMPROVING TEACHING

	Country	Strategy	Objectives
Incentives for improving quality	Colombia	National Incentive Program and Bogotá Award	Program seeks to award the best teachers for their performance, granting them a bonus approximately 1.5 times the average monthly salary and the best post in each of 2,000 locations.
	Chile	Teaching Statute Excellence Awards	Teacher job stability and professionalization. Non-monetary awards to stimulate teaching excellence.
	Brazil	Primary and Lower Secondary Education Maintenance and Development and Teacher Recognition Fund	In-service professional enhancement, increased hours for planning activities, professional salary floor, productivity incentives.
Professional development programs	Argentina	Federal Continued Training Network	Inter-connected system of institutions to provide teacher training
	Uruguay	Full-time Teacher Program	Training to treat school failure and at-risk children.

Source: Vaillant and Rossel, 2004.

[11] See, Vaillant, D. (2004). *Construcción de la profesión docente en América Latina. Tendencias, temas y debates*. PREAL, documentos n° 31. Santiago de Chile, PREAL. http://www.preal.org/docs-trabajo/VaillantN31.pdf

Among the most outstanding innovations for recognizing teachers and improving their skills are those carried out in Chile, where since 1990 a series of instruments have been established in order to offer professional stability to teachers, such as the Teacher Statute and Teacher Excellence Awards that offer non-monetary incentives and the creation of a special fund for training teachers in and outside the country.

For its part, since 1998 Brazil has fostered the Basic Education and Teacher Recognition Development Fund (FUNDEF). This fund generated strategies for creating minimal salary conditions for education professionals. With 60% of the fund aimed at the salaries of teachers and other education professionals, the results of the initiative are gratifying. The law that created FUNDEF established a five-year period for teachers to obtain the skills necessary to carry out their tasks. To this end, it earmarked resources for training "empirical" teachers; those who had not studied subjects that prepared them for teaching tasks.

Argentina is an interesting case, with the implementation of the Federal Continued Teacher Training Network that began offering in the middle of the 1990s instruments for professionalization through training for active teachers.

Since 1997 Uruguay has had a training program for teachers in schools within critical social and cultural contexts and for all-day schools designed to face and to solve the problem of early years student failure.

These programs have had a certain impact on improving the conditions of teachers and on their professional development, although there is little empirical data available to assess the impact within classrooms of the changes carried out.

CHANGE and unions

Education reforms during the 1980s and 1990s in Latin America caused a series of changes that had direct impacts on teachers and organizations that represent them. Teacher unions frequently opposed proposed changes and were serious obstacles to the implementation of reforms.

The influence of teacher unions cannot be ignored. Teachers are generally the largest group of public employees in Latin American countries. When one speaks of teachers, one is referring to millions of people, and in each country – even in small nations such as Uruguay – teachers comprise a very high percentage of the economically active population and of public employees. This fact strongly distinguishes them from other public sectors.

Moreover, the number of teachers continues to expand, accompanying the schooling rate of society. At the beginning of the 21st century, Latin America had more than seven million citizens working in some level of formal education. To this number one should add those who teach languages, the arts, crafts, and technical subjects offered by a varied network of institutions the dimensions of which are not entirely known. Some very preliminary estimates state that the number of teachers working in the informal education sector may be double that of those in the formal system. This indicates the urgent need to design policies for this group that is currently excluded from initiatives designed to improve teaching.

The numbers for primary and lower secondary education are impressive. Latin America has more than three million primary school teachers, more than one-third of whom are in Brazil and Mexico. This group represents more than 5% of all teachers in the world who teach at different levels and 14% of those who teach in primary and lower secondary education on five continents.

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First, there have been demands about working conditions, salaries, and the teaching profession. Second, there have been demands related to transformations in the organization and management of education systems. Finally, there have been protests related to the way that reforms have been designed and implemented and the lack of opportunities for dialogue and negotiation with teacher organizations

Due to the fact that the financing and management of education are normally responsibilities of a central government, teacher unions are important participants in national politics. When governments do not reach an agreement with unions in regard to the working conditions of teachers, collective action can perturb education and, at times, culminate in political paralysis, as has occurred in a number of countries in the region.

The history of resistance and conflicts that teacher unions and governments have experienced in Latin America during the reform processes of the 1980s and 1990s is strongly linked to three areas. First, there have been demands about working conditions, salaries, and the teaching profession. Second, there have been demands related to transformations in the organization and management of education systems. Finally, there have been protests related to the way that reforms have been designed and implemented and the lack of opportunities for dialogue and negotiation with teacher organizations.

Teacher unions have in some cases exercised strong resistance to proposed changes and have often been opposed to reform processes. In general, this opposition has been due to the fact that reform processes involve changes in the historical rules of the game of education systems - for example to immobility of postings, time in service as the main criterion for salary increases, or demands for training.

But beyond these facts, the region has not generally experienced joint and systematic development of opportunities for dialogue that would make it possible to establish points of agreement and to generate agreements on long-term views.

RETURN to the central importance of teachers

After two decades of education reforms with varied results, we need to accept something that would appear quite obvious: that in order to change education it is necessary to do so through teachers. For reasons that are apparently contradictory, their role in education reform is essential. As Fullen[12] says in a much-cited phrase, "teacher training has the honor of being simultaneously education's worst problem and the best solution".

Teachers are viewed as a problem because, among other causes, they are the largest group of government employees. Their salaries consume an extremely high proportion of education budgets [13], with little left over to invest in improvements and innovations. From this perspective, teachers represent a problem for decision-makers and planners who face a vicious circle: low salaries that can't be increased, but at the same time reinforce the low social status of the profession.

Things become even worse, for gradually we face a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy: those in charge of changes do not trust teachers due to the negative results of student achievement assessments. Teachers, for their part, as a result of these perceptions, feel increasingly less content with their work and, in some cases, resent the changes that they are requested to undertake.

But teachers are seen by many not as a problem, but rather as a solution. This is so when they are viewed as actors who play a key role in issues that remain pending from the 20th century and in the challenges of our own century.

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[12] Fullan, M. (1993). *Change forces: probing the depths of Educational Reform.* London, the Falmer Press.

[13] Between 80% and 95%.

THE AGENDA for the 20th and 21st centuries

In Latin America we have inherited from the past century problems that demand solutions: the univeralization of pre-school, primary, and secondary school coverage; improvements in the quality and results of teaching basic skills, particularly among the poorest sectors of the population; and the modernization of middle and upper level technical education.

On the other hand, we must accept the fact that education in Latin America must make a leap toward the 21st century and take up the new tasks upon which economic growth, social equity, and cultural integration depend. Both agendas – that which is pending from the 20th century and that of the 21st – are terribly urgent, requiring considerable effort, and obviously, teachers who can help develop in children, young adults and adults the skills that allow them to perform successfully in the present and in the future.

Furthermore, the responsibilities of education systems and of teachers have multiplied as a result of changes in the labor market. There are certain occupations that require ever higher levels of schooling. This increases the distance between those who have high and low levels of education. More and more activities require people to be able to read and to understand technical information, and the same is the case for being computer literate. Children and young people need to be prepared for unpredictable employment futures with rotation likely not only in tasks but in the type of occupation and sector of the economy.

Improving the quality of teaching continues to be one of the major objectives of education. Another, equally important, is to assure that quality teaching is available to all students – that there be greater equity of education. But these objectives and functions that education systems need to develop generate dilemmas and contradictions.

The traditional ways of teaching no longer serve society. Students have changed. Venues for learning have increased, as have systems for accessing information, and the possibilities of exchange and communication. But education objectives, the way of organizing teaching and the status of teachers remain practically inalterable [14].

> Traditional ways of teaching no longer serve society. Students have changed

THE COMMITMENT of society

The expansion of schooling, improvements in education quality, and reduction of student failure are not tasks limited to education systems, schools, or teachers. They are principally the responsibility of governments, families, and society as a whole.

In Latin America, education has historically been considered to be a responsibility of all of society, but in practice the design and implementation of education policies or of reform of education systems has fallen largely upon governments and only secondarily on other social actors.

The sustained increases in education budgets needed to achieve goals depend on a society committed to education. We know that per-student investment in Latin America is much less than in industrialized countries. Limitations on resources are not new; they have worsened during the last decade due to the fiscal crisis of the 1990s. Today, this problem has resulted in serious consequences for massification of school coverage, teacher salaries, and reform processes themselves.

[14] Braslavsky, C. (2002). *Teacher education and the demands of curricular change.* New York: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

We cannot propose changes in the conditions of teachers by looking the other way and pretending that the crisis does not exist. The difficulties are present and make themselves felt. It is perhaps for this reason that we need to start from what we have. We need much more investment in education than exists currently in order to have the kinds of teachers we need. But we also need to change mechanisms for allocation, utilization, and distribution of resources.

Good intentions are not enough. Nor are declarations or mere words. We have spent years saying that teaching in Latin America needs to change, and that in spite of important current reforms, the measures taken that involve the state of teachers have not always been satisfactory. Perhaps this is so because the subject has not been accepted as a long-range public policy and because it is one charged with political, ideological, and financial implications that, within almost any possible scenario, are immense.

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THE SUCCESSFUL sequence

Changing the role of teachers has been a goal of most education reforms of the region. Nevertheless, experience seems to show that, rather than continuing to insist on this need, it would be better to begin by recognizing the serious difficulties that exist in successfully implementing proposed changes [15]. What are the conditions required to carry out changes that lead to improvements in the instruction offered by teachers? What is such a process like? What institutional mechanisms encourage or hinder such efforts?

If we are going to make a change, we need to ask ourselves what must be done for the change to be successful. It seems to us that various processes are essential: a good innovation proposal or idea; adequate support for changes, along with material resources and continuity so that the change can survive through time. All of this must be accompanied by political will and consensus.

The history of recent innovative processes in regard to teachers in Latin American societies suggests that an imperative is the consideration of viability in order to guarantee the success of changes. It is not enough that a change be well-planned. The steps to be taken must respond to the requisites of feasibility that make them viable in accordance with political/cultural,

organizational/administrative, and material variables [16].

The political/cultural dimension involves the need to put forward a process of change that can be inserted within the framework of the interests of different beneficiary groups. In order to increase the governability of the situation or facilitate decision viability, it is essential to understand the opposing arguments of different sectors. Careful analysis of social opinions on schools, their role in society, what is expected of them, is a key element in any proposal for innovation, since it is through understanding of these opinions and divergences regarding them among different social groups that one can discover a valid proposal and organize viability strategies for it.

[15] See Tedesco, J.C. (1993). *Tendencias actuales de las reformas educativas.* Paris, UNESCO-International Commission on Education for the 21st century.

[16] See Aguerrondo, I. (1992). *La innovación educativa en América Latina: balance de cuatro décadas.* Perspectivas, vol. XXII, nº 3, pp. 381-394.

Material viability should be viewed on three levels: human resources, time, and material resources

In its political dimension, proposal viability requires negotiation skills, alliances, and cooperation of groups in power that might be opposed. These groups will vary, depending on the kind of change and specific historical circumstances, and may exist in different parts of society, within and outside the education system. Building political viability requires negotiation with sectors as diverse as teacher unions, the education bureaucracy, and representatives of different ideological positions.

Organizational/administrative viability requires working on two dimensions: organizational – how different types of decisions and resources are structured, linked, and managed in order to appropriately conduct a reform project, and administrative – how the project is inserted within the existing bureaucracy. The way that this is done is vital and is one of the most controversial points to be resolved. When decisions are not linked to existing bureaucracy, one runs the risk of isolation and a lack of a good working relation with the rest of the education system. On the other hand, when bureaucratic support is excessive and unconditional one may face negative effects on expansion of the reform process.

Material viability should be viewed on three levels: human resources, time, and material resources. Each is important. In the area of human resources, all reform processes involve different categories of actors that make change possible. In terms of time, both teachers and public opinion in general demand rapid results. Any innovation (even on a small scale) requires at least three years to be institutionalized. Material resources are limiting factors in times of scarcity; something with which Latin America is all too familiar.

The probability of success of reform processes and of changes in the roles of teachers in order to improve student learning, is related not only with the characteristics of phases of mobilization, implementation, and institutionalization. It also has to do with political/cultural, administrative/organizational, and material viability and with teachers as key implementation actors. Selection of an appropriate reform strategy is a factor that may determine success or failure.

THE COMPREHENSIVE NATURE of policies

The role of teachers needs to change in accordance with changes taking place in social and economic systems. Partial policies are inadequate. This requires systemic action policies.

Moving toward improving the teaching profession can only be accomplished as part of a systemic change that involves the commitments of schools and changes in how we think about and carry out education policy.

The study of reforms that took place in Latin America during the 1980s and 1990s shows that partial approaches were often adopted. Solid and effective initial and in-service teacher training is essential to any project of education development and change. But it is not enough. An individual badly trained in a poor secondary school is not a candidate to be a good teacher.

One cannot deny that teachers are not part of the serious problems of education in Latin America. But what I insist upon strongly is that they are an essential part of the solution

Only a systemic approach is able to encompass the multiple dimensions that make up policies relating to teachers. It is necessary to consider the diverse aspects of the problem, from selection of students entering teacher training institutions, its programs and pedagogical strategies, types of professional placement, the teaching career, teacher performance criteria, and material rewards associated with the profession.

RE-INVENTING the traditional model

When we consider the history of education, we discover that it is not sufficient to imagine the point of arrival and then proceed to create a list of objectives, profiles, and desired teacher skills. We must define an agreed-upon strategy in which we clearly establish what and how we may move toward the objective, while assuring the human and financial resources necessary for the task.

Changing education and re-inventing the teacher model are conflictive social tasks that involve governments, teachers, and the society at large. If we do not understand this fact, we will not adequately encompass the phenomenon and dynamic of education, remaining at the edges of the problem without arriving at its center.

One cannot deny that teachers are not part of the serious problems of education in Latin America. But what I insist upon strongly is that they are an essential part of the solution. The accumulated experience of attempts that have occurred in various parts of the world, not only on this continent, demonstrates clearly that if in an education reform process many things function well, if everything is done according to good planning using clear, well-defined ideas, but if the teacher issue is not treated, the result will be insufficient, the failures of the system will continue, and little progress will be made.

There is yet much to do. But it seems to me, besides other points that surely will be included in any definition of change, that there are three great themes upon which we must ponder. One of them is the key position of teachers in the educational process, in order not to repeat what happened to reforms during the 1980s and 1990s when, although teachers were not completely absent, they did not participate to the extent required. The need for planned change in order to improve the status of teachers and that takes into account working conditions, initial and in-service training, and school management of teachers, is another important area to be considered. Finally, and I say this in an almost doctrinaire tone, that any reform attempted must be comprehensive, bringing together in its process all actors and all factors that when present operate in favor, and when lacking hinder reform.

Without being overly optimistic, I believe that we are in an enviable position to face this challenge. The road that has been opened by reforms provides a guide for identifying goals, errors, and possibilities. In addition, it has made our societies aware of the need for change. And this, considering our singular history of difficulties, is of no little consequence. *e*

An overview of the teaching profession in Latin America

Systems for recognizing and fostering professional performance

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Concern for improving the quality of teaching and maintaining the motivation of teachers throughout their professional lives has led all Latin American countries to establish teacher promotion systems. Education legislation in all Latin American countries provides for some kind of mechanism for formally and objectively recognizing good teaching performance and rewarding it through increased pay or advancement in professional level.

[1] In collaboration with Verónica González and Héctor Rizo.

Furthermore, this concern is on the political agenda of many countries in the region, among the priorities of national governments, and the subject of constant analysis and improvement. It is also a constant source of interest for teacher unions. For example, in Mexico the National Teacher Career Program is jointly managed by the federal education ministry and the National Education Workers Union (SNTE).

We present in this short article preliminary data from the study entitled *Teaching Careers and Teacher Assessment in America and Europe* currently being prepared by the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean. The objective is to offer an overview of career incentives for non-university teachers in Latin America. We have omitted other aspects that appear in the original study such as access to the teaching career, professional development, and retirement. The study uses the latest available official information issued by education ministries of all the Latin American countries.

With the exception of three countries, teacher career regulation depends on ministries of education. In Argentina each province and the Municipality of Buenos Aires issue teacher legislation that includes a pay scale. In Brazil this is the responsibility of municipalities, states, and the Federal District (Brasília). In Mexico there is shared responsibility between the federal ministry of education and state departments of education.

In all Latin American countries one may distinguish two types of recognition granted to teachers. On the one hand there are *lateral promotions* in which teachers improve their economic, labor, and professional conditions without significantly changing their functions as classroom teachers. With *vertical promotions* teachers exercise tasks other than teaching, such as supervision or school directorships.

> In each country, the number of categories or grades is different, as are the forms of moving from one to another

LATERAL promotion

All countries in the region, except four, have established **teaching scale** systems that use a series of professional grades and categories in order to recognize the work of teachers. These scales can serve to determine salary bonuses such as other worker benefits (for example, priority in changing schools) professional benefits such as study leave or choice of working hours, or improved possibilities to be promoted to other jobs.

In each country, the number of categories or grades is different, as are the forms of moving from one to another. Thus, for example, in Colombia the scale has three grades that are based on academic training. Each grade is divided into four salary levels that are denominated A, B, C, and D. Teachers who are approved after a probationary period are placed in salary level A of the next corresponding grade (according to academic degree).

> In order to move to the next higher level, besides remaining a minimum time in the previous one, teachers must undergo an assessment

Ecuador has established a scale composed of ten categories in which teachers are classified according to degree, time in service, and teaching or administrative improvement. This scale determines functions, promotions, and pay.

In Mexico the scale system is called the "National Mexican Teacher Career Program". It has five levels, from A, B, C, D, to E. In order to move to the next higher level, besides remaining a minimum time in the previous one, teachers must undergo an assessment which considers such things as time in service, academic degrees, professional preparation, teaching updating and knowledge enhancement courses, professional performance, etc.

In Venezuela the grades reached are expressed on a six-category academic scale: Teacher I, Teacher II, Teacher III, Teacher IV, Teacher V, and Teacher VI. Ascent in scale is determined by years of service, degrees, certifications and short courses, minimum points established according to merit, career path, as well as other factors linked to performance, development, and professional effectiveness.

Other countries provide **salary increments** to teachers based on a series of criteria, but without classification into grades or categories. Such is the case for Brazil, Chile, Cuba, and Honduras.

Thus, in Chile the salaries of primary and secondary teachers are based on "Basic Minimum National Pay" (RBMN) that is calculated by multiplying the minimum value of pay per hour determined by law by the number of hours for which each teacher has been contracted. Added to this figure are overtime hours and sporadic complementary pay. Besides the RBMN other calculated factors are:

1. EXPERIENCE (bi-annual) 6.76% of RBMN for the first two years and 6.66% for each additional two years, with a limit of 100% of rbmn and 30 years of service.

2. TRAINING –COURSES, post-degree programs at recognized institutions–up to 40% of RBMN.

3. PERFORMANCE UNDER DIFFICULT CONDITIONS –geographic location, poor areas – up to 40% of RBMN.

4. EXECUTIVE AND PEDAGOGICAL TECHNICAL RESPONSIBILITY. Up to 20% of RBMN for executive and10% for pedagogical technical functions.

In Honduras, the salaries of teachers in government schools are calculated on a base salary which is determined by multiplying 156 hours by the value of a class hour (which in turn is determined by multiplying the average value of the minimum wage by a reference factor (currently 0.71132), an academic qualification benefit, and collateral benefits. The latter are:

a) POST HELD: depending on academic level.
b) TIME IN SERVICE: representing a salary increase of 15% for each year of service range, going from 15% for five years and up to 120% for 30 years of service. A year of service is defined as the time that a teacher has worked in teaching, and is 10 calendar months for primary teachers and 1,000 annual class hours for secondary school teachers.
c) ACADEMIC DEGREE: only applies to studies additional to what is required for a beginning teaching certification.
d) PROFESSIONAL MERIT: points accumulated by teachers.
e) GEOGRAPHIC AREA.

The **criteria** related to promotion from category or salary increases are quite varied. The most important are the following:

1. *Time in service.* In all of Latin America teacher pay increases according to time in service and performance, with the former being the major criterion considered for increasing teacher salaries. This varies from one country to another both in quantity and frequency. In some countries increases are more frequent at the beginning of the teaching career, while in others they are constant throughout.

2. *Additional training.* Another common criterion is recognition for additional training. This may be for additional degrees (Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, and Venezuela) or participation in on-going teacher training (Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela).

3. *Teaching performance assessment.* In order to move from one category to another in countries such as Bolivia, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, and Puerto Rico, teachers must be assessed; in Uruguay and Venezuela assessment is taken into account for promotion in scale. In Chile, Costa Rica, and Cuba the assessment process is taken into account for salary scale increases.

4. *Special conditions.* Some countries take other factors into account such as overtime (Brazil, Chile, and El Salvador), performing other work, working in certain geographic areas (Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and Peru), working with students with special needs (Panama), and working in extremely poor areas (Chile).

5. *Other factors.* In Costa Rica candidate publications are considered. In Ecuador recognition is granted to those in different provinces who perform the best pedagogical, scientific, or technical work that benefits education. En Paraguay and Uruguay research is recognized. En Nicaragua, those teachers who have good records for student retention (low drop-outs) and student passing grades – especially in rural areas – receive a bonus. In Bolivia, teachers who complete 200 days of teaching per year receive a salary increase.

Promotions not only involve changes in functions but pay increases

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In Argentina, Ecuador, and Honduras teachers may suffer ***salary reductions*** for different reasons. In Ecuador, for example, teacher income may be reduced through fines (tardiness, unjustified absences, negligence in fulfilling functions, coming to work drunk) or be suspended in case of serious cases. In Honduras, teachers committing serious faults may be fined by as much as 5% to 10% of their monthly salaries or suspended for from eight hours to 30 days without pay. Very serious faults may result in suspension without pay for from 31 days to one year, transfer to another post, reduction of level, or dismissal.

VERTICAL promotion

The other means for teachers to be promoted is by moving to positions of greater responsibility such as those of school principal or supervisor, as well as section teacher, secretary teacher, vice-principal, etc., depending on each country. Besides changes in functions such promotions involve pay increases.

This system is clearly regulated and is part of the teaching career in all Latin American countries. Such posts are filled due to vacancies or new needs.

Essentially, there are three ways to move up to such posts. The most common is through public examination in which candidates are judged on merit using specific previously established criteria (Colombia, Chile, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela). A second system is through examination of candidate curricula (Bolivia, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic). Finally, Argentina, Ecuador, and

Paraguay have chosen a mixed procedure that combines both of the above. Uruguay uses the three procedures simultaneously. In Brazil, access can be through examination, nomination by a mayor or governor based on personal qualification for the function in question, or by a mixture of both procedures.

The criteria utilized are also quite varied by country, with the most common being academic degrees, additional training, teacher performance assessment, or the attainment of specific categories or grades in the scale.

For example, in Mexico where promotions are regulated through competition between various candidates, the process is based on examination of merit and not on assessment. The factors considered are i) knowledge (45%), ii) aptitude (25%), iii) time in service (20%) and iv) discipline and punctuality (10%).

LOOKING ahead

Review of teaching career recognition and promotion systems in Latin American education systems confirms the idea with which we began this brief article regarding the importance that all countries give to this issue. Of particular note is the identification that many countries make between recognition and promotion, giving the strong impression that the only relevant element in the professional lives of teachers is the question of salary increases, thus converting their professional development into a mere instrument for such promotion. In this way, one runs the risk of the ends and means exchanging roles with all of the implications that this involves.

All countries have established a double system involving lateral and vertical promotions as a way to offer external stimuli to teachers. In most countries of the region lateral promotion is regulated through a scale system that classifies teachers into categories or grades. This situation is very unusual in other countries. For example, in Europe this is not the case in any country. Such a system engenders debate between leveling and establishing hierarchies, with a clear predominance in Europe for the former and for the latter in Latin America.

In this discussion, it is paradoxical that the most important criterion for promotion is not the personal effort of teachers but rather mere time in service. Promotion in grade thus becomes an automatic element without any consideration of the work performed. It is true that approximately half of Latin American countries have gradually established teacher assessment systems to counterbalance the traditional procedure. However, this method is subject to serious criticisms due to lack of objective procedures and criteria. In many cases, it has become once again an end rather than a means to an end.

The inconsistencies and contradictions in different regulatory norms produce the sensation that often, the structuring of the teaching career has not been a product of serious debate placed within a set of education system reforms and with a long-term view. Rather, it appears to be a result of the time-specific tensions and demands. As a result it often fails to contribute to increasing the quality of education, but on the contrary generates conflicts and dissatisfaction on the part of teachers.

The time has not yet arrived when one can speak of a teacher career system free of criticism and unanimously accepted by the entire education community. Latin American education systems are currently facing the great challenge of increasing both quality and equity. One of the key elements in this challenge is to maintain high the hopes and expectations that teachers had when they began their profession.

Furthermore, education systems must encourage them to improve daily, through on-going training, participation in innovative experiences and research so that improvements may have positive impacts on their students. The key question is how to achieve this goal.*e*

THE PATH TO TEACHER PROFESSIONALIZATION

Initial and Continuing Training

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BACKGROUND

From time to time, proposals and ideas appear that seek to generate changes in education systems and in the classroom practice of teachers. Currently, the reasons for this are based on the need and interest to foster improvements in the quality of education, linked to the demands and challenges imposed by social and economic development and commitments of Latin American countries to modernization and globalization.

However, concern for quality often appears restricted to assessment needs, to determining entrance requirements for different levels of the education system, and to changing primary and/or secondary school curricula, while leaving aside, or at least limiting, concerns for training one of the key actors of education systems: their teachers. Nevertheless, it is widely known that teachers are the driving force of the changes that can be carried out to improve the quality of education. It is in their hands, in their craft, in their professionalism, that are found many of the answers to the demands for quality education, since these demands are so closely linked to the problem of teaching. To inquire about teaching, its varieties and operation, leads us directly to asking how beginning teachers are trained, for it is instruction that limits and determines the teacher's task [1].

[1] Questioning teacher training practices is something that has been taking place for more than 20 years and in which I have actively participated. However, this would seem to be the most "Lampedusian" area of the system; one in which changes are made so that everything can remain the same. This concern has led me to ask about the need to open a rigorous discussion regarding why teacher training institutions have become the most relevant expressions of the crisis of education systems, and why they continue to be the object of not always explicit policy disputes.

Within this same context, whatever the argument or position regarding training processes to which teachers should have access and the obligation to carry out, such processes must be understood within a framework that goes beyond their organization and implementation. This is so because training can only be meaningful when:

1) teaching is viewed within its historical context; particularly and concretely the way it has been practiced;
2) it is considered along with the increasing complexity of knowledge and technology;
3) we consider the link between institutionalism, knowledge and its production, and understanding of teaching as a profession.

Therefore, this article is structured on the following points:

➜ Essential historical notes on teacher training.
➜ The relation between teaching and pedagogical knowledge.
➜ Some background on the meaning of *training*
➜ Current requirements.
➜ Conclusions and questions.

ESSENTIAL historical notes

The institutionalization process of countries of the region brought with it the problem of creating education systems. These efforts traveled a difficult path, replete with conflict due to the diverse ideological currents during the advent of our republics.

In the early years of independence, teacher training schools soon appeared, but in general their histories were short-lived and complicated [2]. It was only with consolidation of the idea of the State linked to ideas of 19th century British liberalism that teacher training institutions began to acquire solidity and permanence. The period of the last 25 years of the last century is rich in the emergence of these institutions which not only share a substratum of common ideas, but also the analysis regarding conditions of primary schools that were regarded as "poor, ramshackle, and miserable. The primary schools of those times had teachers of similar quality. Their preparation almost never went beyond being able to read and to write, wandering into the task when life had left them nothing else to do" (Labarca, 1939:113)[3]. This historical note illustrates the intimate relation between teacher training and the quality of schools.

Pleas for the need for teacher training is evident in the words of Sarmiento when he states: *"IT IS GENERALLY THOUGHT THAT IN ORDER TO BE A TEACHER IT IS SUFFICIENT TO HAVE AN ELEMENTARY KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUBJECTS OFFERED IN SCHOOLS. NEITHER PREPARATION NOR SPECIAL QUALITIES ARE REQUIRED, AND OFTEN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IS LEFT TO THOSE WITHOUT ANY PREPARATION WHATSOEVER. NOTHING BETTER ILLUSTRATES THE TURPITUDE TOWARD AND COMPLETE UNAWARENESS OF THE TRUE REQUIREMENTS OF TEACHING"* (Sarmiento, cited in Varela, 1874:229).

[2] To learn more about the complicated history of early teacher training institutions, see for the Colombian case the texts published by the History of Colombian Pedagogical Practice Project directed by Lucía Zuloaga. For the Chilean case, see, Labarca, Amanda: *Historia de la enseñanza en Chile,* Santiago, 1939.

[3] Labarca's view of the situation of teachers before the reforms discussed is similar to that of Colombian teachers described by Alberto Martínez Boom et al. (1989) *Crónica del desarraigo: historia del maestro en Colombia.* Cooperativa Editorial Magisterio, Bogotá.

A concrete example of these ideas is the proposal for a General Education Act (1877) that arose from a critical analysis of the situation in Uruguay in 1870. José Pedro Varela [4], a prominent leader of the institutionalization process of the Uruguayan education system offered his critical arguments, supported by concepts based on British enlightenment and positivism [5], that finds its political expression in liberalism. The need to administratively and economically industrialize and organize the nation was only thought to be possible by encouraging and fostering the education of those who would become its citizens [6]. In this project that sought to transform Uruguayan society, teachers are seen as having a mission of vital importance, since "knowing who a people's teachers are, we will know what society will be like when the generation being educated reaches the point of directing society" (Varela, 1874:230). This concern is made manifest in the Law of 1877 that indicates the functions to be carried out by the National Education Commission: "examine State teacher candidates according to the programs to be previously established and that shall be equal for all who aspire to the same title". Varela thought in this way to make concrete his own idea that "good teachers are trained in good schools" (Varela, 1874:233).

This link between teacher training and the quality of schools, expressed in the last 25 years of the last century remains valid today. Note that in 1956 when UNESCO met to outline a major project that had the general goal of extending and improving primary education in Latin America, among the objectives proposed by the program was "to improve teacher training programs (UNESCO, 1975:17). Moreover, and in agreement with the concern of UNESCO, the subject took on a bit of a dramatic tone when at the end of the 1950's and beginning of the 1960s, Latin American countries were presented with the theories of CEPAL regarding economic and social development of the region, including the statement "teachers are considered to be an obstacle to the modernization and expansion of education" (Puiggrós, 1989:140). The reasons for this view were related to the following issues:

a) economic, linked to low salaries;
b) administrative, linked to both poor geographic distribution and the lack of promotion systems; and
c) academic, that recognized the poor training of teachers (Puiggrós, 1989)[7].

> It is generally thought that in order to be a teacher it is sufficient to have an elementary knowledge of the subjects offered in schools. Neither preparation nor special qualities are required

[4] Varela's analysis of the social, economic, and political situation preceded proposal of the General Education Law, published for the first time in 1876. See Varela, J.P. *La legislación escolar.* Tomo I, Biblioteca Artigas, Ministerio de Instrucción Pública y Previsión Social, 1964, Montevideo.

[5] It is interesting to note that in the case of Río de la Plata these are the fundamental ideas of Herber Spencer scattered in works such as "The Study of Sociology" (1873) and "Essays on Education" (1861), very much influenced by the theory of evolution of Charles Darwin.

[6] This shows that the essence of ideas regarding the link between education systems and economic and social development have continued for centuries.

[7] This consideration is found both in the ideas underlying proposals developed for initial teacher training and in the importance given to teacher training in the 1960s, as will be shown in subsequent parts of this article.

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If we know who our teachers are, we will know what society will be like when the generation being educated reaches the point of directing society

However, in most countries of the region, the solution to this issue seemed to lie in applying the Education Technology Model coming out of the University of Chicago [8]. This model, the characteristics and conditions of which have been widely discussed, was first applied through teacher training courses and then later used in teacher training institutions, basically those dedicated to preparing secondary school teachers and attached to Schools of Education of Latin American universities[9]. This model has been the subject of critical and rigorous analysis in the country where it was created [10]. This is due to the fact that in the context of the United States the education technology model, with its input-product correlates, has been generally used in teacher training.

[10] In 1985 a comprehensive study on teacher training in the United States was begun by John Goodlad, at the Center for Educational Renewal of the University of Washington (Seattle). Goodlad selected 29 institutions distributed in urban, suburban, and rural areas with different characteristics and traditions. Instruments used were questionnaires, interviews, observations, and official documents from the institutions. The study lasted for five years. The first results were published in 1990. They are reported in Goodlad, J. "Studying the education of educators from conceptions to findings"; Sirotnik, K. "On the eroding foundations of teacher education"; Su, Z. "The function of the peer group in teacher socialization"; Edmundson, Ph. "A normative look at the curriculum in teacher education"; Soder, R. "How faculty members feel when the reward structure changes". All published in *Phi Delta Kappan*, May 1990.

[9] Note that in the case of normal schools dedicated to training teachers for primary education, the model proposed by Education Technology was a latecomer. This fact, in our judgment, and merely as a hypothesis that would be interesting to pursue, has its origins in the adherence that these institutions had and have to certain substantive elements of the pedagogical tradition found in Comenio, Pestalozzi, and Dewey. This, however, is only a conjecture.

[8] Projects developed for applying the ideas of Education Technology in Latin America received financial support from the Agency for International Development (a part of the U. S. Department of State). For information on the distribution of these funds, see Pruiggrós (1989).

Critical study is based on an analysis of the situations of schools seeking to discover how schools foster inequality through blocking or denying access to knowledge (Goodlad y Keating, 1990). In this analysis it is seen that the technocratization of teaching "reached epidemic proportions in 1985 when administrators, more attuned than teachers to management concerns and public demands for efficiency, were touched by the promise of generic teaching models that offered instructional remedies ... and while the rhetoric regarding teacher professionalization reached unheard of levels, many schools were purchasing workshops and materials that appeared to offer generic teaching models to be applied uncritically to teach in barber colleges and schools of cosmetology or in motor repair or military training, dog obedience training, and in public schools" (Goodlad, 1990:700) [11].

On the other hand, research findings show: "First, the programs in the sample make little use of the socialization processes between peers utilized in other fields of professional training […] Second, the rapid expansion of expansion of higher education, together with unprecedented changes in academic life, have left teachers confused about the mission of higher education and with their uncertain role within it [...] although the effects of these changes in academic life transcend schools and departments of education, the decline of teaching in favor of research in most institutions of higher education has helped to lower the status of teacher training […] the situation has become so bad in regional public institutions, former normal schools, or

teacher colleges, that hiding their historic link with teacher training is virtually an institutional rite. School teaching and teacher training seem unable to shake off their deprived status […] Third, there are three serious malfunctions in teacher training programs: between the areas of arts and sciences and those conducted by schools or departments of education; between the components of the so-called professional sequence, and between the part that is located in higher education and that carried out in schools […] It is clear from the data that preparation carried out in the programs we studied is focused on **classes** with practically nothing in **schools** […] Fourth, courses on the history, philosophy, and social foundations of education have been seriously eroded […] We have found cases in which entire periods of the history of American education, complete philosophical positions and the contributions of seminal figures such as John Dewey, have been limited to only one class session" (Goodlad, 1990:700-701) [12].

These brief notes on the history of teacher training in our region, as well as reference to the situation of the model in its place of origin [13], permit us to understand the current situation of teacher training. It is one that finds its most radical expression in the loss of meaning of the teaching task.

[11] This extensive citation is justified by the similarities that the reader will note between the initial propositions of the study directed by Goodlad when he describes the state of schools in the United States and the search for immediate solutions generally copied from other contexts or made up of models fostered and financed by international organizations and applied to problems historically endemic to our education systems. On the other hand, and related to the citation given below, it is justified by the similarities between findings of the research team directed by Goodlad and the situation both of Schools of Education and of teacher training in Chile. This should not be surprising, since the model applied in one and the other is essentially the same, in spite of some efforts carried out in recent years to change the structures of teacher training programs.

