

# MENDIVE

REVISTA DE EDUCACIÓN

*Translated from the original in Spanish*

## The teaching of History and the training of skills in the primary teacher

### La enseñanza de la historia y la formación de habilidades en el maestro primario

### Ensino da história e a formação de competências no docente primário

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#### ABSTRACT

The professionalization of teachers is a requirement that comes from social development, it guarantees quality in professional performance, and it is expressed because of continuous training, it also, favors in their training, the

development of a solid knowledge system, of intellectual and professional skills. This paper offers a characterization of the teaching of the History of Cuba for the professionalization of future graduates of the Degree in Primary Education, at the Hermanos Saíz Montes de Oca University and a proposal of didactic actions to transform the state current from the analysis of the main manifestations of the process of teacher professionalization. Historical-logical methods, documentary analysis and survey were used. In practice, it was shown that its application favors the learning of students in the specific historical content, and encourages the approach to the development of interests and professional skills. The implementation of the scientific proposal offers a series of demonstrative results that it is possible and necessary to route the path of skills development in these future education professionals, and it, seeks to stimulate reflection on the subject in other cloisters and Primary teacher training contexts.

**Key words:** professional approach; professionalization; strategy; temporary location.

#### RESUMEN

La profesionalización de los docentes constituye una exigencia que deviene del desarrollo social, garantiza la calidad en el desempeño profesional y se expresa como resultado de la formación continua; a su vez, favorece en su formación, el desarrollo de un sólido sistema de conocimientos, de habilidades intelectuales y profesionales. En este trabajo se ofrece una caracterización de la enseñanza de la Historia de Cuba en aras de la profesionalización de los futuros egresados de la carrera Licenciatura en Educación Primaria, en la Universidad de Pinar del Río "Hermanos Saíz Montes de

Oca" y una propuesta de acciones didácticas para transformar el estado actual a partir del análisis de las principales manifestaciones del proceso de profesionalización docente. Se emplearon los métodos histórico-lógico, el análisis documental y la encuesta. En la práctica se demostró que su aplicación favorece el aprendizaje de los estudiantes, en lo específico del contenido histórico, y propicia, además, el acercamiento al desarrollo de intereses y habilidades profesionales. La puesta en práctica de la propuesta científica ofrece una serie de resultados demostrativos de que es posible y necesario enrumbar el camino del desarrollo de habilidades en estos futuros profesionales de la educación; a su vez, procura estimular la reflexión sobre el tema en otros claustros y contextos de formación de maestros primarios.

**Palabras clave:** enfoque profesional; estrategia; profesionalización; ubicación temporal.

## RESUMO

A profissionalização dos professores é uma exigência que vem do desenvolvimento social, garante qualidade no desempenho profissional e se expressa como resultado da formação contínua; por sua vez, favorece na sua preparação, o desenvolvimento de um sólido sistema de conhecimentos, capacidades intelectuais e profissionais. Este artigo oferece uma caracterização do ensino da história cubana com vista à profissionalização dos futuros licenciados do Bacharelato em Educação Primária da Universidade de Pinar del Río "Hermandos Saíz Montes de Oca" e uma proposta de ações didáticas para transformar o estado actual com base na análise das principais manifestações do processo de profissionalização de professores. Foram utilizados métodos histórico-lógicos, análise documental e um levantamento. Na prática, foi evidenciado

que a sua aplicação favorece a aprendizagem dos alunos, especificamente no que diz respeito ao conteúdo histórico, e também favorece o desenvolvimento de interesses e competências profissionais. A implementação da proposta científica oferece uma série de resultados que demonstram que é possível e necessário orientar o desenvolvimento de competências nestes profissionais da educação do futuro.

