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## Pedagogical Trends, Various Approaches

### Abstract

When talking about pedagogical theories, the first thing to stress is that it is difficult to find something new that has not been said before. In this field, much of what is called innovation comes from earlier times. Theories, conceptions and research have developed a great deal in the field of education. This means that educational systems face new challenges, with all the limitations that this implies. It is also evident that knowledge emerges with growing force that promotes social development. Therefore, it is necessary to implement pedagogical projects based on advanced forms of teaching that support the training of individuals, professionals capable of responding to the demands of the contemporary world.

Keywords: pedagogical trends, education, critical pedagogy, behaviourism, humanist paradigm

### Introduction

The term ‘contemporary pedagogical trends’ designates a set of relatively systematized ideas that have had a significant influence on the educational field during the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, and which start from the concept of a person that has served as a basis for understanding education, its purposes, its protagonists, the teaching-learning process, and ways of conducting it. These ideas have been formed under the influence of a series of socio-historical, techno-economic, political, social, psychological, ideological, rocrematic, and epistemological factors. This has led to the development of the development of the techniques and the sciences related to the field of education. These trends have appeared on the educational scene, not in a closed way, but have been configured and modified over time. Philosophical reflection helps in the discovery of the anthropology and ideologies, reforms, innovations, pedagogical conceptions and doctrines that inform educational systems, and the practice of education. In this study, we look briefly at the paradigms of critical pedagogy, behaviourist pedagogy and humanist pedagogy.

### Pedagogical trends

Traditional pedagogy generally continues to influence practice, although other approaches have developed in parallel with it, since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and during the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. These new approaches have attempted, with more or

less success, to establish criteria of a scientific nature for the development of the teaching / learning process that go beyond their specific practices. This pedagogical trend has incorporated some advances and influences in the course of its development, including some of the postulates of the psychological model of behaviourism that emerged and developed in the twentieth century. This psychological approach is one of the most influential for traditional pedagogy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In the light of the task that today's society gives to education, to train young people to undertake the development of science and technology, one conclusion can be reached: traditional pedagogy is not the most appropriate way to address the task of teaching.

### **Critical pedagogy**

Contemporary pedagogical currents are not limited to those derived from psychology. Other currents have their principles, their categories and their theoretical foundations in philosophy and sociology. Critical pedagogy, for example, has its source in the philosophical-social theory of philosophers and sociologists based on the postulates of Gramsci (2019), Freire (2019) and the theory of post-modernity of Habermas (2010). All these thinkers have made important contributions to explaining current problems in society and their possible solution.

Critical pedagogy focuses on the construction of a dialectical pedagogical language and discourse given in participatory, community and democratic social relations, through liberating actions and practices. It aims to enhance the role of subjects through the exercise of criticism and their imagination, so that they engage in educational action for the benefit of democratic, fair and equitable social organization.

The union between theory and practice is fundamental in education. The philosophy, the history and the sociology of education are inseparable. This union of theory and practice brings thought alive; it transforms.

### **Behaviourism**

Behaviourism has its roots in the philosophical tradition of empiricism. According to this position, knowledge is a copy of reality, and is accumulated by simple associative mechanisms.

In empiricist epistemology, the knowing subject is the passive recipient of the deterministic impressions of external objects. According to the empiricists, knowledge is composed of sensations and ideas, and the associations between them. The origin of knowledge is in the sensations and impressions, which are mere copies or reflections of reality; any idea that the subject plays an active role in determining their own behaviour is dismissed.

Behaviourism (particularly Skinnerian behaviourism) is primarily anti-theoretical and consistent with empiricist epistemology. Behaviourists use the SR (stimulus – response) model as a fundamental scheme for their descriptions and explanations of the behaviour of organisms.

Behaviourism applied to education has created a strong tradition in educational psychology, starting from the earliest writings of Skinner (1989). According to behaviourists, the instructional process consists of the appropriate arrangement of conditional reinforcement, in order to promote student learning efficiently. Any academic behaviour can be taught in a timely manner, if there is an effective instructional programme based on a detailed analysis of student responses and their

reinforcement. Teaching is simply the provision of conditional rewards (Skinner, 1989).

Another characteristic of this approach is the assumption that teaching consists of providing content or information, that is, in placing information around the student, which he or she will have to acquire.

### **The humanist paradigm**

The humanist paradigm analyses the socio-affective domain and interpersonal relationships. Like behaviourism, it is driven by a hypothesis, and its theoretical plans and schemes have been practised in the educational field, with adjustments made according to the context. Research focuses on the refinement and validation of practices derived from the paradigm.

The central issue relates to the problems of the whole person. The human personality is conceived as an organization that is in a process of continuous development. To explain and understand the person properly, he or she must be studied in their interpersonal and social context. Explanations must frame the person as the source of their whole personal development.