[12] In spite of the time that has passed since publication of these results, some aspects still remain valid for teacher training processes in most Latin American teacher training institutions. For example, learning occurs more in classes than in schools. That is, teaching practice, which is a key element of training, continues to be quite restricted. In the primary school teacher training program utilized at the Universidad de los Lagos from 1990 to 1996, this practice, carried out in rural and urban schools in the area had an academic load of 15 hours. This total was considerably reduced as a result of the reform by the Initial Training Program of the Ministry of Education. The reasons for the change were never explained. For this reason, I believe that a pending task in regard to this program is to create an external assessment process to evaluate its results. For further arguments in favor the value of teaching practice in teacher training, see De Tezanos, A. *La transformación de la escuela de maestros: un camino intrincado y complejo*, Editorial del Magisterio, Bogotá (to be issued).

[13] We mention the model in its place of origin because teacher training in Latin America is rooted in the United States model developed by Horace Mann in the 19th century and which was introduced, at least in Rio de la Plata, by Domingo F. Sarmiento. One should keep in mind a distinction between the concrete structure given to training and ideological discourse that has accompanied it and that relates it to the French

THE RELATION BETWEEN TEACHING
and pedagogical knowledge

Discussing the question of teacher quality involves talking about their professionalization and more specifically, the determinants that are involved and that lend meaning from their initial training onward.

Such considerations begin from the premise of the condition of the **task** of the teaching profession. That is, of learning, and practicing the **art** of teaching, the basis and beginning of the production of knowledge that gives meaning and background to the profession: **pedagogical knowledge.**

Knowledge and the function of teachers

The idea of knowledge finds its most distant beginnings in the writings of Aristotle, which begin with arguments on metaphysics. Some distinctions are made therein that are relevant for lending greater clarity and understanding to the meaning of knowledge and to the possible connection with the idea of art, of craft, generically linked to professions and their origins. Aristotle develops a basic distinction, establishing a relation between experience and *technè* [14].

He states that, "although experience appears to be similar to *technè*, they are different in many respects. First, because *technè* arises from experience, being the mediator of the latter. Second, because experience is born from many accumulated memories, while *technè* appears when, through a set of empirical notions, one is able to formulate a single and universal judgment" (Met, 980b:27-28). This latter distinction is further clarified when Aristotle says that, "in regard to action, experience is perhaps more efficacious than *technè* due to the persistent and direct contact of the empirical with particular cases […]

In sum, *technè* is superior because knowledge of it is not only of the fact, that is, of *what* something is, but of the cause, or *why* it is (Met, 981a:12 & 981a:24). And a final difference that allows us to understand in all of its dimensions and amplitude the idea that underlies *technè* is, "another sign of the difference between both and of the superiority of *technè* over experience is the possibility of the latter to be taught, for the very reason of the possibility of being able to go back to the cause" (Met, 981b:7) [15].

Understanding of the Aristotelian *techné* as art returns us to the artesanal meaning of the profession wherein learning for its exercise is rooted in the causes of the act of doing, which gives it a universal character

[14] T.N.: The author here comments on the Spanish translation of the Greek *technè* (τèχνη), saying that although it is often translated as "technique" in her text the term should be understood to mean "art".

[15] This complete quote is very important for the arguments to follow. Basically, it clarifies the confusions generated by the bad translation already mentioned that have given to professional training processes a technical connotation, losing the historical tradition that sees the profession as modern day version of artisan-guild training.

Aristotle develops a basic distinction, establishing a relation between experience and *techné*

The Aristotelian argument on *technè* is based on delimiting and giving meaning to the idea of craft, of art (in the sense of craftsmanship), of that which links a variety of current professions to their medieval corporation origins. Recalling this meaning of *technè* is relevant to our discussion of the professionalization of teachers. From that point it is possible to move the discussion from technification to the production of pedagogical knowledge, a process that denotes the existence of the teaching craft or profession.

The lack of production of pedagogical knowledge places in check the existence and the legitimation of the craft of teaching. On the other hand, understanding of the Aristotelian *techné* as art returns us to the artesanal meaning of the profession wherein learning for its exercise is rooted in the causes of the act of doing, which gives it a universal character[16]. Furthermore, by returning to the artesanal condition of the profession of teacher we see it as a task exercised with creativity given that, as is well-known, each object produced by an artisan will be at the same time similar and different from another coming from the hands of the same artisan. Consequently, the idea of an artisan negates the mechanical repetition of knowledge and of acts in the practice of teaching.

Foucault's statements regarding knowledge [17] are an updated version of the Aristotelian idea of *technè*. The idea is applied by once again using practice as a point of departure for knowledge construction processes. Of such practice it is thus possible to speak of teaching as a craft [18]. This relation of practice/knowledge generates a continuous and dynamic process that deepens and broadens the development of the profession, and that is conceptualized through writing. And it is through this writing that pedagogical knowledge attains meaning and becomes the basis for teaching.
However, lack of clarity about the concept of knowledge and repetition of the relation between theory and practice has led to unproductive confusion and discussion that create ambiguities when making decisions about possible relations between pedagogical learning and teachers.

In this area of teacher training, the discussion, which has gone on for several years, is based on formulations found in the seminal writings of Shulman (1987) who establishes distinctions between generic content ("pedagogical general knowledge") and the relation between the pedagogical and the disciplinary [19] ("pedagogical content knowledge"). Shulman emphasizes as unique to teachers the relation between the pedagogical and the disciplinary, because it is here that teaching is based. Undoubtedly, teachers need general pedagogical knowledge, but it is in the area of specific knowledge of the discipline that the work of teachers is concentrated. That is, if we accept Shulman's formulations, it is the specific area of the relation between the pedagogical and the disciplinary which defines the frontier and the horizon of that which teachers must place in the present [20].

[16] The most forceful current example of this is the medical profession. No one questions the condition of universality of the knowledge produced by its practitioners.

[17] Foucault's idea of knowledge supports the pedagogical knowledge concept that is one of the foundations of the *Historia de la práctica pedagógica en Colombia*, a research study on historically-constituted modes and regulations of teaching. Directed by Olga Lucía Zuloaga, Facultad de Educación, Universidad de Antioquia, Medellín (Colombia).

[18] This notion of knowledge emerges in current discussions as a key concept for treating that which is outside of the operational modes of science, without implying a lesser or a superior condition. Rather, it makes useful distinctions among arguments, especially those linked to the teaching profession.

[19] By "disciplinary" we are not referring to academic subject content, but rather to "a human activity that is based on cognitive and research tradition" (Strike, 1990:116).

[20] Although the statement of Shulman regarding relations between the pedagogical and the disciplinary as essential in the training of teachers appears correct, this raises a question in regard to mediation between the two elements present in the concrete act of teaching.

Questioning the relation between the pedagogical and the disciplinary is not a mere speculative subject in the area of teaching, given the fact that a teleologically defined social practice is involved. This social practice is composed of substantive content of the tradition that marks and guarantees certain formal conditions that can be coded [21]. Future teachers should know how to begin a lesson, identify the central core, and how to end the presentation. Future teachers should understand the necessary gradations of knowledge, how to adapt it to the conditions of their students, as well as how to simplify without being trivial. All future teachers should know that the structure of a lesson is intrinsically related to its purpose and content. Consequently, lessons have codings [22], differentiated by the moment of introduction of a new theme, of review, and of exercise [23].

Placing the lesson at the center of initial teacher training falls within a tradition that it is there, in the lesson, where we find the essence of every teacher (Lombardo-Radice, 1919). Thus, it is teachers, as Shulman (1987) states, who express the relation between the pedagogical and the disciplinary. There, in the lesson, is the privileged venue of the expression and constitution of pedagogical knowledge. That is, the knowledge that the teacher produces and whose production makes the teacher a member of a specific guild: that of those who know how to teach. Therefore, this is, or should be, the lynchpin of teaching training. And it is from the horizon of pedagogical knowledge that we may find the responses to the content and structures of such training. It is

pedagogical knowledge the constitutes the identity of the teaching profession, which differentiates teachers, transforming them into autonomous intellectuals able to generate their own searches, to transmit authority to others and to legitimate and validate those elements of conceptualizations produced in disciplinary training that enlarge and permit the transformation of their practice. This practice is the point of departure, the fundamental material of critical reflection that from writing derives knowledge. It is this knowledge that makes teaching a craft that, historically, has been transmitted within teaching institutions.

The question that arises, however, is when was the point in the history of the guild of teachers when teaching ceased to consider as essential the relation between production of pedagogical knowledge and professional identity, opening the way to other disciplines such as psychology or sociology, to name some that, although quite relevant, do not have the explanatory power necessary to successfully embrace the complexity of teaching.

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[21] These codings are one of the constitutive elements of teacher training, and should be learned during their process of initiation into teaching courses.

[22] Although the statement may appear daring, I hold that the forms of structuring a lesson are invariably the same, for they are based on a tradition that appeared in 1632 with the publication of Comenio's *Didáctica Magna* and which in essence has not changed.

[23] It should be clear that what has been said here about codification refers to the formal aspects of the lesson and not to its content. Moreover, codification does not mean the same thing as planning.

In the area of teaching, questioning the relation between the pedagogical and the disciplinary is not a mere speculative subject, given the fact that a teleologically defined social practice is involved

For this reason, the claim made herein is directed toward the intellectual province of teacher training institutions, for it is there that apprentices learn both the meaning and the sense of teaching; meaning that treats the forms, practices, and description of the profession; sense that treats reflection, questioning of the relations of which it is constituted. That is, the interpretive aspect that sustains the production of pedagogical knowledge. And it is only within this venue of the production of pedagogical knowledge where the contributions of different disciplines become relevant. For it is there, in the relation between practice and reflection, where pertinent disciplinary concepts take on new meaning. And it is at this moment that we begin to recapture the identity, the meaning, and the sense of the teaching task – the process of professionalization so desired by those who formulate education policies.

ENHANCEMENT AND PROFESSIONALIZATION
of the teaching task

It is from the idea of teacher professinalization thus formulated that we may progress in what follows to present some ideas on improving and enhancing teachers and the conditions under which they work.

Background
on the meaning of the concept

The idea of the need for the professional enhancement of teachers appeared in Latin American during the 1960s. This took form in the need expressed in the appearance of institutions dedicated to this activity that were created in most countries in the region as well as in the transformation of the structures of those already existing. Examples of these actions include the creation of the *Centro de Perfeccionamiento, Experimentación e Investigación Pedagógica* in Chile, the *Instituto Colombiano de Pedagogía* in Colombia, and the *Instituto Magisterial Superior* in Uruguay that brought together courses that traditionally were offered by normal schools for entry to teaching, for practice teaching (applied schools in the Chilean context) and for school administrative and supervisory posts.

The institute also took charge of existing specializations such as post-graduate training for primary school teachers, those working in pre-schools, special education for children with mental disorders, and the deaf. Note that in the Colombian case, the Instituto *Colombiano de Pedagogía*, which carries out the same functions as the *Centro de Perfeccionamiento, Experimentación e Investigación Pedagógica de Chile* was re-structured in 1976 [24]. Reform of the institute led to its division. The activities of research were transferred to the *Universidad Pedagógica Nacional*. This led to the creation of its *Centro de Investigaciones* (CIUP). Curricular design, the development of educational aid, and enhancement were transferred to the *Dirección General de Capacitación, Perfeccionamiento Docente, Currículo y Medios Educativos.* Enhancement and training were assigned to the *Centros Experimentales Pilotos* (CEP).

These examples clearly express the two focuses that have characterized professional enhancement of teachers: one linked to continuing training (the cases of Chile and Colombia) related basically to so-called "knowledge updating", and the other linked to development of the teaching profession and to specialization (the case of Uruguay). These different focuses of professional enhancement are also related to the views of the teaching profession appearing at two different times within the same history and tradition.

Relevant historical clarifications

Professional enhancement understood as "updating of knowledge" came out of the IX General Conference of UNESCO (1956). The major project that was outlined, as mentioned above, had as its general objective the extension and improvement of primary education in Latin America. Among the objectives proposed by the program was to "improve teacher training systems" (UNESCO, 1975:17) [25]. This goal was embodied in the organization of the institutions we have mentioned, which worked to foster and put into practice the education reforms that were formulated during the 1960s. Through this process of knowledge updating education technology principles and practices were introduced [26]. Included as well were training programs for teachers who had not obtained teaching certificates but had been teaching for a number of years. These two tasks, training and enhancement, were primary activities in regard to teachers, both in the CPEIP in Chile and in ICOLPE in Colombia.

[24] Changes in the Instituto Colombiano de Pedagogía are a product of Decree 088 of 1976. Ministerio de Educación Nacional. Colombia.

[25] UNESCO thus fostered an education modernization process that fostered the creation of offices of education planning within ministries of education in Latin America.

[26] Examples of the application of the idea of education technology in Chile are programs published in the *Revista Educación* of 1966. Evidence is found in the structure of program announcements: "conducts, contents, suggestion of activities". This text also demonstrates the planning impulse when it states: " Teachers should carry out *planning previous to their classes, defining objectives and conducts to be developed within them* in terms of the specific program unit to be treated ..." (the emphasis is ours).

In the case of Uruguay, the model was based on the past century with institutionalization of education that began in 1877. José Pedro Varela, the ideologue of the change, was strongly influenced by the education policy and philosophic thought of the United States. In its proposal for education legislation included among the functions to be carried out by the National Education Commission are: "to examine State teacher candidates according to the programs to be previously established and that shall be equal for all who aspire to the same title".

This involves creation of an certification system, which is complemented in the same legislation by a teacher scale. In order to rank teachers, the commission, after examining teachers, grants diplomas "that shall be in four levels: 1) first level diplomas, valid for six years; 2) second level diplomas, valid for four years; 3) third level diplomas, valid for two years; 4) fourth level diplomas, valid for one year" (Varela [1876], 1964:83).

Another substantive aspect is the idea that underlies the duration of the validity of the diplomas, that varies from six to one year, and involves the need for renewal. In order to receive the diplomas a teacher should take courses in order to ascend to different levels. Each is related to the kind of school in which one can teach as well as requirements that teachers must fulfill in the different certification exams. The first level diploma exams included demonstrations of knowledge in "reading, definitions, spelling, composition, writing, arithmetic, physiology, and hygiene, theory and practice of teaching, and current education legislation in the Republic" (Varela [1876], 1964:92). the regulations also included examination formats: "examinations in arithmetic, writing, algebra, definitions, composition, grammar, and in the history of the Republic shall be written, with at least ten separate questions on each subject .... On the other hand, each diploma shall show the number (grade) attained by the teacher in each subject" (Varela [1876], 1964:93).

This certification process demonstrates the meaning of the concept of the teaching career that continues in Uruguay. Once the normal schools were operating, teacher certification exams were changed to structured tests in order to fill all primary school level posts in the education system, from entry into the system of recent graduates up to the National School Inspector. In the General Education Law of 1877 the principle of decentralization was included for teacher certification, with the creation in each department (the name of political-administrative divisions in Uruguay) of a Departmental Education Commission with the same powers in regard to teachers as the National Commission [27]. Note that according to the 1877 law, primary school diplomas "authorize their holders to teach in secondary schools" (Varela [1876], 1964:83), given the fact that specific training for secondary school teachers only began in Uruguay in 1950 with creation of the Instituto de Profesores Artigas, part of the Secondary Teaching Council.

These two ways of understanding and interpreting training, updating and career advancement, are closely linked to the need to respond to the demands for modernization of education systems at different moments in Latin American history, in countries with political and cultural developments that are similar but also different.

Proposal of the Common Education Law (1877), that included processes of certification and marked a style that would characterize teacher training, appeared in order to accompany the need to industrialize and to organize the country administratively and economically. For Varela, this could only be possible by fostering the education of future citizens.

In the cases of Chile and Colombia, by the 20th century, the search for teacher knowledge updating was expressed in ideas originating in CEPAL regarding the economic and social development of the region. These ideas required education systems to be updated by achieving high levels of coverage, particularly for primary education (extended to 8 years of compulsory schooling in most Latin American countries). The task for the training institutions created was to improve the academic qualifications of teachers.

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[27] After almost 100 years in force, these procedures changed significantly in 1973 with passage of the Sanguinetti Law that made school direction and supervision posts direct appointments of the President of the Republic. This law changed the condition of equity and transparency of career entry. During discussion of the legislation, teachers went on a strike that kept schools closed for four months.

CURRENT demands

Currently, the idea of professional enhancement is closely linked to levels of complexity attained in the development of knowledge in both science and technology and which involves the need to be able to absorb current knowledge and to be able to use new tools [28]. This development involves both structural and personal demands. Structural demands treat important changes in education systems. Personal demands involve teachers in re-learning and updating [29]. The former are important for knowledge and learning and for the belief systems tacitly incorporated by teachers. Updating essentially treats concepts of teaching as a profession.

Re-learning processes

In facing the challenges involved in economic development, an element that immediately emerges is the possibility for developing to the fullest the knowing-learning abilities of human beings. This is a question of **permanent re-learning** and is linked to conditions that, in my judgment, are essential to human beings - basically to those who have chosen to pursue intellectual and service tasks such as those of teaching. The first condition is an absence of prejudgments regarding that which one does not know. That is, the ability to fully recognize the extent of one's own ignorance. This condition is closely related with the possibility of seeking help, of submitting oneself to the authority of others. This involves a emotionally positive attitude linked to the absence of personal insecurity.

Along with this condition is a second, marked by efficient search skills, made possible through the efficient use of tools. This idea of search tools takes on meaning in the present context in terms of the effective use of computer data bases. However, in teaching they belong to development of cognitive skills of subjects, and fundamentally the possibility of becoming aware of the modes through which each individual assumes his or her own processes of knowledge. That is, the ability to reflect on knowledge itself and for oneself [30].

The **knowing-learning** that underlies re-learning also requires a search for clarity regarding the relations between modes of thought and the contexts in which they arise. The interaction between thinking and the contexts is understood and interpreted through practical reasoning and the logic of events. (Carlgren and Lindblad, 1991:508). Knowing-learning involves a search for the fundamentals of acting, for the understanding that a teacher has on the contexts of his or her action and thinking, the distinctions between different classes of practice, and how these can effect the context and be effected by it. Basically, knowing-learning is linked to the critical updating ability of teachers, both in regard to the extension and to the depth of their knowledge. The former refers to inter and meta-disciplinary relations, since the resolution of every-day situations is not limited to only one discipline. The essential factor in the pedagogical task is its link with various levels of questioning. The responses in regard to how to teach a particular subject in order to solve problems that involve both exposition and appropriation cannot be found in "teacher manuals" nor in texts treating "didactics of the specialty".

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[28] It is interesting that these needs are related very importantly to the idea of modernity and modernization.

[29] The particular demands made by social and economic development and modernization on education systems are those related in this document.

[30] For more on "thinking about modes of knowledge" see Piaget, J. *La prise de conscience*, PUF, Paris, 1974.

These responses require of teachers a displacement ability that transcends the horizons of the knowledge that they supposedly possess. Essentially, this depends upon connections that they are able to make, for example, between pedagogy and epistemology, between epistemology and the biology of knowledge, and between the biology of knowledge and psychology. But such a connection can result in trivializing conceptual structures of the discipline, producing displacement without the presence of the second factor mentioned: profundization. The first, that of extension, requires efficient search skills; the second, however requires efficient management of the tools of knowledge. Teachers, through knowing-learning may rigorously and systematically make use of texts that treat heretofore previously unknown conceptual knowledge and structures. Additionally, they may, through a reordering and displacement process transfer concepts to their daily practice, not only to carry out their tasks and solve problems, but also, and essentially, in order to become producers and builders of knowledge. This profundity aspect is where knowing-learning is concentrated in practice.

Another substantive element in **re-learning** is made up of those "beliefs" acquired during training carried out before begin to exercise the profession. These "beliefs" are transformed into tacit, even sub-conscious assumptions about basic aspects that constitute the profession. In this case, these "beliefs" are related to students, classes, and the contents taught (Kagan, 1992). The "beliefs" of teachers in this context, necessarily, do not respond totally to that which they received during their training, but rather are products of this training, of work experiences and of those convictions regarding teaching and education discussed in the public sphere.

Re-learning is founded on an unconscious drift of these belief systems that emerges from the endemic uncertainties that mark the teaching task (Kagan, 1992). These uncertainties consist of the heterogeneity of norms, the multiplicity of reform proposals, the "absence of dynamic connections between function, training, and career, the existence of very restrictive relations between the education systems as a whole and the social, economic, and cultural context" (Parra and Vera, 1985:6).

Finally, knowing-learning in terms of their extension and profundization linked to the objectivation of the "beliefs" of teachers, are essential conditions of what I have called re-learning, and without which it is impossible to think about and to understand possible procedures for generating updating and adaptation of knowledge.

Updating processes
A QUESTION THAT ARISES HERE IS, *WHAT DOES UP-TO-DATE MEAN; OF WHAT, AND FOR WHAT?*

If we resort to the dictionary, *to date* means that which exists, that which is being used at the time (RAE, 1970). Therefore, to update is to place something into the present (RAE, 1970). Along with these meanings arises a set of questions referring to different areas or venues of teaching: some, that place into question who or what decides determines the condition of updatedness of that which teachers should know and teach; others that refer to how one determines or circumscribes, in the sense of horizons and limits, that something which teachers should place in the present. Undoubtedly, the answers to these questions refer to different levels; the first regarding the who or the what refer to the structure of the education system and to the context within which it operates. Others refer to the development and production of knowledge. It is impossible, however, to think about teacher enhancement without considering as well how both levels of answers can be linked.

Questions regarding the horizons and limits of this "something" that teachers must place in the present involve issues about the conditions of the teaching profession. It is not possible to think about a profession that lacks its own knowledge base [31] (Strike, 1990:91). This, however, leads to another question: what is the knowledge base unique to teachers?

The answer to this question involves the question formulated above regarding the relation between the pedagogical and the disciplinary, the links between both and which lend meaning to the relation. It is the content of such relations that lead necessarily to establishing the determinants of training. Moreover, they influence the orientation of such training when instead of relations one emphasizes one of the two areas, and when updating is seen dichotomously, from the point of view of discipline or of pedagogy, leaving aside the substantive aspect of the relation between both.

> Re-learning is founded on an unconscious drift of these belief systems that emerges from the endemic uncertainties that mark the teaching task

However, these are not the only questions that arise. We should also ask *who decides regarding the updatedness of what teachers should know and teach?* These questions enter into the relation between institutionality, knowledge, and its production. Based on the historical notes offered in the first part of this document, I would say that contemporary institutionality response essentially to the question of controlling tasks of teachers [32]. This question of control is embodied in the fact that it is not teachers who establish a clear demand regarding the content of courses offered by the *Centro de Perfeccionamiento* (CPEIP), but rather it is the institution that decides on the needs of teachers. Moreover, currently it is universities that basically have presented proposals for training in a process in which the Center has delegated this activity.

[31] According to Hoy and Miskel (1987), Strikes says that "presumably, among the characteristics that define a profession is possession of its own knowledge base ..." (Strikes, 1990).

[32] Although it may sound a bit bold, one could say that training courses are an indirect way of controlling the production of teachers carried out by schools of education, autonomous institutions over which governments have no control.

In order for the link between professional autonomy and knowledge base not be broken, unions are essential

Consequently, the relation between institutionality and knowledge is determined by the institution, which decides on the validity and hierarchy of knowledge that should be presented to teachers for the exercise of their profession. Thus in this manner occurs a break with a constitutive element of the professional nature of teaching; that which demands possession of a knowledge base necessarily linked to professional autonomy (Strike, 1990:91). The determination to delegate to a university decisions on types of training courses and contents hinders professional autonomy and the possibility of developing a knowledge base unique to teachers.

In order for the link between professional autonomy and knowledge base not be broken, unions are essential. I agree with Strike (1990) that "perhaps it is impossible to think of having a knowledge base without the existence of a union [...] unions should be organized and have authority over practices in order to assure a knowledge base ... [although] the growth of knowledge presupposes not only good research but also organizational ability in order to identify ideas that have been successful and to exclude those that have failed" (Strike, 1990:96-97).

SO...
what is the relation between initial and continuing teacher training?

To summarize what we have presented here:

➜ **Pedagogical knowledge** is what lends identity to the teaching profession, which differentiates teachers, transforming them into autonomous intellectuals able to generate their own search for knowledge, to lend authority to others and to legitimate and validate those elements of conceptualizations produced in disciplinary training that enlarge and make possible the transformation of their practice.

➜ This knowledge base that embodies the profession is assured by **the existence of unions** without which such a base is unthinkable.

➜ The limits and horizons of knowledge make the problem of the **relation between the pedagogical and the disciplinary** as unique to the knowledge of teachers.

➜ The relation between the pedagogical and the disciplinary involves **the discussion of possible relations occurring in the substance of lessons**.

➜ In terms of the complexity attained by the development of knowledge, the process of **re-learning** should necessarily be focused on **knowing-learning**.

➜ **Knowing-learning** should be considered both in terms of **extension** that involves inter and meta-disciplines as well as **depth of understanding** which involves processes of analysis, understanding, and interpretation of a specific disciplinary area.

➜ The demand for up-dating involves two kinds of problems; one, referring to **the limits and horizons of knowledge**, and another that is related to decision-making and involves the **relation between institutionality, knowledge, and its production**.

➜ The relation between institutionality, knowledge, and its production involves **recognition of the professional condition of teachers, as both holders and builders of a knowledge base**.

➜ The link between teachers, their knowledge base, their intellectual and union autonomy is **influenced by current institutional control mechanisms**.

This summary raises a number of questions:

➜ Are teacher training institutions, and especially their faculties, willing to recognize that pedagogical knowledge is key to the learning and teaching process?

➜ Are the academics who train teachers able to take upon themselves the condition of teachers of a craft, and consequently see teaching practice as a fundamental condition?

➜ Is education administration able to foster establishment of the kind of teaching profession that recognizes work of school teachers who carry out teaching practice counselors?

➜ Are governments willing to allow teachers to acquire and develop the autonomy necessary for any professionalization process?

➜ Are governments willing to foster the kind of teaching favoring knowledge in the face of required content?

➜ Are governments willing to create national training processes for their teachers, making the financial investment necessary, and based on knowledge rather than doctrinary of models?

➡ Are governments willing to create supervision systems bases on pedagogy and not only on the administrative aspects of schools?

➡ Are private school owners willing to respect knowledge-based teacher rankings and linked to salary scales?

➡ Are teachers willing to assume the risks that autonomy confers, while it is they who are responsible for decision-making and the construction of their own knowledge base?

➡ Are teachers willing to submit to a national process based on anonymously assessed tests of knowledge that include all teaching posts?

➡ Are teaching personnel (classroom teachers, principals, supervisors) willing to undergo on-going assessment to remain in their posts in order in this way to stop being employees and become professionals?

When we have clear answers to these questions and clearer signals of willingness to change, both on the part of governments, private school owners, and teachers, then perhaps we will discover the necessary relation between initial and continuing teacher training. *e*

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TEACHER TRAINING:
myths, problems and realities

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We present below the themes that lend structure to this article: regional myths, problems, and realities of initial and in-service teacher training.

The frequent comments of students of education regarding the career of teaching and teachers[1], provide a point of departure for discussing certain social myths and problems that teacher training can approach. We will describe an innovative experience in Uruguay, its progress, obstacles, and challenges. Finally, we will attempt to trace a regional teacher training proposal.

[1] The expressions "teacher", "teachers", "professor", and "professors" are used in the generic sense. including both men and women.

"One is a teacher by vocation"

"I believed that teaching classes would be easy"

"I chose teaching because its a short course"

"Teaching is a job for women"

MYTH
Teachers are born, not made.

MYTH
Teaching: an easy task.

MYTH
A short course with an assured degree.

MYTH
Teaching: a profession for women.

PROBLEMS
➜ Lack of social recognition of teaching as a profession.
➜ Lack of delimitation of the professional field.
➜ Feminization of the teaching profession.

REALITIES OF TEACHER TRAINING IN LATIN AMERICAN AND THE CARIBBEAN

➜ Diversified in different modalities.

➜ Managed by institutions with different degrees of academic status.

➜ Revision of curricular proposals.

➜ Search for quality training processes.

➜ Awareness of the existence of the correlation between teacher training and the effect of their practices on student learning.

➜ Little attraction for men.

➜ Low prestige although increasingly professionalized.

➜ Little linkage between initial and in-service training.

Myths

By surveying students entering their first year of teaching, in order to discover the reasons why they chose to be teachers and to those in their third year of study in order to become acquainted with the difficulties they encounter in teaching, we have identified myths related to teaching and to the kind of initial training that the profession requires.

The social sciences define myths as common beliefs within a group that do not require rational justification nor questioning, since in this case they would lose validity. They are supported by imaginative knowledge of reality and social phenomena. Their linguistic expression is simple, and can be easily learned and recorded for transmission from one generation to the next. In spite of their power to remain within the group that accepts them, myths can also lose currency and be assimilated or replaced (Class, Santillana, 1995).

In the popular imagination (and in those of many of the students mentioned) the profile of the ideal teacher is based on the myth that overvalues vocation (*teachers are born, not made*) and minimizes training. This profile is structured on the almost magical belief that teaching is simple (*teaching: an easy task*). Both myths seem to

reinforce each other if one compares the length of teacher training courses, three or four years, with the so-called liberal professions that have courses of more than four years (*teaching: a short course with an assured degree*). The attractiveness of obtaining a degree in a relatively short time often influences career choice more than the desire to be a teacher or of receiving professional training.

Another socially valuable myth is that which argues that teaching is more suited to women than to men, particularly at pre-school and primary school levels (*teaching: a profession for women*). Historically, women have worked more in primary than in secondary or higher education. One could cite other myths more specifically related to the role of teachers such as that which we identify with the label *multi-functional teacher*. This refers to the generalized conviction that by being a teacher, an individual possesses skills identified with other professions, and that besides the task of educating, teachers can (and should!) fulfill roles such as psychologist, social worker, administrator, and even physician if a student is ill. One also expects teachers to have absolute and universal knowledge in the areas of scientific thought. The myth of the *omniscient teacher*, linked to the previously mentioned myth and to the traditional teaching model, is more difficult to eliminate from the popular imagination than from teaching practice.

It seems appropriate to reflect upon certain problems to be considered in teacher training. It is time that we question old myths that represent a practically outdated model ... almost! We believe that this duty is part of the commitment to our profession and to the training of teachers who will educate future generations.

PROBLEMS

One of the emerging problems which in our judgement needs to be confronted by teachers beginning with their initial training is the lack of social recognition of teaching as a profession.

UNESCO-BIE, in 1966, agreed to recognize the teaching activity as a profession of public service that requires of teachers specialized knowledge (Aula Santillana, 1995). Years before, some authors described teaching as a semi-profession, considering it a mixture of technical and administrative knowledge transmitted to a great extent through native abilities more than through formalized knowledge.

For some sociologists, a profession must possess a unique body of theory and knowledge, prestige of reliability, and social responsibility based on a code of ethics *(França and Galdona, 1992), and differentiated from semi-professions by the following characteristics: "(...) competence (university-level skills), a service vocation, licensed (control of access to the profession), independence, and ability of self-regulation"* (Marcelo, 1995, p. 135).

In order to determine whether teaching is or is not a profession, Fernández Pérez (1995) writes of the six less-discussed characteristics of a profession: non-trivial specific knowledge, continuous progress of a technical character, a critical-scientific basis upon which the above is based, professional self-perception, a certain level of institutionalization, and social recognition. For this author, the lack of habit of teachers to carry out tasks involving self-perfection of their daily practice, of in-class research, and analysis of their practice deny the first three characteristics.

From a critical standpoint, Marcelo says that the above statements are "neutral" analyses of teaching as a profession since this should be analyzed taking into account both the historical and social contexts as well as current requirements of professionalization.

Given that the definition of identifying characteristics of a profession contribute to its institutionalization, legitimizing it, one must pay attention to this aspect within and from initial training.

"If we wish to be considered professionals we should act as such" we say to students of teaching. Coherent with this conviction, in practice we must question the prior conceptions of students[2] ; seek teaching strategies to construct and integrate ideas of the profession, define the characteristics that make teaching a profession, and seek to have self-regulated behavior according to a collectively constructed concept of our profession.

A problem underlying the lack of social recognition of teaching as a profession is the lack of a definition of limits of our professional field in the sense coined by Bordieu for the "fields" that make up the sciences: "(...) professional areas with rules. places and hierarchies where mechanisms of inclusion, consecration, and exclusion regulate the struggle and are the same time its object" (Follari, 2000, p. 112).

It appears that the professional field or space ("scientific community" in Kuhnsian theory) is not well defined for education professionals. The ways that one attempts to explain and understand the education phenomenon are multiple: educating and learning, educator and teaching, theory and practice. This means that in certain cases a multiplicity of specialists, within an interdisciplinary dynamic, exchange roles, losing specificity and misshaping both the profiles of members of the professional field as well as its limits. For example, sociologists, psychologists, and physicians without pedagogical training, exercise the role of teacher, while teachers without specific disciplinary training act as social assistants or psychologists.

Nor is there a "disciplinary matrix" in the sense proposed by Kuhn, of minimum agreements necessary, given that each society in relation to its ideal of man, defines its culture, the purposes of education, and therefore pedagogical culture, school culture, and sub-cultures. The differences between the major orientations of contemporary pedagogy

(Juif and Legrand, 1980) confirm this fact. Traditional schools, the new school, non-directive pedagogies, pedagogical self-management, group dynamics, among others, have produces two types of discussion. The first is ideological and of a critical nature. The other is scientific and technical. Emerging agreements between those who share theories have various impacts on pedagogical practice, according to the social and cultural demands of the moment. The use of psychoanalysis, of the sociology of knowledge, of cognitivists currents, of Piaget-based constructivism, provide educators with provisional, temporary arguments and new relations in accordance with the ideologies that constitute social knowledge.

Although a review of current pedagogical literature makes reference to various coexisting paradigms – of constructivism, system theory, chaos, complexity, according to the scheme of Follari [3], one cannot speak of the existence of a paradigm of the sciences of education, given that one cannot identify global consensus on the part of the members of the scientific community dedicated to education. It would be impossible to reduce these discourses into one that uses a universally-accepted logic and language.

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[2] In responding to the question *is teaching a profession?* some students said no, giving as reasons: a) the possibility in our country of a professional from another field working as a teacher, without pedagogical training; b) low pay; c) the shortness of the training course.

[3] *Op. cit.,* chap. 7 on the non-existence of paradigms in the social sciences.

This fact provides education professionals with a valuable instrument of analysis to continue to develop studies of the scientific status of the sciences of education, studies that should, in our understanding, be forged from the process of the initial training of teachers.

Centering attention on delimiting the professional field leads us to focus on those who make it up. We have done so above in terms of their professional qualifications. It seems appropriate to also do so in regard to gender. The fact that the teaching profession is an occupation chosen principally by women has been the source of discussion. For example, Medina (2003, p.79) refers to " "(...) those authors who attribute to feminization the cause of professional proletariatization and the resultant loss of status, and those who see in this argument a clear example of sexist bias and place in doubt the relation between feminization and proletariatization". In the opinion of the author, who defends the second position – as do we – it is not the presence of a majority of women in teaching that is the cause of low status of the profession, but rather the tendency to discriminate against women in society.

Medina's opinion in regard to the "feminine biological virtues" of " sacrifice, service, and abnegation" valued in the teaching profession for pre-school and primary teaching is interesting. Such "virtues" – projections of the role that women traditionally have played within families – are undervalued by society compared to the technical-scientific skills associated with males.

The author's analysis allows us to become aware of the weight that myths, often amounting to social prejudice, can have on the professional status of teachers. In our opinion, teacher training should recognize this as a problem and seek alternatives so that teachers in training, instead of reproducing sexist discriminatory stereotypes in schools, are able to question the functions of schools as socialization agents. It would be desirable for them to acquire specific professional skills that enable them to "struggle against sexual, ethnic, and social prejudice" (Perrenoud, 2004).

If we wish to be considered professionals we should act as such

REALITIES
of teacher training in Uruguay

In Uruguay [4], initial and in-service teacher training are the responsibility of the National Public Education Administration (ANEP [5]), a government agency responsible as well for planning, management, and administration of pre-school, primary, secondary, and technical levels of public education.

Initial teacher training is post-secondary, non-university and employs different modalities, each attempting to respond to the specific needs of Uruguay at different social levels.

