Learning styles as an essential axis to build a constructivist and innovative model in the evaluation of learning in the Regional Multidisciplinary Faculty of Carazo

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The present essay analyzes the educational model of UNAN-Managua to determine if learning styles as an essential axis, construct a constructivist and innovative model in the teaching-learning process as well as in evaluation.

Although it is true that the UNAN-Managua Academic Vice-rectory gave a workshop on evaluation strategies in 2013, which have a nuance of innovators, there has been no accompaniment to teachers from the Methodological Unit that Exists in the Regional Multidisciplinary Faculty of Carazo (FAREM-Carazo) nor the Career Coordinators have given the necessary accompaniment to each teacher from the technical-scientific perspective in terms of the practice of evaluation strategies applied to students taking into account The learning styles of the students.

At present, no similar proposals have been submitted at UNAN-Managua, so this topic has to contribute to the improvement of the teaching-learning process for the students of the Educational Sciences Careers of UNAN-Managua, FAREM -Carazo.

In order to build a constructivist and innovative model, it is necessary to consider the teaching-learning styles of the students and thus evaluate them in a fairer way according to their competences. In the same way, it is necessary to inquire if the educational institution contemplates it in its model. Rather, the UNAN-Managua model is constructivist and explains that people learn at different rates and that knowledge is social and interactive and therefore constructivist (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua, 2011). However, the Model makes no mention of learning styles as an important factor to be taken into account for the evaluation of the teaching-learning process or as the axis for the construction of a constructivist model. According to Soler (2006), in the constructivist [...] model *"the apprentice is motivated, interested, committed and satisfied with developing his own style of learning and providing his personal perspective".*

In contrast, the Educational Model of the UNAN-Managua states:

> Not only students, but all the elements involved in the process are evaluated: study plans, subject programs, teaching-learning strategies, materials used, physical resources, the learning environment and the performance of the Teachers (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua, p.33, 2011).

However, it is important to discover that each group of students is composed of a variety of students that come from different families, social, economic and educational environment and for that reason, teaching-learning styles cannot be unique, equally, evaluation strategies may not be similar for all students. In the constructivist character of the evaluation, it is said that "evaluation corresponds to the progress of different individual potentials and different cognitive styles" (Saul, Cappelletti, Abramowicz, Iannone, Borba and Ferri, 2004).

Thus, the student groups of UNAN-Managua are not the exception, each of them has different characteristics; For example, in the regular groups are young students who come from private and public schools, rural and urban areas, some are in those careers as a "fill-in", because they could not classify in their first option, among other characteristics. Likewise, the Professionalization groups, which only study Saturdays, are so diverse: they are mostly adults who work teaching empirically, usually come from rural areas of Rivas, Granada, Masaya and Carazo. This is reflected in the database that each semester is requested and updated by the management of the Department of Sciences of Education and Humanities of FAREM-Carazo.

On the other hand, a big amount of these students (adults) does not even have an e-mail account created, with this it can be glimpsed that the diversity that exists in the groups of students is very wide and for that reason cannot be taught and to evaluate homogeneously. If we want to truly apply a constructivist model, we must consider the learning styles as the main axis for the construction of this model.

With regard to learning styles, it is important that teachers know their definition and how they are classified, so as to be aware of the necessity of their role in constructing a constructivist model in the teaching-learning process.

The learning styles are classified as follows: Visual, Aural and Kinesthetic. Psicoactiva Mujer Hoy (2013) defines learning styles as follows:

> "Learning Styles" are the preferences or general trends that a person uses as his own method to learn. They are strategies that, somehow, we use each of us to learn. Although concrete strategies may vary depending on what we are trying to learn, each of us tends to develop a similar global system. These trends or preferences constitute our learning style.

While it is true that in the UNAN-Managua classrooms, FAREM-Carazo, in the careers of Education Sciences, teachers apply a variety of teaching strategies, which affirm the reports of direct supervisions elaborated by the Methodological Unit of this Faculty, it cannot be said that teachers are aware of the learning styles of each student in the different class groups where they share their knowledge. Similarly, it cannot be said that teachers know the learning styles as an important axis for the application of the constructivist model.

In addition, it should be added that when assessing the knowledge acquired by the students, a

traditional and basically summative evaluation method is applied, as Bordas and Cabrera (2001) affirm on the very innovative teaching strategies applied by teachers, but which are evaluated in a traditional way.