**Palavras-chave:** abordagem profissional; estratégia; profissionalização; colocação temporária.

## INTRODUCTION

Knowledge of history is at the service of culture, at the service of learning to think and defend ideas, essential processes in preparing new generations. Only culture allows the understanding of the complex problems and great challenges of today's world. To assume these challenges with a transformative attitude, knowledge is needed, both historical and from various disciplines that are studied in school. The teaching of history implies a transmission of knowledge of the past, but always from concepts that make sense in the present.

The subject History of Cuba has an important role in the apprehension of the knowledge and development of skills, habits and cognitive abilities as well as in the formation of feelings, emotions and values that will allow Children, adolescents and young people demonstrate revolutionary, patriotic, civic, legal, solidarity, anti-imperialist, respect for the environment and love of work attitudes, bearers of a critical awareness of their identity as Cuban and

Latin American in the current harassment of interventionist claims and deideologizers.

The teaching of the History of Cuba is the object of systematic analysis and reflection at all levels of education in Cuba, which includes the university. In the basic curricula of the higher studies, time is assigned, either as a subject or as a discipline, and must be evaluated and approved by all graduates of Cuban universities.

The teacher or professor of History of Cuba should not only be characterized by the mastery of historical contents and a high ideopolitical preparation based on knowledge, both of the History of Cuba and the History of America in general, the historical dispute between the United States and our country, the Martian texts and the ideas of Fidel and Che, but also for the application of methods that stimulate intellectual activity and for having the capacity to carry out an adequate organization, structuring and direction of the teaching activity. These qualities require the professionalization of that teacher or professor.

The professionalization of the teacher is assumed as a continuous process that begins with undergraduate training and transcends work and scientific practice through postgraduate improvement, research activity and professional practice itself.

The advancement of professionalism and development of professional conscience demands constant assimilation and reflection. In that sense, multiple researchers have addressed the issue. These include Gato Armas, Breijo Worosz and Rodríguez Fuentes (2017); Cotelo Armenteros, Riol Hernández and Romero

Viamonte (2018); Martín Romera and García Martínez (2018), among others.

In the same way Imbernón Muñoz, F. and Guerrero Romera, C. (2018) reflect on university teacher professionalization, especially in the role of teachers in the university, and in the current social and cultural context. Rojas González, CA (2017) reflects that among the substantive processes of university institutions is the training of increasingly experienced professionals in the areas of action for which they are prepared. Also, Rojas Valladares, A.L and Soria Leon, G. (2016) emphasize that in the professionalization of university teaching is a requirement that comes from social development and guarantee quality in professional performance; It is expressed as a result of continuing education based on a high theoretical preparation of the science taught and the conceptions of teaching.

The primary teacher teaches History of Cuba, and in this, more than in any other subject, he must demonstrate his professionalism. The difficult task of teaching concerns us all, hence being a teacher in a complex society is a top-level occupation in today's contexts that is why it is consistent with what was stated by (Imbernón, 2017).

In higher education, the integral education of university students must result in paradigm terms, graduates with a solid political-ideological development: endowed with a broad social, humanistic and economic culture; prepared to defend the Cuban Revolution in the field of ideas with their own arguments; competent for professional performance and socially committed to the interests of the nation.

In the Professional Model of the Degree in Primary Education, it is required that this professional:

(...) must be prepared to understand personal and social needs, know how to deal with initiatives to solve the problems of pedagogical practice and integrate scientific and technological advances into the training process; (...) the career must develop in the future teachers, a high sense of individual and social responsibility, must ensure that they find in the process of initial training, the mechanisms that stimulate the motivation for educational work (Ministerio de Educación Superior, 2016)

In the authors' opinion, it is a problem that primary teachers in training do not learn the History of Cuba from the perspective of being future professionals in the division of this subject. They also agree that the university professors of these students should raise their responsibility in order to train professional teachers in the teaching of the History of Cuba. Likewise, they affirm that a professional approach has not been achieved in the teaching-learning process of the Cuban Institute in the Degree in Primary Education.

