

Thematic analysis of the free textbook of Artistic Education, 4th grade of primary education in Mexico

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Summary

It is possible to verify in a timeline, with the activities programmed in the free textbooks of Artistic Education, published by the Ministry of Public Education (SEP), in Mexico, which are used during the 2018-2019 school year, that they do have a logical sequence, progressive, sufficient, in force and well dosed pedagogically, in accordance with the ages of the children in each grade, during the six years of primary education, which contributes to the integral formation of the students and makes it possible to fully comply with their graduation profile, as far as Arts Education is concerned, within public education in Mexico, under the responsibility of the SEP.

Keywords: Free textbooks; Artistic education; Social-emotional skills; Integral training; Quality of education.

Introduction

Motivated by Dr. José Luis Montero Badillo, in the seminar of Design of the process of doctoral

scientific research, at the University of Cuautitlán Izcalli, Campus-Chopos, State of Mexico, the subject of this research originates from the interest of knowing whether, as part of the current government's commitments to Mexican society, the SEP complies with the quality of education in what corresponds to the thematic content of the free textbooks that it publishes and distributes in all public elementary schools, since it is in the process of establishing the “National Agreement for Education” in order to build a New Mexican School, rethinking the educational model that emerged in 2008 and later, those that resulted from the constitutional amendments of 2012 and 2013, which did not have the positive results expected by a series of different factors, starting with the lack of a relevant strategy in its implementation.

And it is precisely from this first factor that after a series of analyses carried out by SEP personnel and a wide diversity of public, private and social institutions, the Educational Proposal of the current 2018-2024 administration considers, as a priority, that the *real* needs and conditions of students should be recognized, so that the profile of the citizen who wants to be trained in Mexico can be defined on this basis, so that the routes to be implemented from the National Education System (SEN) can be established.

The aim is to promote the integral formation of citizens and the reduction of social inequalities, with quality education with equity.

For this, it is necessary to strengthen the meaning of learning in each grade of studies, to motivate the interest of students, through relevant training, which is increasingly related to their daily lives, in accordance with their context and expectations of their future.

This will be the basis for a curricular rethink that should emerge from the consensus of all educational actors.

- ***But how can this be achieved, taking into account the heterogeneity of conditions in which basic education is provided in Mexico?***

The hypothesis in this regard is that “through the use of standardized educational materials for each grade of basic education and elaborated by the educational authority, when studying with the same educational materials, all students in Mexico will be formed integrally, with the same conditions of quality and equity”.

That is why the strategy that since 1960 the federal government, through the SEP, has applied to comply with basic education at the national level, has been through the teaching of classes in all public schools, with the support of educational materials published by that Secretariat, among others, such as the so-called free textbooks, which are distributed every year throughout Mexico, It is therefore of the utmost importance to analyse the thematic content of these, in order to verify that they meet the necessary conditions, in terms of the expected learning, so that they effectively allow for the integral formation of students at that level of education.

Hence the objectives of this research are basically:

- To know the current status of the content of free textbooks, specifically that of Artistic Education of the fourth grade of primary school, published in 2010 by the SEP, in its 4th reprint in 2017 for its application in the 2018-2019 school year of primary education in Mexico.
- To analyze the pertinence and sufficiency of the thematic content of the mentioned text, in order to verify its correct orientation in accordance with the current educational policy, within the 4th grade of primary education.

Methods and Techniques

In order to carry out this research, official information documents were consulted, such as the current Political Constitution of the United Mexican States and some other sources of information generated by the SEP, such as the current Educational Model of Basic Education, the free textbooks on Artistic Education for the six grades of primary education used in the 2018-2019 school year, the Key Learning for Integral Education 2017 and the Public Policy Lines for Basic Education 2018-2024.

In such a way that the research carried out was only documentary, which is why it was not necessary to apply it and follow up with some sample population group, having been carried out with a quantitative, descriptive approach, in which data collection techniques were used through the reading and analysis of the part of the documents consulted that were directly related to the research topic.

