

Chapter 3

Historical Thinking as a Dynamic Vehicle for Teaching Through Key Competences: The Roles of the Teacher and the School

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is evident that the integration of key competences in the educational panorama and in the curriculum is not perceptible in the practical development of the classroom. Given the lack of clear and practical proposals in the legislation that facilitate this implementation, this chapter aims to analyse—through an updated bibliography—the role of the school and the teacher in making key competences effective in the teaching of social sciences. In the same way, it sets out what is considered to be the most effective way of working on key competences in social sciences: through the development of historical thinking and the concepts that define it, as well as the critical spirit, providing students with skills for their personal development, the ability to transfer concepts to everyday situations, as well as empathy and commitment to their social environment.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, education in Spain has been evolving — at a dizzying pace — at the same time as its society has been changing, in order to generate the necessary and most suitable educational scenarios for each context. This constant adaptation seeks — at all times — that the student, in addition to achieving a predominantly conceptual learning, is also capable of applying it -subsequently- in his or her development at different levels. In other words, the aim is to teach in a way that enables the transfer of the learning acquired. This is why we speak of teaching through key competences, since they are those that enable the transfer of both knowledge and skills to situations of a varied nature (Miralles and Gómez, 2021).

However, the integration of competences in curriculum development is not carried out in a way that is visible and practical for teachers and transferable to the reality of the classroom and the school (mired in a disarray between theory and practice) is failing. In this sense, the administration must make the necessary resources and tools available to teachers and educational centres for the performance of their daily tasks, and must be responsible for ensuring -therefore- that this curricular integration of competences is effective, not a mere addition, but that it is perfectly threaded into the planning of the teacher in the teaching-learning process (Álvarez, Díaz and Molina, 2021). Of course, the main way is through a transition in competency training, in which the theoretical and generic scope of the concept is transferred to the way in which this competency approach can be transferred to daily tasks (López, Velasco, Santidrián and Armas, 2011). In other words, teachers must be able to relate key competences to other curricular elements, so that they understand this competence approach from a practical and transferable perspective.

HISTORICAL THINKING AS A FACILITATING VEHICLE FOR THE COMPETENCY-BASED APPROACH IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

Currently, the concept of competences -despite being included in educational legislation for more than a decade- is still new (and not always understood) by the educational community, which assimilates the competence approach as something diffuse, since it is not clear how it should be worked on by students both in the classroom and outside it.

However, as a result of this generalised lack of knowledge, there is currently a mistaken belief that less content is taught through competences, when the reality is that, in addition to acquiring the same content established in the curriculum of the Spanish education system, pupils work on a series of skills that will enable them to understand, reason and apply this knowledge later on. With the inclusion of these key competences in teaching practice, there is a clear need to assess both the acquisition of the content established in the curriculum and, on the other hand, the acquisition of skills or aptitudes that allow them to apply this knowledge in their development as individuals and in the transfer to real situations in their day-to-day lives (Molina, Ortuño and Miralles, 2011). It is therefore a tool at the service of teachers through which the teacher enjoys a greater margin of autonomy, while the student obtains a more significant and transferable learning to their everyday context, it is essential for teaching practice to know the episteme that surrounds competences in order to be able to introduce, use and assess them (Campos, 2008).

In the Social Sciences, Geography and History class, students' learning should not be based solely and exclusively on the memorisation of dates and events in the past, but rather on the students' ability

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to interpret these concepts and content, which should help them to decipher and understand the socio-economic, political and cultural context in which they find themselves (Gómez, Ortuño and Molina, 2014; Gómez and Miralles, 2015; Minte and Ibagón, 2017). To this end, it is recommended that the way of working on key competences should be accompanied by a methodology that has historical thinking as its main axis, which Peck and Seixas (2008 p. 1024) identify through the following concepts:

- Historical relevance, understood as the importance that past events have in the present day, being remembered, remembered, or considered as conditioning factors for the construction of the current reality, in terms of society.
- Historical sources, in relation to the analysis and understanding of these sources, being able to reflect, interpret them and apply knowledge to construct conclusions in this respect. In the same way, it is important to know how to value these sources, and to have the critical capacity to discern in the case of contradictory sources in the same period.
- Change and continuity, concepts that allude to the process of evolution of a society through historical events, knowing how to differentiate key points or events and their repercussions in this sense.
- Causes and consequences is a concept of great importance in the development of historical thinking, as it puts into value the knowledge acquired in reference to a certain event, in order to know how to find the origin of the event, the triggering factors and, subsequently, the effects that this event may have had on society. In this way, they gain an understanding of the importance of certain historical events and their repercussions. It also equips them with the ability to understand current events, such as armed conflicts, analysing their causes and hypothesising about the possible effects they may have had, on a social, cultural, political or economic level, among others.
- Historical perspective, understood as the ability to understand a given period seen as a context which is, in turn, understood on a social, artistic, cultural, political and intellectual level, in order to be able to interpret events from a period point of view, developing empathy to some extent.
- The moral or ethical dimension of history enables pupils to judge historical events through the previously described historical perspective, i.e. by considering these events within a context, rather than looking at them through contemporary eyes (Seixas and Morton, 2013).

These dimensions, which require relational skills and the application of knowledge on the part of students, represent a considerable cognitive difficulty due to the old way in which students have been taught and which neglects the processual and transferable sphere of History. Even so - in no case - can this difficulty (however unjustified it may seem) be ignored by teachers, since otherwise the methodologies used - however appropriate they may appear to be - would have no impact either on the students or on the results they obtain. The question then arises as to the role of the teacher, since, if the teacher's role is only to transmit conceptual content (dates, facts or data in textbooks), perhaps the teacher is not indispensable in this purely content-based teaching-learning system.

In this sense, the role of the teacher in the teaching of Social Sciences is crucial, who, according to Vansledright (2013) must know how to transmit first-order knowledge or knowledge related to specific events (dates, places, characters, etc.) as well as second-order knowledge (strategies, historical perspective or selection of sources, among others). It is this first-order knowledge that has always received the most attention in the teaching of Social Sciences (and in general in the Spanish education system), being the main object or aim of teachers, who seek to memorise content in order to subsequently evaluate it by means of simple theoretical written tests, without actually relating facts. As Gómez, Ortuño and Molina

(2014, p. 142) state, recent studies developed over the last two decades show the few benefits of the assessment of historical knowledge through the exams and textbooks used, as the predominant model in these materials is of a conceptual and descriptive nature, forcing memorisation (Álvarez, Molina, Trigueros and Miralles 2021; Ibagón and Miralles, 2019). However, nowadays - and with increasing urgency - there is a need to transmit second-order knowledge to students, more specifically the ability to analyse historical sources, investigate and produce logical conclusions about a given historical event. However, when it comes to teaching History from this perspective, the shortcomings in the training of teachers in our educational system are most glaring, and far from venturing to use active methodologies in the classroom, they prefer to continue to stick to the exclusive use of the textbook, as well as to traditional teaching and assessment methods. In the same way, it should be noted that the curriculum includes the objectives, content and assessment criteria considered basic to be developed or achieved in each subject; these can be subsequently expanded by teachers in their teaching programmes, although the reality is that in most cases it is only these curricular contents present in the regulations that are applied in the classroom; So much so that authors such as Miralles, Gómez and Sánchez (2014), state the suitability of focusing the subject of Social Sciences on more specific and reduced content, so that it can be dealt with in greater depth in the classroom. In this way, through a curricular specification of the contents, students could focus on them and develop them through research, analysis of sources, written productions or classroom discussions. For their part, Miralles and Molina (2011) highlight the excessive use of superficial learning -based solely on memorisation- and which presents a low degree of empathy and commitment to the social environment as it includes an excessive number of subjects in the curriculum for each educational stage.

