Developing Competences for Teaching Innovation in the University

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Abstracts: Being a Higher Education Institution which cares about the initial training of teachers in Chile is a great responsibility and compromise with society, since education is the most effective way to break the barriers that are imposed on human beings; barrier that frequently affect their quality of life and their social mobility. Therefore, as scholars of this University, we must push forward training based on generating competences that allow future professionals to be a positive influence on boys, girls, and teens of our country, with values based on social justice and human rights, using innovative methodologies, such as Service Learning, which puts curricular aspects to the service of the community.

Key words: teacher training, competences, innovation, learning + service

1. Introduction

Silva Henríquez Catholic University is an institution with more than 30 years of education history. It was founded in 1982 thanks to the solid support of Cardinal Raúl Silva Henríquez, who has left an important and inspirational legacy, centered in solidarity, social justice and love of others. The salesian charisma, the figure of Don Bosco and being a socially responsible institution guides us, just as it is expressed in the UCSH Mission; "offering a higher education of excellence to all who can benefit from it, especially talented youth who come from socially disfavored sectors, based on the salesian training model inspired in reason, love and transcendence"[1].

The University is in a curricular redesigning process, transiting towards a model by competences in the training of different areas, especially Pedagogy, whose duty is ensuring the contribution to the common well-being of everyone and society as a whole. To accomplish this, it is inspired in the works of Don Bosco, the preventive salesian seal and the legacy of the Cardinal as a defender of Human Rights and his compromise with freedom and social justice.

2. Topic Development

The Silva Henríquez Catholic University, as a social entity and because of the demands of current times, has been changing, without leaving behind the values and principles that have characterized us as a House of Studies, among them; the public service vocation which is always searching for justice and social equity and understanding that the initial teacher training that is imparted here has its own seal since it considers education as a service for

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[1] http://ww3.ucsh.cl/nuestra_universidad/proyecto.html.

building a better country. This was the wish Cardinal Silva Henríquez expressed in his letter "My dream for Chile". In it he writes; " I want, in my country, every human being, from conception to old age, to be respected and valued" (1991, Par. 1), thus, the access to education being the best opportunity for inclusion and social mobility.

To achieve the training goals, the Education Faculty has emphasized on improving the academic processes in varies ways, one of them   being the   teaching innovation which incorporates new ways of teaching, where the main focus is on the student that is being trained in this institution. To be innovative involves permanent reviewing of the pedagogic practices that we scholars implement. This also suggests more preparation and training which the University has continuously considered by offering training courses, diplomas, masters, even helping teachers who are going through their doctorate studies. All of this aiming at giving an initial, complete, integral teacher training adjusted to the reality of this society.

Some of these innovations relate directly with the implementation, in teaching, of active pedagogic and methodological strategies such as; investigative activities with the students; simulation of pedagogic actions; hands-on experience; Problem Based Learning (ABP); Learning by Projects (PBL); case studies, Learning + Service (A+S); use of TIC, bibliographical studies, among others, which represent a contribution to the process quality and fit into the institutional seal of professional training. To be able to carry out these and other teaching practices, the Silva Henríquez Catholic University is institutionally supported up by the Performance Agreement signed with the Education Ministry.

The Performance Agreement, within its objectives, suggests centering in quality training, which implies improving the pedagogic practices of scholars. To achieve it, the institution puts forward diverse support, for example: the curricular redesign of different careers at the Education Faculty; changing to a competences model; modifying the crediting system to the use of SCT; and also, consequently, redesigning   the way of teaching and giving different instances and offers of updating that are coherent with the social and institutional changes.

It is worth pointing out that these improvements have considered, from short courses in practical topics, such as, Scientific Writing, Qualitative Investigation, Basic Use of the Atlas Ti, SPSS, English for Everyone, up to support for Bachelor's and Master's degrees, such as Bachelor's degree on Didactic Innovation for University Teaching, Master's degree on University Teaching, Contributions for the quality of teaching from the University of Sevilla, Masters on Teaching and Learning Environments through Digital Technologies from the University of Barcelona, Doctorate Programs with the University of Sevilla, to mention a few.

All previously mentioned is aimed at moving forward in University training for competences who Bunk defines as the ability of having the required knowledge, skills, and aptitudes to develop well in the profession, but, at the same time, to solve problems, to be autonomous, flexible and to participate in the necessary collaborative work for organizations to work well (1994), in other words, this training doesn't focus only in the disciplinary knowledge but also on how to use this knowledge to be a positive contribution to society.

At the Higher Education level, the training for competences is very advantageous since it provides the chance to emphasize on procedural processes, thus determining and expressing in a clearer way the skills the students must be acquiring before graduating. This way, the transition from the university to the professional world is easier to assimilate because it generates a clear profile of the professional, of his or her abilities, aptitudes and skills, and also considers the relevance of the training house's permanent contact with the environment and community where the new professional will settle.

As a very positive aspect, the study program for competences brings permanent opportunities for reflecting upon the design of the study plans, the teaching practices which develop in the training processes, and of course, the ways of evaluating, where the center focuses on the "know-how" and its relationship to other knowledge such as getting to know, being, sharing, coexisting. The priority is that the knowledge acquired becomes functional, applicable and executable, so it improves the quality of life of the whole community. In other words, is a knowledge in the action that, in a responsible way, contributes to modifying reality, solving problems, improving the training processes of ourselves and others based on a "know-how" with conscience.

