

# CONSTRUCTIVE AND COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN THE EDUCATION OF TEACHERS AT UNIVERSITY

Discussion of practice in a psychology course in  
National University of Río Negro, Patagonia, Argentina

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# University education in Argentina

## Some historical background....

Univ. of Córdoba  
founded 1613  
1918 REFORM



## AS A RESULT:

- ✓ Free unresestricted higher level education
- ✓ Student participation in University government
- ✓ University autonomy
- ✓ Teachers appointed by open public contests



Bariloche  
Patagonia Argentina







# Psychology course for future secondary school teachers in:

- ✓ Physics
- ✓ Chemistry
- ✓ Spanish and Literature
- ✓ Theater



# CONSTRUCTIVE LEARNING



- ✓ learner's personal involvement
- ✓ active relation between pre-existing and new knowledge and attitudes



Most teachers defend constructivism.

But..

do we actually practice it?



One common belief:

at University level students' ideas and behaviors will change automatically





# Cooperation and integration in groups

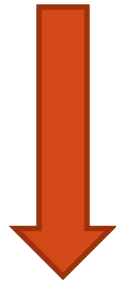


Why is it important?



TELMA BARREIRO

Matrixes of relationships and communication



Cooperative



Competitive



Competitive matrix:

people struggle to  
achieve or maintain  
status

Cooperative matrix:

people support each  
other and pursue  
common goals



✓ Generate different climates in the class

✓ Highly influence learning processes and outcomes



- Alfie Kohn:

People learn much better in cooperative groups

Competition: a recipe for hostility

- Carl Rogers -The teacher as a facilitator:

- ✓ authenticity,
- ✓ appreciation/acceptance
- ✓ empathic understanding



“The teacher must actively influence the way the group functions, the structuring of relationships towards the consolidation of positive groups”

Telma Barreiro



# Goals of our course



- ✓ To create truly cooperative groups
- ✓ To promote significant small group work
- ✓ To facilitate constructive learning processes
- ✓ To meet in creative ways the diversity of points of view and styles our students bring



- ✓The activity in small subgroups is semi-structured
- ✓Two separate moments: lecture and small groups



- ✓The composition of the sub-groups rotate periodically





✓ Improvisation of situations as a didactic tool



- QUESTIONS OR PROMPTS: A CONCEPT, A LEARNING SITUATION, A REFLECTION ON OWN EXPERIENCE...SOME IN THE MOMENT READING)
- ENGAGING WITH A TOPIC PRIOR TO READING ABOUT IT.
- EXAMPLES FROM DIFFERENT FIELDS
- SUMMARY OF IDEAS TO SHARE WITH THE REST OF THE CLASS THROUGH CHARTS OR IN OTHER WAYS
- PLENARY: WE MAKE SURE EVERY GROUP HAS SOME TIME
- SUBJECTIVE QUESTIONNAIRES



✓ Evaluation through learning episodes vignettes

✓ We ask the students to answer a subjective questionnaire



THANK YOU!

GRACIAS!



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