

REINVENTING THE GEOGRAPHIC EDUCATION IN TIMES OF CRISIS: ICT IN THE UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM

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The objective of this work is to carry out a reflection on the changes that we have been forced to address from the teaching of the social sciences, and in particular, in the course “Didactics of Social Sciences: geographical space and its didactic treatment”, a subject which is greatly enriched with school trips and educational itineraries for which we lack economic funding, although new technologies are erected in an indispensable resource to offset, at least in part, these deficiencies. We propose to use ICT resources to bring the environment into the classroom, natural and virtual, to have their space in the process of teaching and learning in geographical discipline.

This work consists of three parts, differentiated in terms of its objectives. The first part is a reflection on the current state of the teaching of geography, whose conclusions is the starting point for the development of the following sections; it follows a study on the resources that new technologies offer us and its meaning and use in the context of the teaching of geography. It is an alternative proposal of work with students through the use of new technologies.

1. INTRODUCTION

Just four years ago, the Bologna plan opened new horizons of university education, with organizational and structural approaches that were called to modify not only the curriculum content but also teaching styles, strategies and organization of groups; however, the budget reduction is affecting the entire educational system.

It is necessary research in new teaching and learning strategies, despite the consideration that the role of the teacher in the classroom has necessarily evolved from

exhibition and master classes towards the direction and orientation of students to explore, investigate and construct their own learning process.

2. NEW DIDACTIC OF GEOGRAPHY

The university is out of concepts like meaningful learning or interaction with students even in subjects of didactics, like didactics of Geography. It is necessary a revision and self-criticism in higher and secondary education by using new learning methodologies: to develop all the key competences, specially “learn to learn” and “social and civic competences”, b) to contribute in the integral formation of the students, c) to facilitate the innovation from the new technologies, d) to improve the quantity and quality of learning.

We present in this paper a proposal articulated from two perspectives: 1) the methodology of work in the classroom since the incorporation of the new technologies and 2) how to present environment in the classroom, through the practical application of new technologies in geographic education.

This methodology we are explaining has already been implemented, and the results were excellent: it improves class attendance and the qualifications and the students considered the experience very positive.

3. NEW METHODOLOGIES FOR NEW TECHNOLOGIES

On the other hand, the University is a perfect place to implement and disseminate the new technologies because it has many material resources, and this is one of the potentialities to apply in teaching and learning: for example, in the University of Jaen you can use virtual teaching to make available the theories of different subjects, and this possibility let you more time to make other activities where the students can construct their learning and investigate alternatives methodologies of teaching, taking into account that our students will be teachers.

4. OF THE ENVIRONMENT TO THE CLASSROOM TO THE VIRTUAL WORLD: RESOURCES ATTRACTIVE TO STUDY GEOGRAPHY

The information and Internet technologies have changed the geography of the world in which we live, because they provide us with the opportunity to obtain information about the planet and treat it to get results. Geographical information technologies which include the geographic information systems (GIS), the systems of global positioning satellites (GPS), remote sensing technologies and applications for the management and analysis of spatial or territorial data.

To finish, I have introduced a general proposal of activities which have been made in the subject “Didactics of Geography” during the last semester in order to be applied in their future jobs, by teachers in primary school: applications of Google Earth, World Population Prospects (WPP) or, Global Health Observatory, among others.

5. CONCLUSIONS

1. The methodological change requires an increase of the quality of the educational process.
2. The information and communication technologies facilitate and promote the use of innovative methodologies.
3. The application of this methodology in which the technologies of information and communication are a resource, that we consider fundamental, has increased the positive results in the learning of students.