For this reason, Domínguez (2016), in his analysis of how to teach and assess historical thinking, stresses the importance of an assessment proposal in line with a methodology that promotes historical thinking in order to develop competences. To this end, he affirms the consideration of the figure of the historian and the work he or she carries out, as well as the importance he or she plays in learning about past events. The author defines history as empirical knowledge whose nature is based on documentary evidence or testimonies based on theoretical concepts, and which therefore cannot be compared to sciences such as physics, which apply scientific laws and are based on experimentation. It also highlights the great value for the development of students' historical thinking, so that they are aware of the importance of not only knowing "what happened", but also of having a broader impact on "why we know today what happened". With all this, the role of the historian, his or her work and historical research as a source of information is greatly enhanced, thus - according to the author - leading to a comprehensive historical education, which combines knowledge and methodologies. It is this type of teaching that is considered optimal for the acquisition of competences by the student, working on historical thinking in its concepts as stated by Seixas and Morton (2013).

One of the key elements when working on historical thinking is the importance that the teacher attaches to the analysis and interpretation of historical sources for the development of this thinking in students (Álvarez, Miralles, Molina and Trigueros 2021; Ibagón, 2021), making it immediate to think about the different types of sources that can be analysed and used in the classroom, and also to ask which are those that provoke the most significant learning. Domínguez (2015), in his writings on historical thinking and the assessment of competences, establishes the association with iconic and material sources (images, videos, clothing, materials or objects from the past, etc.) as those considered most attractive by pupils. This type of source provides more implicit than explicit information, which makes it very convenient for use in the beginnings of this type of analysis, but which should be combined with written

sources in order to develop a more complete work. On the other hand, the author makes a distinction between primary and secondary sources, both of which are valid and extremely useful in the development of teaching practice. Primary sources are those that belong to the period or place to which they refer, while secondary sources refer to documents or materials produced after the historical event, the result of research (articles, books, etc.).

In reference to the above, the author Jesús Domínguez (2015, p. 73) details certain guidelines when using primary and secondary sources in the teaching and learning process of Social Sciences. He states that the ideal way to put this into practice would be to combine both types: a secondary source can provide basic theoretical knowledge about the historical context, in order to be able to situate and better understand a primary source. On the other hand, secondary sources can present different versions of the same event, which can be particularly didactic insofar as pupils can compare and analyse these elements on the basis of information previously acquired from primary sources. It should be added that, through the use of these historical sources, students' historical thinking would be developed and, therefore, the competences in the subject would be included.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HISTORICAL THINKING AT SCHOOL AND IN THE CLASSROOM

In relation to the development of historical thinking in the classroom and its assessment, Jesús Domínguez (2016) establishes a link between these cognitive skills on which the competences are based and the specific case of causal explanation. The author sets out what he considers to be the cognitive skills to which special attention should be paid when developing this causal explanation in Social Sciences, Geography and History classes, presenting them in five blocks (Domínguez 2016, p. 48), which include a series of skills that can easily be developed and assessed in the classroom using current methodologies, i.e. through activities or questions that start from the concrete and move on to the more abstract. The first of these blocks corresponds to the identification of causes and consequences in history, being able to differentiate both terms and relate the effect that the former has on the latter, as well as the effects it may have today. Block two focuses on the cognitive skill of classifying causes according to a series of criteria, such as their duration in time, the importance they acquire in relation to the effect they produce, or the content and functions of these causes. The third block details the analysis of the existing nexus between causes and consequences, through a study of these possible connections, as well as the relations that some causes may have between them to derive in a specific event, with their respective effects. With regard to block number four, it is of great importance to judge those possible scenarios that finally did not occur due to different circumstances, analysing the factors that could have led to this type of possible events and those that triggered others. Finally, the fifth and last block of these cognitive skills focuses on synthesis and communication, through the formulation of hypotheses and the explanation of causes, as well as the assessment and analysis of sources of historical information. In short, through these five groups of skills, it is possible to work on the aforementioned causal explanation of history, developing in turn historical thinking, and with all this, the key competences in the subject of Social Sciences, Geography and History.

