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# OBSERVATION

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Observation is directly connected to human beings' capacity to know.

Can observation be considered an instrument for the collection of objective data?

The experiment of Michael Gazzaniga affirms that the right hemisphere of the brain observes and the left one interprets, this one finds any explanation to safeguard the coherence.

The left hemisphere gives explanations to unexpected behaviors. But how? By relating them, mainly, to memories and experiences of the past.

The problem with this functioning is that it generally does not give a new, updated and elaborate response to the new events that happen to us in our daily lives.

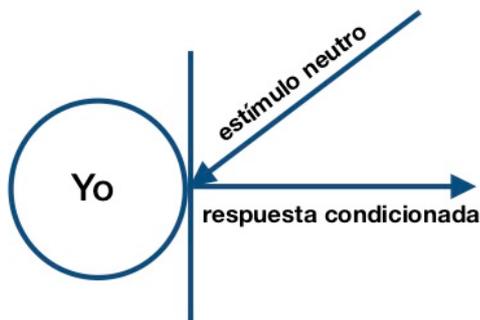
The educational model of the Pedagogy for the Third Millennium (PTM) is "educate yourself to educate". The first object of study for all those who wish to activate an effective educational process is itself.

If the knowledge acquired previously, conditions our observations in an involuntary and even imperceptible way, determining also the representations we make of the events that happen to us; first of all we must focus our attention and efforts ourselves to know these conditioning factors and oppose them.

## **The Reactive Mind: Pavlov's Experiment**

Neutral stimulus     $\longrightarrow$     Conditioned response

The conditioned reflex/response mechanism fully decrypts the dynamic of a person who has not carried out an educational process in himself. Since stratified memories end up representing as many conditioned responses and the person, when requested by a stimulus, does nothing more than reiterate a memory.



This process does not include any evaluation of the stimulus, comprehending of the stimulus. That would happen only when I intervene and reflect on the request

### From conditioned reflex to volutariness: Skinner's experiment

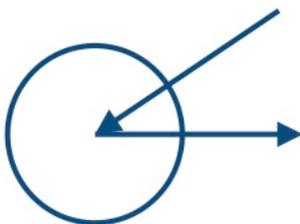
Skinner, to the contrary of Pavlov, was responsible for explaining those voluntary learnings.

Stimulus ----- Understanding ----- Response

The type of behavior reflected by Skinner in his experiment is defined as voluntary, as opposed to those reflections of Pavlov.

According to PTM, **will** is the ability to define oneself as an agent within a space.

This idea of will, understood as the ability to position oneself in time and space, allows one to define oneself and to choose, among many responses to a stimulus, the one we consider the most appropriate at the time.



There is understanding and elaboration of the event.

### **The Interpreter:**

The interpreter filters all the data we receive through our five senses.

It is a mechanism present in each one of us, its operation is automatic and based on the principle of economy.

The interpreter elaborates representations of the experiences we live and then stores them in our brain in a series of compartments, which are later reused to represent the same experience.

In an insufficiently disciplined mind, the interpreter re-proposes the same reading in similar situations. Thus, in these cases, the interpreter represents a very narrow filter that prevents us from representing those events that happen to us and preventing us from nourishing and learning from them.

What determines the size of our filter is the presence of experiences not understood, not adequately placed in our understanding capacity.

### **Attention:**

Attention is the key to our ability to observe.

It will be the focused attention, the one that demands a voluntary effort to remain fixed in the object to which it is going. It consists of maintaining attention to details without losing their relationship with the environment.

Focused attention can be trained to make the most of it in the educational relationship.

Keeping the attention on myself, I can observe my reactions and avoid those automatic and involuntary, thus maintaining neutral perception of the context of interaction.

Keeping my attention on myself, in the educational relationship, I can observe myself and see if I am identifying with what is happening, if my response is a conditioned response and not properly elaborated or if my response is reactive to a negative emotion, and so on.

If I also focus on myself, on how I feel, I avoid involuntary and unwanted reactions and responses.

### **Data vs. Information:**

Our five senses are five channels of reception of sensory stimuli, data that must be interpreted by our brain.

What will make the difference in the creation of conditions in our life will be the awareness of the interpretative process and therefore the ability to distinguish between data and information.

Data are pure elements of reality that the educator places at the disposal of the minor as totally neutral elements, that is to say, that they are not attributed with any positive or negative sign or labeled with any prejudice.

The educator places them at the disposal of the learner so that he or she can interpret them with total associative freedom and can use them in an infinite number of interactions.

By information we mean data which the educator has imposed, mechanically and unintentionally, a particular form - or which he or she has reported on the basis of an experience he or she has achieved or believes he or she has achieved.

These are data to which a very precise sign has been applied, whether positive or negative, so they are loaded with a connotation of value derived from prejudice.

### **Active reflection:**

As we have said about the interpreter we have in our brain, what may improve the quality of its functioning will be the possibility of providing this internal mechanism with data of better quality and precision.

Providing better quality data to our interpreter will allow us to increase the effectiveness of his representation functions.

To obtain this result and to develop the capacity of representation, the PTM presents a practical instrument of great efficiency. Active reflection.

The four elements of active reflection:

**1. Distance from the fact,** separation from the fact. If we manage to ask ourselves, what is this fact? I can have sensitivity, because it allows me to understand that a given action is the product of a series of stimulations to which the other is subjected, and it allows me to understand that it is the latter that seek my involvement. If I did not maintain a certain separation and distance I would not be able to see it; I would feel completely inside the game and, therefore, incapable of any sensibility.

**2. Determination to use stimulation to improve the other person and me.** If I can ask myself, what is your relationship to me? I wonder if I am responding conditioned or not, and thus seek a coherent and appropriate response to the situation. In this way I grow as an educator, because I broaden my horizons of representation. Only the constant focus on what this fact can give me allows me to be interactive with it.

**3. Interact with the fact, maintaining in me several points of view, several strategies, without identifying myself in a single possible role.** Depending on the number of solutions I have related to the fact, it will contaminate me or feed me. If I have several solutions, it will undoubtedly feed me; if I only have one, even if it is good, it will contaminate me because it reduces my understanding of the possibility.

**4. Constant re-elaboration of the material with which I am in contact.** If I am not in this condition, active reflection is not possible; the proposed path becomes mere speculation. On the contrary, when I have my goal, when I am working for myself, which means working for us, it is clear that some things nourish me, others poison me and it is revealed to me that I must put aside what poisons me and open myself to what nourishes me.