Individuals seeking to enter pre-school and primary teaching study in normal schools (II.NN.), located in Montevideo and other cities. Beginning in 2005 a new four-year plan will be implemented. The first such institute was founded in 1885, with all teachers being professionally trained by 1930.

Training for secondary school teachers includes the following modalities (Vilaró, 1999):

➜ Training for technical education teachers is carried out by the Universidad del Trabajo del Uruguay within the Instituto Nacional de Enseñanza Técnica (INET) created in the 1970s.

➜ Other teachers are trained at:

➜ The Instituto de Profesores Artigas (IPA), in Montevideo. Founded in 1949, and the first modality for initial training of secondary teachers in the country.

➜ Teacher training institutes (IFD), located in 21 places outside of Montevideo. These institutions train secondary school teachers based on the traditional curricula of normal schools that make up the common element for both types of training. Special teacher training is offered. Specific subject matter of the discipline are open course offerings of IPA.

➜ Regional teaching centers (Ce.R.P), located outside of Montevideo. These began to function in 1997 (in the north and on the coast), as an innovative experience (the east in 1998, the southeast and south in 1999, of the central area in 2000).

➜ Distance education experiments were begun in 2003.

➜ Physical education teacher training. Carried out within specific institutes (ISEF) in Montevideo, the east and on the coast. This training is not the responsibility of ANEP, but rather of the Ministry of Sports and Youth. These institutes are currently being transferred to the Universidad de la República.

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[4] Uruguay has 3.2 million inhabitants within a land area of 176,215 km^2.

[5] In contrast to other countries, in its technical and administrative functions ANEP is an autonomous entity in relation to the executive power. Financially, it is not. It is composed of the following: Executive Committee (CODICEN), National Department of Public Education (National Director), Primary Education Council (CEP), Secondary Education Council (CES), and the Professional-Technical Education Council (CETP).

An innovative experience
in initial teacher training

Between 1995 and 2001, enrollments in initial teacher training increased by 86%. The creation of regional teaching centers (Ce.R.P), in 1997, outside Montevideo, was one of the causes for the increase. We describe below the training modality developed in these innovative centers.

Their creation responded to the need to remedy the lack of professionalization [6] of secondary school teachers. To this problem was added the small number of individuals prepared at the teacher training institutes (IFD), the high rate of retirement of teachers in relation to the number needed by the education system, and the increase in enrollment coverage rates at the secondary school level (from 15% to 18% in the 1960s it went to 75% to 80% in the 1990s (Vaillant y Wettstein, 1999).

The characteristics that make this modality innovative are:

➜ the establishment of regional cultural enclaves;
➜ democratization of access through a program of grants that offer meals, housing and transportation for students from middle and lower/middle income households;
➜ permanence of teachers and students in the region;
➜ eight hours of classes from Mondays through Fridays;
➜ course duration: three years, with a total of 4,200 hours including teaching practice. Duplication of the number of hours of IPA. It is not thought that the larger number of class hours implies the acquisition of more knowledge, but rather the objective was to create a total training environment with more academic time creating a learning climate;
➜ the presence of full-time trainers working 40 hours per week, 20 hours to direct teaching and the other 20 to such activities as student guidance, coordination, participation in technical teams, study, planning, and research;

➜ the curricular design brings together three training dimension: specialized in an academic area (language and literature, mathematics, social sciences, natural sciences [7]); general training of instrumental subjects (English [8] and computer use), education sciences [9], and teaching practice;
➜ creation of practice schools in which practicing teachers work with a group under their responsibility as assistants during the entire course year with corresponding academic, functional, and administrative responsibility. Course participants work in twos, forming a "teaching partners" each observing and analyzing the classes of the partner in order to obtain a broader view. A teacher tutor attends and supervises the practice.

The 1997 [10] -2002 [11] period was the "foundation stage". Its major characteristic has been to produce innovations. During this time 839 teachers were trained.

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[6] In 1995, the national percentage of degree holders was 30%; between 44% and 45% in Montevideo and 20% outside the capital (ANEP, 1999).

[7] In the second year, social science is composed of: history (2nd and 3rd), social geography (2nd), sociology (3red), geography (3rd). In the second year, natural sciences are composed of: biology (2nf and 3tf), physical chemistry (2nd), chemistry (3rd), physics (3rd).

[8] English is offered as a course in three of the centers . In the others it is instrumental in nature.

[9] With the curricular adjusments made in 2002 and 2003, Education Sciences include teaching techniques and guidance in teaching practice, including a theory seminar (2nd), school planning and management (including assessment theories seminar (3rd); applied education research, psychology of education, and teaching practice.

[10] 1997: year of the creation of the first centers.

[11] 2002: year of graduation of the first class of the last center created.

An "adjustment phase" [12], was begun in 2003 seeking academic, administrative, and financial sustainability of the model, (ANEP, 2004). As part of this second phase and as the result of a process of analysis of the quality of the educational offerings of Ce.R.P. an initial *2005 Curricular Design* document was prepared and included the following adjustments: - - - - - - - - - - →

➜ extension of the course to four years, with a total of 4,500 hours, in order to intensify training in subject areas;
➜ reduction of daily classes to six hours;
➜ review and adjustment of curriculum;
➜ organization of knowledge into four training modules: *construction of the field of education, theoretical construction of practice and professional role, construction of area and disciplinary field, construction of basic instrumental knowledge.*
➜ strengthening of teaching practice from the second to fourth year;
➜ increased flexibility of the design with proposal of different curricular content: subject areas, seminars, workshops, seminar-workshops, practice;
➜ possibility for students to construct electives.

In essence, the *2005 Curricular Design* enhances construction of interdisciplinary and context-related training in the region where the school is located. It fosters teaching, research, and institutional extension, professionalizing teaching.

We recognize as progress the creation of a new training modality, affirmative action for students coming from middle and lower-middle socio-economic contexts, democratizing access to teaching; implementation of comprehensive institutions with time to dedicate to students in order to meet their needs and to compensate for their lack of socio-cultural opportunities; the creation of cultural enclaves that encourage educational activities in the regions in which such centers are located; on-going training of trainers; continual identification of teaching skills, and emphasis on education research.

Among major obstacles for maintaining this model are its economic sustainability. Student grants, paying for full-time trainers, and learning resources require adequate budgets. Another obstacle to consider is the resistance that this new decentralized initial training model has generated on the part of teachers. To sustain the innovations is a substantial challenge, as is the permanence of the model, the difficult goal of equity, cooperation with teacher training institutions that use other modalities, and the creation of on-going training for graduates[13].

In-service training of graduates (teachers produced by the teacher training institutes and/or university professionals) has been met since the beginning by disciplinary and pedagogical updating for entrants (training courses for trainers) and subsequent training and professional enhancement.

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[12] The term "adjustment" is used in the following sense: "An adjustment seeks to treat the reality of the innovation. It assumes changes, but not in the emergency sense of other modalities. In the case of curricular design, they are changes *to* the design but not changes *of* the design" (ANEP, CODICEN, 2004, p. 3).

[13] The Ce.R.P. Del Este is carrying out its "Re-encounter Program" fostered by the founders of the center in order to provide professional support services to its teacher graduates in the first stages of their careers.

DRAFT OF A PROPOSAL
with a regional perspective

Initial teacher training in Latin America and the Caribbean is diversified and presented in different modalities. In general, it:

➜ is administered by a variety of institutions of varied academic status;

➜ has curricular proposals under review;

➜ is searching for quality training processes;

➜ is aware of the correlation between the training of teachers and the impact of their practices on student learning;

➜ is not generally attractive to men

➜ has low prestige, although increasingly professionalized

➜ is unconnected to in-service training

However, it would seem possible and necessary to construct a teacher training model that overcomes existing disabilities in terms of the quality of training while at the same time being able to meet the priorities of education policies. We believe in the power multi-lateral and lateral criteria agreed upon by "actors" and "authors" [14] can have in achieving this goal within a context of globalization and regional integration.

What is required is joint and coordinated effort among countries in order to construct in the region a new teacher training scenario founded on a broadened vision of time and space coordinates. We refer to a period of permanent training that is not limited to the three of four "initial" years and to an area of action that goes beyond national borders and extends to the entire region. At the crossing of these new coordinates will be traced the objectives that guide a *regional teacher training model for Latin America and the Caribbean*. One of the objectives would be to *train teachers able to exercise their professions with social responsibility within a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society*.

Possible lines of action can be found in the will and means of the strategic focuses [15] proposed by PRELAC (2002).

Within this proposal, a **first line of action** could be *"increased flexibility of education systems"* (focus 4) in each country, while being open to regional realities.

A **second line of action** would be focused on the curricular design of a teaching course that would bring together a common set of academic, pedagogical, and instrumental subjects with inter-cultural studies (Hickling-Hudson, 2003). Formal consideration of the diversity of the region would make it possible to "construct meaning about oneself, others, and the world in which we live" (PRELAC focus 1), as well as an intercultural ethic. The same could be said for the seven necessary kinds of knowledge that Morin (2004, p. 56) proposes for education of the future: "recognize the blind spots of knowledge, its errors and illusions", "assume the principles of pertinent knowledge", "the human condition", "planetary identity", "facing uncertainties", "understanding", "ethic of the human genus".

[14] "The term "actor" transmits the idea of performing a previously-established role, while "author" refers to a person who creates and defines his or her role and who is the cause of a change or action". (UNESCO, PRELAC, 2002, p. 9).

[15] "These focuses are areas in which countries and the region need to channel their efforts in order to achieve project objectives and the goals established within the Action Framework of Education for All" (UNESCO, PRELAC, 2002, p. 13).

A **third action line** could foster "learning and participatory communities" (PRELAC focus 3) fashioned from a participatory school culture in which teacher candidates can share experiences and thoughts on their education practices with those who have similar experiences in other countries. Making use of the experiences of working networks developed by countries such as Argentina and Chile could be the point of departure for the creation of international networks between teacher training institutions in the region that cut distances through on-line communication (video conferences of teachers, chats, e-mail, e-learning forums). Participation would aid in the development of social-cognitive skills in order to face the challenges that the knowledge society presents. For Monereo (2003, p. 17), these are "to learn to be critical and selective", "learn to learn", "learn to communicate", "learn to establish empathy", and "learn to collaborate".

The **fourth line of action** could involve "teachers and strengthening their participation in changes in education so they may respond to the learning needs of their students (PRELAC focus 2), fostering the development of research within a classroom and school context using the research-action modality (Maciel de Oliveira, 2003) as a means to discover valid teaching, learning, conflict resolution, and diversity awareness strategies.

A **fifth line of action** would have to do with fostering participation of social agents in the regional teacher training model that we have outlined, both in clarifying of its objectives and in content proposals and provision of resources, thus encouraging "social responsibility for education in order to generate commitment to its development and results" (PRELAC focus 5).

The linkage to in-service training, in order for it to be permanent, should be present in the largest possible number of teacher training curricular and extracurricular areas, thus creating means of feedback between graduated teachers and training institutions.

Finally, we would like to make it clear that we are well aware of the ambitious nature of the proposal we have traced here. But we are aware as well of the need to move toward education models that foster regional integration and that train human beings who are sensitive to diversity and able to act with the "ethic of the human genus". Teacher training can be a road toward reaching this horizon, but first ... we must build it. *e*

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DEMOCRACY AND CHANGES
in education for native peoples

CHALLENGES OF A NEW KIND OF TEACHER TRAINING IN LATIN AMERICA

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The last two decades have seen great changes in the education of native peoples in Latin America. Although as early as 1940, representatives of Latin American countries meeting in Pátzcuaro (Mexico) recognized that education of native peoples could no longer continue to be ignored, it was only after demands from the indigenous movement itself that governments began to work more seriously with education alternatives for native peoples.

Within this framework, teacher training has also undergone important changes in order to accompany progress of the gradual development of diversity – focused pedagogy.

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Through education,
indigenous people sought
to achieve citizenship

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION DEMANDS
and government response

The demands of the indigenous movement in Latin America which began to be organized during the 1960s very soon included education components. It could not have been otherwise. The lack of access to education was one of the most serious stumbling blocks to the progress of native peoples as citizens of States by which they were practically ignored. Through education, they sought to achieve citizenship. To this end they needed to learn the language and culture of hegemonic sectors at socially-acceptable levels. But this demand for education soon went beyond this first stage limited almost exclusively to learning Spanish or Portuguese and mastery of the written language in order to also demand the right to maintain their own languages and ancestral cultures.

Thus, "Intercultural-Bilingual Education" (IBE) was born in the 1980s. In the case of Colombia this was termed "ethno-education" which also sought to be intercultural and bilingual. In Bolivia, for example, this innovative education movement began to be formed in 1982 during a time when the country was returning to democratic rule, within a climate of broad participation of civil society in public affairs, and when the native peoples movement, led by Aimara intellectuals, made its voice heard and demanded the right to be different (cf. López, 2005).

Today IBE is a integral part of most education systems in Latin America, and is found in 17 countries. In some cases such as in Bolivia, Chile, Nicaragua, and Venezuela it involves the entire indigenous population through government programs with broad coverage. In others it includes only targeted areas such as isolated indigenous villages as in Argentina, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala. There are also cases such as in Colombia and Ecuador where IBE is carried out jointly with indigenous organizations and communities.

Mexico and Peru are the two countries with the longest traditions in the search for an education alternative for native peoples, although in their cases efforts have come more from government and academics, a fact that has limited their development and cast doubt upon their futures. In other countries such as Bolivia and Ecuador, IBE was more a grass roots movement, making indigenous education projects part of a larger issue of guaranteeing democracy while critically revising current liberal democracy models in order to construct viable alternatives within multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multilingual societies such as those of most Latin American countries [1].

A common denominator of this education alternative is "inter-culturality", a concept that is currently part of the demands of native peoples in their questioning of the nation-state model and their struggle for a differentiated citizenship that recognizes their social, cultural, and linguistic peculiarities. However, native peoples do not demand inter-culturality only as an indigenous right, but also as a prerogative and a need of all, including members of ruling sectors. This is due to believing that only by re-discovering themselves and accepting as positive their own diversity can Latin American societies construct more valid and durable democracies.

From the perspective of education, native peoples in Latin America seek to achieve equality with dignity. For this reason, the demand for a different kind of education is only a part of a larger agenda that includes territorial rights, environmental protection (particularly water) and, in short, the right to life. This is the context within which native peoples place the right to use their own languages and cultures and the right to education.

For native people, education is not an isolated concern. Rather, from their integrated and holistic perspective, it is something that cannot be separated from their lives. For them, education is life-long and thus has a meaning to the extent that it is linked with other equally important dimensions.

It is understandable that Latin American countries are not yet ready for the kinds of changes proposed by native peoples and their organizations, in spite of changes that governments have made in their constitutions during the last 20 years in order to recognize the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-lingual nature of their countries. Although for countries, IBE is only a pedagogical response and purely educational response to a problem they have been obliged to face – lack of communication in classrooms and in schools – for the native peoples of the continent IBE is, above all, a tool for achieving social emancipation or "liberation" as many of them repeatedly state (see López, to be published).

As a result, in all countries IBE is today seen as a government, and in some cases, only a government proposal. Even when these programs include the teaching of indigenous languages along with Spanish as well as the possibility of diversifying the school curriculum in order to incorporate native values and knowledge of every-day life, in many parts of the continent native peoples have opted for a more radical focus that they call "endogenous education".

The interesting thing about this is that, in spite of its apparently archaic name, this new educational alternative neither seeks nor leads to isolation from the rest of the country or from the other social and cultural groups therein. Rather, it includes active participation in decision-making and the ability to decide on the type of education that their communities and peoples now require.

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[1] For an overview of IBE in the region, see López and Küper, 1999 and 2002.

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What they seek is that education be based on their own needs and expectations, and that management be under their control, if not exclusively, at least in direct and permanent interaction with government authorities. This kind of education is viewed as their own because they have control over it, but it is also bilingual and intercultural like government IBE as history and current conditions require, as they are very much aware (cf. CEPOs, 2004; CENEM, 2004; ACEM, 2005).

In Bolivia, questions such as these will necessarily be treated in the constituent assembly to be held in 2005. To not do so would be to lose a golden opportunity for the country, due to its condition as a society with a majority indigenous population and to the fact that since 1982 in Bolivia has had a unique history in terms of the relationship between native and non-native peoples which in the field of education resulted in intercultural bilingual education – a response to grass root demands and pressures.

Those who from a hegemonic perspective view the progress of native people with alarm eventually cite the incontestable fact that not all indigenous parents understand what IBE is and what practical implications it has. Moreover, they purposely and strategically evade a historical analysis of the situation and the fact that such manifestations are nothing more than vestiges of the colonialism and subordinate condition that still surrounds native peoples both in this country and in others of the region.

Yet, when native peoples gain awareness, as others have, that IBE is a tool to forge new mentalities from a position opposite that of the usual racism and discrimination, they will see, as some of their leaders already do, that IBE is not only an answer to their needs; it also represents a possibility of a different future (cf. CEPOs, 2004).

The changes that have taken place in the education of native peoples in the region since the 1940s – when it was seen only as compensatory and seeking solely the absorption of native peoples into the mestizo masses in order to construct the nation-state – demonstrate the singular development of our countries in terms of recognizing the social, cultural, and linguistic diversity that characterizes societies in this part of the world.

Since these changes are a product of greater visibility and active presence of the more than 40 million native people that inhabit Latin America, and of increased democratization of the region, education is a social laboratory *par excellence* in which one can experiment with new social relations and more creative forms of government organization that overcome the limitations that the classic nation-state has witnessed in the more than 200 years since it was transferred from post-revolutionary France to the Americas.

Seeking the comprehensive and holistic view of knowledge that characterizes native peoples

INTERCULTURALITY, BILINGUALISM,
and teacher training

Considering what we have described in the previous section, for at least two decades in different countries of the region there have been experiences of alternative proposals for preparing future teachers able to meet the challenges presented by IBE. This has occurred within the almost generalized context of lack of attention or lack of concern for initial teacher training that marked the application of education reforms during the 1990s. Significant experiments for changing teacher training institutions have occurred , for example, in Chile, Peru, Bolivia, Brazil, and Ecuador as well as in Guatemala and Nicaragua. Within this general context, teacher training has given priority above all to preparing teachers to work in primary schools.

Innovative experiences in teacher training for IBE have utilized above all the lecture teaching model and have been carried out at different levels of education, depending upon current national teacher training policies. Thus, while in Guatemala and partially in Ecuador [2], initial teacher training for IBE continues to concentrate on secondary education, in Nicaragua and in Peru the effort has concentrated on both university and non-university higher education.

For its part, in Bolivia there is also a dual model but different from that which we have described. There, initial teacher training is offered by IBE normal schools but graduated teacher candidates can enter special bachelor level IBE programs that are offered by some of the country's universities and in this way complement their previous studies to earn the teaching degree. Chile is perhaps the only country of the region in which teacher training for IBE is only offered at the university level [3].

In each of these situations it has been necessary to make changes in teacher training curricula in order to include specific subjects directed at professional training for IBE teachers. Among these of special note is the inclusion of subjects and/or themes concerning native cultural heritage, the function and use of indigenous languages, as well as teaching methods, the inclusion of subjects on teaching of an indigenous language as a mother language, and the teaching of Spanish as a second language.

[2] Teacher training in Ecuador takes place during the last phase of secondary education and two additional years.
[3] This also occurs in El Salvador, but there training in IBE is not yet offered.

Teacher training seeks greater
re-engineering while attempting
to fulfill its commitment from
an internal perspective

Changes in curricular offerings in other cases have been more extensive and have consisted of profound changes to classic curricular offerings so that on the one hand they seek a comprehensive and holistic view of knowledge that characterizes native peoples, and on the other also tune training to how new pedagogical corrents posit boys and girls can learn better. Thus, according to these postulates, some teacher training curricula for IBE present different training methodologies that abandon lecture-based teaching and give priority to student participation both through group work and in assisted construction of knowledge through involvement in real field research sometimes from the perspective of research-action[4].

But just as formal education has begun to carry out important changes in teacher training, there are also more radical initiatives in terms of the initial training of teachers. This occurs above all in contexts in which it is necessary to respond to new challenges resulting from "endogenous" education. In these cases, teacher training seeks greater re-engineering and seeks to fulfill its commitment from an internal perspective so that the new teacher is prepared in and from a commitment to the indigenous movement and to respond directly and immediately to indigenous views and demands. This requires a greater and ongoing link with indigenous communities, their daily problems, and real needs.

As might be expected, the experiences of training community teachers is now taking place in those countries in which indigenous organizations and leaders put forward alternative proposals for indigenous education. Such is the case, for example, of the efforts fostered by CRIC, the Cauca Indigenous Regional Council (Colombia) through its program in community pedagogy, of the Quechua communities of Raqaypampa (Bolivia), that train community educators so that besides teaching they can involve themselves in local municipal management processes and of more than 40 private education administration and guidance institutions in Guatemala that prepare teachers to respond to the needs of what is called Mayan education (cf. ACEM, 2005; CENEM, 2004).

But, in spite of the differences that may exist between current innovations, be it the case of public or private institutions, existing in higher education or remaining in secondary schooling, all IBE teacher training programs seek first of all to respond the linguistic aspect inherent in IBE, second to the intercultural perspective that both drives and sustains it, and third to the specialized pedagogical dimension, particularly when the two previous variables are connected to questions regarding the teaching of indigenous children that are either bilingual or aspire to be so. It is from this perspective that in many cases initial teacher training for IBE is linked to experiences for applying this modality in primary schools and/or to indigenous adult education.

This is the case, for example, of what occurs in the Program for the Training of Bilingual Teachers for the Peruvian Amazon (FORMABIAP), an innovative experience carried out jointly between an indigenous organization and the Ministry of Education of Peru. The indigenous students of FORMABIAP during their five years of training remained in contact with their home communities. Furthermore, together with formal schooling the curriculum includes important periods of the year in which students do field work. In the first two years, the field work is primarily aimed at socio-cultural and linguistic research. In the last three years the emphasis is on practice teaching in schools. In this way, initial teacher training contributes to better combining theory and practice as well as research and training since what is done in the field contributes to the following school phase being more relevant and pertinent as well as providing relevant issues that the teacher in training experiences "hands-on".

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[4] In July 2004, GTZ (German Tecnical Cooperation), through its IBE Upper Normal School Project (www.minedu.gov.bo/pinseib), together with OREALC/UNESCO and the Ministry of Education of Bolivia held an international seminar on IBE teacher training during which information was presented such as that offered in this section.

CHALLENGES
to improving the quality
of initial IBE teacher training

As can be seen, not only is Latin American education in general passing through important structural changes as a result of underlying principles of current curricular reform. IBE is also experiencing a review process as a result of growing demands from the indigenous peoples movement.

IBE, although in general viewed only as a government program, is supported by indigenous leaders and organizations who see it as a substantial improvement over previous mono-cultural and homogenizing government programs. However, there are currently other important experiments underway resulting from the search for alternatives – coming from within teaching practice itself – designed to lend indigenous-community education more relevance and pertinence, above all by recapturing the political meaning upon which all IBE programs are based.

The demands made today on IBE present new challenges to initial teacher training and pose questions that it needs to answer if it wishes to train professionals able to respond to the challenges faced by indigenous organizations and communities.

These challenges may be divided into three dimensions that I believe are key for the re-creation of IBE and for training teachers for this kind of education. These dimensions are epistemological, linguistic, and political.

The **epistemological challenges** come above all from the questioning of indigenous leaders and intellectuals – many trained in the best schools of the West – of knowledge in general as well as that which schools and teacher training institutions transmit and reproduce. They question the parcelized and atomized nature of the knowledge transmitted in schools and recommend the more comprehensive and holistic view characteristic of indigenous thought.

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A re-engineering of
language teaching in
order to view it as part of
a true linguistic education
of future teachers

From this perspective, they argue the need to re-think both school curricula and how it is implemented in teacher training institutions in order to recapture comprehensiveness and lend particular meaning to content when it is seen and analyzed in regard to other knowledge and other dimensions of life. Thus, besides seeking to re-direct this perspective they propose an interdisciplinary reading of phenomena and processes that make up the curriculum.

These new perspectives certainly do not exclude either the consideration or analysis of Western knowledge. On the contrary, they place before us the need to understand it on its own terms and from the perspective of the understanding and comprehension of the communities to which future teachers belong. In other words, this is not a case of choosing between one or another form of knowledge, but rather to see the two forms of thought in relation to each other, both in a complementary fashion and in terms of the life and reality of concrete socio-historic communities of which indigenous communities are a part.

The **linguistic challenges**, or perhaps better stated, *socio*linguistic challenges also have to do with a re-engineering of language teaching in order to view it as part of a true linguistic education of future teachers. First, this is a case of questioning the view based on mono-linguistic assumptions and on the ideal of homogenization of language in order to retrieve the understanding of multilinguism as natural and characteristic of much of the world. On this basis, the challenge is to prepare teachers to analyze and think about the varied socio-linguistic situations in which they will practice their professions, thus avoiding – as often happens – that a monolinguistic situation in Spanish is placed in opposition to a bilingual situation of Spanish and an indigenous language. Neither of these two poles are in reality as clearly defined as schools would wish.

In fact, the current situation is much more complex, confronting us with situations in which, even for those who we take to be monolingual Spanish speakers, there are multiple variations that require appropriate treatment [5]. The linguistic education of future teachers should emphasize the development of a critical linguistic mentality in order to hone language sensitivity in order to be better able to respond to each and every specific socio-linguistic context within which they will work.

In this process it is necessary to abandon an exclusive concern for form and leave behind as well the idealized and therefore unreal vision of the languages in question. Although such training is useful for preparing any teacher, it is even more important in the case of teachers who will be working in communities and neighborhoods that contain native people.

Finally, we have **political challenges** of re-conceiving and re-inventing IBE and to cleanse it of its compensatory and welfare-related components. This is a case of seeing it as an integral part of the unalienable rights of indigenous peoples and as a trigger mechanism for protecting these rights. From this dual collective and individual dimension of rights, IBE has not choice but to link itself with other equally basic rights that give meaning to being indigenous – for example the right to territory and the right to think, feel, and act as an indigenous person. From an axiological perspective, this means that teacher training goes beyond awareness of these rights in order to consider diversity as a value in itself.

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5   In this respect, one may question, for example, the lack of reflection regarding the treatment – at least in the beginning of schooling – of variations in dialect, whether of Spanish or Portuguese, and how schools impose a standard variety, strongly based on written language and on middle class speech, in detriment to the speech and self-esteem of a large number of students from poorer classes.

Given that education in general, and teacher training in particular are seen as unique areas for citizen training, we need to ask ourselves about the kind of citizenship to be trained through IBE. This is especially important today in the midst of ethnic revival and emphasis on that which is local and specific, together with the growing questions regarding the exclusionary character of the indigenous version which has been granted by the type of democracy current in the region. We need to ask ourselves whether IBE and teacher training for IBE should contribute to the emergence of this new type of citizenship to which multi-ethnic societies throughout the world aspire and which many indigenous peoples currently demand from the mono-cultural State.

Does not teacher training for IBE need to re-open the question of democracy and its reformulation in light of the indigenous vision and of the exclusion and oppression to which indigenous societies have historically been submitted?

Within this context, themes such as these deserve to be included in study programs for teacher training in IBE in order to foster reflection and to contribute to training in the kind of ethnic citizenship – differentiated or intercultural citizenship – to which many indigenous thinkers refer in their desire to construct radical and effective democracies in which all have a place and can have their voices heard, thus contributing to the construction of more just and more equal societies than those which modernity has attempted, but has failed to construct. And they have failed to do so for the very reason that they have excluded important sectors, such as native peoples, from social and political life. *e*

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TRAINING TEACHERS
FOR QUALITY SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR ALL

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We are living during a time in which, while part of the population exists in what has come to be called the knowledge society, of the majority we can only say that it lives in an information society - where it is totally immersed in and bombarded by information that only the very few are able to transform into knowledge. This results in depriving most of the population of cultural symbols to which it has a right in order to understand the world, partake of its benefits, and face its problems in order to solve them. Countries should understand that this right obliges them to distribute knowledge without exclusion. The increasing value of knowledge and its social management in our societies should lead us to re-examine the importance of processes through which information is acquired, since these are among the most powerful tools for extending, distributing and democratizing access to these new forms of knowledge. (Pozo, 2003).

The economic and social changes that marked the end of the 20th century and the beginning of our own have had very important impacts on education systems which, in various ways, have attempted to adapt themselves to these changes. The sub-system that, for various reasons, has received the most criticism (high grade repetition rates, drop-out, lack of ability to adapt to social demands) has been secondary education. We have written much in recent years (Macedo, Katzkowicz, 2001) of the need for secondary education, in the face of the social and economic transformations, to re-define its role in educating young people who are to become responsible citizens within a society for which they will define prevailing values and norms.

Many of the problems that currently affect secondary education are not new, but have existed for decades. For many years, the purpose of secondary schooling was to prepare students for higher education, and was the preserve of minorities who gained access due to their social and economic status and geographic proximity to such schools. It was an intermediary phase, without a specific definition except that of general preparation for higher education. Increases in the number of students at this level has involved not only growing enrollments, but also the incorporation of a more diverse and heterogeneous population into schools designed and structured for a homogeneous population. This fact has resulted in a serious identity crisis for these institutions, with a loss of social function, and lack of relevant and pertinent content.

We would first like to emphasize here some of the specific problems posed in serving students of this age group. These are the result of changes imposed by education systems themselves and by the physical, psychological, and emotional changes that occur during adolescence, and lend to this phase of education a sense of transition, replete with tensions and ruptures. Moreover, secondary education marks a transitional phase between two different cultures, each seeking to carry out markedly different educational and social functions. This "intermediate" state has increased the inconsistency that has characterized secondary schooling when one attempts to define its purposes. Perhaps it involves the paradox of training in the present young people who will live in a distinctly different future.

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Proposing research-based secondary teacher training does not mean merely including a new subject such as research methodology within training curricula, or to guarantee through such proposals the research capacity of teachers. These are undoubtedly necessary, but they are not sufficient

Proposals for educating this age group should be analyzed according to their specificity, taking into account changes in both primary and higher education. The different aspects of the schooling of secondary-age students should be considered from an integrated perspective; that is, curricular reforms should contemplate reforms in teacher training and in their roles, and not be seen as isolated sub-systems to be treated consecutively, juxtaposed, or in parallel.

In our opinion, the need to guarantee quality secondary education for all requires radical changes in different dimensions of the question. We have always maintained that the key protagonists for carrying out needed changes at this level of schooling are its teachers. Without question, this responsibility should be accompanied by a social and political framework that guarantees the necessary conditions for teachers to be able to fulfill the functions which this new kind of secondary schooling will require, generating a climate that values and places trust in their professional task. The focus that we propose requires that we think about the initial preparation of teachers, combined with on-going in-service training, both of which being based on research. It also requires a policy of incentives, appropriate working conditions for teachers, and opportunities for reflection so they may work and share practices with their peers. According to Perrenoud (2001), such reflection is needed because within societies in change the ability to innovate, negotiate, and regulate practice is decisive; it involves reflecting on practice and fosters the construction of new knowledge.

RESEARCH: a key factor that can no longer be postponed

Secondary education that is sensitive to community demands and those stemming from social, cultural, and economic changes requires teachers with updated professional knowledge and skills as Braslavsky [1999] states (for example, pedagogical-didactic, institutional, productive, interactive and specification skills) and with an ability to innovate and interest in forming groups for research and reflection in order to improve practices and contribute to improving the quality of secondary education in the schools in which they work. Research is closely linked to training, being able to take every-day problems in classrooms and schools and transform them into research questions. This research/training interface can provide acting teachers with new skills and new knowledge that they need for changes in secondary education to be effective and achieve its major objective: to effectively contribute to the education of secondary school students.

At the same time, this research/training interface will aid in identifying the needs and modalities of training for future teachers, providing necessary input for designing initial training that addresses real problems faced by teachers and providing them with adequate tools.

Proposing research-based secondary teacher training does not mean merely including a new subject such as research methodology within training curricula, or to guarantee through such proposals the research capacity of teachers. These are undoubtedly necessary, but they are not sufficient.

Our proposal for research-based secondary teacher training involves seeking effective interaction between secondary schools, training institutions, and research. As Ribeiro (1988) wrote, this reflects the need for teaching to be a team effort seen as a collective research task for producing knowledge on teaching and learning.

In secondary classrooms of our region however, there is more concern about adding subjects and existing curricular content than in discovering ways to stimulate the curiosity of students so they may relate to and take ownership of valuable knowledge or to train teachers to help students do so. Thus, needed reflection on optimizing teacher training has been postponed. Our students need to have space and time in order to develop their abilities and potential. They need to be heard, understood, and stimulated to develop themselves as persons. They need to develop self-esteem. And our teachers need the training necessary to achieve these goals.

Teachers, whose task in secondary school has traditionally been seen in most as "giving classes", now have a much broader role that includes being part of school teams for developing the institution's projects, being concerned with transmitting values in the classroom, working with life skills, as well as linking the tasks of innovation and research. For its part, the welcome growth in enrollments requires teachers to serve children and young people with very different backgrounds, life situations, abilities, and expectations. We agree with Frigerio that it is possible to discuss the question of fate, that we should eliminate the widely-held idea that some students are unable to establish a constructive relation with knowledge, unable to re-create culture. But for this to occur we must have teachers who do research and take into the classroom knowledge relation models that are appropriate for meeting the diversity of their students in terms of their particular characteristics for appropriating the content and skills taught. In this sense, Ranciere says that two factors are at play in the act of learning: intelligence and will on the one hand, and confidence in the intellectual ability of any human being on the other.

> **Schools are the smallest link in which teaching and learning processes find their coherence; the locale where changes in education can take place**

In the face of these challenges to teachers, to be agents who facilitate the appropriation of knowledge, to accompany students and pass on the symbols of the culture of humanity, to be models in identity construction, in many cases we find them lost in routine and overloaded with daily tasks, and opting either consciously or unconsciously to reproduce their own experiences and fall into routine. Their work, which is under the constant surveillance of authorities, communities, parents, the press, and their school superiors, often results in professional discontent and stress. As a result, what happens in classrooms is far from what is required for the learning processes of their students.

FROM THE CLASSROOM to the school...

In our judgment, schools are the smallest link in which teaching and learning processes find their coherence; the locale where changes in education can take place. The work of teachers in classrooms cannot and should not be separated from the task of schools as a whole. Perrenound (2001) says in this regard that schools should view themselves as places wherein access to knowledge is democratized, developing within students autonomy and a critical sense, social skills, and the ability to form and defend a point of view.

We need schools that are able to provide education based on unified criteria developed by all those involved in the task. Achieving such unity involves, first, a new concept of the secondary school curriculum, overcoming a structure based on the juxtaposition of subjects. It also requires a new concept of the work of teachers, going beyond the idea of individual student work firmly rooted in lower secondary education, and toward team and group effort. It is very clear that learning venues have increased in number. Schools today are part of a larger learning environment. This fact perhaps demands a new definition of the classroom. The "class for learning" should be reconsidered in both space, time, and the actors involved in teaching and learning.

Studies of the quality of education offered in schools make it clear that this is not only a question of student academic achievement. Also important is the commitment of the education community (in many cases more important than teaching resources or the latest school buildings). The importance of this "institutional factor" is that it can mediate between the initial situation of a student entering school and his or her school performance, marking the difference in the fate of a young person and leading toward equity. Within this "institutional factor" we rank all that has to do with school and classroom processes, but very particularly those that have to do with such processes (teachers, principals, support personnel), with their links, their commitments, and their ability to create a rich and stimulating learning environment, to their force in leading education projects that train students, respecting their diversity and from all aspects: content, academic, learning strategies, attitudes, and values.

In this sense from our analyses of secondary schools we have noted certain factors that determine student achievement. Among these are their perceptions of attitudes valuing them in the school, expectations regarding their achievement, their levels of participation, resources placed at their disposition, levels of follow-up within the school, and their perceptions of expectations and participation of their families.

At the same time, secondary schools have had enormous difficulties in attaining this internal culture. Such a climate requires unity and cohesion, while these schools have traditionally been viewed as transitory for teachers and for students as a succession of subjects with different teachers, different kinds of training, demands, and modalities. Research has clearly shown that improving learning in secondary schools has to do with changing working modality for another that has coherence and provides elements appropriate for school culture and climate.

