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Education in our time: competency or aptitude? The case for medicine. Part II[☆]



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Critique;
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Abstract Part II is focused on participatory education (PE), a distinctive way to understand and practice education in contrast to passive education. The core of PE is to develop everyone's cognitive potential, which is frequently neglected or ignored.

The epistemological and empirical basis of PE is defined as the concept of *creative critique*, the idea of knowledge as each person's construction and life experience as the focus of reflection and cognition. PE aims towards educating individuals with unprecedented cognitive and creative capabilities, qualified to approach a more inclusive and hospitable world.

The last part is about the fact that medical education has remained among the passive education paradigm of the *professional capabilities*. It emphasizes the critical role of *cognitive skills*, both methodological and practical (clinical aptitude), in the progress of medical education and practice. Finally, it discusses what to do and how to do all these elements, aiming towards a better world away from human degradation.

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PALABRAS CLAVE

Critique;
Conocimiento;
Educación
participativa;

La educación en nuestro tiempo: ¿competencia o aptitud? El caso de la medicina. Parte II

Resumen Esta segunda parte se enfoca en la *educación participativa* (EPT), una forma radicalmente distinta de entender y practicar la educación en comparación con la *educación pasiva*. El núcleo de la EPT es desarrollar las *potencialidades cognoscitivas* inherentes a toda persona, que han sido secularmente mutiladas, relegadas, inhibidas o ignoradas.

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Se definen las bases epistemológicas y experienciales de la EPT: el concepto de *crítica penetrante y creativa*, la idea de conocimiento como elaboración propia del sujeto y la *experiencia vital* como objeto primario de reflexión y cognición. Con estas bases, se especifican los caracteres distintivos de la EPT que apuntan a la formación de sujetos con potencias cognoscitivas y creativas inéditas, capaces de aproximarse a un mundo hospitalario e incluyente.

La última parte se dedica a la educación médica que, al adecuarse a la moda de las *competencias profesionales*, permanece dentro de la *pasividad*. Se enfatiza el papel clave de las *aptitudes cognoscitivas* metodológicas y prácticas (la aptitud clínica) en el progreso y superación de la educación y la práctica médicas. Finalmente, se argumenta sobre qué hacer y cómo hacerlo respecto a la educación, en la búsqueda de un mejor mundo a contrapelo de la degradación.

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1. Introduction

This second part deals with *participatory education* (PE), a radically different way of understanding and practising education in contrast to the *passive one*. The epistemological basis of PE is the concept of critique and the idea of knowledge to specify the factors aimed at the formation of people who can overcome the *degrading attributes* and approach a friendly and inclusive world. The last part refers to medical education which, by adhering to *professional competences*, does not go beyond *passivity*. It also highlights the decisive role of *cognitive skills* and especially the *clinical aptitude* in the progress of education and medical practice.

2. Participatory education

The theory of PE, based on the idea of knowledge as a *construction of the learner*, claims the existence of inherent *cognitive skills* in every subject—denied, ignored, relegated or inhibited throughout history—and from such an assertion it reveals and identifies the process that transforms them, through *critique*, into cognitive and creative skills that make such creation possible. The critique alludes to a kind of thinking parallel to philosophy: *used to put everything in question, not to give anything for granted, trying to get to the source of what seems natural and evident*, with the creative element which provides *critique* its true meaning: *to devise and propose superior ways of thinking and interacting with the critique object*. Accordingly, its concept *penetrating and creative critique* to distinguish from its common meanings, such as pejorative judgment, disqualification, censorship or focusing only on quibbles.

The most essential condition of the *participation in knowledge* is *life experience* (LE) which takes its place as a *self-referential* key of the cognitive actions (reflective and deliberative) of the subject^a. Hence, the starting point

of *participation* is to reflect on the LE and adopt a cognitive attitude towards those experiences that disturb, move, attract or arouse curiosity, what shapes the individual *cognitive* interests. By becoming aware of these interests, the adventure to self-readability and context awareness begin, where the subject realizes that knowledge is not something external but a personal construction, which allows capturing the quality of its relationships with significant objects and its conflicts which is the origin of their desires, inclinations, inhibitions, satisfactions, dissatisfactions, frustrations, and aversions. So this involves the exercise of their cognitive skills that motivates the individual to relate in a more rewarding and enriching way with objects (to be a better person) and figure out their place in the world and their possibilities of interaction in it.

Participation in the classroom becomes possible when favourable environments are achieved so that the learner recovers his LE as an object of reflective cognition, and is guided in a search for clarification of himself and its context. The above, to recognize and understand the nature of their links and conflicts in daily life, what led him to a consistent way of acting. Such environment supposes prioritizing potentially more appropriate, relevant, and stimulating for reflection and deliberation themes of the study for its closeness with their *cognitive interests*. Reflecting towards LE is the access key to the adventure of knowledge, where information that contributes to the understanding of the self and its context attracts the subject with keen interest, and is criticized for its shortcomings and limitations to recognize his intentions, and thus, when incorporated into the creation process and being part or incentive of points of view created by the subject, this information is transformed into knowledge.^b Such cognitive situation implies the presence

things; activities, events and performances of all kinds, or unannounced and shocking situations. The type of object and the quality of the experiences changes because of material, social, and cultural circumstances of the subject and his time in life.

^b the knowledge of the self and the context means to make an incursion with the weapons of critique (which assumes a mastery of oral language and, above all, written to unsuspected levels) in various fields related to the self (philosophy, psychology, anthropology,

^a LE are *affectively charged* experiences that arise during the particular interactions of each person with objects that are *significant*: the self (conflict concerns, curiosities), close friends, attractive people; other living beings (pets), various material and symbolic

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