

The Perceptions of Pre-Service Teachers Regarding the Teaching Methodology of Primary Education Social Science Teachers

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This chapter has been proposed with the aim of discovering and analysing how Social Sciences teachers represent and develop knowledge in their teaching practice through the perspective of pre-service teachers. To achieve this, the methodological model of primary education teachers will be analysed via observations carried out by students of an undergraduate degree in Primary Education during their period of teaching practice, paying particular attention to the development of the historical thinking skills and the use of ICT resources and of learning strategies, resources, and assessment. These observations by trainees reflect how pre-service teachers are more aware of the importance of encouraging a wider variety of learning and assessment strategies and activities for the achievement of historical thinking competences and more complex thinking skills.

INTRODUCTION

The change in approach to the teaching of History which has taken place over recent years emphasises the need to promote new learning strategies and models and a method of assessment for History which are more linked with the development of skills, particularly those of historical thinking (Carretero, 2019; Sáiz & Domínguez, 2017; Sáiz & Gómez, 2016; Metzger y Harris, 2018; Thorp y Persson, 2020). In this context, it is essential to analyse the conceptions held and the teaching approaches employed by

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Social Science teachers, how they represent the knowledge they teach and what consequences this has on the strategies and resources which they consider most relevant for teaching (Guerrero, Sánchez & Miralles, 2022).

Nowadays, a less descriptive and conceptual approach to the teaching of History is advocated, one which is more geared towards developing the capacity to think historically and to foster competences such as the critical analysis of information, the use and interpretation of sources, seeing things from different perspectives and other skills related with the trade of the historian and the construction of historical knowledge (Thorp & Persson, 2020; Sáiz & Gómez, 2016; Prieto, Gómez & Miralles, 2013; Santisteban, González & Pages, 2010; Lévesque, 2008; VanSledright, 2011). This construction is obtained through teaching and learning processes of second-order contents related with this way of understanding history education based on the historical thinking skills: historical relevance, causes and consequences, change and continuity, the analysis of sources, empathy and historical consciousness (Seixas & Morton, 2013; VanSledright, 2014).

This implies encouraging more complex cognitive strategies, the development of a historical consciousness and a responsibility for a democratic and critical citizenship (Lucas & Delgado, 2018; Rüsen, 2015; Sáiz, 2013; Marín, 2017) which extends beyond a form of learning based essentially on the textbook and on taking standardised examinations (Prats, 2011; Herrera & Gil, 2015, Hernández, 2019; Gómez, Rodríguez & Miralles, 2014; Gómez, Rodríguez & Mirete, 2018).

This model advocates a form of history learning which combines the following two dimensions: knowledge of history and the use of historical skills and competences related with basic educational competences (Lee 2005 and 2011; Sáiz 2013). In this context, teaching staff are a fundamental element in the development and improvement of learning processes and are also a key aspect in the transformation of education and a change in learning models (Pagès, 2011). This change involves reviewing the models and practices carried out if teachers wish to be agents of the change towards sustainability and in the training of future citizens (Calero et al., 2019).

Santisteban (2019) has spoken of the need to shape a transformative citizenship, among whom the learning of social and citizenship competences is fostered. It is necessary to encourage a curriculum with a social vocation which develops competences and contents in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals and the application of learning models based on higher-order thinking skills (Avendaño-Castro & Parada, 2013; López Facal et al., 2017; Lévesque & Clark, 2018) from a socio-cultural and humanistic perspective of history teaching connected with citizenship education and social problems (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Rüsen, 2015). This form of education is extremely committed to democracy and justice within the framework of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (Medir & Serra, 2021).

Within the teaching of historical contents, it is necessary, therefore, to promote new learning strategies and models and forms of History assessment linked to the development of these historical thinking skills, making it possible for them to be developed in the classroom from a critical perspective (Pagès, 1994; Miralles et al., 2014; Estepa, 2017). At the same time, it is also important to work on second-order contents and to promote a form of historical comprehension which involves the development of these skills via active student-based methods and resources (Guerrero et al., 2021; Miralles, Gómez & Rodríguez, 2017; Thorp & Persson, 2020; VanSledright, 2011).

The improvement of these approaches and models regarding the teaching of the social sciences should be based on the identification of the learning practices and processes being carried out in compulsory education as these can constitute an indicator of the educational change being brought about. Even at the

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