Teachers and students should develop a sense of pertinence in regard to their schools. They need to recognize that they are integral parts of a team and that upon them depends the creation of a climate appropriate for improving the learning results of all students, that provides teachers and school authorities the motivation that comes from a sense of good professional and personal development. Secondary schools should be training centers in the broad sense of the term: intellectual, social, professional, and human, training students through the on-going training of their teachers.

The commitment of the education community is most important

BEYOND lecturing...

In light of the above, teachers who develop their tasks within this learning environment, must go beyond "classroom lectures" in order to attend as well to the aspects that we have analyzed and that we can summarize thusly:

➜ Participation in developing the educational-didactic project of the institution in order to make pertinent curricular decisions. Participation in this task helps replace the idea of the teacher as curriculum consumer by teacher as curriculum developer.

➜ Participation in education research allowing the teacher to analyze the complexity of knowledge construction on the part of students.

➜ Preparation of learning activities that flow naturally from the social milieu of students and that should be developed in an appropriate affective environment. This kind of planning is also a team effort.

➜ Joint planning with colleagues and the school management team that takes into consideration explaining and carrying out appropriate tasks for values education that sensitizes students to the values of solidarity and a culture of peace.

These are a part of the elements that research has proven to be very valuable not only for achieving student learning, but also for the commitment of teachers and their professional and personal development.

Therefore, these should be taken into account in defining their training.

Our proposal to make use of the contributions of research in order to define teacher training strategies should take these functions into account. But we should also consider the real situation in which teachers find themselves and the model of professional competence to which they aspire (Marchesi, Martín, 1998). These strategies, according to these authors, have more probabilities of modifying teacher practices when they have the following characteristics:

➜ Are based on the needs and concerns of teachers.

➜ New features are related to teachers' previous knowledge.

➜ It is possible to discuss the new ideas within a group.

➜ There is a practice period followed by assessment, reflection and further practice.

➜ Use different focuses, among which an important feature is observation of competent teachers and self-assessment.

➜ Learning through reflection and problem solving.

➜ Teacher training related to progress of schools and the kind of culture dominant within them.

This last criterion emphasizes, as we have seen, that teacher competence has to do with other dimensions of their professional development: the conditions under which they work and the climate, organization, and culture of their schools.

We believe that teacher training institutions and education policy decision-makers should take all of these elements that we have treated into consideration when deciding upon changes in teacher training.

The idea of on-going education should lead us to re-think both the organization of education systems as well as teacher training. It is increasingly evident that a new education paradigm is needed that, overcoming current restrictions, is able both to correct the deficits of the past and offer more appropriate answers to the needs of the future (Tedesco, 1995).

If we wish our young people to enjoy an education that provides them with opportunities to learn to live together, to develop a positive concept of themselves, to acquire skills and knowledge that allows them to make decisions, to critically and autonomously access information, to relate to their peers, with others, and with their surroundings, to interpret and be integrated in the world in which they live, act, and interact, and certainly to continue to LEARN, we should analyze the changes in secondary education in an integrated and decided manner. There are many changes to be made, but without doubt one of the most important should take place in the culture of secondary school teaching and be based on establishing the fact that what is needed is not to TEACH knowledge, but rather to EDUCATE through knowledge.

There are many changes to be made, but without doubt one of the most important should take place in the culture of secondary school teaching and be based on establishing the fact that what is needed is not to **TEACH** knowledge, but rather to **EDUCATE** through knowledge

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Teacher leadership in building quality school culture

A *Higher Challenge*

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CONTEXT

Education reforms carried out in most Latin American countries since the beginning of the 1990s were among the policy priorities of countries that committed themselves to this effort. Improving equity and offering education that is sensitive to differences and favors the poorest and most vulnerable; improving the quality of teaching, by increased demands and focusing on learning results; enhancing the professional level of teaching; decentralizing and reorganizing education management and granting more autonomy to individual schools; strengthening schools by offering better operational conditions and demanding responsibility for results; these were the areas that, with different emphases, countries of the region concentrated upon.

Here we will discuss two important areas of reform: school management and teacher assessment.

The first has involved developing efforts related to strengthening school management and results assessment. The second fosters the professional development of teachers and incentive policies. It was during these years that the terms "accountability" and "leadership management" entered the everyday vocabulary of discussions of these issues.

After more than a decade after the beginning of these reforms, we know that their implementation was not homogeneous and that their results have been very different in each country [1]. Among the factors to consider in an initial comparative analysis are the level of commitment of governments, the states of political/institutional instability, and the level of involvement of stakeholders [2]; among the latter, of strategic importance for the success of any reform are teachers. Their participation in tracing the basic outlines of reform has in general been very slight, of low impact, and in most cases, reactive. This is because in most cases reforms in the 1990s were approached from an institutional perspective with changes concentrating on education system legislation, content and methodologies, financing models, and management and administration. The result was that in many cases the changes did not succeed in modifying traditional practices as was intended, that "continued to obey old models incorporated into the culture and subjectivity of teachers" [3].

Within this framework, and recognizing the disparity of situations that effect Latin American schools, this article presents a selection of basic bibliographic references that seek to offer guidance in key concepts through which it is possible to recognize the aspects or situations that foster the leadership development in teachers. This involves generating conditions that encourage a working environment that fosters a culture of effective participation of teachers for improving their performance and to achieve the objectives of school programs.

The idea is that the concept of leadership is not be limited to the school principal and his or her direct subordinates as has traditionally been thought. This emphasis, although depending to some extent on structural and legal variables of each country, as we shall see - is based upon the form and meaning of how school activities are carried out. Consequently, it has to do with more direct working relations, good-will, resolution, and control.

Leadership in a school should not be limited to the principal and his or her direct subordinates as is traditionally the case

[1] "Reforma Educativa en América Latina – Balance de una década" . Marcela Gajardo. PREAL, Cuadernos de Trabajo N°15 . pp.47-48.

[2] "El Proceso de Diseño e implementación de una Reforma". 2004. Cristian Cox. Doc. Trabajo Magíster en Dirección y Gestión Escolar de Calidad. Fundación Chile/ Universidad del Desarrollo 2004.
Key in policy design is "stakeholder analysis", in which actors are understood to be the set of individuals, groups, institutions, and organizations who have an interest in education policy and who participate or influence the definition of such policies.

[3] Algunas dimensiones de la profesionalización de los docentes. Representaciones y temas de la agenda política. Emilio Tenti F. Coordinator of the Area of Diagnostics and Education Policy of IIPE-UNESCO. Published by that organization. Buenos Aires, 2003, and PRELAC Journal August, 2004.

BASIC CONCEPTS and associated studies

We will make an initial distinction between management and leadership [4]. While management is concerned with dealing with the complexity of modern organizations, leadership treats the changes necessary in order to project the organization within a dynamic context.

Schools in the 21st century are defined in organizations open to the community. Consequently, their principals and teachers cannot administer or manage the school without lending it a medium and long-term orientation and vision.

We present below a comparative table organized according the definitions of Kotter:

Management (concerned with the complexity of the organization)	Leadership (concerned with change)
Through planning, budgets, goals, establishing stages and objectives.	Through providing guidance, developing a vision of the future with strategies that make it possible to introduce changes.
Ability to develop the plan is through personnel organization and skills.	Plans are developed through personnel coordination; that is, communicating new directions and making them understandable.
Plan establishment: through control and problem-solving in comparison with the original plan.	Introduce elements of motivation and inspiration to assure fulfillment of the plan.

Management and leadership are two different and complementary ways of acting. Each has its functions and activities. Both are necessary for organization performance within changing environments.

In schools, the most recent studies have provided ample evidence to demonstrate the impact of the exercise of appropriate leadership on school efficacy. A distinctive feature of this leadership is that, through an appropriate leadership structure it is possible to obtain the participation of teachers in different areas of school activities. We here observe and/or participate at least conceptually in a transition from a kind of more traditional leadership called *transactional*, that maintains lines of hierarchy and control (in a bureaucratic sense) to a focus of leadership that is more transformational that distributes and delegates [5].

What is notable about this new concept is that it not only seeks to improve leadership practices, but how it understands and designs school organization.

"We are going through a period of re-conceptualization of school leadership" said Antonio Bolívar some years ago [6], either because focuses are favored that lead to understanding leadership as an exercise that goes beyond inductively stimulating members of the organization or because, more than an individual action, it is described as a quality of organizations.

[4] Lo que de verdad hacen los líderes". John P. Kotter. *Harvard Business Review*-Liderazgo. Ed. Deusto, 2002, p. 42.

[5] *Estrategias para el desarrollo de centros educativos.* David Hopkins. Professor, School of Education. University of Nottingham. The article may be found in "Dirección participativa y dirección de centros". II Congreso Internacional de Dirección de Centros Docentes. Universidad de Deusto, 1996, p. 386.

[6] "Liderazgo, Mejora y Centros Educativos" Antonio Bolívar. Paper presented at the VIII Meeting of the ADEME Group (Asociación para el Desarrollo y Mejora de la Escuela), held in July, 1995 in Madrid. Published in A. Medina (ed.): *El liderazgo en educación.* Madrid, UNED, 1997, pp. 25-46.

We see, then, that this is perhaps the most complex factor of change in leadership styles of our school systems. Although most educational organizations pass slowly from a very hierarchical style of administration and management (associated with their government origin and organization) to another in which it is required that school management teams not only manage, but that they exercise leadership within the organization, we now see, recognizing the professional potential existing in school organizations, a type of leadership that involves the entire teaching community.

But what does this mean for individual school management teams? Does it mean not exercising leadership in the institutional environment? Very much to the contrary. First, because the development of school leadership depends on understanding features that are unique to "educational organizations" and to their inter-relation with their surroundings, and second, because teachers require strategic guidance and leadership the same as any community member of an organization. The unique thing about this new concept is that the school demands of the teacher-actor a particular contribution through the exercise of his or her *own leadership*.

Although Bolivar tells us that leadership is a special form of influence concerned with inducing others to voluntarily change their preferences (actions, assumptions, and beliefs) regarding tasks or projects, now it is necessary to establish structures and processes within schools that make possible the multiple and dynamic exercise of such leadership. That is, besides their administrative role, teachers who act as facilitators of others and who take responsibility for projects. In this sense, more than seeing each teacher as a school leader, school processes and practices that are developed through different relevant lines of action are led by different teachers.

As Fullan notes, cited by Bolivar [7]: "As teacher leadership broadens school capacity beyond the principal, his or her function should be to create conditions so that every teacher can be a leader". The absence of such processes tends to produce a much more personalized kind of leadership. This in itself is a considerable challenge for teachers, particularly in terms of the development of their professional skills.

The idea of teacher involvement is key to understanding schools as *learning organizations*.

Leadership is a special form of influence concerned with inducing others to voluntarily change their preferences (actions, assumptions, and beliefs) regarding tasks or projects
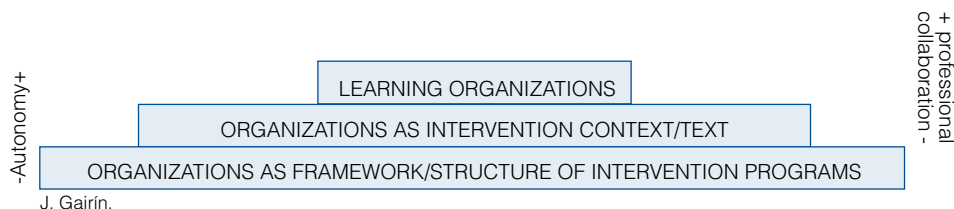
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Researcher Joaquín Gairín [8] recognizes three stages in the development of organizations. The upper level that in which organizations "learn"; that is, those organizations that facilitate the learning of their members and that are in a continuous process of change. One of the key determinants in achieving this degree of development is the level of involvement or of professional collaboration of those who work within the organization, as seen in the following graph:

[7] *Op. cit.* 6.
[8] "Estadios de desarrollo organizativo: de la organización como estructura a la organización que aprende". Joaquín Gairín Sallán. III Jornadas Andaluzas sobre Organización y Dirección de Instituciones Educativas. Granada, 14-17 de diciembre de 1998. Published in Lorenzo, M. and others (ed.) (1999): *Enfoques comparados en organización y dirección de instituciones educativas*. Volumen I. Grupo Editorial Universitario, Granada, pp. 47-91.

-Autonomy+

+ professional collaboration -

| LEARNING ORGANIZATIONS |
| ORGANIZATIONS AS INTERVENTION CONTEXT/TEXT |
| ORGANIZATIONS AS FRAMEWORK/STRUCTURE OF INTERVENTION PROGRAMS |

J. Gairín.

There are two key aspects to learning organizations: the value of learning as a base for the organization, and the development of people in order to implement new practices within the institution in which they work.

But Gairín goes further. Considering the multi-dimensional and multi-faceted nature of reality, the focus of attention and of action of teachers is to be the classroom or school. In both environments there are internal and external influences at work for which it will be necessary to furnish teachers with resources so that besides being transmitters of culture, they will be transmitters through the diagnosis and observation of reality. That is, actors who exercise constant control and foster criticism over decision making that reality requires [9].

The author concludes that people do not develop only to satisfy delimited and prescribed organizational objectives. Rather, they do so in order to broaden their functions. He adds that from this new position they "may come to question aspects related to leadership, decision-making, and established control mechanisms" [10]. It is evident that under this new way of conceiving organizations, that traditional leadership is not able to respond to the challenges of a learning organization. The proper modality has more to do with a concept of shared leadership. This key concept was to be consistently explained by Peter Senge [11].

Leadership, for Senge, is a response to the demands of post-bureaucratic management, which is characterized by organizational flexibility, adaptability, decentralization, and autonomy, aimed at autonomously solving problems and, in general by the presence of very few hierarchical levels in the organization.

For our analysis, the key ideas we borrow from Senge will be the following:

➜ Organizational learning may be understood through systemic analysis. This provides the observer with a holistic perspective: "We should develop a sense of connection, a sense of working together as part of a system in which each part affects and is affected by others, and where the whole is greater than the parts" [12].

➜ In order to achieve organizations open to learning, it is necessary to develop five disciplines, among which the fifth will be key: 1) construct shared visions, 2) foster personal mastery,

3) improve mental models, 4) team learning and dialogue, and 5) systems thinking.

Senge's focus proposes a change in the way of conceptualizing management, placing special emphasis on leadership, but not on the traditional definition of the term, but rather one that adjusts to the needs of learning organizations so that the organization generates multiple leaderships of members and groups, opting for a strategy of creating "leadership communities".

In a learning organization, the traditional more hierarchical, or executive view of leadership is replaced by a more horizontal, flexible, and inclusive focus. It is not the case of leaders not existing, but now all will be leaders who have "guiding ideas" - a type of co-leadership (Bennis) [13].

A first and obvious conclusion is the structural impact of this new look at organizations, particularly on our classic educational institution – the school. The second conclusion has to do with new challenges for teachers. They must develop intellectual leadership that allow them to enter into dialogue that makes possible future scenarios of constructing their working environment. It is not possible in this case to think about independent teachers who merely follow the rules. Rather, they must be active because the problems and challenges of today's organizations are not solved hierarchically, Senge would argue, but rather through a combination of solutions proposed by different people in different jobs and using different forms of leadership. In order to meet the challenge it is essential to carry out an exhaustive revision of the teaching profession, from initial training through on-going professional development.

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[9] *Op. cit.* 8, p. 17.

[10] *Op. cit.*, p. 7.

[11] Much has been written about the subject of leadership and the studies of Peter Senge. Besides his key book, *The Fifth Discipline* (Ed. Currency Doubleday, 1990), we particularly recommend the article "El liderazgo compartido según Peter Senge", by Antonio Bolívar, of the Universidad de Granada, presented at the III Congreso Internacional sobre Dirección de Centros Educativos, held at the Universidad de Deusto in 2000, p. 459.

[12] Senge, cited by Bolívar. *Op cit.* 11.

[13] "The end of leadership"(1999). Bennis, W., cited by Bolívar. *Op. cit.* 11.

LEADERSHIP
within improvement processes:
showing results

"Almost all studies of school effectiveness have demonstrated that leadership, in both primary and secondary education, is key" [14]. Furthermore, studies of effectiveness have not provided any examples of effective schools with weak leadership. The question therefore is: what kind of leadership? In this regard, the specialized literature proposes more than one classification. For our purposes, we emphasize that which is called "transformational leadership".

Research on this kind of leadership has traditionally been associated with studies on the quality and improvement of education. A prominent researcher in this field is Bernard Bass (1988) [15], who defines transformational leadership as "the behavior of certain principals who tend to convert their teachers into education leaders", motivating them through achievement, awakening awareness regarding the importance of education results, and generating high expectations.

Bass concludes in his research that the key factor in determining a successful school is this kind of (transformational) leadership, compared to transactional leadership or its absence, known as *laissez-faire*.

More recently, other research has demonstrated the role of leadership as a key to fulfilling objectives in schools. We particularly recommend three studies: that cited by Sammons dealing with key characteristics of effective schools; the vast study of Waters, Marzano, and McNulty regarding the impact of leadership on student achievement [16], and the UNICEF study that describes the factors present in "effective schools" in Chile that are located in areas of high social vulnerability[17].

Let us examine the most important aspects of these studies. Among the 11 factors the Sammons recognizes for effective schools, the first is *professional leadership*, characterized by firmness and determination of administrators in the to goals to be achieved, without this implying not opening up opportunities for teacher participation. His research demonstrates that effective principals share leadership responsibilities with other high-ranking team members and more generally involve teachers in decision-making.

The study of Waters, Marzano, and McNulty is one of the most relevant recent (2003)meta-studies of the impact of leadership of which we are aware. It involved tracking for 30 years 70 studies involving approximately 1,100,000 students in 2,894 schools and 14,000 teachers.

> It will be necessary to furnish teachers with resources so that besides being transmitters of culture, they will be transmitters through the diagnosis and observation of reality

[14] "Características clave de las escuelas efectivas". Pam Sammons, Josh Hillman, and Peter Mortimore, México, SEP (Biblioteca para la Actualización del Maestro. Serie Cuadernos), 1998.

[15] Ph.D. Professor and researcher, School of Management, State University of New York, Binghamton, NY. Cited by Manuel Álvarez Fernández, Jefe del Departamento de Formación de la Comunidad de Madrid, in the article "El liderazgo en los procesos de mejora". *La implantación de calidad en los centros educativos*. Ed. CCS, Madrid, 2001, p. 270.

[16] "Balanced leadership: what 30 years of research tells us about the effect of leadership on student achievement" (A Working Paper-McREL, 2003), by Tim Waters, Robert J. Marzano, and Brian McNulty.
http://www.mcrel.org/PDF/LeadershipOrganization Development/5031RR_BalancedLeadership.pdf

[17] Escuelas Efectivas en Sectores de Pobreza" ¿Quién dijo que no se puede?. Cristián Bellei,Gonzalo Muñoz,Luz María Pérez, Dagmar Raczynski. UNICEF. 2004. www.unicef.cl

It posited 21 responsibilities associated with leadership:

Responsibility	Area over which principals have influence...
Culture	Actors involved in school activities share beliefs, sense of community, and cooperation.
Order	Standardized procedures and routines established.
Discipline	Sees that teachers do not lose focus regarding other subject during times when they should be dedicated to teaching.
Resources	Provides teachers with materials and professional development necessary for successful execution of their tasks.
Curriculum, teaching, assessment	Directly involved in the design and implementation of curriculum, teaching, and assessment practices.
Focus	Establishes clear objectives and maintains them as priorities for the school.
Knowledge of curriculum/ teaching/ assessment	Possesses knowledge of curriculum offered, of types of teaching, and assessment systems implemented.
Visibility	Has quality contacts with teachers and students.
Every-day stimuli	Recognizes and rewards personal achievements
Communication	Establishes strong channels of communication with teachers and students.
Outreach	Represents the school to stakeholders.
Incorporate/ participate (*input*)	Involves teachers in the design and implementation of important policies to be put into practice at the school.
Affirmation	Recognizes and celebrates school achievements as well as school failures.
Relations	Shows concern for personal aspects of lives of teachers and personnel
Change agent	Has the will to change and actively challenges the *status quo*.
Optimizer	Inspires and leads new and challenging innovations.
Ideals/beliefs	Communicates and acts based on strong ideals and beliefs regarding schooling.
Monitors/evaluators	Monitors effectiveness of school practices and their impacts on student achievement.
Flexibility	Adapts leadership behavior to current needs and gracefully accepts criticism.
Situation awareness	Is aware of background details in managing the school and uses the information to anticipate possible problems.
Intellectual stimulation	Assures that teachers and personnel are current on the theories and practices corresponding to each. Fosters common dialogue on this subject in the school.

The research shows [18] a very close relation between school leadership and student achievement. The impact or magnitude of this influence (expressed as a correlation) between leadership and student achievement was .25. In order to interpret this figure, the authors offer the example of two schools, called A and B., both with a similar number of students and teachers. The two schools have equal student achievement scores on a standardized test. The scores of both principals for the 21 responsibilities are equal. In both cases the average is in the 50th percentile.

Now, if we consider that the principal of school B improved his or her abilities on the 21 responsibilities by exactly one standard deviation (Figure 1), the results of the research show that this increase in leadership ability translates into student achievement in school B by 10%.

That is, school B went from the 50th to the 60th percentile over that achieved by school A (Figure 2). This is a significant achievement improvement.

[18] *Op. cit.* 16, p. 3.

FIGURE 1.
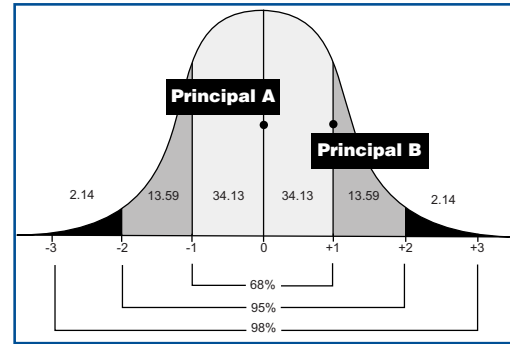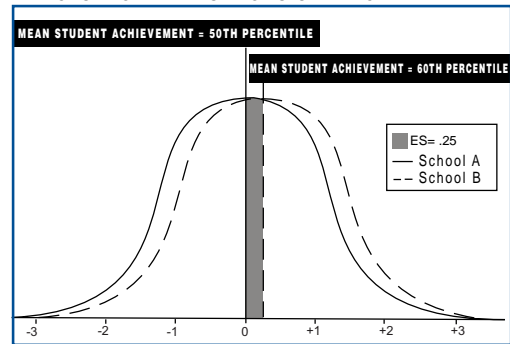ILUSTRATION OF ONE STANDARD DEVIATION DIFFERENCE IN PRINCIPAL ABILITY

FIGURE 2.
EFFECT SIZE OF LEADERSHIP ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Leaders foster the speed and extent of change while conserving those aspects most meaningful in terms of culture, values, and norms that are worth preserving

The study makes it possible to analyze each of the 21 responsibilities and to measure their impacts on student achievement. Two further conclusions are possible as well: the weights or influences of each responsibility change according to the circumstances and perspectives of the actors. Therefore, determining and selecting the "focuses" or critical themes which should be given priority is one of the skills to be developed by leaders. The second conclusion has to do with those key aspects that influence scores from the perspective of schools, teachers, and students. This allows us to more clearly determine where teachers can – as authorized actors – establish defined leadership in the school organization.

Schools, teaching practices, and student factors that influence school outcomes[19]

School	1. Viable and guaranteed curriculum.
	2. Effective feedback and challenging objectives.
	3. Involved parents and communities.
	4. Safe and ordered environment.
	5. Professionalism and solidarity (work in teams).
Teacher	6. Instruction strategies.
	7. Classroom management.
	8. Classroom planning.
Student	9. Home environment.
	10. Learning/prior knowledge.
	11. Motivation.

Perhaps the most interesting thing about the study is the finding that in terms of leadership, there are no truths or definitive standards of action. On the contrary; the concept of an adequate balance between knowledge and abilities is what should stand out. Effective leadership means more than simply knowing what to do. It also means recognizing the proper moment and why it is necessary to act. Leaders foster the speed and extent of change while at the same time conserving those aspects most meaningful in terms of culture, values, and norms that are worth preserving. They know what policies, practices, resources, and incentives should be established and how to order them according to the priorities of the organization.

The UNICEF study[20] ratifies the above for high social-vulnerability schools and concludes that those that stand out are those that present "leaders and authorities who are perceived as such .... with the necessary experience to do so, on both the pedagogical and institutional levels", where one of the key reasons that explains good results obtained by the schools studied is the exercise of *technical-pedagogical leadership,* concluding categorically that, "regardless of who carries out this task, there is always the figure of the *master teacher* who guides his or her peers.

The studies show that leaders understand and value professionals within the organization, knowing them and creating appropriate environments for learning, fostering participation providing the knowledge, abilities, and resources that are required.

In conclusion, considering the varied and complex school context in Latin America, the conceptual bases that demonstrate trends toward the kind of organization founded on the learning of their communities, with more participatory management structures in creating cultures of quality, it is clear that both school administrators and teachers should act as leaders in their respective environments. This will not be an easy task. For it involves a significant change in organizational culture. For both, successfully taking up the challenge depends not only on good-will or mandates from above, but rather in large party on high degrees of professional skill that will have to be developed. *e*

RECOMMENDED ARTICLES:

Antonio Bolívar: "Liderazgo, mejora y centros educativos". Work presented at the VIII Meeting of the ADEME (Asociación para el Desarrollo y Mejora de la Escuela) group , July, 1995 in Madrid. Published in A. Medina (ed.): *El liderazgo en educación.* Madrid, UNED, 1997.

Jaoquín Gairín Sallán: "Estadios de desarrollo organizativo: de la organización como estructura a la organización que aprende". III Jornadas Andaluzas sobre Organización y Dirección de Instituciones Educativas. Granada, December 14-17,1998. Published in Lorenzo, M. and others (ed.) (1999): *Enfoques comparados en organización y dirección de instituciones educativas.* Volumen I. Grupo Editorial Universitario, Granada.

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TEACHER health and well-being

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AMBIVALENCE OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION: malaise and WELL–BEING in the exercise of teaching

The teaching profession is always an ambivalent activity. Janus-faced, it is an open door through which one can both enter and depart. On the one hand, teaching can be carried out with optimism and become a source of professional self-realization, lending meaning to an entire life. There is nothing wrong with turning the pages of our small personal histories and reminding ourselves that we have spent our years teaching how to live to thousands of young people with whom in our classrooms we have shared curiosity for discovering the world: that fascinating game of uncertainties and questions through which we have introduced them to the best discoveries and the worst errors of thirty centuries of accumulated history.

Nevertheless, it is impossible to hide the other face of the teaching profession: one that is demanding and at times physically draining, subject always to the judgment of a public that with its questions, puts us to the test not only of our knowledge, but also of our own personal coherence. It is a profession that demands patience, and above all, humility. In truth, to be a teacher is to be constantly at the service of the learning of our students. And it is not easy to accept the fact that each year one begins from zero; that one goes from being forty, fifty, sixty years old ... while *they* are always the same age, tripping over the same concepts, and forever asking the same questions.

Sometimes one has the impression that we are doing nothing; that tasks repeat themselves as in the myth of Sisyphus, and that all of our efforts are useless. In order to illustrate this bitter face of the teaching profession, I will tell you a story. At the beginning of this course, I asked to raise their hands those of my university students who had seen a teacher leave the classroom crying. Seventy-two hands went up out of a group of 110 students.

But, although it has two faces, it is still a single coin. In order to see the contented face one needs only to hide the bitter one. To speak of *teacher malaise* is nothing more than an exercise for clarifying that which one should turn over in order that the face of well-being can shine. When in 1985 I used the expression *teacher malaise* for the title of a book which is still in print [1], I wished to express from the cover the first cause that removes the contented face from the teaching profession: the lack of reflection on the meaning of our profession, and consequently, the desire to play impossible roles that lead us unremittingly to personal self-destruction.

In effect, if we think, we will note that the expression *teacher malaise* involves an indeterminate semantic component. When someone says that they are ill, it means that they have a fever, a headache, or a sore throat, and should no doubt go to bed. However, when someone tells us they are malaise, it means they know that they aren't well, but at the same time this doesn't tell us why they aren't well. And in fact this is what occurs to most teachers who suffer from teacher depression. They know they are not well, but aren't able to correctly diagnose what needs to be cured in order to end their malaise and improve the situation. The first policy for confronting teacher malaise lies in approaches to initial teacher training. Often, such training is based on an idyllic vision of the teaching profession that does not prepare future teachers to face the real difficulties they will encounter in their daily work in the classroom. The construction of teacher well-being passes necessarily through a period of initial training that allows the future teacher to become familiar with the problems to be described in the following six sections.

[1] Esteve, J.M. (2004). *El malestar docente.* Barcelona, Paidós.

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Avoid distortions in defining the role of teachers

The first problem to be solved by anyone who begins a profession - in teaching or any other - is the difficulty of defining the professional role itself; that is, defining the *professional identity*. In order to be successful as a teacher, the first thing one requires is to find a personal and coherent answer to these basic questions that guide all subsequent action: Who are we? Why do we go to class? What are our objectives? What is the meaning of what we do? Clear responses to these questions are essential. In my more than 30 years as a teacher I have seen too many colleagues play impossible roles, focus their work as teachers from positions so lacking in meaning that, from the very first I have thought that they would have great difficulty with teaching. Unfortunately, I have rarely been wrong. And the worst part of these errors of personal identity is that they not only harm students; eventually the teacher who commits them will do much harm to himself or herself.

The inappropriate roles that teachers can play are infinite

The inappropriate roles that teachers can play are infinite. They are so many that it would require another article to describe them. But as an example I will speak of those that are most frequent. The first undoubtedly, is that of those who think that in order to be a good teacher, the only thing that is really needed is to completely master the content of the subject to be imparted. This is the so very frequent case of which we hear students speak: the case of someone who knows the subject, but is a terrible teacher. Besides knowing the subject matter to be taught, teachers must master a series of basic social skills that allow them to guide the dynamic of the work of a social group within the confines of a classroom.

Until the middle of the 20th century, it was thought that these skills were a personal characteristic of the teaching candidate: some personal aptitude of certain personalities naturally gifted with leadership and, therefore, especially suited to the teaching profession. Those who did not possess them needed to learn them, overcoming initial fears, through the barbarous method of trial and error (this was called, from an expression taken from the theater, having *stage presence*). By now, at the beginning of the 21st century, sufficient bibliography and specific methods are available for developing these social skills in practice. So much so that we can state that one can teach beginners who master a teaching subject to be good teachers, without subjecting them to an accumulation of mistakes that makes them begin their teaching activity from a feeling of failure that can mark them forever [2]. The teacher who masters his or her subject but does not master classroom dynamics is unlikely to experience the friendly face of the teaching profession. The day to day problems of discipline are especially destructive to the personal equilibrium of teachers.

The second inappropriate role most frequently encountered among our teachers is that of social selector. These are teachers who believe themselves to have been delegated by some vengeful deity to examine students, determining who is and who is not worthy of receiving a school diploma. For them, assessment, and not teaching, is the element that ennobles their work: the moment at which they can make use of the measly power granted to them by society. This model abounds among secondary school teachers, and even more so at universities. Within this group we find the wretch – this is a real case – who receives his students on their first day of class with the greeting, "I hope that you have great interest in studying this subject, which I shall take upon myself to remove".

Those adept at this model dedicate themselves to hiding semantic traps in questions; to searching for the most twisted variant of an application impossible to find in real life, in order to confound the largest possible number of students in examinations; and to framing explanations in class from the supposition that those not able to understand are unworthy of continuing studies and, therefore, do not deserve much complementary explanation.

The result is that, in the subject that they impart, students must seek some kind of outside help, from their parents or from other teachers, in order to continue in school. Instead of helping students to learn, these teachers become Darwinian selectors charged with weeding out the unfit. It is socially unacceptable for us to submit to a teacher a group of students who have until now done well, and that the teacher tells us that only two or three are worthy of continued study. What do such teachers want us to believe? That young people who have maintained excellent averages in previous years have all suddenly become sullen and stupid? How much longer will our society grant these teachers the right to confound our young people without doing anything to help them? This role can only be played for a limited time. The hidden violence and injustice that these teachers generate ends up exploding in their faces sooner or later.

2   Esteve, J.M. (1997). *La formación inicial de los profesores de secundaria.* Barcelona, Ariel.

It was his life to think
and feel and make
others think and feel

I will complete my portrait gallery with a third inappropriate role: that of the extra-terrestrial academic. This is a professorial species less harmful to students than those previously described, but which in the long run tends to harm the very teacher who decides to play this role. I refer to those teachers who refuse to be so, basing their identities on the role of the erudite individual focused on the permanent study of the most ephemeral details of his or her specialty. The problem tends to be that they lose any contact with reality, severing the lines of communication with students who do not live in the same world. It is very important to study, but after all, society pays us to teach new generations; that is, our accumulation of knowledge finds its true value in communication with students.

We cannot remove ourselves to a world of files and libraries that make us lose contact with reality. Our role is to act as intermediaries between the accumulated knowledge of a scientific specialty and young people who have come to learn it.

However, playing the role of the scholar, some teachers seek refuge in the world of books to the point of losing contact with students; or worse, with their colleagues and with reality itself. I have always said that instruction should have as its first referent a teacher who masters his or her subject in depth, since one must offer to students a synthesis of the best that has been studied, the best that has been published, and one's own personal experience. But this should not make us forget that we accumulate knowledge in order to communicate it. Therefore, so many hours of study only find their true meaning when we offer what we know to our students in order to help them learn, guiding their study and ways of seeing the subject that we teach based on the keys that we have worked years to discover. To be a teacher, just as important as discovering these keys is the desire and passion to communicate them.

Defining the objectives
of our teaching role

In order to help future teachers to discover their own professional identity, avoiding teacher malaise, I see no better path than going back to my own personal experience. I mentioned this in a previous article [3], but I have no better way to explain the elements that must be brought together in order to build a professional identity that allows us to live our profession with joy.

As with almost all teachers of my generation, I began teaching with a great deal of anxiety. Perhaps this was because, until only a few years ago, no one taught us to be teachers and we had to learn by ourselves through trial and error. I still remember with shame the insecurity of my first year as a teacher. I still remember the fear of finishing presenting the material I had prepared only to have a student ask questions I couldn't answer, or of losing a page of my notes and not being able to continue with a lecture. I still remember the daily tension involved in presenting myself as a serious academician, to show that everything was under control, to demonstrate knowledge that I was far from possessing...

Then, as time passed, by correcting errors and emphasizing the positive, I was able to abandon appearances, and I earned the freedom to be a teacher: the freedom to stand in a classroom with self-assurance, with a good knowledge of what one can and cannot do in class, the freedom to say what I think, to try new techniques in explaining a subject, to change forms and modify content. And with this freedom came joy: joy in feeling useful to others; joy of my work being valued; joy to have escaped routine, converting each class into an adventure and intellectual goal.

The objectives of my professional identity I borrowed from Unamuno, a former Rector of the Universidad de Salamanca, author of an obituary of Giner de los Ríos, that I read by chance in the bulletin of the Institución Libre de Enseñanza. Unamuno recalled the teaching of de Giner with these words:

"He was *such a man and such a teacher*, and so little a professor - one who *professes* something – that his thinking, or better yet, knowledge, was in continuous and constant movement ... not writing what he had already thought, but rather writing while thinking, just as he thought while speaking, thought while living since *it was his life to think and feel and make others think and feel* "[4].

[3] Esteve, J.M. (1998). "La aventura de ser un maestro". *Cuadernos de Pedagogía.* 266, febrero, pp. 46-52.

[4] Unamuno, Miguel. (1917). Comentario. *Boletín de la Institución Libre de Enseñanza,* p. 60.

"It was his life to think, to feel, and to make others think and feel" .... Miguel de Unamuno and his concern for linking thought to feeling .... I have never encountered a better definition of the teacher's task: to dedicate one's own life to thinking and feeling and to make others think and feel; both together. Many colleagues, in different stages of teaching, agree on this point. Mª Carmen Díez, from the perspective of primary school, thus expresses her current view of teaching: "I now understand schools as being where we go to learn; where we share time, space, and affection for others; where there will always be someone to surprise you, to excite you, to tell some magnificent secret in your ear" [5].