These ideas have prompted an investigation into the professional approach in the teaching and learning of History of Cuba in the career Bachelor of Primary Education at the University of Pinar de Rio " Hermanos Saiz Montes de Oca " and, based on the information obtained by scientific methods, propose

didactic actions to transform the current state from the analysis of the main manifestations of the process of teacher professionalization , which allows to improve the current state in that sense.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

It is part of an initial diagnosis in a population of 40 students of 2nd year, 22 of the current school 2013 - 20 14 and 18 of the 2014- year 2015, all of the career Bachelor of Primary Education, taking as a selection criterion that it is the one that works directly on the contents of the subject Historia de Cuba II; in turn, the student systematizes and integrates the historical notions learned in the previous years and their precedents for teaching.

The five professors of the discipline were included, all with teaching experience at the university level.

To obtain data on the subjects involved and the process teaching - education of the teaching of the subject History of Cuba II empirical survey methods applied to students, interviews with teachers and observation of classes, targeting both activity of the teacher as of the students. The theoretical methods of analysis-synthesis and induction-deduction were essential, both in the phase of preparation for research and in the stage of interpretation of the information obtained and the approach of conclusions.

## RESULTS

In the survey applied to the 40 students that make up the sample with the

objective of know which of the subjects you received in the semester, at the time of this study, They considered it the most important for their profession, 27 (67.5 %) selected Didactics I; 13 (32.5 %) and 13 (32.5 %) opted for the subject Psychology II.

The following questions about the object under investigation considered essential were included in the questionnaire for the students:

- Of the subjects, you study this semester, ¿which one you consider as the most important for your profession as a primary teacher.
- One of the subjects you study is History of Cuba II ; about it select the trial (one only) that is right for your particular case:

a) It allows me to insight into the domain of our country history and the lives of their heroes and martyrs.

b) It is essential to strengthen my ethical and human values.

c) It is necessary for me to learn to teach Cuban History classes well to my future students.

d) It is not important to me, because since elementary school I have been studying History of Cuba.

- In your current Cuban History classes, skills you must master work. Mark those (may be more

than one) in which you have ever fixed your attention by imagining being a teacher of that subject:

a) Tell historical facts

b) Characterize personalities and historical facts

c) Base facts, causes or consequences

d) Assess personalities and historical facts

e) Locate in time (temporary location)

f) Locate in space (spatial location)

g) Establish circumstantial relationships between historical events (relationships of time, place and other concurrent conditions)

h) Work with the sources of historical knowledge.

- In the interview with the eight professors of the discipline Historia of Cuba, of the Bachelor's degree in Primary Education, it was intended that teachers value, from their position, the role they grant to impart the History of Cuba in general of university careers, with emphasis on the Bachelor of Primary Education. They were also asked: To work for the development of the specific skills of the subject, have you reflected how to give professional focus to that work, so that you can influence

their training as teachers of Cuban History and not only as students of the subject? What skills do you consider the greatest potential for this professional approach? Argue your considerations.

The eight professors (100 %) attach strategic importance to the teaching of this subject in university careers, particularly in the Bachelor's degree in Primary Education.

With respect to the second question, the eight professors (100 %) agree that the example of the teacher always has some influence on their students, in their case much more because they are students who will be primary teachers and some of them will teach History from Cuba once graduated.

Four classes were observed in the teaching group of 22 students and four in the group of 18; they were taught by two teachers. During the observation, the focus was on the following aspects:

- Of the students:
  - a) Development of the specific skills of the subject, evaluated on a scale from five (5) (maximum value) to one (1) (minimum value), based on responses and interventions in the class itself: truthfulness, logic and security in the answers given to the questions and indications of the professor or approach of own ideas, doubts or request of clarification or extension of the historical information.

b) Manifestations that will reflect an interest in the subject from the position of future teachers who would teach it.

- From teacher:
  - a) Professional focus of the subject throughout the class, mainly in the orientation of the objectives and the assessment of the results of the class.
  - b) Professional approach at work with specific skills of the subject: guidance for mastery of the internal structure of the skill, control and assessment of skill development, levels of assistance where necessary.