However, working on historical thinking is no easy task, since, as Sáiz and López (2015) state, in order to educate historically, it is necessary to develop students' historical thinking from early stages, given that this characteristic is neither innate nor intuitive, and of course it is not knowledge that is acquired

immediately; rather it requires a training process in which the teacher must integrate gradually and continuously, combining first and second order concepts in a balanced way in the teaching-learning process. In this sense, in Spain, such methodologies are hardly used, causing certain deficiencies at various levels but which, according to Molina, Rodríguez and Sánchez (2013), can be corrected through the transmission of historical research to students from a very early age; which would be a clear enrichment, going beyond the minimum content of the educational stage to which it is attached. It is therefore a question of bringing scientific research into the classroom, thus developing different concepts of historical thought, fundamentally the use of historical sources, the moral or ethical dimension of history or historical relevance. From this, in practice, aspects such as the ability to establish causes and consequences through the analysis of events in their context would also be developed.

With regard to the historical perspective, it is important to point out the importance of teaching history within a context, studied from various angles. The key to meaningful and transferable learning is to come to understand history through concepts, characteristics of the society of the time, art, clothing, the scientific and technological situation at the time, among others. In this way, and being closely related to the concept of causes and consequences, a given event is understood in its context, facilitating the understanding of its origin, working on empathy, and also valuing the consequences it had, both at the time and today, estimating the repercussions that this event may have had on our current society (López and Valls 2012). On the other hand, history is considered to have been learnt well when the pupil, faced with current events, is capable of taking a position, having a logical and reasoned opinion, understanding the origin of the event, and critically analysing what is happening, applying the knowledge acquired in Social Sciences and making a real transfer of this knowledge to everyday situations, so that education becomes complete, to develop people with critical, thinking, analysing and reasoning skills. All of this means that, through historical thinking, the competences in Social Sciences are worked on.

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HISTORICAL THINKING

It seems indisputable that it is difficult for teachers to carry out competence-based assessment without departing from what is established in the curriculum. In this sense, legislation sometimes poses a barrier when teachers aim to develop assessment based on active methodologies in which the student is the focus and assessment is understood as a process and not as an end, transcending beyond the memorisation of concepts in order to develop -thus- historical thinking and a critical spirit in the student, being able to transfer concepts to real life. As Polo (2010) states, there is a disconnection or lack of normative concreteness insofar as the competences are described but at no point is the way to develop and assess them specified, nor the measures to be adopted in the event of noticing cases in which pupils present problems in the acquisition of these key competences. According to Molina, Ortuño and Miralles (2011), assessment - or rather, good assessment - does not neglect the motivating and guiding function that it should have, forming part of this process on an ongoing basis, avoiding focusing its consideration as a merely qualifying element. Likewise, this test or examination, which will be graded, must be important when planning teaching activity and choosing the most appropriate methodologies for its successful achievement. Furthermore, the authors also refer to a balance in the assessment of knowledge in its three modalities (conceptual, procedural and attitudinal), avoiding giving top priority to one of them, as is currently the case with concept tests.