Fernando Corbalán, coming from teaching secondary school mathematics, after telling us that we must have fun in class, seek the thirst for knowledge, and provide and atmosphere of research, concludes: "And don't think that it is only the minds of students that are opened. That of the teacher is opened as well, is filled with new and broader nuances and perspectives, and the enriching relationship functions in both directions. My experience, at least, tells me that some of the games and problems that I have used have arisen out of dynamics in the classroom ... and when one creates this magical atmosphere in class, with intellectual flows in movement, few activities can provide more pleasure" [6].

Some time ago, I discovered that the ultimate objective of a professor is to be a teacher of humanity. The only thing that truly matters is to help our students to understand themselves and to discover the meaning of life and of their profession within the context of the world around us. For this, there is no better path than discovering in each of our classes, the human value of knowledge. All of the sciences are based on men and women concerned with unraveling the structure of reality. Someone once developed the knowledge of each subject taught as a response to a vital concern. Another, filled with doubt, avid for a new question, developed the knowledge of the subject that tomorrow must be explained.

[5] Díez, M.C. (1998). Número monográfico. *Cuadernos de Pedagogía.* 266, febrero.
[6] Corbalán, F. (1998). Número monográfico. *Cuadernos de Pedagogía.* 266, febrero.

The ultimate objective of a professor is to be a teacher of humanity

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And now, in order for your students to learn the answer, there is no other path than to go back to the original question. It makes no sense to offer answers to those who have not first asked the question. For this reason, the basic task of the teacher is to provoke questions, uncertainties, the search process of men and women who developed the knowledge that now are a part of our books. The first tasks are to create dissatisfaction, discover the value of what we are going to learn, create an atmosphere of curiosity in which questions are asked. For this, one must abandon professions of faith in answers found in books, one must turn the eyes of one's students toward the world around us and go back to initial questions, requiring them to think.

Each day, before explaining a subject, I need to ask myself the meaning of what I am to place before a group of students, and ask myself what I am going to contribute, what I hope to accomplish. And then, how to fit in what they know, their experiences, what they have lived, what may concern them, with the new contents I am about to introduce. Finally, I issue myself a challenge: I have to enjoy myself while explaining, and this is impossible if each year I recite the subject like a psalm in the same way, in the same place, and using the same examples. I have been a teacher for 32 years, listening to myself explain subjects; on some days repeating them two or three times to different groups. I have calculated that I will retire in 2021. And I'm sure that I would die of boredom listening to myself year after year repeating the same thing, reading from yellowing paper with wrinkled edges.

For me, renewing my teaching is a form of selfishness: independent of the desire to improve the learning of my students, I need renewal as a form of remaining alive in teaching, as a personal challenge to investigate new forms of communication, new paths to make my students think ... "he thought while speaking, thought while living ... it was his life to think and feel and to make others think and feel...". From this perspective, teaching finds in each day the sense of adventure that saves one from tedium and boredom, thus discoverinjg the freedom to express in class something that is very dear. Immediately, you receive an answer: the students bite the hook of your words and you can let the line run out. You can fashion the rhythm of your explanation to the frequency of their gestures and questions, and time passes in a flash for you and for them. You can then discover joy: this magic moment is a compensation for hours of study and makes you feel useful in teaching.

> **It makes no sense to offer answers to those who have not first asked the question. For this reason, the basic task of the teacher is to provoke questions, uncertainties, the search process of men and women who developed the knowledge**

There is no better gift of the Gods than to encounter a true teacher. We sometimes have the good fortune to meet someone whose words open heretofore unexpected horizons, confronting us with ourselves, breaking the barriers of our own limitations. A true teacher leads us to thoughts that we haven't dared to ask, and latent concerns illuminated by a new light. And curiously, we do not feel humiliated to follow the course of someone else's thought. On the contrary, a true teacher's discourse frees us, creating within us a parallel judgment with which we re-structure our way of seeing reality. And then, after the words have died, we still hear echoes within us, urging us to go beyond, to think on our own, to reach new conclusions that were not in the original discourse. This is the objective: to be teachers of humanity. Through the subjects that we teach, or perhaps in spite of the subjects that we teach, we must recover and transmit the meaning of wisdom; recover for our students, beneath the tangle of science and culture, the sense of what is fundamental, allowing them to understand themselves and to explain the world around them.

I have spoken of my shaky beginnings in teaching, of my current views after more than 30 years in the profession. But, in order to help others travel the same path I now must speak of the intermediary process and, inevitably, of the difficulties ahead. Let us examine the basic problems that we must solve.

Creating one's professional identity

The first problem, as we have seen, is to develop one's own professional identity. This involves changing the mentality of the beginning professor, from that of the student he or she has always been, in order to discover what it means to teach.

And here the first problems appear, because there are individuals who do not accept the task of being a teacher. The difficulties appear to be different for different people.

For some, the worse problem is idealization: they enter teaching with an idealized image in which predominate ideas about what a good teacher "should do", "should think", and "should avoid". But they do this without being clear in practical terms of how to act, how to focus problems in a positive manner, and how to avoid the most common difficulties. They have learned, for better or for worse, the content to be transmitted, but they don't know how to organize a class nor how to earn the right to be heard. Thus, they have subconsciously accepted as an article of faith, the importance of motivation for meaningful learning: "the good teacher should motivate students". But no one has bothered to learn in practical terms ten specific motivation techniques. Thus, when facing the practical task of teaching, the new professor has a clear model of the ideal teacher, but doesn't know how to make it a reality. He or she knows what should be done in class, but doesn't know how to do it.

This "reality shock" lasts two or three years. During that time, the new teacher must solve practical problems that involve entering class, closing the door, and being alone with a group of students. In this trial and error learning, one of the worst paths is to want to respond to the image of the "ideal teacher". Those who try to do so discover the anxiety of comparing each day the limitations of a flesh and blood person with the ethereal phantom of an ideal stereotype. From this perspective, if things are going badly it is because *I'm not worthy*, because *I'm not able* to master the class. It is thus that new teachers question themselves and, at times, cut communication

channels with colleagues who can help them. How can I recognize in front of others that I have problems teaching if the "good teacher" "shouldn't" have problems in class? As Fernández Cruz says [7], professional identity is attained through consolidation of a pedagogical repertory and through a period of specialization in which the new teacher must reconsider themes and class strategies, now from the point of view of the practicing teacher rather from that of the university student.

For other teachers, the problem of professional identity is much more serious. As Fernando Corbalán writes, "the vast majority of teachers have never had a clear vocation for the task ... we study a profession for something else (professional mathematician, chemist, physicist ...)" [8]. In effect, our secondary school teachers were trained in university departments that, in many cases, had no intention of training teachers. Within them, frequently, the predominant model is that of the research specialist. As a result of this model, the teacher who begins to give classes has to reorganize the specialized knowledge acquired at the university, and think about how to teach it. And at this point, often, it is supposed that specific training is not necessary, since it is assumed that mere mastery of subject matter assures success in teaching it.

Apparently, no one has bothered to think about the identity problem or our new teacher upon leaving the university and confronting a classroom full of students who are far from being enthused about the subject that must be treated. Feelings of error and self-commiseration take hold of some of our teachers and,

at times, last until the end of their professional lives. The new teacher is a researcher, a specialist, someone with a university degree who has spent two summers shuttered in a library preparing a thesis and surrounded by original documents that few are able to decipher. Why must that person now be obliged to teach general history? And to discover, horrified, that the students haven't the least interest in the subject to be taught, and that key themes in the teacher's specialty – such as the fascinating thesis topic – are dismissed in two paragraphs in most school texts. Finally, our future teacher has no idea of how to organize a class, how to maintain a minimum of order therein, and how to gain the attention of students. Here, the problem of creating a stable professional identity goes through a true process of re-conversion in which the central element consists of understanding that the essence of a teacher's work is to be at the service of student learning. How hard this is for most of our teachers to understand! They are researchers, specialists, inorganic chemists, nuclear physicists, medievalists, or archeologists. Why should they lower their levels of knowledge to the mentality of a group of barbarous adolescents? "You have to keep the level up!" , they shout excitedly. And this means, in practice, that their classes are directed toward two or three privileged students while the rest are forgotten. Moreover, until the end of their days, these individuals will go through teaching complaining about the affront of a society that obliges them to descend the Olympus of the university in order to teach a group of adolescents.

[7] Fernández Cruz, M. (1995). *Los ciclos vitales de los profesores.* Granada, FORCE.

[8] Corbalán, F. Ibíd.

A teacher is a communicator,
an intermediary between
science and the students

Other teachers are able to enjoy their work, and discover that it is necessarily related to an attitude of service toward students, to recognizing ignorance as a predictable initial state, to accepting that the first task is to kindle the desire for knowledge, to knowing that the work consists in re-converting what one knows in order to make it accessible to a group of adolescents. My old college professor, in my first years working at the University of Madrid, told me that teaching to those who do not know is officially cataloged among works of mercy; and it does require in effect, a certain sense of humility to accept the fact that your work consists in being at their service, to answer their questions without humiliating them, to seek materials that bring out what is essential, and to fill past gaps to permit them access to new knowledge.

Students are what is really important. The enormous business that is an educational system does not have our personal enlightenment as its goal. We are there to transmit science and culture to new generations, to transmit the values and certainties that humanity has accumulated through time, and to warn new generations of the extent of our grand collective failures. This is the task to which we are to dedicate ourselves.

Mastering classroom interaction and communication techniques

The second problem to be solved in order to become free and at ease in the classroom has to do with our roles as interlocutors. A teacher is a communicator, an intermediary between science and students who needs to master basic communication techniques. Moreover, in most cases, teaching situations develop within a group environment, requiring of teachers a mastery of group communication techniques. Furthermore, this initial learning process which today is carried out by trial and error, must be improved, bringing the new teacher to understand that a class functions like a communications and interaction system. Most anxieties and problems of beginning teachers are centered on the formal areas of what can and cannot be said in a class. New teachers soon discover that, besides content, they need to find adequate forms of expression; ones in which silence is as important as words; in which the use of a particular expression can be seen as either very pleasant, or make them subjects of ridicule.

The problem lies not only in presenting content correctly, but also in knowing how to listen, question, and clearly identify the moment to retreat. In order to do so one must master codes and channels of communication, speech, gesture, and audio-visual techniques. One must know how to identify different climates created by the group in class, the different tones of voice teachers can use: serious and paused tones inducing a group to reflect, while if we want to provoke discussion we should raise our tone of voice a bit, etc. Experienced teachers know what physical space to occupy in class, depending on what is happening there; they know how to interpret student signals in order to regulate the class rhythm. Mastery of these and of other communication skills demands training, reflection, and a constantly self-critical attitude in order to hone one's own teaching style [9]. Finally, we learn to be the masters of our own classroom style, communicating exactly what we want to say and maintaining an empathetic attachment with our students.

[9] For the study of classroom communication and interaction codes, one can find a good summary in: Esteve, J.M. (1997). *La formación inicial de los profesores de secundaria.* Barcelona, Ariel. Las metodologías de *Inoculación de estrés* y de *Aprendizaje de destrezas sociales en situaciones simuladas* offers us practical and reliable solutions for confronting these tasks in teacher training processes. The description of such techniques has been translated into various languages. Vid.: Esteve, J.M. (1989). "Training teachers to tackle stress". In: Cole, M. & Walker, S. *Teaching and stress.* London, Open University Press. Esteve, J.M. (1988). "Strategies cognitives pour eviter le malaise des enseignants: L'induction du stress et la désensibilisation systématique". *Education (Belgium).* 213, December, pp. 9-17. A video has been produced that describes these techniques. It may be requested at: Servicio de Tecnología de la Imagen. Parque Tecnológico. Universidad de Málaga. 29071 Málaga, Spain.

Organizing productive order in the classroom

Another serious obstacle to be overcome, and perhaps that which causes the most anxiety in newcomers is that of discipline. In fact, this is a problem very much linked to our feelings of security and to our own identity as teachers. In this area I have seen everything: from colleagues who enter the classroom on the first day with an iron hand because someone has given them the old advice they shouldn't smile until Christmas, to unprotected and indefensive colleagues unable to bear the smallest

personal conflict. Between these two extremes that go from indefense to aggressive answers, the teacher has to find a way of organizing the class in order for it to work productively. And, when beginning to do so, we discover that not even this has been taught to us.

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The central element consists of understanding that the essence of a teacher's work is to be at the service of student learning

It is assumed that the "good teacher" should know how to organize the class, but on few occasions have future teachers been taught where to find the key to make a group function without conflicts. The old assumption according to which "in order to teach a subject the only really important thing is to master its content" finds in this field its most radical negation. Teachers discover that they must carry out other tasks different from those of teaching: defining functions, delimiting responsibilities, discussing and negotiating work and assessment systems, until getting the group to work as such. And this demands special attention, to which time must also be dedicated. Reasoning and dialogue are the best weapons, together with the understanding that students are not the enemy. My experience tells me that students are essentially reasonable beings. It is possible that, if you permit, they will attempt to soften and somewhat lower your demands. But if you use reason based upon your own self-assurance, students quite easily discover what the limits are.

Adapting teaching content to the knowledge levels of students

Finally, we have the problem of adapting teaching content to the knowledge levels of students. New teachers must understand that they are at the service of students. They must free themselves from academic styles of universities or teaching colleges and adapt their focuses of knowledge in order to make them understandable to a group within the classroom. I also complain about the low level of my students; but complaining is useless. We have the students that we have, and among the alternatives there is only one choice: either you instill in them a desire to learn, or you leave them behind as your explanations progress. There are those who, in order to safeguard the level of teaching, adopt the latter alternative. But this has always seemed to me to be an implicit recognition of failure. Perhaps because, as I mentioned before, I long ago discovered that whatever the subject to be taught, the only important thing is to be a teacher of humanity. Learning to diversify teaching levels is the ultimate challenge upon which is based the effectiveness of teachers who can be happy and proud of their work [10].

TEACHER health

When the initial training of our teachers is unable to prepare future teachers for responding to real problems in learning situations that they will face; when this training doesn't teach them to correctly analyze the forces that move students as a social group; when it doesn't prepare them for appropriate reactions to different climates to be met through time, then teachers begin to accumulate insecurity and to recognize their inability to respond to the demands of their chosen profession.

If, moreover, initial training has caused them to internalize the model of the "ideal teacher" to which they cannot respond, it frequently occurs that new teachers cannot admit before their colleagues that they have problems in the classroom, since "good teachers don't have problems in class". They therefore opt for hiding and denying these professional problems and end up severing channels of communication with more experienced colleagues who could provide help. If this psychological mechanism continues, based on narcissistic conflicts of someone who has problems but cannot communicate them in order to not recognize before others that one is not a "good teacher", the newcomer adds to these real problems a new source of anxiety: the fear of being unmasked, the dread that others will learn about these problems. In this way, beginning teachers burn their own bridges to receiving help and to finding solutions to problems that will only grow until placing in danger their own personal equilibrium.

However, we cannot conclude simply that situations of teacher malaise lead inevitably to personal imbalance that affect their health. Before reaching that point, teachers use a broad range of defense mechanisms that can hold them in a precarious balance during quite a long time. The first defense mechanism, used, according to our research in Spain by nothing less than 22% of teachers, is the teaching focus of inhibition, in which one cuts off any personal implication from teaching. In effect, the first defense mechanism lies in depending on work

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[10] Regarding the diversification of teaching tasks and new challenges to our profession in the face of social changes of the new communication society, see: Esteve, J. M. (2003). *La tercera revolución educativa*. Barcelona, Paidós. Portuguese translation: *A terceira revolução educacional*. São Paulo. Editora Moderna.

routine and determining that nothing that happens in the classroom can affect them. In this way the teaching activity itself is reduced to a minimum: one merely seeks to survive each day until the bell rings, and to survive each semester until vacation time arrives. Just as a boxer who knows he isn't going to win the fight, these teachers stay in their corners, raise their guards, try to avoid punches, and wait for the bell to ring. Obviously, the quality of their work is minimal. But when implications are cut, concern is cut as well, and during some time they are able to maintain personal equilibrium by denying problems and resorting to inhibition mechanisms. However, it is rare that this works in the long term. According to studies at our university, it ends up seriously affecting the personal equilibrium of teachers. In fact, 4.5% of teachers who employed it were seriously affected in their mental health.

When the inhibition mechanism begins to falter and the fear of being unmasked grows, teachers resort to a whole series of additional mechanisms that include in the concept of teacher malaise that of teacher burn-out [11] and that allow them to maintain increasingly unstable equilibriums before being affected by a real problem that damages their health. Among the most frequent manifestations of burn-out we may cite: requests for transfer as a way of fleeing conflictive situations, the manifest desire to abandon teaching (although it cannot be accomplished), frequent absenteeism as a mechanism to relieve accumulated tension, permanent physical exhaustion,

expectation anxieties (teachers expect to have problems although in fact they do not), stress, self-depreciation (feelings of guilt in face of the inability to master teaching) .... Once teachers have gone through these phases, we finally encounter situations of personal imbalance that clearly affect their health: continual anxiety, associated with various diagnoses of mental illness; reactive neurosis, and depression.

To speak of the health of teachers requires establishing various points. Teacher health depends on their working conditions. Therefore, as these conditions are changed it is likely that we will see changes in teacher health indicators. The trends enumerated below have been developed through research on teacher health at the Universidad de Málaga studying all primary and secondary teachers in the province of Málaga, a total of 8,312 teachers during a period of seven years [12].

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[11] Translator's note: The Spanish text maintains the English term *burnout*.

[12] Esteve, J.M.; Franco, S., y Vera, J. (1991). "La salud de los profesores". *Cuadernos de Pedagogía.* 192, may, pp. 61-67.

Incidence of health problems
by school level

During the seven years of the study the difference between primary and secondary school teachers increased, with a greater incidence of sick leave among primary school teachers.

In effect, the percentage of primary school teachers as a proportion of the total group saw sick leaves due to illness rocket from 6.77% to 21.31%. That is, a percentage increase of 14.54 with clearly significant differences from secondary teachers who in the same period only showed an increase of 4.17%, going from 5.36% to 9.53%. One can thus conclude that primary school teachers are more affected by illness than secondary school teachers. It should be noted, however that, it is possible that the different control system for absences in secondary schools may be masking a certain percentage of absences that are not recorded or are covered by colleagues without being reported. Another differentiating factor between these levels is the greater presence of women in primary education, with a greater incidence of absences among women, as we see in the section that follows. This difference is also seen in any other professional group. If we compare two groups of professionals, there is always a greater incidence of health problems in the group that has worse labor and salary conditions.

Rate of sick leave
by gender

Women appear to have taken significantly more sick during the seven-year studies. At the beginning of our study the figures were 7.86% for women and 4.92% for men. During the period studied these differences increased for the group of women by 13.04% compared to that for men of only 6.05%. In order to avoid biases in the comparisons, data for maternity leave have not been included.

Studying differences by gender in all of the records showing sick leave, we see this trend continues in the differences causes for sick leave, except for those caused by digestive and cardiovascular disorders in which we find a greater incidence in the group of men. This trend may be related to the different dietary habits of men and women, since frequent alcohol consumption is higher for men than for women.

Average age
for teachers taking sick leave

The average age of teachers on sick leave showed variations during the seven years studied. It was at 40 years at the beginning of our study. After a slight dip it was at 39.8 years at the end of the research period, only 0.2% of the figure of seven years before. Our study did not consider the age distribution of the population in different groups for the study of this variable.

Women appear to be
significantly more
affected
by sickness

Average length
of teacher sick leave

The average length of sick leave declined during the seven years studied. At the beginning of our study, recorded sick leaves had an average duration of 41 days. After rising to 44 days for the following year, the average then declined in the following years, with 26.45 days for the final year of the study; this was the lowest figure recorded during the seven years.

We wish to comment here that it appears that increasing control over teacher sick leave, with a progressive requirement for medical certification, may be one of the decisive elements in the decline of the averages. In effect, efforts to control sick leave led the requirement of an official request for sick leave in the case of short-term illness. Before this requirement, only a telephone call to the school was required, advising that the teacher would not be going to work, with his or classes being covered by arrangements between colleagues. This same phenomenon may introduce biases into the increases of sick leave that we have noted in the sections above. Particularly, in the increase in the number of teachers on sick leave and in the days lost due to sick leave, the considerable increases recorded in the seven years of the study include a certain bias produced by increasing controls on teacher sick leave. Note that the first years of the study only include figures on sick leave due to short-term illness.

Most frequent sick leave diagnoses

When considering the most frequent pathologies among teachers one should be aware of the medical problem of classification of diagnoses. Comparing the data we obtained from official medical sources in Málaga with other published studies, one immediately sees not only differences in the diagnosis classification, but also in regard to sick leave control criteria and in their classification in one section or another.

Nevertheless, when forming conclusions these coincide with other available studies. Utilizing the criterion of the total number of days lost through sick leave according to type of diagnosis, the most important are trauma, ear nose and throat, and psychiatric, in that order. These data appear in nearly the same order throughout the seven years studied, although gynecological complaints not associated with pregnancy appear in some cases in second or third place, always very near the first three and quite distant from the rest of the diagnoses.

Twisted ankles, laryngitis, and depression are the most frequent diagnoses in each category.

Stress cycles and their relation to sick leave

In *El malestar docente* (1994) we considered the hypothesis of the influence of increasing psychological tension on teacher sick leave. The studies of Canadians Hembling and Gilliland[13] (1981) in which they identify stress cycles during the school year show a monthly distribution of teacher sick leave using graphs that have three peaks, reproducing the structure of quarters in which the number of sick leaves increase as the quarters move forward, and then fall during vacation periods.

The observation that sick leave declines during quarterly vacations may be due to the existence of a certain bias produced by the fact that during vacation periods many teachers do not request sick leave since they are not required to report to school. The normal rhythm of sick leaves added to this phenomenon may produce the decline that is clearly visible in the graphs and that corresponds to vacation periods.

Study of these graphs during the seven years reproduces, in general terms, these three peak figures, although it should be noted that any halt in the normal rhythm of classes, such as a strike or an extra week of vacation, can alter the graphs, cutting the increasing incidence of teacher sick leave during the quarter.

However, the most significant fact to consider in order to assess the hypothesis of a relation between stress cycles during the school year and the monthly distribution of sick leaves would be an increase in such leave from the beginning of quarters, rising until a vacation period interrupts the rhythm of accumulated tension and, consequently, the number of sick leaves.

In order to reject the hypothesis it would be necessary to explain why in the month of November there is more sick leave than in the month of October during the seven years studied, why in March there is more sick leave than in February if Easter vacation does not intervene, and why there is more sick leave during the month of May than in April when we control for the interference of vacations. Since Easter vacation occurs at different times in different years, comparisons are difficult for the second and third quarters of the various years studied. However, in the first quarters, that have the same structure every year, increases in sick leave run parallel with progress in the school calendar every year. The study carried out by García Calleja using data from the Ministry of Education and Science also reproduces the same structure of increases of sick leave during school quarters.

The phenomenon is too complex for us to be able to make definitive statements. But the hypothesis regarding increases in tension during work periods and its relation to sick leave are sustained as well by the studies carried out in Málaga on short-term absenteeism in which we see three peaks in the graph with more absences in November than in October, more in March than in February, and more in May than in April.

Conclusions on major trends in studies on teacher health

A detailed study on the statistical series obtained can lead us to varied comments on trends in the health of teachers, permitting us to develop some recommendations. Here are the most evident:

1. It is necessary to coordinate and to unify the criteria that operate in different medical sections in each area so that it would be possible to compare data between various studies and to improve knowledge on the health and health trends of teachers. Any coherent measure to be adopted should begin with improving working conditions and statistical systems used by medical control offices.

2. One notes an extraordinarily significant increase in ear nose and throat complaints, affecting 477 teachers at the end of our study of a total of 8,312 teachers, compared with 45 individuals with this complaint of a total of 6,483 teachers at the beginning of the study. This represents an increase for this complaint of 960% when the number of teachers increased by 28.2%.

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13 Hembling, D.W., y Gilliland, B. (1981). "Is there an identifiable stress cycle in the school year?". *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research*. 27, 4, pp. 324-330.

3. One also sees a significant increase in mental illness of teachers. At the conclusion of our study there were 105 teachers on sick leave due to neuro-psychiatric illness - basically depression. This type of leave had an average duration of 41 days per subject, which results in a loss of 4,328 working days.

When we compare the data over time to detect trends, there is a considerable increase in this kind of illness during the years studied. Thus, in the first year of our study there were 50 neuro-psychiatric related sick leaves. Seven years later the number was 105. This means that while the teacher population increased by 28.2%, the increase in neuro-psychiatric illness was 110%. We should avoid, however the alarmist cries published by the media. Taking the number of teachers as a whole, the data show the rate of psychiatric illnesses increasing from 0.77% at the beginning of the study to 1.26% at its end. Even considering the possibility of unreported cases, data for the rate of mental illness of teachers is at about 1.5% or at the most 2%. This is far from the sensationalism of the data of the media, some of which report adolescent depression to be at 25%.

4. The deterioration of the health of teachers is made evident when one studies the trends of sick leave during the seven-year period encompassed by our research. It seems essential, therefore, to adopt preventive measures that can brake this process, developing support structures for the affected teachers during their careers. The most evident type of intervention should focus of rehabilitation processes available after sick leave so that the complaints do not become chronic. This is particularly so for psychiatric and ear nose and throat complaints. In effect, currently sick leave only contemplates a recuperation period during which the teacher continues medical treatment. But due to the lack of prevention policies, the teachers in question return to the same working situations with the same problems. Thus, sick leave is repeated and its causes end up being chronic.

Among the most evident preventive measures would be to organize speech courses for teachers who take leave due to throat problems and to establish support and rehabilitation structures for teachers who take psychiatric-related leave or, if necessary, their re-classification to non-classroom posts. These are measures that, even from an economic perspective, can be cost-effective due to decreases in absenteeism and elimination of many chronic problems during with a school administration is continually paying two salaries to cover a single teaching position. Moreover from a human perspective, it is not difficult to perceive the problems with granting 40 days of leave only to return a teacher to confront the same situation in which he or she had voice or psychiatric problems, without follow-up of the concrete case in order to determine if the individual is prepared to confront the teaching situation, perhaps only to be affected again and again until the situation becomes chronic.

5. Finally, preventive programs should be established during initial teacher training, developing systems of practice such as stress prevention and the learning of social skills which prepare future teachers to face potentially conflictive situations which must be confronted in the classroom.

The first key that leads to self-realization and the professional exercise of teaching is initial training

epilogue:
PRIDE in being a teacher

I will conclude as I began: teacher malaise and well-being are two side of the same coin.

In terms of well-being, I know teachers who place the interests of their students above their own health. Thus, they do not miss classes even when they have a fever, and withstand illness because they don't wish to disappoint the students to whom they feel committed. The tasks that they have scheduled motivate them to be in class, and they do so without thinking that they are doing anything extraordinary.

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In terms of malaise, I know teachers who use any excuse for not going to classes as long as possible. The least inconvenience is used as an argument to remain in bed and stay away from school. They plead for leave authorization from physicians, using as an argument the unsupportable psychological pressures to which they claim they are submitted, demanding recovery periods supported only by their complaints, and do not feel the least responsibility for failing their students and colleagues who have to cover their absences.

It is not possible to generalize about the positions of teachers in regard to teacher malaise, nor in regard to illness. Teachers are no different than any other professional group. The first key that leads to self-realization and the professional exercise of teaching is initial training. It is there that the six basic problems cited above must be solved. Moreover, the mentality of teachers and their motivations to teach play a part. Some teachers hate students and work in the field because they were unable to find anything better. Any prevention strategy will fail with this group, which may never have a taste for teaching. On the other hand, there are teachers who are able to excite a group of students even if they have to give class in a leaky barn. The warmth of their words fill the group's work with meaning, and these teacher don't mind not working in better surroundings.

One of the best lessons on what teaching means was taught to me by rural teachers in small schools in Humauca, in the State of Jujuy, near Tilcara before reaching the border of Quiaca between Argentina and Bolivia. Earning a monthly salary of less than what a meal costs in a restaurant in Europe, they were teachers of children, social assistants of parents, public health agents of villages, and still used a part of their small salaries to help disabled children in their schools. And they did so without thinking it extraordinary, convinced that it was their duty and that thus they could contribute to opening paths to a better future. They were aware of being the only instruments of culture and of progress with which people could some day aspire to something better. The technical assistance work that I was to carry out there were equally ambivalent. I couldn't teach them much; there was no need for me to explain anything about my stupid first-world technology, but I learned much from them in silence, studying that precious example of what it means to share knowledge and be a teacher of humanity in a rural school.

It is possible that many people think that teachers are not socially relevant, for our society values power and money. But, my life has meaning because I value the challenge of knowledge and the passion to communicate it. I feel that I am a trustee of 30 centuries of culture, and responsible for my students assimilating our best achievements and drawing conclusions from our worse failures. And together with me is a large group of colleagues who, from the most distant rural primary schools and secondary schools in the toughest neighborhoods, are proud to be teachers, working day-to-day to preserve in our society the values of culture and progress. Among them are valuable teachers of humanity: men and women dedicated to accompanying their students in the doubts that arise as they discover the world; men and women willing to teach their students to confront themselves until finding answers to the fundamental questions that lend quality to human life.

The last piece of advice that I can give them for living the teaching profession from a position of well-being is to feel proud to be teachers; to, outside the ethic of power and of money, create an ethic of effort. For although no one appreciates it from the outside, the best of our work is in the spirit of our disciples, and the best payment for our profession is to remain in the memory of those who we have known how to help.*e*

Gradually and surely, over the last few decades, knowledge has accumulated on the importance that working conditions have for teaching practice and their impact on the quality of life of teachers. This knowledge has come from various areas of health and the social sciences.

the working conditions and
health of
teachers

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Sociology has contributed by studying teaching, applying categories developed in labor sociology in order to place into context and understand the link between teacher health and pedagogical results. It has emphasized concrete studies on how teachers work, and has applied new analytic perspectives in order to highlight gender questions in a profession dominated by women as well as teacher problems in various geographic areas. Sociology has also critically focused on how the work of teachers is organized, issuing an alert about the adjustment of such organization to adjust to the current demands of education.

Occupational health and ergonometric studies have called attention to the negative impacts of certain labor practices, focusing on both research and the prevention of occupational illness. One of the major contributions has been to make visible specific occupational hazards for teachers and to overcome the common notion that teaching is a low-risk occupation (long based on a focus only concerned with occupational accidents and classic occupational illness caused by physical, chemical, or biological agents).

Occupational and organizational psychology have investigated the consequences of labor practices and working conditions for the psychological well-being of teachers, individual and collective defensive measures for preventing such consequences. There have been a number of attempts to measure emotional factors involved in the exercise of teaching. Some of their contributions have been the conceptual and operational delimitation in measuring what has been called "teacher burnout" and the increasing concern for various forms of violence in the workplace in the case of schools. Psychology has also carefully studied individual and collective forms of preserving well-being in threatened and vulnerable contexts.

Without intending to be exhaustive and using contributions from various disciplines, this article reviews key data that describe labor and health conditions of teachers.

THE LABOR PROCESS of teachers

The labor process, understood as human activity directed at an object and using particular means in order to produce a given product, is a useful analytic category for studying the relation between health and employment. Given that analysis of the labor process is more visible when treating the transformation of primary into industrial products, much time passed before non-industrial activities were to be seen and analyzed as labor processes and specifically conceptualized as factors that could positively or negatively affect the well-being and quality of life of those by whom they were practiced. This has been the case with teaching.

Nevertheless, in an era in which the flow and use of information are increasingly important it becomes ever clearer that labor is involved with immaterial objects as well, and that labor can be analyzed in how it transforms the user of a service, that processes present facets that are much more complex than merely the industrial image of Taylor, and that the objects transformed may be subjects with whom one establishes an interaction (with all of the vicissitudes and transactions of human interactions). At the same time, students, the subjects of educational actions are so as individuals and as a group.

An important factor in the way the work of teachers is carried out - with subsequent effects on their health - is that the workplace of teachers is not fixed. They move from one point to another within the micro-space of the classroom. But the work process is not limited to this micro-space. Not even school itself – generally separated from its surroundings by walls – is able to confine the work process of teachers. Frequently their work cannot be separated from the physical and social surroundings of the school. More frequently, the work of teachers ends up being finished within their homes.

The point of view presented here is that analysis of the working process of teachers should include:

➡ The degree of creativity that teachers can exercise when designing their activities. Within this is included both self-perception of their abilities to carry out tasks and limitations and/or demands imposed by the curriculum.

➡ The complexity of the object of labor – that which is transformed through actions of the teacher, which in this case is a subject in which we recognize both individual (the student) and collection (class, sub-groups) dimensions.

➡ The complexity of the means of labor, with a strong component of immaterial means that use formal or informal qualifications of the teacher combined with permanently changing material media and with participation of individual and collective subject (parents, parent centers, and other groups) that contribute to the educational process.

➡ The complexity of the products of the labor process which contain immediate sub-products (completion of daily goals and tasks with students) and medium and long-term (achievement of final goal of students successfully completing the course armed with knowledge and skills).

➡ Work times in which generally one measures time of various parts of the work day, with pauses and often interruptions of teacher time, reducing free time and rest periods.

➡ Absence of limits between school as a work center and as community meeting place; a lack of limits also observed in the invasion of social problems of the surroundings into the school, thus transforming it into part of the community social network that even invades the space of teachers themselves.

Table 1 (see page 138) shows these elements in the labor process, from a teacher work perspective that considers it from the micro space of the classroom to the more general plane of the social environment within which concrete tasks are carried out.

The graphic representation emphasizes that the teacher work process is complex and in terms of the final product, government-allocated resources are just as important as the dynamics of conflict that can be generated by informal groups within the classroom, or social problems that affect students and which the teaching task cannot avoid.

Moreover, we see that the final expected product varies according to the dimension from which one observes the labor process, and that in carrying out the task, teacher skills are used that are not sufficiently supported from levels outside of the classroom (those which would supposedly support the educational process). The bottom row shows a visible but less-recognized dimension of the teaching task. it is an activity that establishes a permanent dialogue with the social system, expressing it either through the educational system or through social subjects (individuals, families, and communities).

Table 1. ANALYTIC TEMPLATE OF THE TEACHER WORKING PROCESS

Dimensions of the work process	Elements of the work process				
	Labor design	Object of labor	Means of labor	Time of labor	Product of labor
Civil society/ community/ neighborhood	Ideologies. Proposals. Expectations. Problems & conflicts.	Life and labor conditions. Neighborhood groups. Family dynamic.	Participation or distancing from educational tasks. School support.	School year. Social support on vacations. Demand for extra time.	Increased social status. Support for family group.
Social system	Power relations between social actors. Plans and programs. Assessment.	Determination of age limits. Education access policies. Segmentation of levels and categories.	Resource allocation. Contract and salary policies. Placing a value on the work.	School year.	Adaptation to institutionality. Continuation of studies. Training for the labor market.
School	Design of programs. Assessment. Class preparation.	Formal groups (courses, workshops). Informal groups.	Distribution of material resources. Technical-pedagogical support. Education management.	Management of time schedules, recreation periods, pauses, meetings.	Fulfillment of goals. Grades. Graduation.
Class	Fulfillment of curricular obligations. Resources to implement innovations.	Individuals (students). Class. Informal groups.	Material resources of teachers and Emotional resources and other teacher qualifications.. Social resources of the group and of individual students.	Pedagogical time. Time/student ratio. Class preparation time, review of homework and tests. Time for moving from one class to another.	Knowledge acquired. Habits and behavior instilled. Problems solved.
Locations outside the workplace	Class preparation.	Solving problems and conflicts. Social meetings.	Search for materials. Training. Meetings.	Class preparation time, review of homework and tests. Field activities.	Idem.