From the point of view of humanists, education should focus on helping students to decide what they are and what they want to become. Humanistic education is based on the idea that all students are different and helps them to be more like themselves and less like others. In this sense, it is considered necessary to help students to explore and understand themselves and the meanings of their lived experiences (Delgado-Linares, 2014).

According to Delgado-Linares (2014), the major goals of education are:

- To help develop the individuality of people;
- To help students to recognize themselves as unique human beings;
- To help students to develop their potential.

The students are seen as completely unique individuals, different from all others, and it is firmly believed that at the end of the academic experience this uniqueness of the students as people will be respected and even enhanced. Students are seen as beings with initiative, with personal needs to grow, to have feelings and to have particular experiences.

Teachers are seen as facilitators of the students' potential for self-realization. Didactic efforts must be directed to the goal of promoting activities of the students that are self-directed, and stimulate self-learning and creativity.

The teacher should not limit or put restrictions on the delivery of pedagogical materials, but rather should provide students with all that are available (Rogers, 1994).

Gutiérrez-Vázquez (2008) mentions the important traits that the teacher must possess:

- Interested in the students as whole persons;
- Openness to new forms of teaching and educational options;
- Ability to foster the cooperative spirit of students;
- Ability to engage with students as they are, authentic and genuine;
- Have an empathetic understanding of students, the ability to see things from their perspective, and have a sensitive attitude to their perceptions and feelings;
- Ability to reject authoritarian and egocentric positions.

The humanist educational programme does not offer a formalized theory of institutions, but proposes a series of techniques in order to achieve a better understanding of the behaviour of students, to improve the climate of respect, to give students the opportunity to develop their potential and achieve meaningful experiential learning in school.

To achieve the goals of humanistic behaviour, some steps are necessary:

- Programmes should be flexible and be open to students;
- Meaningful experiential learning must be provided;
- The creative behaviour of students should be given primacy;
- Students should be given autonomy;
- Students must be given the opportunity to cooperate;
- Students should be given the opportunity to evaluate themselves and their own work.

Rogers (1994) is a humanist who has most adequately analysed the concept of learning. For Rogers (1994), the human being has an innate capacity for self-development, and if this capacity is not hindered, learning will develop in a timely manner. Humanist education involves the person as a whole (affective and cognitive processes) and unfolds in a natural or experiential way.

## Conclusion

Among socio-educational paradigms, critical pedagogy focuses on the construction of a language and a dialectical pedagogical discourse that supports participatory, cooperative, community and democratic social relations, through liberating practices and actions (Freire, 2019).

Behaviourism is regulated by the hypotheses, principles and laws of empiricism and the experimental analysis of behaviour. Behaviourists regard teaching as a simple arrangement of conditional reinforcement. The student is seen as a passive, isolated being whose participation is restricted by structured programmes and complex school controls. Teaching is transmitting knowledge; he who is taught learns faster than he who teaches himself (Skinner, 1989).

The teacher is conceived as a behavioural engineer who makes contingent arrangements to increase desirable behaviours and decrease undesirable ones. One of the contributions of the paradigm to education is programmed teaching, which is based on the systemic arrangement of the environment (books, online courses) which is designed using behavioural principles to achieve the desired results. Finally, behaviourists evaluate student behaviour using instruments that objectively measure behaviour (psycho-pedagogical tests).

The humanist paradigm is not monolithic, and is developed from the philosophical currents of existentialism and phenomenology, as well as from clinical practice and the reflections of humanist psychologists. It is configured as a theoretical / practical scheme with its own identity. The central problem of this paradigm is to analyse and study the processes of the whole person, since human personality has a structure and organization that is in a continuous process of development.

The two theoretical currents that serve as the foundation of the humanist paradigm are existentialism and phenomenology. From the former comes the idea that the person is created by their own choices, and from the latter, the study of external or internal perception as a subjective process. The theoretical assumptions of this paradigm

revolve around self-awareness and responsibility for human volitional acts. There is no single methodology, but the holistic approach to the study of the person is an important premise.

In educational contexts, humanists propose a comprehensive education to achieve the total development of the person. The importance of students' self-realization is highlighted. The student is a unique, unrepeatable being, with personal growth needs, who is not to be treated in a fragmentary way. The teacher is perceived as a guide and facilitator of the student's current trend. The teacher's activities should be aimed at strengthening learning and creativity (Delgado-Linares, 2014). Learning in this paradigm is significant when it involves the person as a whole. While there is no single methodology, there are several techniques to promote meaningful and experiential learning and the self-growth of students (Aizpuru-Cruces, 2008).

All people are different, and each has developed their socialization process in a different way and they have developed in different material conditions. Therefore, their learning needs are also diverse. It is not possible to treat all students in the same way, much less expect them to develop academically in a similar way.

The challenge, then, is in the capacity of the teacher and the educational system to work according to the needs of the students.

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