The *object of study* in this case was specifically the thematic content of the free textbook of Arts Education of the fourth grade of primary education, which was compared with the free textbooks of the same type of the other five grades of primary education, in order to determine whether there is the necessary congruence between these texts, in such a way as to allow students at this educational level to obtain the learning planned in accordance with their graduation profile.

Documentation analysis

The Political Constitution of the United Mexican States in force (last reform of 27-08-2018), in its Title I, Chapter I "Of Human Rights and their Guarantees", Article 2. "The Mexican Nation is unique and indivisible", establishes in its Paragraph B), Paragraph II, that the Federation, the Federative Entities and the Municipalities have the obligation to:

"To guarantee and increase levels of schooling, favouring bilingual and intercultural education, literacy, completion of basic education, productive training and secondary, higher and higher education. Establish a scholarship system for indigenous students at all levels. Define and develop regional educational programmes that recognize the cultural

heritage of their peoples, in accordance with the relevant laws and in consultation with indigenous communities. Promote respect and knowledge of the diverse cultures existing in the nation.”

Article 3 of the Constitution states: “Everyone has the right to education. The State - federation, states, Mexico City and municipalities - will provide preschool, primary, secondary and upper secondary education. Pre-primary, primary and secondary education make up basic education; this and the upper secondary education are compulsory.”

Created on October 3, 1921 with that purpose, the SEP has the Mission: “To create conditions that allow to assure the access of all Mexican men and women to a quality education, in the level and modality that they require and in the place where they demand it”, and it has among others, the responsibility of imparting in a free and secular way, the public education of the basic and superior medium level in Mexico.

Therefore, the current Political Constitution of the United Mexican States states: “The education provided by the State shall tend to develop harmoniously all the faculties of the human being and shall foster in him, at the same time, love for the Homeland, respect for human rights and awareness of international solidarity, independence and justice.”

Amended paragraph DOF 10-06-2011

As it states: “The State shall guarantee the quality of compulsory education in such a way that the educational materials and methods, school organization, educational infrastructure, and the suitability of teachers and principals guarantee the maximum learning achievement of the learners. ”

Added paragraph DOF 26-02-2013

To fully comply with such important precepts in the field of education, is that on January 12, 1959, by presidential decree is created in Mexico the National Commission for Free Textbooks (CoNaLiTeG), being at that time, constitutional President Adolfo López Mateos.

The SEP, through the CoNaLiTeG publishes and publishes textbooks that are distributed free of charge in all public schools of basic education nationwide.

The CoNaLiTeG's bibliographic collection can be consulted at :
<https://historico.conaliteg.gob.mx>

From the year of its creation and during its sixty years of uninterrupted work, CoNaLiTeG has published nine generations of free textbooks:

- First generation: 1960.
- Second generation: 1962.
- Third generation: in 1972.
- Fourth generation: in 1982.
- Fifth generation: in 1988.
- Sixth generation: in 1993.
- Seventh generation: in 2008.
- Eighth generation: in 2011.
- Ninth generation: in 2014.

The intention of the federal government in Mexico, when it created the CoNaLiTeG in 1959, was to support the work of the teachers in charge of basic education throughout the country, with the elaboration of educational materials that would contribute to making a reality of the fact that public education at the basic level would be given to all students under the same conditions, with the intention of guaranteeing in some way the quality and equity of the public education in their charge, at that educational level.

To this end, by means of an infinite number of interminable work meetings in which specialists in various areas of knowledge participated - and continue to do so in the same way today - the thematic content of each of the different textbooks that would be published for each subject and grade of basic education was decided, and then these specialists proceeded to develop each of the multiple approved subjects, thus giving form to what would be known as "free textbooks".

And although the work carried out by each of the people who throughout the already 60 years of history of the CoNaLiTeG have contributed with their knowledge and talent in the elaboration of the multicipated textbooks published throughout those nine generations of previously detailed editions, with their respective reprints each one of them, it was possible to detect, with the passage of time and the application of these standardized educational materials by each school grade at a national level, that not necessarily the learning contents between the different grades, for example, of the primary education level, within the same subject or area of knowledge, they were congruent with the context in which they were applied, nor did they maintain a gradual, progressive, ascending logical sequence in terms of the level of knowledge that the student had to acquire and develop in a particular subject, regardless of the fact that with the dizzying passage of time, the thematic contents quickly lost validity and therefore relevance, as the textbooks were surpassed by the advances that are generated every day in all areas of knowledge in all parts of the world, including of course Mexico.