If one only looks at the upper cells of the analytic template it appears that the teaching task is basically an activity of processing and transmission of information within a given social system and with results defined in the play of power relations within society. But the concrete work activities within the classroom involve much more than this, being an important delicately-balanced emotional support network of students. The teaching task fulfills the purpose of transmitting a set of socially-defined cultural elements made up of knowledge, values, behaviors, habits, attitudes, etc. This process is seen by society as essential for its reproduction, and to this purpose it delegates the function to a specialized worker - the teacher. Although the activities of teachers are a complement to the role of families in the comprehensive training of new generations, in today's society schools fulfill a central, and on occasion an almost exclusive role in the process.
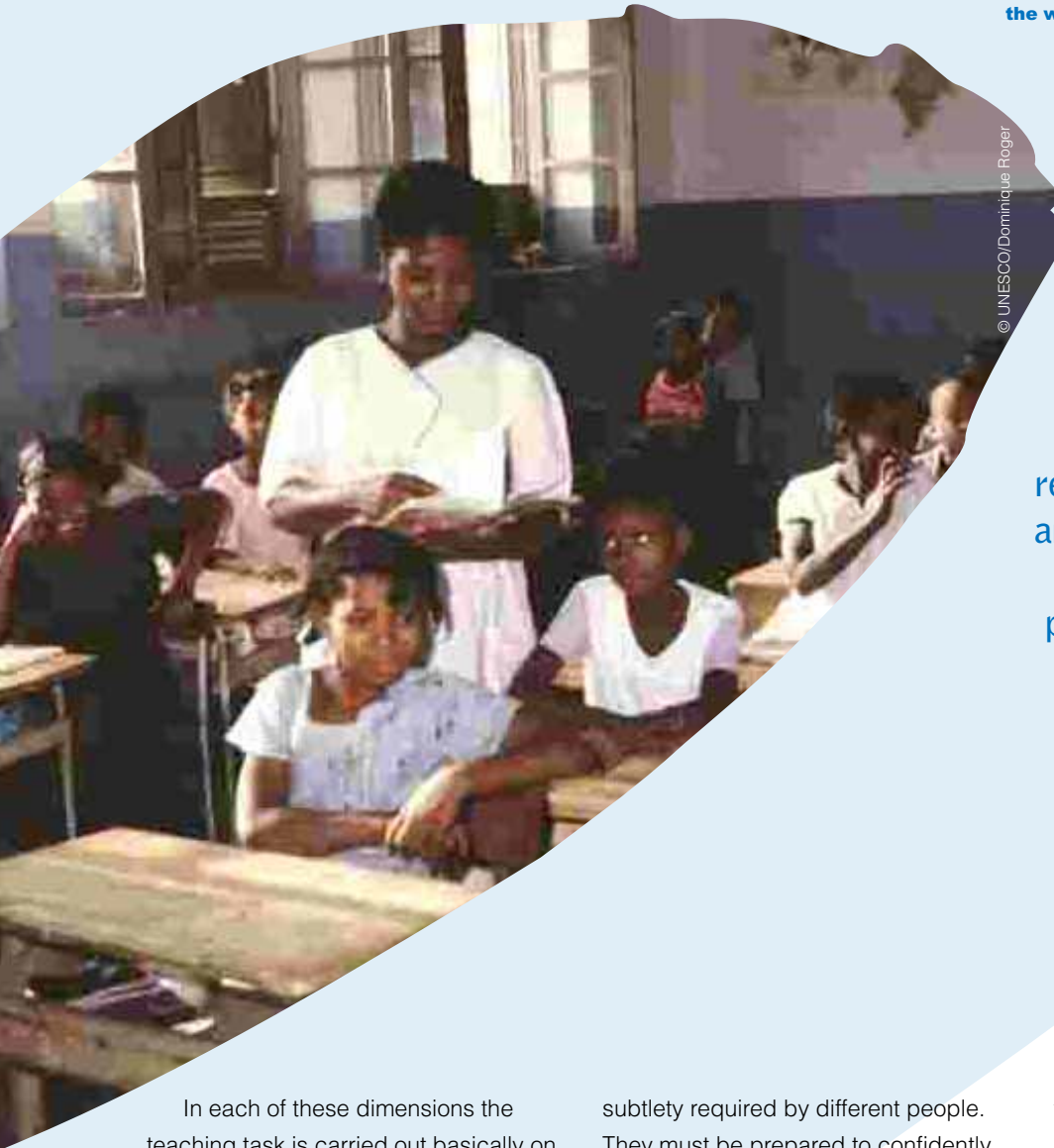
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Understanding the state of health reported by teachers and offering effective means for health promotion and care

In each of these dimensions the teaching task is carried out basically on the basis of very active and dynamic social relations, where language, communication, and norms play a central role. The qualifications demanded of a teacher become critical when analyzing health indicators (see below). Besides mastering the specific discipline to be taught and the techniques that foster best transmission and successful learning, in many cases teachers fulfill a therapeutic purpose as well, providing guidance and social support in the face of daily problems. Teachers are expected to have knowledge of sexuality, psychology, the social and political reality, sports, culture and to be able to manage social relations with the flexibility and

subtlety required by different people. They must be prepared to confidently respond to the multiple interests of their students.

In summary, the work of teachers is a complex process using intangible object transmission networks (norms, knowledge, habits, emotions), with multiple sites that can become working areas and from which different social actors expect final products that do not always converge. Within a context of changes in public education and in management of the teacher labor force, it is very important to carefully study analysis of the labor process in order to understand the state of health reported by teachers and to offer effective means for health promotion and care. A view

that only considers immediate material surroundings in which teachers work may be able to suggest the classic preventive measures that have served industrial workers (regarding tangible objects, clear norms, defined products, precisely defined limits between factory and surroundings). A view that considers the complex and intangible as threats only will emphasize establishing relations between the labor of teachers in general and particular damage indicators, utilizing the direct causal model of classic occupational illness that is based on industrial activities.

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THE HEALTH
of teachers

When analyzing the health of a particular labor group, one looks at data common to the group. These data are made understandable either due to the form in which the physical and mental conditions of workers are utilized during work, or by the ability of work to assure adequate reproduction (in both material and immaterial aspects, nutrition, family, housing, rest, free time, social networks). If one looks at the labor process of teachers from all the dimensions mentioned, it is also important to consider the degree of invasion that the labor imposes on the subject, either by occupying free time or personal and family space, or by using informal qualifications of the subject without valuing them (nor paying for them).

Table 2 shows the major health deterioration profiles with indicators suggested by various studies. The concept of deterioration refers to a decrease in objective and subjective well-being that begins with slight malaise, but if prolonged can reach an intensity that interferes with some functions, finally becomes an incapacitating illness requiring hospitalization, and that can lead to death.

Table2. TEACHER HEALTH DETERIORATION PROFILE

Health deterioration dimension	Indicators
Deterioration of mental health	➜ In the United States, in 1978 23% of teacher health leave had stress as a contributing factor (ILO, 1992). ➜ In Argentina, 1994, the national survey carried out by CTERA showed that 25% of teachers were diagnosed as suffering from stress and 13%, neurosis or depression (Martínez, Valles, Kohen, 1997). ➜ In Chile, a 2003 study of a representative sample of teachers showed the prevalence of depression of 29,1% and anxiety disorders 23,1% (Colegio de Profesores de Chile, s.f.). ➜ In the United States it is estimated that between 5% and 20% of teachers suffer from some degree of burnout (Farber, 2000). ➜ In Québec, between 1989 and 1993, 30% of medications prescribed for teachers by the health system were related to mental health problems (Messing et al., 1999).
Deterioration of vocal funcions	➜ A survey of Chilean teachers showed an OR of 4.4 for vocal problems, compared with a control group (Colegio de Profesores de Chile, s.f.) ➜ Among professions that use the voice, teachers are the group that most seek medical attention. (Jónsdottir et al., 2002). ➜ In Western countries, nearly 40% of teachers report vocal problems (Kosztyla-Hojna et al., 2004). ➜ In the CTERA survey in Argentina, 33,7% reported that they had suffered from laryngitis (Martínez et al., 1997). ➜ In a study of classroom noise in Spain it was discovered that the levels are not a risk for hearing loss, but that they do make communication difficult. (Ruiz et al., 2001).
Muscular-skeletal deterioration	➜ In Argentina, 15,9% of teachers have suffered from lumbago (Martínez et al., 1997). ➜ 7,3% of teachers in Spain have lost working days due to muscular-skeletal problems (Sevilla, Villanueva, 2000). ➜ Teachers in Québec have a low percentage of muscular-skeletal problems, but higher than the average of other service workers of similar age groups. (Messing et al., 1997). ➜ In nine ergonomic observation periods of 10 minutes each of Quebec teachers it was found that they walk 43% of the time, and are on their feet most of the time. (Messing et al., 1997).
Sense organs deterioration	➜ In Argentina, 26,5% of teachers have myopia (Martínez et al., 1997). ➜ In a 107 minute, 16 second ergonomic observation period of teachers in Quebec during which visual concentration was assessed during class work, only 6.3 seconds of visual distraction were recorded. (Messing et al., 1999). ➜ The survey of Chilean teachers showed an OR of 2.4 for visual problems, compared with a control group (Colegio de Profesores de Chile, s.f.).
Other indicators	➜ Among teachers there is a high percentage of varicose veins (data from reports of Colegio de Profesores de Chile and of Martínez et al.). ➜ Teachers are exposed to infectious respiratory diseases (data from reports from Sevilla, 2000, and Martínez et al.).

RELATION BETWEEN DETERIORATION PROFILES
and teacher working conditions

In research carried out in 1991, the following factors are seen by teachers as those of the most concern (Parra, 1991):

➜ Social system:	Pay Social status Lack of specialists Professional career	
➜ Neighborhood/ Community:	Physical environment:	Noise Smog
	Social environment:	Drugs Delinquency Alcoholism Lack of cooperation from families
➜ School:	Infrastructure:	Hygienic services Cafeterias Green areas Private space
	School support	
	Educational support:	Materials Laboratories Libraries
➜ Class:	Physical environment:	Cold Lighting
	Education support:	Materials
	Work load:	Use of voice Excessive and tiring work
	Students:	Learning difficulties Lack of discipline

In analyzing the data of this study, three facts stand out:

a) Teachers are concerned about those dimensions that best express the social character of their activity.
b) They are more concerned about those factors that most affect teacher performance (lack of materials, for example) than problems that affect their own material well-being in schools.
c) Another source of discontent lies in the lack of social support, expressed as low pay, low status, and little cooperation, among other problems.

That is, what concerns teachers is that the content of their work is not carried out within the terms expected by them and by society. Various studies have shown the same opinions from perspectives that complement and converge. Teachers like the work that they do and highlight as a source of self-realization and satisfaction working with children, although they recognize the risks of overwork, fatigue, and deterioration that this involves.

Although in general, ministerial guidelines define what is to be taught, for how long, and to what population, while providing the means considered necessary and sufficient, in daily practice in school teachers carry out a number of functions and tasks that are not included in prescribed work. In order to face the concerns that their work presents, teachers use all of their skills for behavior education, maintaining the attention of their students at an optimal level, assuring the physical well-being of their students, and providing affective support. From a gender perspective, the work of women teachers (who constitute the majority of the teaching force) appears not to have clear limits with the maternal role assigned by society.

From the perspective of stress theory, of note is the emotional effort involved in teaching that always carries the risk of over-involvement. Here, what we mentioned above about social relations within which teaching is carried out is important, with the demand for empathy, flexibility, efforts to not treat others as objects, attention to all the complexities of human communication, etc. Although recognizing the positive and creative character of satisfaction provided by social interactions, occupational stress theory knows that this can be a source of malaise and health problems, when the worker needs to be sustained by such satisfactions. There are three important sources of stress derived from social interaction:

a) social conflict;
b) injustice, unjust treatment, and unreciprocated conduct;
c) anti-social conduct.

The susceptibility of the work of teachers to dynamics and conflicts that are present in the immediate school environment and in the social system as a whole is much more evident in contexts of change within education systems that are taking place throughout the world in various areas of social life (education, health, social services, labor) and whose common denominators are job and salary instability, chronic poverty, vulnerability to regressive practices in communities (delinquency, drug abuse, violence), and increases in the equality gap. In this context, it is understandable that the emotional effort made in the immediate workplace – in classrooms and in dealing with individual students and with groups – leads to a high risk of overwork and frustration. The final product obtained is not in line with expectations on any of the dimensions of the labor

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The emotional effort made in the immediate workplace – in classrooms and in dealing with individual students and groups – leads to a high risk of overwork and frustration

process. Nor is it in line with the consequent deterioration of teacher health, measured by different indicators of psychological well-being. It is within this perspective that research on burnout is taking place.

Using the control/demand model in order to analyze stress factors of teaching, it has been determined that the demands of teaching have a greater weight as a stress factor than the control dimension over one's own work. This is understandable if one considers the multiplicity of tasks that go well beyond the teaching of a particular subject.

In–depth studies on protective factors and preventive strategies reveal a line of future developments the results of which can be of enormous benefit in improving the labor teachers deliver to society, without placing their health at risk

Ergonomic analyses of the work of teachers highlight what we have said about the multiplicity of teacher tasks: constant demands on attention and concentration during class time; constant muscular tension while in contact with students; demands placed on the voice due to the lack of effective means of amplification and of acoustic isolation, and also due to the sizes of classes and difficulties in maintaining the attention and orderly conduct of students.

From the perspectives of ergonomics and social psychology, of note is the risk due to the absence of limits to work time: teachers work under pressure in classrooms in order to satisfy multiple demands; they lack time for pauses and rest during the day; changes in education systems have led to double employment of many teachers; teachers work double and triple shifts, completing tasks at home at the same time that they assume material roles.

In brief, viewing teaching as an activity that has elements in common with other labor processes does not mean taking away its character as a specialized profession within society. Rather, it allows us to place in relief the multiple unvalued aspects of teaching and to offer an analysis of their working conditions and of the impact that these have on the well-being and quality of life of teachers. Hopefully, it can contribute to opening effective avenues to prevention and to fostering health among teachers. Studies that reveal the protective factors and preventive strategies reveal a line of future developments the results of which can be of enormous benefit in improving the labor teachers delivers to society, without placing their health at risk.

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Teacher performance assessment:
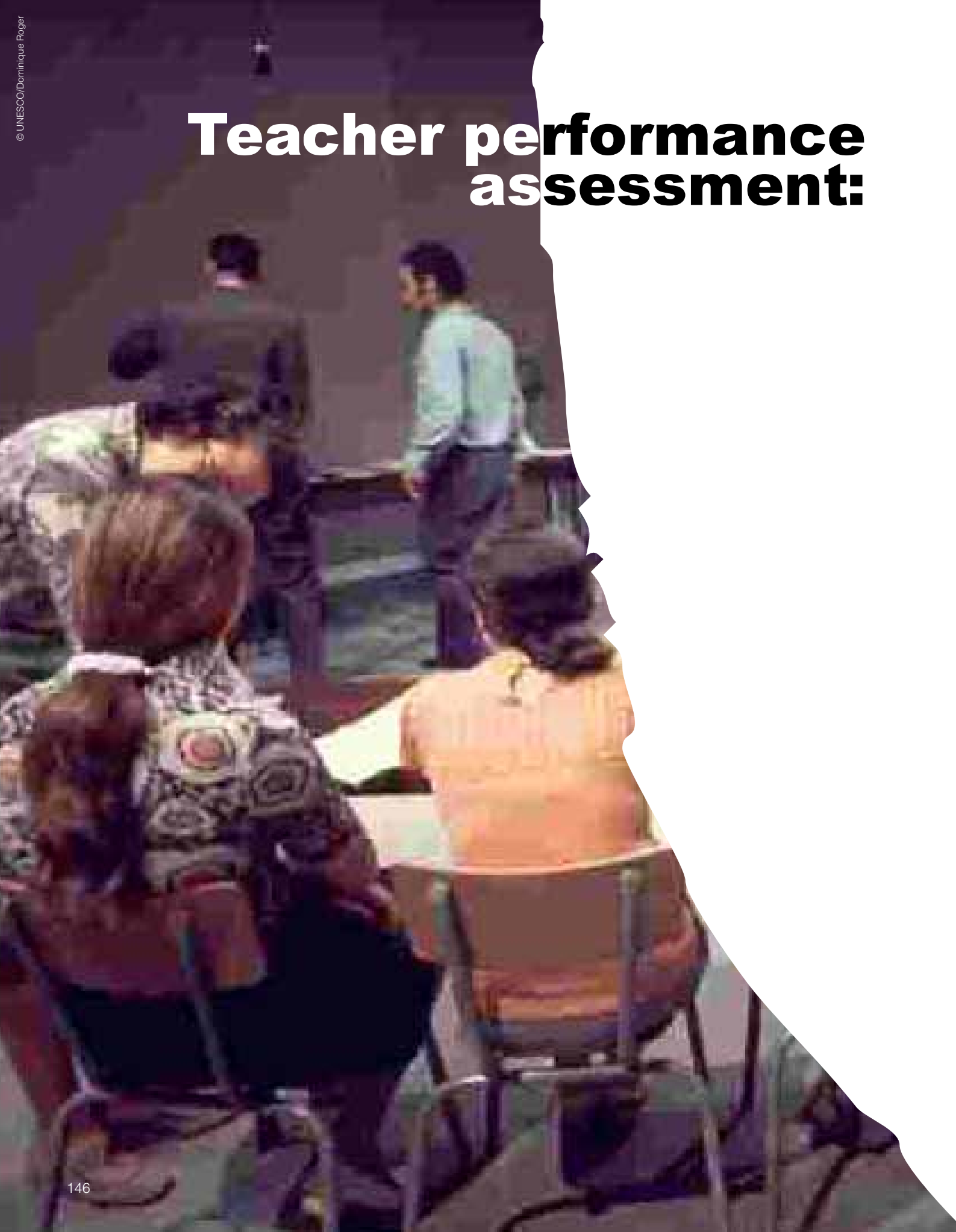
tensions and trends

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Research has shown the great impact that variables related to work carried on in schools and by teachers have on student learning. In this sense, teacher assessment is essential in order to judge their work and to improve the quality of education.

We first present here some considerations on the most important concepts of assessment that serve as our framework of reference. We then present an analysis on the major tensions and problems that should be considered in order to make structural improvements in teacher assessment proposals in our countries.

THE CONCEPT of assessment

Among the variety of current assessment concepts, that called *educational assessment* is able to make the greatest contributions to improving the work of teachers.

The adjective *educational* is the guiding word here. Assessment is thus more than obtaining information on some aspects subject to being graded. It is rather the major input for the development and comprehensive improvement of the object of assessment. Educational assessment implies that the act of assessment, far from being aseptic and completely free from bias, does indeed have a purpose. The purpose is, as we have said, to contribute to improvement.

The assessment process should encourage deep reflection on the possibilities of improvement as an essential tool for strengthening the transformational potential of teachers and leading to solutions of important problems, to bring about a more just and human society. In the words of Medina Rivilla, "ASSESSMENT IS A REFLECTIVE ACTIVITY THAT ALLOW US TO BE AWARE OF PROCESSES AND GOALS ACHIEVED IN DEVELOPING EDUCATION PROJECTS. ASSESSMENT INVOLVES SYSTEMATIC JUDGMENT THAT FACILITATES DETAILED KNOWLEDGE OF PROCESSES APPLIED AND OF FUTURE DECISIONS REGARDING THE CHANGES WE WISH TO BRING ABOUT".

The educational nature of assessment goes far beyond mere declarations of intent. It includes instrumentalization processes and the management of information that it obtains. Assessment procedures cannot be limited to expressing intentions. It requires, rather, constant vigilance and continual reflection during the entire exercise in order to obtain elements that lend total understanding to the participants of the process. If not, one can, and unfortunately often does lose the educational character of assessment with the consequent appearance of different and strong obstacles that as a result can cause the failure of the proposal being developed.

The identification of those aspects that can potentially cause problems for assessment can help to overcome them. Some of these are related to the dynamic character of the assessment process, such as mechanisms that are needed in order to prevent drifting into inertia and unthinking processes that can distort the entire educational concept.

The act of assessment, far from being aseptic and completely free from bias, does indeed have a purpose which is, as we have said, to contribute to improvement

Others are inherent in the social character of assessment itself. In effect, there are different context variables and interests that in some manner point toward the emphases and orientation that the assessment process should follow.

In a sense, the importance that different spheres of our societies lend to assessment reflects the fact that assessment is socially determined. A rapid review of keystones for assessment support this statement. For example, during the Industrial Revolution, schools needed to supply persons whose trained emphasized:

a) mechanization of routines with people being skilled in accurately repeating activities;
b) memorization, since it was necessary to learn and follow instructions contained in manuals;
c) discipline and obedience, since industry needed people who could obey the orders of their superiors.

In the light of the studies of Taylor and Henry Fayol, published in "Administration Industrielle et Genérale" in 1916, synthesizing the management processes of planning, directing, coordinating, and controlling, there also appeared the terms *education technology, curricular design, learning objectives*, and the quantitative emphasis in assessment.

In the 1930s, when the Great Depression caused a generalized stagnation of education and the need to optimize resources dedicated to the development of educational programs, Ralph Tyler published in 1942 his *General Statement of Education* and in 1950 his *Basic Principles of Curricula and Instruction* in which he proposed objective-based assessment. The focus continued to be quantitative. However, the range of topics to be assessed was broadened and the need was expressed to consider the intentions and interests of the producers and participants of the programs.

In the 1960s, a time during which resources were allocated as a function of the success of the programs, Cronbach in 1963 incorporated in assessment a concern for the collection and use of information for the use of decision-makers, and the distinction between formative and summative assessment. Scriven, in 1967, spoke of the need to recognize the value of what teachers had accomplished and the conditioning factors that could affect their accomplishments.

On the other hand, as through time society needs its members to develop other kinds of skills that allow them to develop in a world in which appropriate management of information and knowledge becomes the major dynamic factor, the limitations of quantitative focuses for understanding education phenomena becomes more evident and adds to the on-going discussion about quantitative vs. qualitative perspectives of assessment.

Rist stated that, "Adherence to a paradigm and opposition to another disposes us to conceive the world and what happens within it in profoundly different ways". In fact, while the qualitative paradigm seeks to be more comprehensive than deterministic, it is interested in discovering people's meaning, the motivations, and intentions, it does not base its validity nor its reliability on "objectivity" but rather on the wealth and depth of its findings. Seeking to reveal specific facts through their singularity, it cannot establish generalizations. The quantitative perspective, on the other hand, explains through empirical findings and objective measures. With its objective present in the context of the justification, its proof is based on solid and replicable data (from which the evaluator should maintain distance in order not "bias" the analysis). Its power is based on its ability to make statistically supported inferences, and it assumes stability of the reality that it studies.

Conceptually speaking, education assessment is closer to the qualitative paradigm, but recognizes and makes use of the solidity and rigor of quantitative procedures and instruments in order, through the complementarity of the paradigms, to guarantee a believable and representative process for the entire educational community.

Within the context of complementarity of paradigms appear triangulation mechanisms that foster broader acquisition of a more profound understanding of social reality, impede immediate and unthinking acceptance of initial data and impressions, increase the range, depth, and clarity of concepts, help to correct biases, etc. There are elements that in large measure determine the reliability and validity of assessment [1].

[1] It should be noted that well-known assessment specialists such as Denzin (1970), Silverman (1985), and Fielding (1986) doubt that knowledge obtained through triangulation is necessarily more objective and reliable than that obtained through a single methodology. In the same sense, Fernández Huerta states,*"It is not possible to construct objectivities through the inter-relation of intersubjectivities"*.

TEACHER PERFORMANCE
assessment
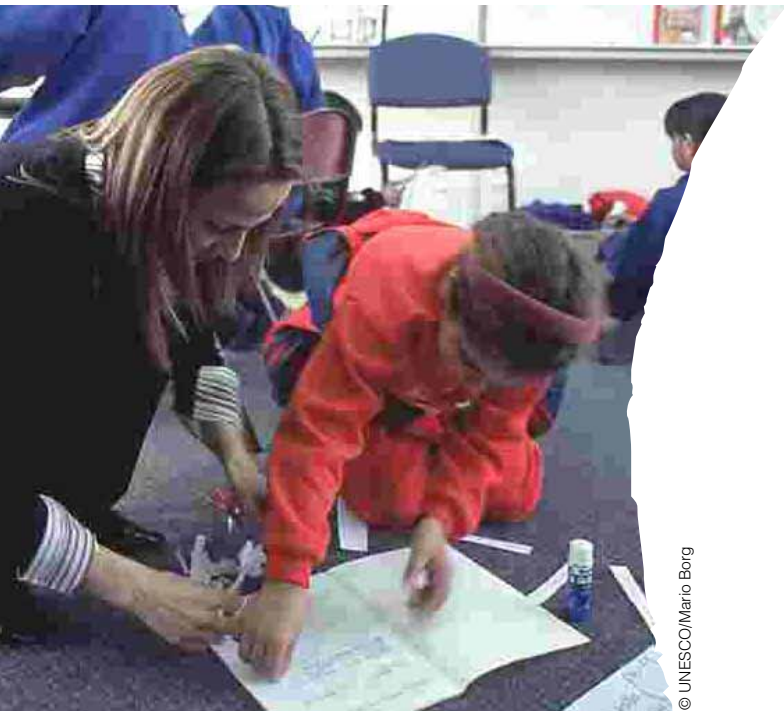
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Assessment of active teachers can be approached from different perspectives distinct from the position defended in this paper. We present below two that are of great influence in our countries and that produce a very reductionist framework on the assessment of teacher performance. One of them limits itself to studying what teachers do in schools, while the other analyzes the work of teachers in terms of the learning results of their students.

The first sees teachers as carrying out a set of tasks that are assigned according to their roles and to what society considers what education professionals should and are able to do. Therefore, performance assessment should be limited to providing information on the appropriate fulfillment of their assigned tasks. For this approach, it is important what teachers do, and not what they are able to do in terms of their human and professional potentiality, to benefit their own development and that of their schools.

The second approach assumes that teachers are educational agents and therefore responsible for the success or failure of the training process carried out in schools. For this focus, all can be explained and understood based on the intrinsic characteristics of teachers. The context is seen to have little influence in spite of the broad and complex social determinants that co-exist inside and outside of schools. Here, the concept of performance points toward the ideal Rambo style in which the individual works alone, overcoming all difficulties based only on his or her individual merits an past experience.

In the assessment proposals of ministries of education of some countries, teacher assessment is defined as "a systematic process for obtaining valid, objective, and reliable information that makes it possible to gauge the degree of fulfillment of the functions and responsibilities of teachers in their areas of achieving results with students." Here, the intent is evident to overcome the patent reductionism of the previously described views through the strategy of uniting them into one only.

In order to implement assessment using this definition one needs to define the ideal teacher in both ethical and pedagogical dimensions, through which one can denote functions and responsibilities that teachers should carry out and that are to be the objects of assessment. Moreover, in order to not limit assessment to the simple confirmation of responsibilities carried out, it is necessary too that teachers make evident in the fulfillment of their work the entire set of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that make up what they know and what they do.

Assessments conceived in this manner tend to appear in meritocratic discourse that take as a point of departure the existence of universal parameters such as academic excellence or quality of education, that can and should be measured with through single systems [2]. That is, they should be uniformly treated, independent of the contexts in which education takes place. Naturally, this means that any attempt to talk about context appears as renouncing the wish to achieve these parameters.

It is difficult for these approaches to achieve the ultimate objective of assessment or improvement in the institutionalized routines of teaching.

In order to carry out an educational assessment of the work of teachers it is necessary to recognize that such work [3] takes place within a very complex field in which are combined in a not well articulated manner subjects as important as knowledge, the concept of education, science, art, ethics, politics, labor, teaching, learning, expertise, practice, school organization, management criteria, personal motivations, professional skills, influences coming from other teachers, etc.

Thus, the work of teachers is not limited to carrying out specific tasks, but rather is a process through which *tEACHERS MOBILIZE THEIR PROFESSIONAL SKILLS, PERSONAL DISPOSITIONS, AND THEIR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN ORDER TO LINK MEANINGFUL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE COMPONENTS THAT INFLUENCE THE TRAINING OF STUDENTS: PARTICIPATE IN EDUCATION MANAGEMENT, STRENGTHEN DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL CULTURE, AND INTERVENE IN THE DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION, AND ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL AND NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICIES IN ORDER TO FOSTER IN STUDENTS LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF LIFE SKILLS* [4].

Here, as above, we emphasize the social character of the work of teachers and how their tasks combine both intrinsic and extrinsic variables. It is true that teachers work within a social group, in an institutional framework filled with routines and power relations which make up the school climate. But they are not victims of the circumstances around them; rather their work helps them to configure organizational routines, contributes to consolidating pedagogical thought, and contributes to the cultural wealth of the surroundings.

Within this context, the assessment question regarding teacher performance may be formulated in the following terms: how may teachers, given current conditions, improve professionally and at the same time have a positive impact on the learning of their students?

Two things are needed: a) professional development of teachers within their particular contexts, and b) improved educational practices. The first is necessarily linked to training and the updating of skills, in terms of both pedagogy and subject matter, to reflecting upon their own teaching tasks, and to their active participation in reflections by the school which acquires vigor through the exercise of self-assessment. The second refers directly to curricula that, as stated by Medina and Blanco, is a field of investigation that combines theory, practice, teacher training and professional enhancement. Considerations of the curriculum give meaning to the what, how, and why of teaching processes that foster learning.

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[2] There is an interesting work about arguments of this kind by Carina Kaplan: KAPLAN, C. "Una crítica a los discursos pedagógicos meritocráticos en contextos sociales signados por la desigualdad". *Revista Temas de Psicopedagogía 7.* Buenos Aires, 1998.

[3] Regarding teacher performance we have made use of some thoughts contributed through the initiative of PRELAC and under the coordination of Magaly Robalino, of a group made up of, Alfredo Astargoza, Héctor Valdés, Ricardo Cuenca, and the author.

[4] Taken from the draft document "El desempeño profesional desde las nuevas dimensiones del protagonismo docente", written by the group cited above.

Therefore, it is not possible to separate teacher performance assessment from a comprehensive view of institutional development. For improvements in the effectiveness of education require the integration of personnel development, teacher assessment, and improvements in schools as institutions.

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Teachers are not victims of the circumstances around them; rather their work helps them to configure organizational routines, contributes to consolidating pedagogical thought, and to the cultural wealth of the surroundings

The personal development of any professional includes not only his or her potential derived from cognitive structures, past experiences, and skill repertory. As Knox states, this is very limited and restricted to individual mental and emotional resources. Rather, personal development requires different stimuli obtained from assessments on the work of teachers from other members of the education community and from the goals and challenges provided by assessment processes. Teacher assessment is a trigger to processes that lead to improving educational practices.

Therefore, if it is the case that through assessment it is possible to improve educational practices and the training of our citizens, enhance citizen culture, and thus clarify the future of peoples, why does assessment provoke so many difficulties in countries such as ours that are so much in need of progress in carrying out teacher assessment?

In principle, there would seem to be a natural tendency to resist being assessed. Assessment is good and necessary in theory, and is even quite easy to implement when no one is directly affected. Students, are so familiar with assessments to the point of not resisting having their knowledge assessed through written, confidential tests, they do, however, resist public assessment of their performance.

But there are broader issues that can explain the question posed above. Some of these are described in the following section. Before that, it should be made clear that teacher performance assessment is not a good in itself. Depending on how it is planned and executed it may be more harmful than beneficial for the development of students in general and for their learning in particular.

Evidently, if teachers feel that their jobs and professions are at stake, they tend to behave and act in a manner that guarantees that they come out well in assessments. This, far from leading to improvements in the quality of teaching, will generate simulations of behavior and even agreements of the type "I won't cause problems for you, and you give me a good assessment" that are detrimental for high-quality education.

Nor should we expect all teachers, individually or as a group, to express support of assessment. The histories of our countries demonstrate that although it may not always be from the army that legitimacy is granted, it is nevertheless a social construct that does not have consensus as its only path. For consensus tends to occur as a result of positive results of adopted policies.

> If teachers feel that their jobs and professions are at stake, they tend to behave and act in a manner that guarantees that they come out well in assessments

> Performance assessments are carried out with teachers, and not against them

TENSIONS
and problems for assessment

Our countries do not have assessment cultures that permeate the working structures of schools, and that would thus permit a natural growth of assessment proposals. As a result, whenever assessments are proposed, alarms sound and the entire community is witness to debates arguing pros and cons.

Teacher performance assessments, by emphasizing improvement and producing forums within which teachers can make proposals and express their doubts at each and every point, generate appropriate conditions for clarifying the panorama of assessment and for finding ways to make assessments viable. Performance assessments are carried out with teachers, and not against them.

Although it is true that there are objective conditions that are inherent to assessment, there are also conditions that are relative to the particular proposals of each assessment process that present additional problems and tensions to performance assessments.

The role of assessment
within the context of discussions
of the quality of education

Most of our countries encourage processes to guarantee the quality of education using well-defined conceptual frameworks for establishing different strategies. Some of these strategies provide clear guidelines of what can be called product-focused assessments: written exams for teachers, written student achievement tests for different grades or at the end of school cycles, etc.

In this way, ministries of education outline resource allocation policies, secondary schools carry out admission exams for primary school students, institutions of higher education use the results of government tests or administer their own assessment examinations to entrance candidates from secondary schools, and teachers question the quality of training that their students have received in previous courses. That is, a general distrust is created regarding the correspondence between the training people receive at different levels of education and that which they are supposed to be offered.

Using incomplete information [5], the communication media interpret the results of assessments for the general public, added to this distrust and placing the entire educational system is doubt before society. The results of these tests tend to be used to place before society's judgment the quality of education offered in this or that school. Obviously, these results can be and in fact are used to assess teacher performance.

This entire atmosphere of generalized distrust produced by occasional testing that does not consider contexts and the processes through which results may be explained is not a proper framework for any kind of assessment. Among other things because it sends incorrect messages such as "they assess me because they doubt the quality of my work"; rather than the correct message "it is necessary to participate in assessments because through them I will be able to identify opportunities that will make it possible to improve the educational process of which I am a part."

Quality processes seek improvements, of which education assessment is an integral part. Administering diagnostic assessments and using them as examples of institutional and personal inefficiency damages the very improvement processes that one seeks to carry out.

Another problematic aspect of the debate on quality is closely linked to the efficiency criteria currently used in our countries. These criteria emphasize within institutions the optimization of available resources and particularly the use of quantitative indicators such as the number of students enrolled vs. the number of contracted teachers, or average test scores vs. infrastructure investments, etc.

The danger here is to leaving aside the analysis of all processes that help explain the results obtained and generating a vicious cycle of few resources - poor results - few resources.

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[5] For example, a test administered to students in their final year included four questions in the area of the humanities. With the results obtained by the students, judgements were made regarding the quality of training offered by a particular school.

The role of assessment
in the teaching profession

The teaching profession, as understood in most of our countries, besides incorporating a set of regulations on how teachers move through the education system - conditions for entry, for permanence and promotion, among others – includes enhancing the academic quality of teachers and establishes teacher training mechanisms.

Within the framework of the teaching profession, in most countries the use of assessments is restricted to cases of the promotion of teachers to school directorships. In order to be promoted to this level the major criteria are: time in service as a teacher, academic degrees earned, training courses taken - many of which without the least pertinence to the area of a teacher's work [6] – and where the teacher works. It is evident that teacher career plans do not seem to be based on improving education in order to produce better teachers, but rather for their unperturbed transit within the profession. Time and the homogenization of titles earned seem to be the essential inputs to create the appearance that education is improving in our countries.

In contrast to the above, various studies show a low correlation between teaching experience, rank reached during exercise of the profession, and learning demonstrated by students. Therefore it is vital to think about incorporating performance assessment as a source of quality differentiating inputs, thus breaking with the inertia that lends homogeneity to titles obtained or to the passage of time that does not necessarily improve the work of teachers.

We are not speaking of assessments that alter the working climate and conditions of teachers, fostering individualism and competitiveness. Rather, it is a case of incorporating assessment as an on-going system that provides multiple possibilities for systematizing academic work, guiding the activities of schools, and improving the management of human resources.

The idea of incorporating the results of assessments as elements to be considered in the development of the teaching profession appears to be seen by many teachers as a threat to job stability. Nevertheless, teachers, like all professionals involved in dynamic processes, need energetic inputs that allow them to face inevitable entropies of the profession and which impede processes under development.

Another problem lies in how to determine if the results of teacher assessments should be a differentiating factor in salary scales. This discussion has a number of ramifications.

On the one hand, there are those who argue that salary levels should recognize work achievements. Here, the subject is social justice, for it makes no sense for a dedicated teacher who generates excellent student performance and is positively assessed to receive the same or lower salary than others who merely have a higher degree and longer time in service.