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In this sense, Calatayud (2000) states in his analysis of the current abuse and hegemony of the exam in primary education assessment, the preponderance of the use of exams or objective written tests in student assessment systems is still in force, resulting in an erroneous understanding of the exam as an end and not as an instrument. This translates into an erroneous view of assessment within the teaching and learning process, understood as a merely qualifying element, which marks the pupil and classifies and differentiates them according to a mark; instead of being conceived in its orienting, motivating and accompanying function, going parallel to the construction of knowledge, instead of being placed only at the end, as a judgement. For their part, Miralles, Gómez and Sánchez (2014), in their study on the content and skills assessed in examinations in the third cycle of Primary Education, reflect on the need to adapt assessment today if we want to achieve the proposed goal: “in fact, if the main objective of the teaching of social sciences is to prepare students for democratic citizenship, beyond the mere acquisition of information, the assessment of this knowledge must be adjusted to this purpose”. However, this desired change implies for the teacher an adaptation and a change in the conception of teaching methods, to introduce others that include a series of modifications, especially focused on this evaluation; such as the introduction of new indicators of the students’ progress or difficulties, such as interviews, conceptual schemes, written productions, direct observation, participation in debates, round tables, analysis of sources, etc.). In this way, by fostering competences in the subject through these assessment tools, students’ historical thinking is also developed, increasing their critical and reflective capacity, as well as their ability to solve problems and be able to express this knowledge. In order to achieve this, the didactic means and resources available to the teacher for transmitting knowledge in the subject of Social Sciences are decisive. Thus, as a preliminary step, it is imperative to distinguish between traditional materials, present and used even today, and those that have emerged in recent years, which are closely linked to digital competence: Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Currently, the former are as important as the latter, being complementary and in no case substituting each other, as Sáiz and López (2015, p. 89) state, “in the teaching-learning of historical thinking competences, the use of narratives is fundamental”. 89), “in the teaching-learning of historical thinking skills, the use of narratives is fundamental”, which, according to the authors, are valid and necessary instruments in the process, to be used both to teach and to evaluate meta-concepts of a historical nature, since by developing these narratives, the student structures and organises his or her thinking logically and gives meaning to the expression of a specific historical event. For his part, Carretero (2009), in addition to defending narratives as key tools for the understanding of history, as they capture events and their causes in a logical order, on the other hand assures that there is an underlying danger in the use of this type of material, which is to forget that they are incomplete chronicles. Students should be aware of the simplification involved in capturing what happened years ago in textual form; inevitably, many details, stories and characters are forgotten because they are not included in these materials.

Another of the risks posed by the author is the students’ conception of history as a series of events that follow one another in a logical narrative thread that leads to a specific end, almost always, and optimistically, towards progress. The third risk that arises in reference to these historical narratives is the belief that they are history in themselves, forgetting that they are tools created by specific figures with the capacity to decide who or what is told in them. On the other hand, reference is made to the individual narrative, understood as a tool that focuses its description on a specific figure or character, as an element that presents a certain duality in its use: on the one hand, they humanise historical events, calling on students’ empathy and their ability to put themselves in the place of the characters in the context in which

they are included; but on the other, the causal nature of the narrative is lost, focusing on the specific case instead of generalising factors such as social, economic or political factors.

Regarding the use of more up-to-date tools in the teaching-learning process, it is inevitable to adapt the school to the reality of the society in which we live (Carretero, 2019). The changes that occur day after day in terms of technology must be included in the school, making demands at a material and human level; since on the one hand it requires the acquisition or updating of devices, and on the other, it requires teachers to have up-to-date training in technological matters, as well as new approaches in the classroom, all with a single purpose: to favour student learning. ICT are nowadays a key element in the classroom, as they facilitate and provoke the incorporation of students into the digital reality we live in (Seva, Vera and Soriano, 2017). In this sense, Soriano (2011) directly relates the use of ICT to greater motivation and attention in the teaching-learning process, thus favouring the acquisition of knowledge of a different nature and the development of digital competence, which is present in the curriculum. For their part, Olmos (2018) and Zou (2020) reinforce this idea of increased motivation by introducing methodologies that encourage the use of these technologies through the gamification of content in a timely manner, increasing motivation, the desire to excel and therefore interest in the subject.

We therefore find a series of limitations or conditioning factors that hinder the incorporation of this competence-based approach in the classroom by the teacher, who, in a suitable context, can favour the development of historical thinking in the students. In the first place, this lack of training in competences is a key element in this question; and in order to address it consequently, it is necessary to address the concept of assessment, understanding it as a training and learning tool within the process and not only as an element of assessment or verification of the acquisition of certain knowledge. In this sense, Gómez, C., Rodríguez, R. and Monteagudo, J., (2017, p. 159) affirm the need for “a methodological renewal that favours work through active strategies, such as projects, case studies or PBL that encourage the autonomous action of students through cooperative work structures. This is done by placing students in practical situations that require knowledge, skills and attitudes to be able to respond positively to these situations, but not before having gone through a process of meditation and reasoning to arrive at possible solutions, which helps students to think critically”. They also claim that this type of more active methodology, in which students are confronted with practical questions, can serve as an evaluation in itself, as it allows them to assess their understanding of the historical events dealt with and their contextualisation.