As a consequence of all this, unfavorable feelings towards the contents of many of the textbooks edited by the SEP for basic education were generated throughout the national territory and in a

large number of students, the same teachers and educational authorities and even in society in general, because in all cases they did not fulfill the objective for which they were designed, with the negative consequences that had direct repercussions on the integral formation of students, in whom a series of gaps could be observed in terms of the knowledge that they should have acquired during their educational journey through public primary schools, specifically speaking of this educational level.

The result was that on many occasions students became discouraged or discouraged when studying with these educational materials, as they did not meet their expectations or be able to meet their learning needs, since in some cases they saw no application to what they were learning. In other cases, the same subjects became repetitive for the students, year after year, because the authorities responsible for this had not taken care that among the texts of the same subject there was a logical and progressive sequence in the learning contents that the students would have to receive throughout their studies at the basic level.

This generated that from time to time, the CoNaLiTeG was publishing new editions of textbooks with the best intention of satisfying the needs and expectations of the educational actors and mainly of the students, in accordance with the degree of studies in which it will be found at a certain moment, so that by the updated thematic content of these educational support materials, the integral formation of the students of the level of primary education in Mexico will be achieved.

However, unfortunately not in all cases, with the new editions of free textbooks and the educational reforms that have taken place in Mexico over the past 60 years, it has been possible to overcome this lack of integration in the thematic content of textbooks of the same subject of study in the different grades of schooling throughout basic education.

And fortunately this has been possible, after many years of insisting on the part of the different educational actors and society in general, so that the necessary adaptations were generated to be able to count on educational materials with sufficient learning contents, updated, close to the reality of the different contexts in which the educational process is carried out throughout the country, to be able to attend basic education in reality, with the quality that is so required in practice with the positive impact that it should have on the real life of citizens in training within the classrooms of public schools in Mexico and not only that it remains a dead letter as it has been for a long time, within the shocking political speeches that are heard every year by the educational authorities and the rulers in turn.

This is how we arrived motivated by the interest in analyzing the thematic content of textbooks of the same subject in its trajectory throughout the six grades that make up primary education in public education in our country, in order to verify whether or not the planned learning in each of these educational materials comply with the necessary conditions to guarantee in some way the maximum learning achievement in the training of students throughout their stay during public

primary school in Mexico, in charge of the SEP.

In the detailed analysis of the textbook of Artistic Education, of the fourth grade of primary education, the subject of this research, we can observe from the cover of the same one that contains the image of "The Homeland", designed in 1962 by Jorge Glez. Camarena, that tries to show what in that then was an aspiration in Mexico: *"that the textbooks were between the legacies that the Homeland leaves to its children."*

The presentation of the quoted text was prepared by the SEP to support the study of the student and so that reading knows more about people and the world that surrounds him/her, in addition to other materials designed for study and understanding with the family, alluding to the importance of involving the family in the integral formation of the student.

From the beginning the text invites the student to visit the school library, thus encouraging the habit of reading and cites the term "explorer" in the use of texts to enjoy reading to the fullest, in addition to learning and being able to make decisions with what has been learned.

It specifies the fact that teachers will deepen the subjects of the text, through the use and application of ICTs, which are oriented to learning and are called TACs, to contribute to raising the level of quality of education for the direct benefit of the student.

He mentions that schools and educational materials in Mexico are transforming, as a reaffirmation of improvement in the level of quality in education care.

It invites parents to review the student's assignments, involving them in their academic training process, and invites students to tell their parents what they do in school and asks parents to talk to their children's teachers about their development as their students, since many parents and teachers participated in the creation of the free textbooks, along with researchers, publishers, and specialists in each subject.