Others argue that the issue is not so simple, and that merit pay only produces problems for the quality of education since these kinds of competitive elements conflict with the economic reality of our populations [7], which dictate that very few teachers can hope for promotions and salaries increases. The result of merit pay would be that only teachers with some exceptional characteristics would be able to aspire to such increases, while the majority will not feel stimulated to improve. The alternative, of course, would be to invest resources in providing all teachers with the means and the incentives to attain greater professional growth.

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[6] In some countries, a teacher who, for example, takes a photography course obtains points allowing them to ascend the pay scale without regard to level or the subject matter that they teach.

[7] Some financial studies have even tried to demonstrate the unviability of a professional salary for teachers, arguing that teachers represent a very large proportion of public employees and that any salary increase, as small as it may be, has a serious impact on public finances.

Problems related to assessment participants

In general, all assessment proposals, with greater or lesser emphasis, conclude that all those who affect or are affected by the subject who is to be assessed should participate in performance assessments. Those affected should participate in order that information may be obtained related to the contexts of the person assessed; the others should participate in order to establish the quality conditions for the work carried out.

It is easily argued that all of them are necessary sources of information in any performance assessment, but that there will always be difficulties when defining the way that such information is to be obtained, as well as the relative importance that each of them will have in arriving at conclusions or value judgments of the process.

Given that each actor provides a partial view of the universe of the teaching task, participation of the largest possible number contributes to decreasing the degree of potential arbitrariness of an assessment. Moreover, including the largest possible number permits better assessment of professional performance in terms of institutional development.

Thus, for example, no one doubts that the opinions of students regarding the work of their teachers are valuable in performance assessment. However, besides the questions that these opinions provoke both in terms of validity and reliability, the way that they should be used in the over-all assessment process is far from clear. Does one use them to formulate questions regarding the teaching competence of instructors? Do they serve for asking ourselves about teachers' disciplinary competence? Are they important for identifying the commitment that teachers have toward their profession?, etc.

Something similar occurs for each of the participants that one wishes to involve in the process. The problem is not only a question derived from conceptual frameworks of assessment; it touches upon the very question of the legitimacy of assessment, for no education assessment proposal can be carried out if it does not generate credibility in the objects of assessment. Teachers who do not believe in the assessment process in which they are involved will never assume ownership of the results and will never use them for their own professional development.

Different studies have demonstrated that teachers see themselves as active participants in an organization that has clearly-defined hierarchical structures and as occupying a place in an organization in which they perceive those at higher levels, those at the same level, and those at lower levels than theirs. From this perspective, one can understand that they accept as legitimate the assessments of their hierarchical superiors, ethical components of the opinions of their colleagues, and that they are opposed to assessments coming from administrative sectors, parents, or students.

Assessments of education that include teacher participation as an essential component permit them to take part in defining sources of information, establish the role that each plays in the assessment and the levels at which information obtained should be placed. All of this results in a significant reduction of the negative reactions that this subject provokes.

Teachers who do not believe in the assessment process in which they are involved will never assume ownership of the results and will never use them for their own professional development

Problems of school distrust

Teacher performance assessments are carried out with teachers and never against them. In the certainty and credibility that this statement awakens in teachers lies much of the success of the assessment process. When we examine the factors that remove or add credibility to performance assessments we can see that those to be assessed place much importance on who proposes and who leads an assessment exercise. Of major importance is who makes decisions based on this process. In the case of proposals coming from ministries, besides considering its details, the legitimacy of those proposing and executing the assessment is of great influence.

A long history of ill-advised and badly managed social policies on the part of the ruling classes of most of our countries has led to a great deal of popular mistrust of government programs. The fact that most of our governments have bowed to international lending agencies, impelled by interventionist policies that benefit the world powers in detriment to development of the poorest countries, has led to a state of hopelessness on the part of our populations who spontaneously reject the numerous legal proposals presented for consideration to representatives of powers far removed from the multitude, whether these are called congresses, senates, etc.

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Within this framework, assessment proposals coming from ministries of education are seen as attempts to legitimate policies and actions imposed from outside. Examples abound: in some countries, policies that seek increased coverage are in conflict with the demands for fiscal austerity imposed by international financial entities which governments, in order to increase spending on coverage, sacrifice investments in school construction, teacher training, school lunch programs, etc. that improve the education that is offered. In justification, the public is presented with teacher and student assessment results as fruits of the inefficiency of schools and as evidence of a supposed poor performance of teachers, thus "showing" the need for and appropriateness of the policies established.

On the other hand, education policies seem to depend, basically, on particular interests of the government in power. It would not be inaccurate to speak of education reform by a Minister of Education [8] . The temporary nature of such policies makes it difficult to speak of clear government education policies in our countries.

In short, except for valuable exceptions, we can state that education ministries and secretariats do not enjoy the necessary confidence of teachers for government assessment policies to be examined and reflected upon without opposition. It is perhaps for this reason that proposals instituted and even designed with teacher unions take longer to be published than to be rejected by teachers. Some studies show that where the majority of teachers are opposed to assessments and most rejection is encountered, is in those countries in which there are the highest levels of mistrust of the institutions responsible for formulating and executing education policies.

[8] The problem becomes more serious in cases of more than one Minister of education during a single presidency.

Who is interested in participating in an assessment process that discredits his work?

Public dissemination
vs. confidentiality of results

Without assessment, teachers have been wrapped within a calm and warming bureaucratic structure which allows them to enjoy the same job stability and salary levels as other colleagues who have the same level of training, independently of differences in classroom performance. Assessment necessarily carries with it differences in performance, knowledge and skills that in a sense break into this tranquility.

Assessment involves explaining individual differences. It is therefore useless to attempt to hide them. What must be done is to take advantage of them in order to benefit both teachers and schools. Democratic and equitable forums are needed that foster reflection on those factors through which these differences can be elaborated in order to work toward their reduction. For this reason, what happens to assessment results is a question that should be resolved before the development of any assessment proposal since, if teachers are not assured that these results will not be used to place their professionalism and responsibility in question, but rather to help them improve their own performance, they will feel the need to be opposed to the process.

The question of whether or not to make assessment results public is key to successfully implementing assessments, especially in media-based countries such as ours. Our communication media appear to be mainly interested in publishing assessment results when these are particularly negative [9]. Who is interested in participating in an assessment process that discredits his work?

Behind the position to publish the results, and with them the inequalities, is the idea that this will have a positive impact by generating pertinent information for both service providers, users, and teachers themselves who can use them to overcome the problems identified. Behind the decision to not publish assessment results is the conviction that public and formal acknowledgment of differences revealed will result in strengthening and reproducing them through time [10].

But, besides the dilemma here described, there is the need to reconcile the right of the public to know with the need to make positive use of the results – something that appears to require a high degree of confidentiality [11].

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[9] "40% of teachers receive negative assessments", is a much more desirable story lead than: "Most teachers rated positively in tests".

[10] A follow-up of rankings carried out in secondary schools using tests administered at the end of the school year would make it possible to demonstrate that the differences of average scores between schools with good results and those with poor results are gradually increasing.

[11] It appears that ministers felt that publication of assessment results was an excellent indicator of their efficiency, and therefore did appear to take this question with sufficient seriousness.

The role of teacher unions
in assessment processes

People in general, and professionals in particular, for different reasons that mostly have to do with the need for protection against possible threats to survival and the right to obtain better living conditions, have joined together in organizations that seek the defense of members. It is common knowledge that teaching has not received sufficient recognition from our governments for the profession to be able to exist with dignity and under conditions that correspond to its social importance.

Although peoples of different societies recognize the importance of education and sincerely attribute outstanding human characteristics to teachers as a way of thanking them for the key role that they play in human development, government policies place the teaching profession in the lower ranks. This translates into low salaries and poor conditions for proper performance.

The fact that teacher unions assume intransigent and permanent positions against any governmental proposal that might place teacher job stability at risk has much to do with the social importance of teachers combined with a general recognition of the unjust conditions under which they are obliged to exercise their profession. This also helps explain why, in spite of the anti-union efforts of governments that obsessively see the defense of the weak as a danger for their own stability, teacher unions still retain much of their social protest abilities and their power to mobilize.

It is only fair to recognize that in many countries, teacher organizations increasingly participate in the formulation and development of education policies. This is due not to any generosity on the part of governments, but rather to the fact that through their struggles and intellectual potential, teachers have over the years gained a forum. Current conditions demand that these teacher organizations assume as their own cause the rights of children and young people to receive a higher quality education.

Doing so will lead to the recognition that teachers are the major agents of education and that better quality education depends to a great extent on improvements in the services that teachers provide. Opposing education assessment such as that described above, based on the mere fact that it may create difficulties for teachers or on the simple assumption that government can use assessment against teachers, is placing oneself in opposition to the rights of children to education as well as opposition to the very roots and principles of the teaching profession.

Teacher assessment, seen not as a hierarchical strategy of vigilance for controlling the activities of teachers, but rather as a way to foster improvements in teacher performance and for producing policies that benefit education as a public service, is of invaluable benefit to teacher unions themselves. For the social benefits of these policies will yield benefits of social support for defending the teaching profession against the attacks of short term efficiency-minded States such as ours.

Current conditions demand that these teacher organizations assume as their own cause the rights of children and young people to receive a higher quality education

Teacher unions should accept the fact that judgments of the work of teachers are inevitable, and that the lack of clarity and systematization that characterize the "informal" judgments made by different sectors of society, given their extreme subjectivity and ease with which they are manipulated by the powers that be, are in themselves clear threats to the teaching profession. The constant allusions made by government ministries and transmitted by the mass media regarding the quality of education provided by schools are not gratuitous; rather, they allow authorities to present teacher work stoppages and mobilization as threats against the rights of children to education.

In spite of the fact that teacher assessments can be used to produce negative consequences for teachers and thus weaken the structure of teacher unions, teachers should concentrate their efforts and abilities on guaranteeing proper implementation of education assessments, reaffirming in this way their commitment to the defense of their profession and to the quality of education.

Indicators in teacher assessment

In order to identify the subject of indicators as a point of tension in teacher assessment, we use the characterization of Jorge Caliero Martínez who argues that these indicators:

a) Furnish information about any social phenomenon.
b) Combine several variables in order to provide an over-all view.
c) Are fixed in time.
d) Make comparability possible.
e) Provide a certain degree of predictability.

These characteristics should be reviewed in light of the following criteria necessary for their proper utilization:

a) The indicators should provide relevant information to avoid assessment being based on questions not essential for the development of teachers and of schools.
b) Precision in variable construction is essential when establishing the validity and reliability of assessments.
c) Indicators will be manipulated. Therefore, extreme care must be taken in their formulation. On the way that they are used and the form in which the information obtained is presented will depend a good part of the results of an assessment.
d) The cost of using an indicator establishes whether it will be used or not, while being careful to not place at risk its relevance or precision.
e) The availability of information required by the indicator is closely linked with its viability.
f) The possibility of regularly updating indicators is important in order to determine positive or negative trends of processes.

To the above we should add the fact that education is essentially qualitative, and the most appropriate indicators are therefore qualitative – the very ones in which the communities have least developed expertise.

Finally, and to conclude, teacher performance assessment, more than one more exercise that is carried out in schools, can become an opportunity for teachers, parents, students, unions, ministries of education, governments, and society in general to adopt the goal of establishing educational processes that provide our peoples the real and objective possibility to move toward their own consolidation and progress.*e*

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figures
IN THE SAND
Education and society

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On a tidal plane I encountered a group of children and young people from a nearby fishing village busily drawing on the sand enormous figures of fish, boats, hearts, dates, and names. In the background was a school building, closed for the holidays. Asking one of them, he told me that his school had never used the beach, this large and open notebook full of teaching and learning possiblities. For him, school was synonymous with boredom and monotony. Classes for him were like another word beginning with the same letter – cages that make prisoners of both students and teachers through an education that is conformist, repetitive, memory-based, and lacking in participation.

I thought about how difficult it is to find anyone who denies this irrefutable truth: the education system needs total renovation and restructuring. The questions are how to reform it and what are the fundamental goals of these necessary changes.

It is important to initiate a search for alternatives for an education system that lacks the capacity to respond with the necessary quality and development to the needs of its current and future students. Nor, as noted by Adriana Puiggros, does the system have the inclusive capacity to absorb those of the population who have dropped by its wayside, in many cases permanently.

Such alternatives should be based on innovative thought, with *innovation* understood operationally as "conducts or objects that are new because they are qualitatively different from existing forms, have been deliberately conceived in order to improve some component of the formal education system or of non-formal educational practices, that improve the level of education of the population …" (Restrepo, 1985).

A NEW MODEL
with a view toward change

Implicit in this is the need for a moving toward a pedagogical model from the perspective of change in education, placing emphasis on the methodology of informal education, contributing such vital elements as reassessing the value of the knowledge possessed by learner and the relation to context. This provides a transformation potential since it is vital that the educational process express our culture, inter-cultural capacity, idiosynchrasies, history, perspectives, and identity.

The idea of comprehensive popular education involves a combination of formal and non-formal modalities, with education services offered that are closely related with the realities, aspirations, and needs of the social sectors with which one works. Quality and equity are essential parts of this process, one that includes the comprehensiveness of key themes, gender diversity, culture, age, economic status, physical or mental capacity, and the plurality of forms of education linked to the highest possible quality.

It also should involve the creation of daily life-based learning environments, stimulating the construction of dialogue and knowledge. It should redefine eduational processes based on a different view of knowledge and with the participation of people in its extension, production, application, and appropriation.

We must lend value to the processes of socialization directed at increasing and consolidating individual, group, and collective capacities of social groups (especially the underprivileged) through recuperation and re-creation of values, reassessment of the values of historical memory, and the production, appropriation, and application of knowledge that makes possible active participation in proposals for national developed carried out at local and regional levels.

The educational process cannot take place without a close relation between education and life

Education should take an active part in the social processes that generate or reconstruct interests, aspirations, culture, and identities that lead toward human development. It should provide growth and consolidation, in both theory and practice, of the values of solidarity, participation, work, honesty, creativity, a critical outlook, and the commitment to action leading to change. We must seek to develop the ability to articulate participatory methodological proposals in the teaching-learning process as well as in planning, assessment, decision-making and management, and in the understanding, search for, and solution of problems. Education should provide opportunities for the development of these abilities, and be linked both to social participation and to the sciences, arts, and technology – developing abilities, creativity, and judgment skills.

EDUCATION,
practice and life

It is important to develop the collective production and appropriation of knowledge. This involves training people to construct knowledge and to critically take ownership of accumulated universal knowledge instead of only transmitting it uni-directionally. In the process, the point of departure and of arrival lies in practice, involving arriving at a moment when existing practice can take a quality leap toward improved practice, in an ever-rising process. In this sense, education should always emphasize participation and coherence between method and technique.

The educational process cannot take place without a close relation between education and life, viewing people not only as beneficiaries, but also as major actors in the process.

While talking and drawing with them in the sand, designing a sun, smiling faces, and a seahorse, I thought, "only popular education with roots and branches is able to respond to current and future challenges. The roots involve lending new value to memory and historical processes, identities and cultures, to commitments to the excluded, the segregated, the forgotten and oppressed. Lending new value to gender, age and ethnicity; to participation and ethics. The branches represent the ability to renovate and to innovate; to take upon us the new tasks creatively and boldly, escaping dogmas and stigmas, and the fear of flying".

Comprehensive education means also including a plurality of themes that express universal values that are rarely integrated into educational programs. One example is the participation of women, which in the proposal should respond both to practical needs (daily life, the home, sex education) and to strategic gender needs (equality of opportunities at various levels) and also express a non-sexist producer-reproducer emphasis of new values.

Another example is respect for cultural diversity and for the environment, where one can integrate the perspective of sustainability from the local to the most general dimension.

Another case is ethnic education, starting at the recuperation of implicit methodology of native cultures, linked to universally valid principles, developing an education proposal in accordance with the needs, contexts, and culture of indigenous peoples.

One can re-conceptualize and replace the idea of propaganda with that of political communication, linking it to a horizontal relationship that is more effective for achieving objectives. Interesting proposals have been developed for political education of activists with parties that recognize the need to change their political methods and styles. Research shows the entire range of developing political participation, above all for micro, local, and regional processes.

THREE DIMENSIONS
of unity

Education should be related to the organizational and social life of the community. There cannot be a separation between daily life, the needs and potentials of people, and educational programs.

Three dimensions should be mentioned in this regard:

➔ The dimension of *DISCOVERY* and *RECOGNITION*, that is, investigation, recovery, and re-valuation.
➔ The dimension of *OWNERSHIP*, that is, pedagogy.
➔ The dimension of *SHARING, EXPLAINING*, that is, communication.

These dimensions are interconnected and linked to various areas of peoples lives and practice. Within these, education is a dimension of the process. It is not the case, therefore of merely improving "pedagogical actions" without touching upon other facets of life. This, however, is not sufficient for comprehensive education without considering the proper place of the *OWNERSHIP* dimension. Similarly, the communication and/or popular education alternative rests more in *SHARING*, and participatory investigation in *DISCOVERING*.

Education moves between two poles: those of *KNOWING* and of *TRANSFORMING*. One cannot know without transforming, and vice-versa. These constitute a dialectic unity. We cannot carry out the pedagogical task of knowing and then wait for transformation to take place. On the contrary, we know by transforming and we are transformed by knowing. But in comprehensive education we do so always from the viewpoint of knowing; however transforming is the major contradiction. If not, the act of knowing will be an end in itself, in knowledge for itself.

> There is no educational process if one does not furnish a close relation between education and life, seeing people not only as beneficiaries, but as major actors in the process

Knowledge, as a fundamental characteristic of human beings, makes sense when this knowledge generates capacities for transforming reality. True assessment of education is not measured according to the appropriation of concepts, but rather according to the ability to instill improved practice, or one with a better ability to transform in the correct sense.

Returning to the three dimensions (discovery, ownership, and sharing), which is the most important? Certainly, one cannot always determine the same importance or weighting between them. In spite of being interconnected, in the operational sense there are subordinate relationships, according to purposes and particular nature of context, objectives, and subjects. That is, a process can be one of participatory investigation, of communication, or of training. Entering into one of the three dimensions we can treat the others. The important thing is the comprehensiveness and, above all, the result in terms of transforming practice. The three dimensions are determined by the principal pole of transformation, but according to rhythms and processes.

Nor can the three dimensions be reduced to the purely instrumental plane.

For example, thinking that sharing means writing a neighborhood newsletter, or that discovery involves a superficial diagnosis. It must be deeper, more dynamic, and continuous. To investigate is to discover oneself, but if one is not able to broaden oneself historically and gradually, what one knows may be limiting. The entire process assumes taking note of the tensions between the micro and the macro, between departing and arriving, between old and new knowledge, between that which is personal and that which is collective, between the subjective and the objective, between project and process, efficiency and efficacy, science and conscience, between knowing and sensing, quality and clarity.

Comprehensive education should be able to relate objectives with a participatory and critical pedagogy. An appropriate didactic needs effective tools (techniques) in order to implement the entire process. But these techniques, methods, objectives, concepts, are coherent within the framework of a methodology of the practice of change.

There is no educational process if one does not furnish a close relation between education and life, seeing people not only as beneficiaries, but as major actors in the process.

The methodology seeks to base itself on comprehensiveness, relating diverse realities with linked unity. Thus, it cannot be only "technique", leaving aside human or ethical questions; or only scientific, only humanistic, or only formal or non-formal. Rather, it must link, discover, and complement, various dimensions.

It is important to develop the collective production and ownership of knowledge. This involves training people to construct knowledge and to critically take ownership of accumulated universal knowledge rather than only transmit it unidirectionally. In this process, the point of departure and of arrival lies in practice, involving arriving at a moment when existing practice can take a quality leap toward improved practice, in an ever-rising process. In this sense, education should always emphasize participation and coherence between method and technique, among other themes.

We face the challenge of how to work with concrete realities, new ways of thinking about and carrying out basic education; new ways of conceiving the role of society, of the State, of schools, of teachers, of learners and those who support them; new ways of coordinating and constructing social alliances; new

The key word is coherence: between practice and theory, between saying and doing, between life's dimensions

COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION
and the search for coherence

ways of conceiving and constructing educational-cultural infrastructure; new ways of combining and linking different manners and modalities of education in relation to the expressions of education corresponding to all age groups; new ways of obtaining education resources and environments.

The proposal may be in the form of an innovative comprehensive education strategy that is expressed both on the functional and territorial planes. On the functional plane it may be composed of the educational programs of an entity, association, or group that wants to incorporate its members or non-members into particular levels of education or training. On the territorial plane, it may be an actual center located in the community that provides educational services in direct relation to the aspirations, needs, and knowledge of the residents.

Within this perspective, comprehensive education is not synonymous with "non-formal education" or "adult education". It transcends them because its methodology can generate proposals in various areas, from formal education to the political education of activists, and including adult literacy training or education of native people.

Is this comprehensive education proposal viable? Of one thing we can be certain: if education is not able to enter into the area of social policy, into the plans of civil society and take advantage of community organizational capacity, it runs the risk of falling into the limbo of good but unrealizable ideas. Men and women are needed who are able to captivate, propagate, and push the proposal forward, not only in the sphere of civil society, but in the political area and the private sector.

It should be remembered that for the philosophy of comprehensive education, social practice is the best criterion of truth. Transformational practice is complex, multiple, and process-based, where a dialectic methodology incorporates the sunflowers of a plurality of dimensions that are reflected in reality. Education should be involved with this multiplicity of practice in order to provide recognition, ordering, and understanding of such practice, to interpret it from a social perspective and convert it into support for a liberating project that personalizes (in the sense of making them more *persons*) human beings, helping make passive inhabitants into active citizens. This involves conscious, intentional, and critical intervention in the form of multiple actions within a poly-faceted and complex reality.

Comprehensive education is therefore a systematic and intentional process of understanding social practice in order to transform it consciously as a function of the organizational process and within the perspective of an historic project of liberation. In other words, it is a set of systematically and processually articulated actions with the purpose of collectively understanding life in order to transform it in an organized manner. The key word is coherence: between practice and theory, between saying and doing, between life's dimensions.

The backdrop is, moreover, the methodology of transforming practice or dialectical methodological conception that is valid not only for education, but for all broad processes of change, since it is attached to the multiplicity of social practice in order to provide recognition, ordering, and understanding of the same; to interpret it from a social perspective and to transform it as a function of a historic project.

This involves conscious, critical, and intentional intervention within multiple dimensions as well as within a multiple and complex reality. Thus, education fosters the method for knowledge of reality, of the dialectic interrelation of dimensions, of accumulation and organized articulation, of identity, and of culture. *e*

OF TEACHERS
in changes in education

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THE NEED FOR CHANGE
and the growing crisis in education

It is increasingly apparent in Latin America that without education, no change is possible, and that education is a key instrument for human development, economic growth, competitiveness, strengthening the roots of democracy, contact between cultures, citizenship, and the exercise of rights.

Education is not an end in itself. It is a means. But it is also an opportunity for creating and arriving at agreement.

However, in order for education to provide its beneficent influence several conditions are necessary. Of these at least three basic ones stand out:

a) That education be part of and support a national-level project
b) That education be considered a priority on the political agenda of governments.
c) That education policies fostering change be consensual and supported by all sectors, especially by teachers themselves.

In most of Latin America, education is unconnected with the destiny of the people and of their country. An education of this kind has little impact on the processes of change. This explains why these countries lack a national project and, therefore, an education project as well.

TEACHERS
in the storm

Teachers, due to their great responsibilities in the classroom, are essential elements for change. But they are also are a factor contributing to deadlock.

The actions of teachers regarding the subject of change may be viewed on at least two levels: one, according to their influence on education policy through activities of their unions, and the other through their daily work in the classroom.

A number of studies on teacher conflict in Latin America note that actions of fact and political strategies of teacher unions, with some important exceptions, have been limited to the question of salaries. This revindicatory reductionism has prevented teachers from effectively supporting and participating in education policies. Moreover, prolonged and often continual work stoppages have weakened the quality and prestige of public education in detriment to the education of lower and middle-class children and young people and to the benefit of the growth of private schools[1].

In regard to the exercise of teaching and its impact in the classroom we may note the following:

1. One determining factor in teacher performance is initial training. This area suffers serious deficiencies in most Latin American countries. In effect, teacher training underwent no significant changes during the 20th century. Of course, during this time the requirements for entering teacher training gradually increased. Course content changed. Nevertheless, reforms did not significantly effect the organization and curricula of "normal schools" [2].

2. In spite of weaknesses in teacher training, radical changes took place in education systems, both in terms of quantitative and geographic expansion as well as in new social and institutional demands on the profession. This produced a disparity between the requirements of education systems and the professional training of teachers [3].

When national agendas give priority to fiscal stability and macro-economic equilibrium, and place social policies (including those of education) on a secondary or tertiary plane, education will therefore have little impact. This is the case of the majority of countries in the region.

Although in terms of the coverage of education Latin America has achieved satisfactory levels, in terms of quality the situation leaves much to be desired. Moreover, in most countries these indicators demonstrate the seriousness of the education crisis and the failure of reform.

Many reforms carried out during the 1990s were responses to a format adopted to the requirements of the neo-liberal adjustment model, thus giving priority to policies designed from the point of view of management, efficiency, a reduced role of the State, and forced upon the backs of teacher movements. Herein lies one of the causes of the failures of these reforms.

From an analysis of the factors described we may conclude that currently, education does not foster change. Rather, it strengthens the status quo.

Not without reason, accusations in these crises fall upon elites and governments. But other factors and actors such as teachers are often hidden from view. For a number of reasons, whether due to their opposition to imposed models, or to their own internal processes regarding the development and exercise of their profession, teachers have also contributed to strengthening the conservatism of education systems.

1   Milton Luna, "La conflictividad docente en América Latina". UNESCO. Paper in process.

2   T.N. The term "normal school" is derived from the French Ecole Normale Supérieure, which provided instruction in the "norms" or "standard practices" of teaching.
Inmaculada Egido, Francisco García Peña, Cristina del Moral, "La formación de profesores para la enseñanza de la historia en la educación básica. Así se enseña la historia". Convenio Andrés Bello, 1999, pp. 113 and 114.

3   ibid, p. 114.

3. The challenges of a society overloaded with information, the problems and changes in the socialization of children and young people over-stimulated and "educated" by television and video games, increasing weakening of family structures, new demands from the labor market, and an economy requiring new skills and knowledge, the increased need for citizen participation, were all confronted by schools and education systems both paralyzed and impotent, encumbered with teachers trained using traditional methods. "These phenomena and other problems characterize the current situation of schools and make the task of educating and teaching increasingly difficult and frustrating" [4].

4. The declining social status of the teaching profession, the limited salaries of teachers, working conditions that are inadequate for a stimulating exercise of the profession, all have kept away and continue to keep away the best students. Many young people who enter teacher training do so because of a lack of alternatives or due to failure in other careers rather than because they have a natural vocation to teach [5].

5. The loss of social status of teachers, the low economic attraction, and other professional and political factors have resulted in low teacher self-esteem. But the subject of identity is also related to the loss of historical and political perspective of teachers within the framework of education in crisis and unattached to a national project.

6. Unattractive salaries have led a large number of teachers to follow survival strategies that have relegated the exercise of teaching to merely one more activity carried out during the day in order to earn a living. We therefore have teachers with multiple jobs. In the best of cases, they remain within the system giving classes in two or three schools. If not, we have the teacher-farmer, teacher-taxi driver, teacher-ironsmith, teacher-shopkeeper, teacher-politician, etc. This being the case, little time remains for preparing classes, for reading, and for on-going training.

All of these conditions have generated a human and professional group increasingly pressured, unstimulated, and stressed, with little motivation to change. This also results in the crisis within education systems.

CHALLENGES

Therefore, in order to meet the inescapable historic demand of moving toward changes in education, we urgently need not only to place education as a top priority on the agendas of our countries; we also need to express the struggle for education within the framework of reconstructing a new national project, one which is conceived from a South American or Latin American perspective. Such a project must point toward integration, social justice, equity, interculturality, human development, economic growth, and the strengthening of democracy.

But in the struggle to obtain this objective teachers and their organizations must be involved.

In order to do so, teacher unions need to broaden their agendas to include proposals that involve having an impact on education policies and on putting into practice innovative teaching alternatives. They must broaden their social bases to include alliances that incorporate all social and political sectors within a common agenda to foster changes in education.

But all of this also involves creating and carrying out education policies with the active participation of teachers through processes shared with other sectors which are participants and co-responsible for the situation and for education outcomes.

But the key focus must be the best interests of children and young people. It must be the full right to a quality education. It must be the common good and full development of the individual and of society.

But in order to move forward in this task one must ask: how may we include in this movement the great number of teachers who are little motivated to change? This is the greatest political challenge of current and future processes of change in education. *e*

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[4] Klipper, Heinz, "Trabajo y aprendizaje asumidos con responsabilidad propia. Elementos para la enseñanza de asignaturas". Ed. Beltz, 2001, p. 16.
[5] Inmaculada Egido, op. cit., p. 115.

TEACHERS
AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

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All children should be educated together in school and community, regardless of social or cultural origin or personal characteristics

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This article is in two parts. The first treats the focus of inclusive education and its implications for education systems. The second covers aspects related to the professional training of teachers in order to move toward fostering schools that are more inclusive.

Inclusive education is frequently associated with the presence of children with disabilities in regular schools or of other students labeled as having "special education needs". The concept, however, is broader. It focuses on transforming education systems so that they may meet the requirements of diversity, eliminating barriers to learning and participation faced by many students for different reasons.

Inclusive education is above all a question of justice and of equity. It seeks to provide quality education to all of those who are in a disadvantaged or vulnerable situation – a much larger number than those students who have special education needs. In this sense, inclusive education receives important support from the agenda of Education for All. Making effective the right to education involves assuring other rights, such as equality of opportunities, of participation, and non-discrimination, and the right to one's own identity.

The right to participation and to non-discrimination means that no person shall incur any type of restriction in order to participate in the different activities of human life. In practice, achieving this right in the area of education means that all children should be educated together in school and community, regardless of social or cultural origin or personal characteristics. Schooling carried out in special schools or groups, or in differentiated, permanent programs should be an exception while assuring that the teaching offered is equivalent to the regular curriculum as much as possible.

In order to make full participation a reality it is necessary to both assure equality of opportunities (that is, offer to each person the help and resources that he or she requires according to individual characteristics and needs) in order that he or she has equal conditions within which to take advantage of educational opportunities and to achieve maximum development and learning. Full participation involves having a voice and being accepted for who one is. It is thus essential to guarantee people's right to their own identity in terms of being individual human beings within society, fostering their freedom, autonomy, and self-government.

Inclusive education involves a perspective that is distinct from regular education. It is based on diversity and not on homogeneity. It holds that each student has his or her own education needs that are a result of social and cultural origins as well as personal conditions regarding motivations, skills, and interests that mediate learning processes, making each person unique. Differences are inherent to human beings; therefore, diversity is "normal".

Based on this concept, the emphasis is on developing education that values and respects differences, viewing them as an opportunity to enrich teaching and learning processes and not as obstacles that must be avoided. The response to diversity requires greater flexibility in educational offerings and diversification of curricula so that all students achieve basic skills through different means in terms of learning situations, hours, materials, and teaching strategies that are equivalent in quality.

Inclusive schools develop teaching tools that respond to group and individual differences. They therefore benefit all children and contribute to the professional development of teachers. They all foster the development of attitudes of respecting and valuing differences, of collaboration and solidarity that are the bases for learning to live together and for constructing more just, democratic, and less fragmented and discriminatory societies.

The inclusive education focus involves as well a different view of the learning difficulties experienced by many students in school. Traditionally, these have been attributed to factors inherent to students (social or family condition, their skills, etc.) and for this reason it would be better to group students with the same difficulties in order to provide them specialized teaching, without being concerned with modifying the surroundings and education strategy.

The inclusive perspective, on the contrary, considers that learning or participatory difficulties are interactive in nature; that is, they depend on both individual factors and on the contexts within which such difficulties develop. For this reason, any student may face them during his or her schooling. The curriculum, the school climate, assessment strategies, or teacher expectations, among others, may generate learning or participation difficulties in students. In this perspective, the focus of attention is to introduce changes in the educational context and to develop ways of teaching that benefit all. All students should participate fully in the curriculum and in school activities. It is believed that the best option is not to group them according to their difficulties in special schools or groups, but rather to include them in regular schools.

The development of inclusive education also involves important changes in the role of special education, which is seen as a set of specialized knowledge, techniques, and resources that is placed at the service of regular education in order to meet the special education needs that students may present either temporarily or permanently. The trend is for centers of special education to be transformed into resource and support centers for the community and for regular school, so that they only educate those students with very significant special education needs. There are, however, examples of such students attending regular school as well.

INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS and teacher skills

In light of what has been stated above, one might ask what are the skills that a teacher must have in order to face the challenge of inclusive education, and what kind of training is required in order to provide these skills. These are not easy questions to answer in this brief space. But it is worth while pointing to some aspects.

Above all, one needs a teacher who is prepared to assume risks and to try new kinds of teaching; a person able and willing to reflect on his or her practice in order to transform it; a person who values differences as an element of professional enrichment and who is able to work in collaboration with other teachers, professionals, and families. One needs a teacher who is able to personalize common learning experiences; that is, one who knows well all of his or her students and is able to diversify and adapt the curriculum; one who creates different learning situations and experiences; who offers multiple opportunities; who has high expectations in regard to the learning of all students, who offers them the support they need and assesses their progress in regard to each one's point of departure and not in comparison with others.

If we want teachers to be inclusive as well as able to educate in and for diversity, it is necessary that there be significant changes in their training. First, teacher training institutions should be open to diversity, training students who are representative of the differences present in classrooms. Second, they should be prepared to teach in different contexts and within different realities. Third, all teachers, whatever the education level in which they work, should possess some common basic knowledge, theory, and practice regarding attention to diversity, curricula adaptation, assessment differentiation, and regarding the most relevant educational needs associated with social, cultural, and individual differences.

Inclusive education involves a transformation of school culture

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However, no matter how good the attitudes and training of teachers, they need support in order to respond appropriately to the diversity of their students. Therefore, they need to have available professionals with specialized training who can collaborate with teachers in order to meet certain education needs of students, especially those linked to different kinds of disability. It is necessary to think about the creation of community resource centers that include different types of professionals with complementary functions, since support from special education teachers is not sufficient for fully meeting the demands of diversity.

These support professionals should collaborate with, but never be substitutes for teachers in the analysis of education processes, identifying and fostering the changes necessary in order to optimize the learning and participation of all students. In this way, the school as a whole will benefit and the appearance of learning difficulties caused by inadequate teaching will be reduced. In order to achieve joint agreement and work with teachers, it is highly desirable that specialized training be carried out "a posteriori" to general training, and even after a period of general classroom experience.

As for continued training, given that inclusive education involves a transformation of school culture, a training modality centered on the school as a whole is a very valid strategy for changing attitudes and practices, and for assuring that teachers take ownership of a shared inclusive education project. Extensive research shows that isolated teacher training is not able to produce significant changes in the culture of schools. e

TEACHERS
AND ADULT EDUCATION

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During the 1990s most Latin American countries developed policies aimed at reforming their education systems. In part, this was a result of political changes as well as the result of adapting to globalizing economic processes. Structural as well as curricular changes were emphasized during this period (OREALC/UNESCO, 2000; Reimers, 2000).

However, elements inherent to teaching, such as teacher training, changes regarding learning and the very function of teaching within new contexts did not receive attention with the same speed as the transformations taking place in other areas of education, principally due to the complexity that change represented in its multiple facets such as system reorganization, the appearance of new paradigms in knowledge management and its association with technology, as well as the social status of teachers.

In the specific case of adult education one can cite another three elements that added to this complexity: the considerable regional variety of practices in this area, the numerous intersections between government and non-government programs that was a result of the large number of young people entering the work force during this time, and the decline in the added value of adult education as a result of the dissimilar policies in the region (Shugerensky, 2001; UNESCO, UIE, 2003). Nevertheless progress was evident during this period, showing good qualitative results along with recognition of the challenges that led to progress and complexities in the area of adult education.