This change in the way of assessing involves a major approach to a more meaningful teaching-learning methodology. Dispensing with written tests in which -after having finished watching some content in class- a series of questions are posed in which the only questions to be answered are those that encourage memorisation or the retention of dates and data with no kind of association of what has been learned; and on the other hand, bringing assessment closer to the process, understanding it as part of it, in the subject of social sciences it involves a contextualised understanding of society, generating relationships between events, times, facts or places; being able, in the same way, to connect this knowledge with the present day (Martins, 2019; Santisteban, 2017).

However, the reality is that teachers, for various reasons (lack of knowledge, fear, etc.) do not implement these teaching-learning methods in the classroom. It is true that the curriculum cites the competences, their importance and the benefits of methodologies with a student-oriented approach; however, there is a clear lack of real and practical guidelines to be applied in the classroom, which, if included in Spanish educational laws, would bring teachers closer to the reality of their application.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Through this chapter, new lines of research emerge through which more light could be shed on historical thinking as a way of working on key competences in the social sciences. A future analysis of pupils' historical thinking through the concepts of historical relevance, historical sources, change and continuity, causes and consequences, historical perspective and the moral or ethical dimension of history is extremely interesting. In other words, a study of the current situation in this sense, in order to be able, on the basis of this reality, to develop new lines of research and work to be taken to the classroom and put into practice, which is in all cases the most complex part and the part which is least carried out.

On the other hand, following the analysis of current assessment methods and the affirmation of the large gap between these and active methodologies (rarely applied), another future line of research emerges concerning the most appropriate assessment procedures for the implementation of competences in general, and historical thinking in particular.

The inclusion of a new line of research is also proposed, the development of which is very interesting, relating to the study of the current perception of primary school pupils in the last stage (prior to secondary and baccalaureate studies) of competences, the role of the teacher and the assessment system applied in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

Following the development of the previous chapters, the need for transformation that both the school and the Spanish education system require becomes clear. However, despite the existence of a pedagogical approach such as teaching by competences, which is already supported by educational regulations, the lack of a practical basis for its implementation in the classroom makes it extremely complicated for teachers. This is why teachers - in their day-to-day work - must be able to count on theoretical and practical support and also on a support that allows them to face the various problems that may arise in the exercise of their profession when implementing learning by competences (Domínguez, 2015).

It should be noted that this recent focus on competences in the field of education has aroused great interest in terms of their incorporation into Spanish school curricula. This is due, to a large extent, to its pragmatic nature, whereby teachings are proposed that arise from society's own needs and whose contents are, for the most part, procedural in nature (rather than conceptual -Gómez et al, 2017-). All this has triggered a renewal of education legislation, involving education policies at both national and international level, thus questioning the univocal thinking on quality education.

Despite the latest changes, in the current context, the concept of competences - for teachers - is a noble purpose but ineffective in its incorporation, perhaps because clear examples have not yet been defined that allow these new approaches to be put into practice (Álvarez, Trigueros, Miralles and Molina, 2020). Despite its incorporation into educational regulations, the lack of clear and practical proposals regarding this transfer among teachers trained in traditional models and without pragmatic references experienced first-hand, it is difficult to venture which is the best proposal for teaching by competences to be extended. Likewise, given the limited training in terms of competences that today's teachers have, they are reluctant to implement this new teaching perspective (Gómez and Miralles, 2016). Therefore, it is immediate to look at the perception that they have in relation to the teaching of social sciences. In this sense, the research by Sánchez, Campillo and Guerrero (2020) on the perceptions of primary

and secondary school students regarding the teaching of history stands out, in order to discern which methodologies focused on the development of historical thinking they value most positively. Through this study, there is evidence of progress in the use of strategies that encourage greater student involvement and participation, although it is still necessary to strengthen didactic and methodological training in university teacher training studies in order to update the teaching and learning process and teaching practices in the classroom; Although the weight of these didactics, and specifically in the didactics of Social Sciences, has been increasing in undergraduate and postgraduate courses since the last decades of the 20th century (Pagès 2002), there is still a long way to go in these aspects.