Through the survey of the 40 students it was known that:

- Didactics I as the most important subject for their future profession as primary teachers, was considered by 27 students (67.5 %), the other 13 (32.5 %) opted for the Psychology II subject.
- Regarding the assessment they made about the role that the subject History of Cuba had in them, it was obtained that 25 students ( 62.5 %) indicated that it allowed them to deepen the domain of our homeland history and the life of their heroes and martyrs, five ( 5 ) ( 12.5 % ) considered it important because it allowed to strengthen their ethical and human values, six

( 6 ) ( 15 % ) considered that it was necessary to learn to teach good classes of History of Cuba to their future students and other four ( 4 ) ( 10 % ) had the opinion that the subject was not important to them , because since elementary school had been studying History of Cuba.

- From the attention by the students to the development of the skills of the subject , from a professional perspective, it was obtained that 35 of them ( 87.5 % ) focused their attention at some time on the ability to tell historical facts, 20 ( 50 % ) in the ability to assess personalities and historical facts, 16 ( 40 % ) did so in the ability to characterize personalities and historical events , another 16 ( 40 % ) selected the ability to base facts , causes or consequences, 12 ( 30 % ) included the location in space and 11 ( 27.5 % ) selected the ability to work with the sources of historical knowledge. The abilities to locate in time (temporary location) and establish circumstantial relationships between historical events were not selected by any student.

Through the interview with the professors it was known that they give a high value to the subject History of Cuba and in arguing it refer to the need for historical knowledge as a component of a general and citizen culture, as a condition to love and defend the homeland and the conquests of the Revolution and as a way for the formation of ethical values. But they also include the need for students in the Primary Education career to master historical content and related skills, as those who are fifth or sixth grade teachers will have a high responsibility to teach that

subject, which should be done with professionalism

As for giving a professional approach to the History class, all teachers agree that they explicitly declare it to their students when they present the subject, also when they orient them towards the objectives in each class and occasionally in certain circumstances when assessing or evaluating the participation of students in teaching activities.

They consider that to relate historical facts and assess personalities and historical events are the two skills most potential to give professional focus to the process of teaching and learning in the subject History of Cuba, which argue on the basis of the role of communicator who has the master, including in this condition both the ability to express themselves orally and to influence the students' thinking and behavior with their message. However, they admit that in working with any of the specific skills of the subject the intentionality of a professional approach can be achieved if one previously reflects on how to do it.

For the evaluation of the development of specific skills of the subject they had

Consider three categories (summary in table 1):

1. Satisfactory (with a value of four points)
2. Acceptable (with a value of three points)
3. Low (with a value of one and two points)

As can be seen, three of these skills have a satisfactory evaluation (to tell historical facts, characterize personalities and historical facts and value personalities and historical facts) and two have an acceptable evaluation (substantiate facts,

causes or consequences and work with the sources of knowledge; meanwhile, the others are valued with the lowest ratings (locate historical events in time, place in space and establish circumstantial relationships between historical events).

**Table 1-** Assessment of the development of specific skills in students.

ABILITIES	MIDDLE VALUE
To tell historical facts	4
Characterize personalities and historical facts	4
Base facts, causes or consequences	3
Value personalities and historical facts	4
Locate in time (sort chronologically)	two
Locate in space (locate historical places)	two
Establish circumstantial relationships between historical events	one
Work with the sources of historical knowledge	3

*Source:* Observation table of Cuban History II classes in the Primary Education career, 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school courses.

There were no manifestations that reflected interest in the subject from the position of future teachers who would teach it.

In conducting the teaching - educational process, it was appreciated that these professors, when making orientation towards the objectives of the class, referred to the importance of the treatment of content with a view to their future professional performance, but that approach It was not maintained during the development of the activity or in the assessment of the class results.