Thanks to all of them it was possible to publish this text (and the whole collection), but the real life of the book begins with the student since the books are the best travel companions they can have and he wishes them success as "explorers", inviting them to investigate, to develop their creativity and their initiative, to learn as much and as best as possible, becoming responsible for their own learning.

The text index is made up of the presentation page, a section called "Know your book" and five blocks comprising 21 lessons, in addition to the bibliography at the end of the text, to finish with the iconographic credits in a total of 85 pages.

Finish the book with a survey addressed to the student about his or her opinion of the text, made up of 10 reagents: 9 multiple-choice and 1 so that he or she can freely write down his or her

suggestions for improving the book or the educational materials used during the school year in which he or she is studying.

- Block I of the thematic content of the text comprises lessons 1 to 5.
- Block II comprises lessons 6 to 9
- Block III comprises lessons 10 to 13
- Block IV contains lessons 14 to 17
- Block V comprises lessons 18 to 21

The current educational model establishes as features of the primary school graduation profile, corresponding to social-emotional skills and life project, that the graduate:

“He has a capacity for attention. Identify and practice personal strengths to self-regulate emotions and be calm to play, learn, develop empathy and live with others. Designs and undertakes short- and medium-term projects (e.g., improving qualifications or hobbies).”

And specifically regarding artistic appreciation and expression, he specifies that the graduate: “Explores and experiences different artistic manifestations. It expresses itself creatively through elements of music, dance, theatre and the visual arts.”

Results

Once all the necessary sources of information directly related to the subject of this research have been consulted, and in accordance with the adjustment made to the curriculum of the 2018 educational model of basic education, it has been possible for students to obtain the tools that allow them to adapt to a world that is constantly changing, since the current curricular approach seeks to articulate the contents of basic education at all levels of schooling, so that there is a clear and congruent evolution in the learning of students with a pedagogical proposal that has favored the autonomy of the student through the development of understanding, critical thinking and even, even at an elementary level, but even the development of research skills, so that students have been receiving the “key” tools to learn throughout their lives.

The proposal in basic education includes, among the most relevant elements, the “key learnings”, which allow students to continue learning permanently throughout their lives, to cite just one example, in the understanding of world events both in the field of nature and in the social; in the development of mathematical thought, in the correct handling of language and communication, among many others.

It also includes everything related to personal and social development, so that students develop in

an integral way through the realization of artistic, cultural, sports, recreational activities, as well as activities for students to learn to regulate their emotions, develop and live to the full their values and know how to live in the best way with others.

Another fundamental aspect included in the proposal is curricular autonomy, which is intended for each school to be able to define part of the curriculum, to deepen key learning or to incorporate knowledge such as chess, robotics, regional content or social impact projects directly related to the context in which each primary school is located in Mexico, with all the benefits that this implies in many aspects, not only for students directly, who will be the first to benefit from it, but also for all educational actors and Mexican society in general.

By applying the “Pedagogy of Being” in the latter educational model for compulsory education, the SEP seeks to create the best conditions necessary so that every person who passes through a basic public school is prepared to become what they want or dream of becoming, recovering the essence of education in all senses, putting again in the center of the educational process the act of educating, without privileging neither more nor less, neither the student nor the teacher, which gives us a new vision of the way of doing things within the educational sphere.

Applying basic education in this sense has the best intention of contributing to the improvement of our immediate environment and thus of our country in general, developing the potential of each student as a human being by giving a sense of life more proper, more authentic, closer to their person, their beliefs, their way of thinking, being and doing things, based of course on universal values such as love, harmony, kindness, justice, dignity and respect, among the most representative.

In addition to improving the quality of education provided by the State, it is important to ensure that it is inclusive, valuing diversity, learning from the differences between people in their different conditions as human beings, favouring the presence, participation of individuals in society and thus the progress of the nation.

Therefore, education is in charge of focusing on the abilities of students, providing them with the conditions that each one requires according to their own abilities so that they have the highest expectations as social entities, both individually and as members of a society, learning that cooperation and joint work is the best way to work for the common good, not only of a few, with all the benefits that this implies.