In order to understand these perceptions of teachers, who are different in many ways and also diverse in terms of the context in which they are inserted, it is worth considering the different approaches that the teaching-learning process can adopt; both the more traditional ones in which the teacher takes on the leading role, and those charged with innovation in terms of methodology, in which the student becomes the centre of the process and acquires greater attention (Martín, Pozo, Mateos, Martín and Del Puy, 2014; Schmidt, 2019).

It is undoubtedly interesting to know the teachers' perception of the training they once received from teachers in this subject, as it can somehow influence the way in which they perceive the teaching of the subject, both in negative and positive aspects. With the analysis of Gómez, Rodríguez and Mirete (2018), referring to this perception or memories of social studies students, a study carried out two decades ago by Cuesta (1998) is updated. However, the results obtained after this study denounce the lack of reform in the teaching of history, with an absolute predominance of traditional methods such as lectures, which are not at all participative, with the book as the main resource and the absence of debates, analysis of sources or problem solving. Once again, this shows that the change for the better in the field of active methodologies in the classroom is taking place but is still insufficient, making good teacher training in didactics essential in order to evolve and improve this perception of the teacher and with it the figure of the teacher.

In the same way, returning to the case of assessment, and, specifically, to the Assessable Learning Standards, understood according to Royal Decree 126/2014, of 28 February, which establishes the basic curriculum for Primary Education, as "specifications of the assessment criteria that define the learning outcomes, and which specify what the student should know, understand and know how to do in each subject". The preponderance of the conceptual nature of these standards is evident, as opposed to the procedural and attitudinal ones, which are more intrinsically related to the methodologies described above, and which are therefore more favourable to the acquisition and assessment of these competences. It is clear, therefore, that the regulations need to adapt the assessment elements for teachers, who are currently subject to very marked guidelines that are far removed from the meaningful learning that is so much sought after.

In accordance with recent regulations in Spain, specifically Royal Decree 984/2021, of 16 November, which regulates assessment and promotion in Primary Education, as well as assessment, promotion and qualifications in Compulsory Secondary Education, Baccalaureate and Vocational Training; and Royal Decree 157/2022, of 1 March, which establishes the orientation and minimum teaching standards for Primary Education, these standards are now used as a guideline for assessment.

Annex I of Order ECD/65/2015, of 21 January, which describes the relationships between the competences, contents and assessment criteria for primary education, compulsory secondary education and baccalaureate, establishes and details the key competences established in the Spanish education system; as well as the importance of the use of active methodologies as opposed to traditional methodologies

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for the acquisition of these competences, given that they allow students to develop social, management, analysis, organisation and decision-making practices, among others.

In addition, Annex II of the Order describes methodological strategies considered favourable for the practice of teaching through competences. These are guidelines to facilitate implementation, based on good planning on the part of the teacher (objectives, resources, etc.) and the importance of understanding and adapting this practice to the context in which it is to be carried out. In the same way, the aforementioned Annex II highlights the importance of boosting student motivation, generating curiosity and dynamising the sessions through student participation, which is essential in the subject of Social Sciences for the development of historical thinking and student involvement.

In this sense, if teachers have to be able to develop all these functions in order to become competent in their profession, it is also important to point out that there is no clear interpretation of what specific performances educational professionals should have. This validity or teaching competence is therefore demonstrated through the analysis and critical reflection of the teacher's practice in the classroom, and at various levels (Seixas, 2006). This concludes that there is no single valid professional model, but that the very variety of profiles shows that, despite being different, many of them could be considered valid. Furthermore, with the aim of educating by competences and the express will to do so under the dictates of educational regulations, it can be affirmed that educational centres, perhaps due to a misinterpretation of the legislation (perhaps because of excessive influence from publishers), far from approaching the proposed model, continue to apply outdated and canned methodologies, completely ignoring the reality of society and of the students themselves (Álvarez et al, 2021).

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