This "know-how" requires pedagogy students of the Education Faculty to have theory and practical knowledge. It also requires transversal training that reflects the institutional seal, favoring the development of value for the educational service, affectivity, compromise, cooperation, compliance and an optimistic view of an education which can change realities and is able to break barriers and transcend the whole society, as expressed by Wattíez y Quiñónez "abilities that every human needs, to be able to solve, in an efficient and autonomous way, the situations that life brings. It is founded in a profound being, not only knowing what and how, but knowing how to be a person in a complex, changing and competitive world" (Proyecto Tuning, 2007).

Focusing on the training offered by Silva Henríquez Catholic University's Education Faculty, one of the main challenges of the study program for competences, apart from carrying out a redesign of the training programs, is producing a change in the function of the educator, which was traditionally centered in teaching, to another, whose nuclear focus is for the student to become the agent of his or her own learning.

For this, we, scholars, must have two tasks in mind; to incorporate innovation into teaching and to give space and challenges, therefore the university students can build their own path towards the training goal, with compromise that must transcend the immediate space of the qualification   or   continue forward on the training trajectory, and must also look towards the contribution, impact and the educational and social transformation that the immersion into their professional life can generate, safeguarding the institutional seal as base to valuing human beings in their wholeness.

As teaching innovations, some already implemented in my personal work, is the use of TIC and the Learning in Service methodology (A+S). Their purpose is that both, in their interweaving, can be a contribution to quality training for the students who go through curricular activities that I impart. In this occasion, some central ideas of this experience are presented, systematized in an investigation carried out the year 2016, where I, as a teacher, incorporate the use of blogs by the students, as well as the use of A+S, permanently motivating them to generate reflection in the action, contributing with this to the common well-being because "doing a service to the community makes real sense when everyone who makes up the group has participated in the different phases of its development" (Mendía, 2012, p. 75), just as it was done by 4th year students of the Special Education Pedagogy Career, with special mention in Cognitive Disability and Severe Developmental Alterations of the UCSH in the Special School Los Cedros del Libano, in the community of San Miguel.

The above clearly relates to a paradigm change in the society of knowledge and to the innovative teaching processes. It is fundamental to move forward in training ,as much as the modern times and their demands move, in other words, to accommodate to the demands of globalization and the digital era, allowing the Initial Teaching Training to incorporate TIC competences, transversal and transcending the teaching action, just as it is pointed out; "The techno-educative innovation in this training means giving new lines of sense to everyday pedagogical interactions" (Fainholc B., 2008, p. 53).

The main objective of this experience was to encourage the development of meaningful learning in Special Education Pedagogy students, level 700, with special mention in Cognitive Disability and ASD, through active methodologies that allow unique aspects of the discipline to link to professional training.

To achieve the objective, the process involved 26 students of the Proposals of Intervention in Disability curricular activity as the main actors of whom I was in charge as their teacher. In the framework of A+S, as community partner, we worked with the Special School Los Cedros del Libano, with a population of 170 students with Special Educational Needs, all whom are permanent. The experience took place in 12 classes made up of 8 to 15 students with diverse physical and cognitive disabilities, as well as diverse levels of health compromise. The teachers of the school were also directly benefited by being observers of the actions carried out in the school context.

The way to work was planned in sessions of 4-hour each one; the first ones were to obtain information, process of adjusting, observation and knowledge of the group course assigned. The following ones were used to work collaboratively with the Teachers of each course; also Scales and Guidelines of development were used to be able to come up with case studies. The final sessions were destined for the implementation of classes using methodological strategies pertinent to different realities. As a product of the experience, we can point out the creation of a blog as a logbook (in pairs),   the report of the case study, class modeling and giving material and elaborated courses according to the needs and requirement of each group where the students worked.

3. Synthesis

As main results and contributions, many can be mentioned; the ones with the most objectivity were selected, for example, incorporating actions carried out in a real context. This enriches the students and the community since we are able to deepen in an educational problem, solutions are analyzed and investigated based on the tools and disciplinary knowledge of the actors, and the putting in practice of processes that allow its execution (the detection of needs, planning, organization, execution, evaluation) to transform and improve a determined reality, in other words, fundamental competences are put at use for the professional development and their insertion into the professional world, also, by actively incorporating strategies and methodologies, and the use of common language, (the use of blogs), which he or she actively incorporates in the learning (Learning-Service).

Therefore, these 26 future teachers have been exposed to experiences which allow them to mix theory and practice, to transform` it into a service for a determined community; and to make it visible through TIC, thus gaining essential competences in today's teaching and in all the knowledge that it involves. The relevance of this experience is in its social, personal, diverse and educative value; "There is a convincement, socially recognized, of the need to use TIC to support the teaching-learning processes, which demands the training instances that are responsible for training teachers to take over this issue, since these scenarios represent new challenges that education must address, and for which the teachers-in-training must be ready" (Mineduc, 2006, p. 9), as a consequence, geographical, idiomatic, cultural, social and ideological borders are eliminated in different educational communities and in life.

Finally, being a competent professional involves being flexible in different working spaces, putting the "knowing" in service of the "doing", solving situations in an everyday basis, working with and for the other, but principally understanding that the work and actions that students develop in their lives as teachers, will generate impacts and changes in other people. This can be positive or negative; for that reason, educating is a service with

social responsibility.

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