Therefore, and in congruence with the results obtained from the analysis of the thematic contents and activities to be developed within the primary education level, specifically concerning Arts Education and in particular comparing the sequence of learning contents of the free primary education textbooks used in the 2018-2019 school year, it can be observed that now, within the current basic education model, there is a sequence of pedagogically graduated knowledge at the level of each grade with an upward continuity for each grade of the next level of studies.

This allows learning to become meaningful for students, and for that reason is relevant, which allows them to awaken and maintain interest in learning by appropriating it to see and feel it close, regionalized and therefore appropriate to the context where they develop, which generates in turn, that for their own interest they appropriate better the knowledge that they are acquiring and in their case they can apply it immediately, being able to verify in this way that they have been useful and of application in their daily life, being able to contribute in this way to their integral formation, with the direct benefit for the students with the real and efficient fulfillment of the Mission of the SEP in the scope of their functions in charge.

Discussion

In accordance with the objectives originally set out in this research, which were basically to ascertain the current status of the content of free textbooks, specifically that of Arts Education of the fourth grade of Primary Education, which is applied in the 2018-2019 school year of primary education in Mexico, and to analyse the relevance and sufficiency of the thematic content of the above-mentioned text, in order to ascertain its correct orientation in accordance with current education policy, within the fourth grade of primary education, it can be determined that the orientation and sequence of the lessons learned in the aforementioned textbook are indeed correct.

With it, the ends consigned in the “New Education” that currently promotes the government in Mexico, through the SEP, become a reality in its application in primary schools throughout the country, by providing students of that educational level with the necessary tools that allow them to know how to express their feelings and emotions, and effectively manage the numbers,

Even reaching to enjoy its application at the time of performing mathematical operations when required, with an attitude of openness to the world in all aspects, awakening interest in knowledge, to acquire more and new knowledge that allow students to have the skills of mathematical thinking, critical, creative, so that they know how to analyze and solve situations and problems at any time and place they are.

In addition to the fact that the comprehensive education designed as a graduation profile for primary school students offers them the possibility of being able, with what they have learned in public school, to construct their own goals according to their age and short-term interests, being able to work in teams without any problem when relating to any other type of people, regardless of their physical, social, economic or cultural conditions, which fertilizes the formation of “good citizens” who know how to value people for themselves, art and culture.

Another relevant aspect of the “New Education” is the fact that students learn to take care of their own health, the environment, that they respect nature and other people out of conviction, aware of what this implies and not only because they are seeing them or because they know that something should not be done but they do not even know why, or even worse, without thinking about the

consequences that their actions can have if they do not respect.

And finally, it is important that in a globalized world, from primary education students learn to take advantage of the benefits and advantages of existing technologies in their context, with their good use and productive employment, with the multiple benefits that this implies, always taking care of the risks that also exist when making a bad use of them in daily life.

The fact that the thematic contents of the free textbooks, published by SEP in Mexico for primary education, currently allow to think about the integral formation of students, a verified one in a research subject, in this case that of Arts Education, is a point in favor of contributing with raising the quality of the same in direct benefits of each one of the students of the public schools of that educational level, and with the formation of intellectually but also emotionally well prepared people, it contributes to the improvement of the living conditions of all the inhabitants of the country, having better citizens every day in the community around each one of us, which implies a great advance in many aspects, not only in the educational field.

All the efforts to achieve it throughout the cycle of basic education and to continue it during high school and higher education will bring great benefits for everyone, so we must not stop doing everything that is in our hands, from our different areas where each of us perform, as teachers of our children and young people, as educational authorities in charge of public and even private schools, as part of the administrative structures of different government agencies, starting with the SEP, at all levels of management: federal, state or municipal, as parents of those children and young people in formation and in general as a society that lives and lives with them every day, because they deserve it, because we owe them, because our children and young people are the future of our country and we want well-prepared and integrally trained people so that at the right time they lead the reins of Mexico in the best way, because we all deserve it, because they owe it to each one of us.

The time is now, here, without pretexts or justifications, that we must continue working because public education in Mexico is of the required quality, as demonstrated by the efforts made in the textbooks currently used in primary schools.

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