In terms of progress, three countries –Chile, Brazil, and Mexico– stand out in their efforts to improve national figures of illiteracy and the integration of education and labor. In the case of Chile, education policies sought to integrate adult education into the overall education reform. To this purpose, plans were implemented dedicated to young people as a participatory segment in traditional adult education (Chile Califica), programs were reformulated and modularization of levels of learning were fostered (OREALC/UNESCO, UIE, 2003). There was also a new program of international study grants for classroom teachers that included adult educators. (Jeria, 2004).

In Mexico, the National Adult Education Institute (INEA) developed the Education for Life and Work Model (MEVyT), permitting diversification and increase of offerings and coverage for a large part of the population. Thus, MEVyt includes education training material and strengthens teacher training. For its part, INEA developed an assessment and follow-up system of program quality indicators which served as valuable support for a serious information gap in the region. Finally, there was the development of the community squares concept as education environments open to the community and equipped with computers and a collection of printed and electronic materials, where young people and adults could complete their basic education using new information and communication technologies (Mendoza, 2004).

Brazil created a system with the participation of government and private funds, providing increased access to and enlargement of programs with different focuses - young people, job training, and literacy (OREALC/UNESCO, UIE, 2003). These examples show that under certain conditions it is possible to optimize results when there is a will and a minimum of policy consistency.

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The region still faces many challenges. Some of the difficulties that have not yet been overcome are teacher working conditions, segmentation of the labor market, varied professional standards and types of certification and training, and different salaries for the same activity. In addition, there are differences between teachers with higher education degrees, literacy trainers, and those working in communities some of whom are volunteers and others semi-volunteers. These difficulties generally result in education policies that involve distortions and over-lapping of programs. In the case of Brazil there is over-lapping between local, state, and federal programs for at-risk populations.

A second difficulty is a lack of research and theories on learning and adult learning in particular. Many professionals who work in this sector come from primary or secondary education. Their training does not include cognitive aspects peculiar to adult education, usage of self-direction concepts in learning, as well as how to approach knowledge and learning in terms of its different modalities. Little research has been done regarding class, ethnicity, and gender and their relations to knowledge, although at the level of higher education Brazil and Mexico have research in this area. (Jeria, 2003).

Finally, one of the most important challenges is that of changing the concept of what it means to be a teacher, from the traditional idea of someone who delivers knowledge to one of an active knowledge agent. In other words, "... seeing teachers as subjects and designers of comprehensive education proposals and not merely as executors; as reflective, autonomous, creative professionals, committed to education change" (CEPAL, UNESCO, 2005).

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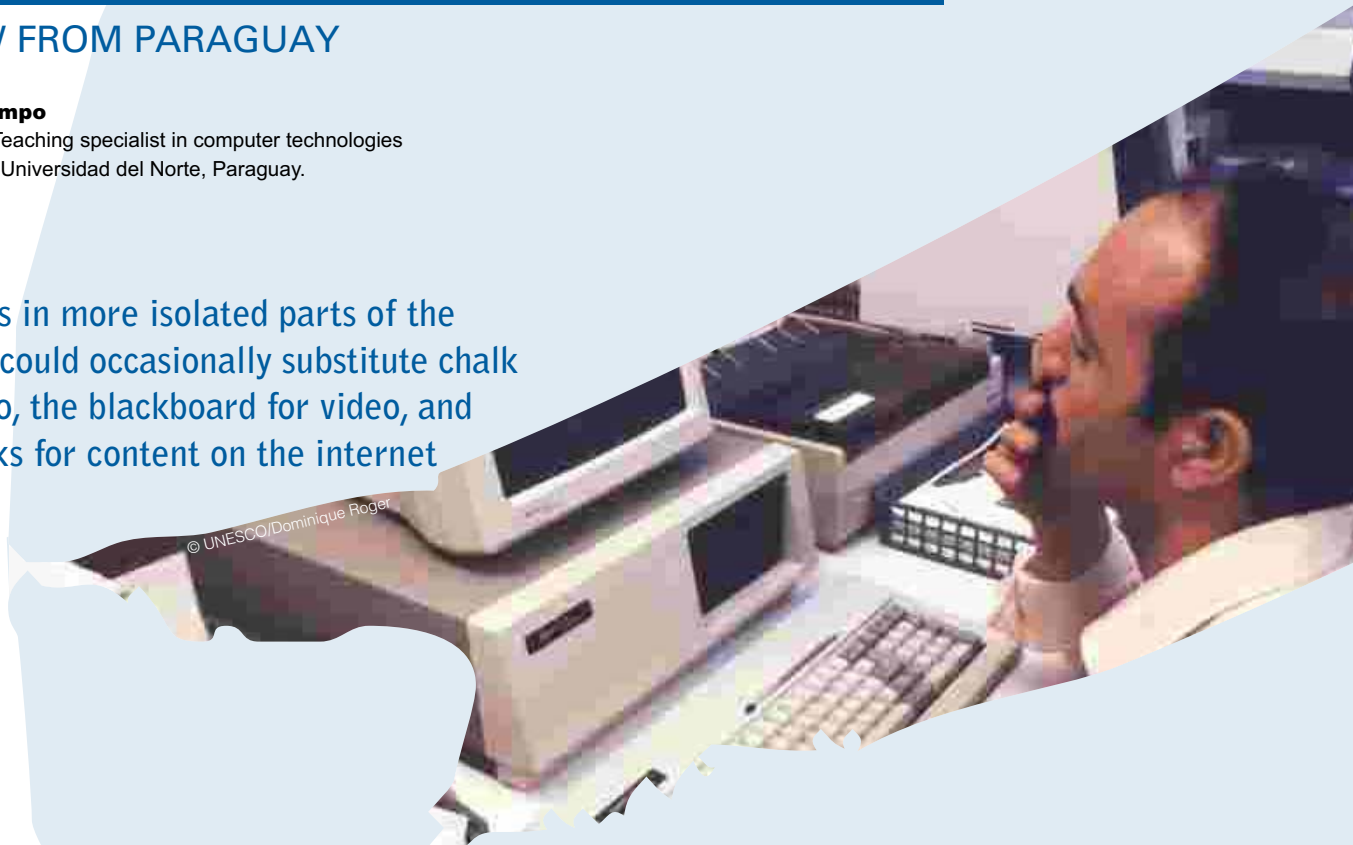
ICTs AND TEACHER TRAINING

A VIEW FROM PARAGUAY

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> Teachers in more isolated parts of the
> country could occasionally substitute chalk
> for audio, the blackboard for video, and
> textbooks for content on the internet

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Although teacher training in the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) – video, radio, TV, internet, computer-based learning – in recent years has made significant progress in Latin America, many challenges remain that depend, among other things, on the socio-cultural and economic conditions of each country and on the seriousness with which one approaches the comprehensive training of teachers.

In the case of Paraguay we may note that, although significant progress has taken place in the use of ICTs in both initial and in-service teacher training, the impact of these technologies is still slight. However, existing progress is of great importance, considering the fact that the country is engaged in a race against time in education in order to deliver the sector from the obscurantism in which it suffered during nearly 40 years and which now faces the new millennium.

The experiences herein noted in initial and in-service teacher training that incorporates ICTs have allowed teachers in isolated rural areas and in low-income urban zones to experience their first contacts with technological tools and with access to information. Existing distance education experiences have in

many cases been ways for teachers in more isolated parts of the country to be able to occasionally substitute chalk for audio, the blackboard for video, and textbooks for content on the internet. This is something that would not have been possible without appropriate training programs.

We should also note that although the attitudes of trained teachers are generally positive in regard to ICTs as teaching tools, there are still serious risks of falling into a technological reductionism that argues that by itself, access to machines and technology results in a substantial improvement in the quality of education.

One should also avoid the notion that ICTs means only computers, education software, the internet, and learning platforms. There are to date few systematic experiences in the use of video, radio, and TV as teaching tools. Nor is there information on training in the critical viewing of television, in spite of the fact that these media are among the most common for access to information on the part of educators and the general public.

In existing projects in training in ICTs and through ICTs, a large proportion of participating teachers are still at the basic levels of computer literacy. There are few successful experiences in which teachers effectively plan and implement learning environments using technological support, using them in the classroom in order to improve the efficiency of the teaching process.

A significant barrier exists is the sustainability of high-quality initial and in-service training through time and which include technological skills. Many programs begin strongly, but then disintegrate due to lack of resources to guarantee their continuity and to a lack of general policies which lend them consistency in order to survive in the long-term and establish quality standards for the country. Without these conditions, practicing and in-training teachers cannot achieve the skills necessary in order to fulfill their roles. This damages the professional image of teachers and their motivation.

On the other hand, although incipient experiences do exist, there is a lack of nationally produced computer-based, internet, and audio-visual educational material for proper development of the content of the education reform that is being carried out in the country.

TEACHER-ORIENTED paths and challenges

In order to go beyond what has been accomplished to date, the realities of Paraguay demand central policies of the Ministry of Education and Culture regarding ICTs that can be supported by efficient management, real resources for maintenance of experiences in the long-term, and follow-up. In this regard, efforts should be made to transform the internet into a public good, considering the high cost of education technologies (software, hardware, licenses) and to work with public domain software. Moreover, efforts should be made to involve communication media such as radio and TV, which are of great importance in current educational processes and are more accessible to the population.

It is essential as well to create interdisciplinary working teams at the central level, not only in the Ministry of Education and Culture, but also with the participation of private and professional institutions with broad experience in the area that can contribute to the design and consolidation of a comprehensive view of ICTs in teacher training and in education in general.

One should not forget, moreover, that optimal results are only possible if there is follow-up and tracking of training experiences within schools themselves. For it is there that one expects key activities to take place and to have the greatest impact. Training processes that depend exclusively on replicas or multiplication of learning are marginal activities producing little results.

Moreover, teacher motivation and their optimal training as agents of change continue to be corner stones upon which education reform in the country rests. Therefore, these must be monitored and maintained at the highest possible level.

An inadequately trained teacher, however highly motivated, cannot be effective. The same is true for a trained by unmotivated teacher (overburdened with activities and without creativity in the classroom). Neither will be actively engaged and will be merely counted in official coverage statistics.

In conclusion, the challenges to education in the country have not changed in their essentials compared to the past: well-selected teachers with excellent training in their areas of expertise and highly motivated have been, and will continue to be essential.

What has changed, and greatly, is what one understands to be "*teacher knowledge*": the new skills that are demanded and the context within which teachers work. Here, ability to gain access to quality information, a critical and responsible point of view in regard to the problems that affect society, and the development of technological skills stand out as key inputs to enable teachers to be agents of change.*e*

> An inadequately
> trained teacher,
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> motivated, cannot
> be effective

INFORMATION SYSTEMS ON TEACHERS

A HIGH, BUT LITTLE EXPLORED PRIORITY. A necessary comment

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A summary review of what education information systems regularly produce about teachers clearly reveals that they systematically treat some aspects the range of which is limited for covering the teacher question.

In effect, information systems tend to provide data on the number of teachers, their levels of formal qualification, and student-teacher ratios [1]. Even in these cases, information is not generally sufficiently clear and at times its use lacks rigor.

Similarly, assessment of the academic achievement of students continues to face the impossibility of treating even a significant fraction of variations at different levels of schooling. If teachers are key actors in learning, won't such learning be related to limitations in the generation of substantive information on teachers and their practice?

Concretely, teachers are primary and active **agents** in the educational process. For this reason, it is necessary to understand their actions as such. The second focus of PRELAC understands the question in these terms. Therefore, the UNESCO Regional Bureau of Education has begun a process designed to encourage the creation of teacher information systems that seek to provide a comprehensive view at their role as actors.

[1] These data are not always clear. "Number of teachers" can refer to persons contracted either part-time or full-time to hold positions within the stucture of education systems. "Certification" denotes only requisites fulfilled that may not necessarily correspond to levels of performance. The "teacher per student ratio", which is only an indicator of levels of investment in human resources, tends to be used as an equivalent for the numbers of students per group.
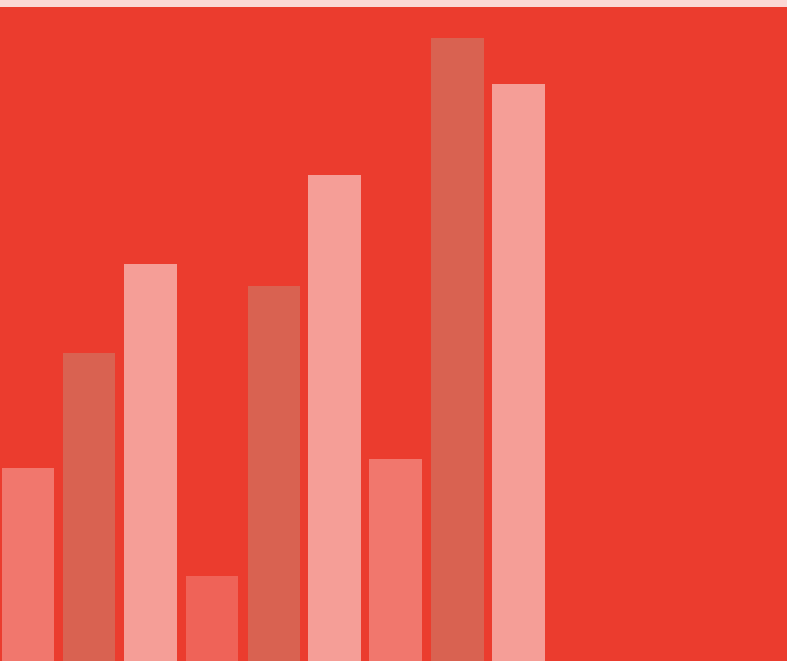
To this end, the first requirement is to construct a framework of reference that makes it possible to identify key dimensions. These correspond to the following questions: Who are teachers? What do the do; what is their practice? What is the institutional context in which they develop? The activities of teachers - *what they do* - must be understood as the result of a combination of their characteristics - *who are they?* - within a given institutional context - *in what context?* . Finally, practices and context have an impact on the characteristics of teachers themselves, of their actions and the context through time.

One needs information in order to analyze, for example, to what extent institutional factors such as salaries and teacher selection make up a set of coherent conditions that improve learning, or to determine the long-range impact on the composition of the teaching profession.

It is thus possible to assert that the activities of teachers will be an active element for achieving education objectives, depending upon the institutional conditions within which these objectives develop and the personal and professional characteristics that each teacher possesses and brings to carrying out his or her tasks.

Undoubtedly, institutional conditions establish the limits of what is considered legitimate and desirable in regard to teaching practice. The levels of training required and the norms expected, together with salary levels, professional career expectations, etc., are elements that influence potential teachers and those in service regarding that which the system expects and offers [2].

For their part, cultural factors, private and family objectives, professional histories, and other personal attributes contribute to defining how each teacher carries out and develops his or her tasks, both in terms of the resources that can be mobilized (their own cultural backgrounds) as well as in regard to the degree of satisfaction and the way in which they perceive the institutional framework in which their responsibilities are developed and the learning needs of their students.

These thoughts and challenges allow us to identify information needs that go beyond those currently available and can lead to the construction of a better view of the formulation, follow-up, and assessment of education policies.*e*

[2] For example, a system that offers increasingly lower pay or makes insignificant demands tends to retain people with lower skills, fewer employment options and less committment. This results in low social status of the profession. On the other hand, a system that demands more skills while guaranteeing working conditions in agreement with these demands and performance that goes beyond the expected tends to attract and retain the best professionals. This results in social recognition of teachers and creates a positive "virtuous circle".

LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN TEACHER NETWORK

KIPUS, A NETWORK IN PROGRESS

The Latin American and Caribbean Teacher Network (KIPUS) was organized for the exchange of information, for discussion, and to generate joint projects and proposals. It seeks to take an active role in developing education policies and strategies in the fields of professional and human development and teacher training in the region.

The network began through an initiative of the Meeting of Pedagogical Universities sponsored by the Universidad Metropolitana de Ciencias de la Educación (UMCE) de Chile – in May 2003– and receives technical support from OREALC/UNESCO Santiago. Its organization was outlined in the *Letter of Santiago*, signed initially by eight teacher training institutions in six Latin American countries. In a meeting in Honduras in September, 2004 it was agreed to open the network not only to those who work in teacher training, but to all types of institutions and persons involved in teaching. In February, 2005 the Latin American and Caribbean Teacher Network chose the acronym "KIPUS" as its insignia.

The network has an Executive Secretary and an Assistant Secretary in order to facilitate its administration. Currently, Dr. José Martínez Armesto Vice-Rector of the Universidad Metropolitana de Ciencias de la Educación de Chile is its Executive Secretary, and Dr. Óscar Ibarra Russi, Rector of the Universidad Pedagógica de Colombia is its Assistant Secretary. Technical coordination of KIPUS was assigned to the Teacher Training and Work Area of OREALC/UNESCO.

INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW WITH Dr. ÓSCAR IBARRA
Assistant Secretary of KIPUS

What significance do you lend to the creation of an interactive mechanism on teacher training such as the KIPUS Network?

— The task of KIPUS is to structure articulation and integration mechanisms of pedagogical knowledge in order to establish their social use as foundations of knowledge for the teaching profession, as a source for the formulation and practice of ¨knowledge that educates", and in the consolidation of the region.

The network responds to the need to establish education as a practice for transforming social and cultural realities, based on respect for the differences and the diversity of teaching, the recognition of the importance of teacher training institutions, and the construction of a universe of meaning that allows us to grow spiritually, scientifically, and technically supported by our similarity as nations and as peoples in order to engage in dialogue with the culture of globalization from the perspective of teacher training.

KIPUS is a relational scheme of public and private teacher training and education research institutions on the regional level that, based on their pedagogical character, their impact on the training of teachers in each of our countries, their public responsibility for guaranteeing the quality and excellence of their academic processes, on new information and communication technologies, and on universal academic standards, decided to collectively seek alternatives for development and growth.

The network seeks to guarantee the material processes that make possible the mobility of teachers and students of pedagogical institutes and universities, the circulation of scientific knowledge about education, the knowledge and monitoring of pedagogical and education research, dissemination of discussions on public policies that affect teacher training and the development of teaching systems, in order to guarantee respect for the teaching profession in each country and recognition of their value socially and culturally, and in monitoring and improvement of education in the area of its influence.

The network possesses potential for the collective construction of pedagogical knowledge, systemic circulation of knowledge, on-going comparisons of research, encouragement of training innovations, strengthening of academic communities, cooperation in developing training institutions, balancing of training policies and mutual enrichment in education training focuses and methods of each country and of the countries of the region.

Its limitations are common to this kind of organization. Most important is the search for and development of projects that can overcome the disparity of criteria, the weaknesses of communication systems, the bureaucratic tendencies of management, the isolation of government education entities, the costs of teacher and student mobilization, the lack of a culture of integration and the lack of political will of education authorities.

What kind of actors directly or indirectly linked to teacher training should participate in a network of this kind? Who is participating? What indications are there in terms of the level of support of these actors?

— First of all, the pedagogical universities of countries, due to the fact that they are the natural meeting place for academics and education intelligence in the perspective of higher level teacher training. Then, in order, the networks of schools of education of the various public and private universities should participate since they take an active part in the professional development of teachers and in the development of pedagogy and its applications to teaching. After that, normal school networks and pedagogical institutes. Others that may participate are education and pedagogical research institutes, education policy units of ministries, government and multi-lateral agencies dedicated to the development of education, as well as teacher unions as special guests.

Currently, eight national pedagogical universities are participating as well as numerous associations and networks of Schools of Education, normal schools, and pedagogical institutes, according to the legislation of each country.

The institutions that have participated in our international meetings – the first in Santiago in May 2003, the second in Lima in November 2003, and the third in San Pedro Sula, Honduras in September 2004 – have indicated the following:

➜ The experience of participating in the network has made institutions reflect upon their own educational and pedagogical activities, be critical of their own training proposals, and open to receiving opinions that make possible improvements in their thinking.

➜ Appreciation of the value of the network for the development of training institutions as a means of communication and integration among academic communities and for mobilization of teachers and students within a strategy for strengthening our region.

➜ The impact of the network in strengthening education research, the development of networks bringing together teachers and researchers, proposal for innovations and the consolidation of education policies.

➜ Contributions of the network to academic quality, international discussion on education and strengthening of plans for social change supported by improved professional development of teachers and the consolidation of pedagogy as a key discipline of teaching practice..

➜ New information and communication technologies as important factors in strengthening the network and in serving societies.

In regard to the level of academic and communication support of entities that make up the network and those that can be linked to it, I believe that in order, the most dynamic have been and will continue to be the pedagogical universities and the networks of schools of education. Lesser levels of support have been provided by normal schools and pedagogical institutes, since they lack homogeneous development throughout the continent.

What kinds of links should KIPUS make with other sectors of education and with other areas of society? With whom? In what sense and what possible impacts?

—KIPUS should first be consolidated as a powerful network able to produce the impact that it seeks on teacher training and education research institutions, ministries of education, and on teacher unions. Second, it should be involved in links with those who fashion education policies, ministries, multi-lateral education and social development entities, scientific and technological research centers, and public communication networks.

Third, KIPUS should interact with entities that work in the dissemination and promotion of national culture, the business sectors of countries, and finally with political groups and individuals who influence legislation.

The intention in establishing these contacts is to establish links between social demands and the production of scientific and technical knowledge, the formulation of more pertinent proposals for teacher training, and better quality for education in the region using teachers as key actors.

INTERVIEW WITH DOCTOR JOSÉ MARTÍNEZ
Executive Secretary of KIPUS

What strategies and projects can and should be carried out within the framework of the KIPUS network? Are there any being developed or currently being executed?

— Yes. There are some research projects that have begun within the network, and which have received important support from OREALC/UNESCO. There is the subject of AIDS education, for example. There is another on giving priority to teachers, and we are now preparing another project to be supported by the network that has to do with academic and student mobility.

The network stimulates the development of projects linked to teacher training. The projects that I have mentioned have been the result of meetings with representatives of training institutions. They are, therefore, welcome within the network.

One of the basic subjects of the network, in my personal opinion, has to do with the internationalization of institutions of higher education. Internationalizing institutions is one of the basic aspects of the subject of interchange of experiences, joint work, fostering research, and disseminating existing information to different member countries of the network. That is, beyond the long-standing area of international relations among institutions, what we seek is the development of teacher training using a commonly agreed upon model.

Among these accomplishments, in various phases of development, what contributions of the KIPUS network can you identify up to this time?

— There is one that I believe is very important. Because this network began as an initiative of ours within the university. That is, four or five years ago in Chile we began treating the subject of higher education and the role that universities should play. Much was said about complex universities, those that exist within an environment of professional information, of university-level research, and it was noted that within the country there were universities that were not complex in the Humboltian university sense, but were very specialized. When I assumed the direction of the university as Rector, among other things I considered as pending the question of the value of pedagogical universities - institutions dedicated exclusively to teacher training.

We didn't ask ourselves this question previously because traditional universities have schools of education. A person with specialized training, say someone who has studied history, enters the school of education and trains as a pedagogue. That is, there are two kinds of training separated in time. Therefore, our question was: what is the value of pedagogical universities? What advantages do they offer?

This was part of a dilemma in the country. It occurred to me to speak with rectors, with the idea of bringing together the pedagogical universities of Latin America. The idea was accepted. I discussed it at OREALC/UNESCO, and requested the sponsorship of the ministry. Then, we began to contact rectors and organized the First Seminar of Pedagogical Universities of Latin America. There had been previous attempts.

With a network such as KIPUS underway, what other expectations of support, of carrying out projects, do you have for your institution?

— We are very interested in the subject of internationalization of universities. Why? We are aware that our university had a historic role of supporting many Latin American universities and countries. We therefore thought, why not make an effort to foster the exchange of experiences in the area of teacher training? We have had much success in this area.

We carried out a curriculum improvement project that took five years and now have graduated students using that curriculum. Therefore, we want to support this experience and learning about the experiences of other institutions. Internationalization is a two-way street.

What we would like to learn about through support from other institutions is the subject of research. Education research. We believe that, after good quality teacher training, there is a need to produce knowledge in this field, which is very much open. Consider Latin America: how much research is carried out on teacher training? There is a great deal of theory, much talk, but very little data about pedagogical strategy, curricular strategy, or curricular proposals that really aid in training professionals. I am against the concept of teaching as a vocation. I believe that teacher professinalization is key. For example, I may have a vocation to be an engineer, but if I'm not professionally trained, I can't go forward.

Finally, it is vital that reforms achieve changes in the classroom. What happens in a classroom when a teacher, in front of 30, 40, or 45 students, leaves reform aside and teaches the class however he or she wishes? It is important that we demonstrate that we are able to change the quality of what is taught at the classroom level.

What are the projections and challenges for the future?

— I began to work here in 1985 and networks were much in fashion. The obstacles or weaknesses stem from the rapid loss of interest of participants to continue contributing to the flow of the network. Because a network is a flow of information, activities, knowledge. This is a difficult point. It is necessary to keep the network alive, as well as the meetings. It is essential to make the best possible use of the web and the internet.

Another point is to try to unite institutions, and another is to give it mobility. We are interested in the mobility of students. We worked for three years on student exchange ... with very little money. Now, students go to seminars, are away for a quarter or a semester, and come back totally changed because they are aware of other realities and they compare them. Academic exchange is also very important. Academics should spend time with their colleagues and participate in teacher training in other aspects. Beginning this year I will take a sabbatical. The network will facilitate these mutually beneficial meetings and exchanges.

INTERVIEW WITH DR. LEA CRUZ
Universidad Pedagógica Nacional Francisco Morazán (UPNFM), Honduras

What strategies and projects should be carried out within the framework of the KIPUS network? Are there some already designed or in place?

—One of the basic objectives of the KIPUS network is to transform it into a forum of exchange of knowledge, publications, and generation of projects that foster achieving quality education. UPNFM is proud to be part of this effort, and I believe that within the framework of this project we can share the experiences that other Latin American institutions have in the field of school and teacher assessment, especially with those that have completed their accreditation processes. These subjects are of great interest for our institution because we believe that without on-going assessment of both schools and programs, it will be difficult to deliver the levels of quality and pertinence that societies and the global context demand.

It is for this reason that UPNFM, beginning in 1998 within the framework of SICEVAES-CSUCA, put into place a self-assessment and external assessment system for each of its undergraduate programs which are currently in a quality improvement process with the expectation of regional accreditation. Additionally, this year we have begun to work on institutional assessment. For this reason we are interested in learning about the experiences that other regional institutions have had in these areas and to be aware of the lessons they have learned.

What concrete contributions has the KIPUS network provided to your institution up to this time? What other kinds of contributions do you expect?

— *Considering that the KIPUS network is a relatively recent project, we can cite a concrete contribution to our institution as being hosts to the Second International Meeting of the Teacher Training Network of Latin America and the Caribbean held in San Pedro Sula in September 2004. That event made valuable contributions to the academic development of the university community that I represent.*

In the short and medium term, UPNFM hopes to achieve teacher exchange on the graduate and post-graduate levels, research fellowships, design and implementation of joint projects in areas such as: teacher training in Latin America, initial teacher training, training of trainers, participation in forums on the quality of education and teacher training, both in face-to-face events and on-line. We believe that it is important to establish links through the network with various organizations through which both students and teachers that make up the network can compete for places in teacher training programs to be implemented in the region.

What do you believe is the best way your institution can contribute to the KIPUS network?

— *All institutions have valuable experiences to contribute. In particular, UPNFM is prepared to exchange information and knowledge from the research and publications that it produces.*

We thus wish to offer our experiences with the framework of the education reform carried out in the country and in which UPNFM has been a leader in the transformation process of normal schools in order to develop an integrated model of initial training, professionalization of teachers through which, beginning this year, future primary and lower secondary teachers will earn an academic teaching degree.

Another project that UPNFM is carrying out is called "Schools of Excellence" in which we foster the study of strategies for improving the teaching of reading and writing. In addition, there is the Technical Education Mathematics Improvement Project that is of great interest for educators of the region.

In terms of Special Needs Education, UPNFM and its Research and Innovation Center has more than 15 years of experience which may also interest others. We have also increased attention to diversity by serving students with special needs and ethnic groups (whose mother language is not Spanish) in various undergraduate courses.

We can also place at the disposition of the network the experience that we have accumulated in training external evaluators. In this sense, I see the formulation of a joint project as a short-term contribution on our part.

I have no doubt of the importance that the network has for all educators of the region. I am very optimistic, and believe that through it we can increase country-to-country cooperation. e

EFA AND PRELAC
TEACHER INVOLVEMENT
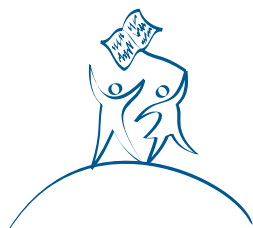
Education for All (EFA), a key policy framework of UNESCO that places major emphasis on teachers. Gives special importance to developing Goal 6 of Dakar:

"Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills", assumes teacher training among its assumptions for successful achievement.

Such training should be appropriate, pertinent, and of high quality. The program also expresses concern for working conditions, stating that "enhance(ing) the status, morale, and professionalism of teachers" is one of the twelve strategies for achieving EFA.

The Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC) * has as one of its major features five strategic focuses that define priorities in order to provoke changes that will aid countries in fulfilling the objectives of Education for All.

Although these focuses are complementary rather than mutually exclusive, Focus 2 is dedicated wholly to the subject of improving the professional performance of teachers. Due to its importance as a referent and guide for countries in the region, we here reproduce its key text.

Focus 2: *Focus on teachers and strengthening their active participation in education change in order to satisfy student learning needs.*

… This involves supporting public policies that recognize the social role of teachers and that value their contributions in fostering education change in education systems. This need arises from recognition of the limitations inherent in traditional teaching methods, principally in regard to the transmission of information, memorization of content, and little teacher autonomy in curricular design and assessment, a passive attitude in regard to educational innovation and a teaching style that is more individual than cooperative.

* (The Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean) PRELAC was approved by the Ministers of Education of the region at the First Intergovernmental Meeting, held in Havana, Cuba in November 2002.

Teachers must be trained with renovated morale and new skills in order to face the challenges of education in the 21st century within the current context of rapid change in politics, society, economics, culture, technology, employment, and the knowledge and information society. In order for teachers to incorporate the enthusiasm and commitment needed for their new tasks, due attention must be paid to their working conditions and emotional well-being. Moreover, teachers must be seen as subjects and designers of comprehensive educational proposals and not as mere executors; as thoughtful, autonomous, creative, professionals committed to changes in education; as individuals who possess sufficient skills to enable them to develop through informal and distance learning and be able to relate productively to other education modalities unrelated to schools.

Among the skills teachers need to acquire to satisfy learning needs are those based on the emotions of their students. The difficulty of the teaching task lies in exercising cognitive knowledge and emotional understanding skills among a growing diversity of students and in being able to perform within different education options, modalities, and contexts in order to adapt themselves to continuous changes in knowledge and to creatively take advantage of new technologies, work in networks, and learn to work productively with their peers.

Policies aimed at enhancing the professional skills of teachers involve systemic changes as well. That is, one cannot change teacher policies without changing schools. Here is a reciprocal relationship, since changing the roles of teachers is at the same time consequence and cause of comprehensive changes in schools. Changing public policies regarding the professional enhancement of teachers assumes, therefore, changes in school management, curricular design, system administration, as well as labor and social security policies.

This strategic focus is to be developed through:

→ The design of public policies that seek comprehensive changes in the roles of teachers.
→ Incentives for the creation of international, regional, and national networks of schools, students, and teachers.
→ Both initial and in-service teacher training.
→ Support of incentives for teachers who work in socially vulnerable venues.
→ Development of actions aimed at attracting men to the teaching profession.
→ Creation of support networks and resource centers.
→ Overcoming the traditional public policy-making model that distinguishes between those who design and those who execute policies. *e*

THE INNOVEMOS NETWORK
FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Innovemos, **the Regional Education Innovations Network for Latin America and the Caribbean** (http://innovemos.unesco.cl), is an interactive and permanent forum for reflection, production, exchange, and dissemination of knowledge and practices on innovation and change in education, that contributes to improving the quality and equity of education at its various levels, and in its different modalities and programs.

Innovemos was created in 2001, coordinated by OREALC/UNESCO Santiago with the financial support of the Government of Spain. There are 15 member countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Spain, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

It is organized as a regional network of national networks made up of different kinds of institutions – schools and non-formal education programs, education promotion and research centers, ministries of education, and universities. Member countries are grouped around six thematic areas that function within the network: institutional development, curricular development, professional development, education and employment, diversity and equity, and democracy and citizenship.

The network contributes to changing education concepts and practices, generating knowledge through and for practical experience and developing a culture of innovation in teachers, increasing their abilitiy to critically analyze their own practices. In this sense, a key principle of the *Innovemos Network* is its ability to combine innovation, research, teacher training, and education policy.

Currently, education reform, learning and teaching theories, technological progress, and the growing diversity of students all present new challenges to teachers, rendering their tasks more complex. Teachers and other education professionals require meaningful information for decision-making. It is in this sense that *Innovemos* provides needed support. In effect, one of the major roles of the network is to develop research and

assessment processes for innovations in order to construct a body of knowledge on the theory and practice of innovations and education change that contributes to attaining better quality learning for all.

Innovemos presents a perspective on professional development in which teachers perform a social task that fosters learning opportunities for all. It is, therefore, not solely a resource for improving the quality of education.

The **Professional Development Circuit** of *Innovemos*, in the same manner as the other circuits, collects and disseminates innovations, education experiences, bibliographic material, interest links, and documentation on specific areas. Through its inter-active structure it fosters dialogue, participation, and the exchange of ideas.

This particular circuit treats subjects related to the professional development of teachers, school principals, school guidance counselors, tutors, specialists, and other professionals.

It encompasses a wide range of systematized experiences and innovations on initial and in-service teacher training, leadership and participation, performance assessment, incentive systems, and school support. It also offers support materials and information in the area of new technologies, literacy training, gender, social exclusion, values and life skills education, among others.

NOTES

MEETINGS

II International Meeting of the Latin America and the Caribbean Teacher Training Network (now called KIPUS). Subject: "The Challenge of Training the Best Teachers".

Organized by the Universidad Francisco Morazán de Honduras, OREALC/UNESCO, the UNESCO Institute of Higher Education for Latin America and the Caribbean and the PROEDUCA/GTZ-Peru Program. September 2004

The event brought together 42 institutions from 15 countries. Discussions focuses on teacher training, professionalization, profile of trainers, and assessment of training institutions.

First Meeting on the Training, Profession, and Work of Teachers

Held in Bogotá in April, 2004, within the framework of the Latin American Education Policy Forum (FLAPE), coordinated in Colombia by the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional.

The main topics of discussion were: education policy and teacher training, professional norms and working conditions, social actors and training, and monitoring and assessment indicators.

PUBLICATIONS

Formación docente: un aporte a la discusión.
LA EXPERIENCIA DE ALGUNOS PAÍSES

Authors: Errol Miller, Beatrice Ávalos, Eleonora Villegas-Reimers, Teresa Mauri Majós, Georges Soussan, Bob Moon, Dr. Drori Daniel. Published by OREALC/UNESCO Santiago.

A set of papers on initial and in-service teacher training in various countries that, in spite of their different contexts, share the concern for seeking teacher training that is appropriate to the reality of our times, countries, and students.

The authors treat initiatives that may be taken in order for teachers to be true protagonists in changing education. This book may be downloaded at:
http://www.unesco.cl/medios/biblioteca/documentos/formacion_docente_un_aporte_discusion.pdf

¿Quienes son los maestros?
CARRERAS E INCENTIVOS DOCENTES EN AMÉRICA LATINA

Author: Juan Carlos Navarro (editor). Published by the IDB , 2002.

This book ponders the possibilities of improving the quality of teaching and the role of teachers from an important perspective: incentives. It presents existing knowledge on teachers and the kinds of incentives in various countries and their impacts on the quality of learning.

Maestros en América Latina:
NUEVAS PERPECTIVAS SOBRE SU FORMACIÓN Y DESEMPEÑO

Authors: Juan Carlos Tedesco, Emilio Tenti, Inés Aguerrondo, Denise Vaillant, Beatrice Ávalos, Guiomar Namo de Mello, and others. Published by PREAL and IDB.

Aware of the decline of the teaching profession and reduced resources dedicated to initial and in-service teacher training, these papers – discussed in seminars – open up a broad debate on progress achieved and innovations introduced. The major topics are: assessment of the professional practice of teachers; initial and on-going training, and incentives and innovations.