In the English Language grammar class, teaching-assessment practices do not complement each other. Teachers apply a very active and constructivist methodology because students use grammar in role plays, make informational murals, write diaries, and others. However, when evaluating the 40% that corresponds to the written test, teachers elaborate extensive multiple-choice tests (four to five pages), this explains the contradiction of applying innovative strategies at the time of teaching the class but evaluating learning traditionally.

The following is a study by Aburto (2014) who asserts that there is confusion in the teachers of UNAN-Managua, FAREM-Carazo between qualification and evaluation. They do not know how to distinguish between what to evaluate, whether content or learning, nor do they know how to distinguish meaningful learning, which students will need to put into practice in real life and work.

The results of Aburto's study (2014) state that there is a lack of awareness of FAREM-Carazo teachers in the disciplines of: Mathematics, General Physics, French II, History of Nicaragua on the management of the constructivist model in the evaluation process :

> *70%, that is to say, 14 teachers designed evaluation instruments, charged with reproductive answers at the level of knowing, among the items used mainly pass the questions of reproduction of contents, excel: define, complete, enumerate, multiple choice and false/true, the last one without conditioning [...]*

> *[...] teachers have a "banking" vision of education and do not develop critical awareness in students as transformers of the world" (Freire quoted in Aburto, 2014)*

> *It is clear that the evaluation instruments in most cases are aimed at valuing memorized content, in a minority could be observed that they do are oriented to develop competencies.*

> *In practice it is evident that the different actors involved in the study do not dominate the processes of Teaching-Learning and the process of Educational Evaluation.*

> *It requires a process of conscious review and control by career coordinators, in the calendars plans, weekly plans and evaluation tools, of course this adversely affects academic performance.*

> *The Educational Evaluation allows to know the degree of progress, achievements, abilities, capacities and skills that students develop during and after the teaching-learning process.*

> *The Career Coordinators and Department Directors do not effectively comply with the process of control of teaching planning and the design of evaluation proposals.*

> *There is a lack of knowledge of pedagogical processes such as: Teaching - learning Process and evaluation as a process, very marked in students, in teachers there is a lack of mastery of the same processes, as with other teachers with management positions.*

In addition, if teachers do not know what Aburto (2014) previously mentions and if there has not been an investigation about the knowledge and application by teachers about learning styles, it cannot be declared that the constructivist model is being applied in an effective way, as explained in the previous paragraphs in which the contradiction of the implementation of constructivist strategies is exposed, but the application of the evaluation is traditional.

Also, the closest thing to the study of learning styles in the UNAN-Managua, FAREM-Carazo is what Aburto (2014) mentions.

> *This is what we must understand university teachers and more specifically those of the FAREM-Carazo, at the time of evaluation, for this from the first day of school must be collected the characteristic information that manifests each student in the performance inside and outside the classroom; anecdotal, logbook or any other document that allows to carry the data record in order to assess performance, individual growth, development of habits, abilities, skills, capacities of the student within the group of classes and finally make the decision of Promotion or retention.*

The results of Aburto confirm what Villalobos (2003) put forward, teachers should understand and take into account each student's performance, individual growth, abilities and skills as teaching-learning styles in an exercise of freedom for each student and teacher find different alternatives to learn and teach better. Without leaving aside the evaluation of the whole process as a whole in the constructivist model to which UNAN-Managua is governed.

In this sense, for the teachers and students of UNAN-Managua, FAREM-Carazo, in each of the Education Sciences Careers, there are challenges. One of them is proposed by Jorba and San Martí (1993) who say that to evaluate is to know the strategy used by each of the students to solve a task and to recognize the causes of the difficulties. It is to discover the style of learning that is put into practice by each student to acquire the knowledge and solve the tasks posed by the teachers. This is possible if we innovate both in the evaluation process and in the special didactics

The second challenge is the awareness of innovating in both didactic planning and evaluation, with the aim of applying learning styles. Otherwise, if the teacher is not aware of this need the constructivist model will not be applied satisfactorily.

Once again, it is clear that the terms of application and accompaniment of teaching-learning strategies and their evaluation from the perspective of each student's styles as the axis for the construction of a constructivist approach, it is not being applied in its maximum expression.

It is for this reason that the need to elaborate a workshop plan for the counseling and accompaniment to the teachers of UNAN-Managua, FAREM-Carazo, regarding the learning styles as axes for the construction of a constructivist model must be analyzed. This action will contribute to the improvement of the teaching-learning process and, consequently, to the evaluation of the same process in an innovative way.

Finally, for the construction and application of a constructivist model as proposed by the Educational Model of UNAN-Managua, the learning styles should be analyzed and applied as main axes in order to be successful in the teaching-learning process and innovative evaluation of process.

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