In the work with specific skills of the subject it could be seen a systematic absence of guidance for mastering the internal structure of each skill, insufficient monitoring of that aspect individually and, consequently, very little evaluation of the

development of these skills. Only in some cases, levels of assistance given to advance were given; the lack of perception by the teacher of the progress of each student is considered the main cause that others in need of help did not have it.

The evidenced shortcomings require teaching activities, which in a strategy designed for that purpose could be considered in three important moments of the work of the discipline. In this sense, the following moments and actions are proposed:

**I- Function of the subject group**

- Conception of the methodological treatment of the internal structure of the temporary location skill with a professional approach.
- Concrete actions based on developing the temporary location skill with a professional approach.



## II- Theoretical preparation of teachers

- Projection and state of improvement and self-improvement about the historical content of each unit.
- Projection of aids with a view to achieving mastery of the internal structure of the skill by students.
- Mastery of the importance of this ability in interrelation with the other specific intellectual abilities of the subject History of Cuba.
- Conception of the method and procedures for the development of temporary placement skill with a professional approach.

## III- Quality of activities

- Assessment of the coherence between the objective of the temporary location skill and the actions carried out with a professional approach.
- Relevance of the actions that are carried out respond to the real diagnosis of the temporary location skill with a professional approach.
- Projection of the active inclusion of students based on the development of the temporary placement skill with a professional approach.

In the conception of the activities, the following indicators will be taken into account with a view to the development of the temporary location ability:

1. If they favor making the necessary inferences in favor of the discovery of the historical content focused from the time factor.
2. If they demand learning the internal structure of the skill.

3. If they favor the investigation in other bibliographies on the subject addressed.
4. If they stimulate the reconsideration of ideas and opinions on the subject.

In favor of the professional approach, they lead to:

1. Stimulate the search for new aspects of historical content that foster a new work in the development of the internal structure of the skill.
2. Stimulate the development of activities for the development of historical content from a temporal point of view with a professional approach.
3. Stimulate the socialization and acceptance of suggestions on activities.
4. Promote metacognitive reflection and self-regulation through responses by other students seeking coincidences, discrepancies and perfecting in a conscious and thoughtful way.
5. Create the conditions (hygienic, material, cognitive and affective) in favor that the appropriation of the historical content is favorable.

The fulfillment of the actions of the didactic strategy for the development of the temporary location skill with professional focus is inserted within the methodological work of the discipline and its effect on the quality of the classes developed by the teachers of that group is specified. Making it a means to achieve the objective implies:

- The redesign of the teaching actions of each teacher, for which it must take into account its dynamic nature, which can be modified if

possible at the same time of the class or immediately after it (It supposes a good preparation by the teacher) .

- To give prominence to the student in the evaluation of the results of the evaluation carried out; depending on taking into account their contributions or suggestions regarding the actions of the teacher and his own.
- Make an assessment at the end of each class system in terms of achievements, difficulties and obstacles in the development of the process in relation to the teacher, students and group.

It is appropriate to point out in this work the coincidence with the criteria of Fabé González (2014), who raises the need to consider work with the invariants of professional skills. In this case, it is up to the pedagogical groups of the career to define which are by the way of the scientific-methodological work.

## DISCUSSION

The analysis and interpretation of the data obtained allows us to recognize that the students of the Degree in Primary Education are fully identified with the subjects directly related to the profession, while the others are not of interest in that regard. The subject History of Cuba II is given importance because of the influence it has on cultural education as citizens, but there are few who value that having mastery of it is a necessity for them as future teachers.

A highly respected position in this regard is that of Romero (2014), who considers that the formation of a historical culture in the professional is an essential

requirement, as a starting point to contribute to the development of the historical reasoning mode.

It is significant the recognition that students make of the ability to *tell historical facts* from a professional perspective, which could be associated with the experiences they have had throughout the teaching of the History of Cuba with teachers of lively and attractive orality, without doubt an important condition to teach the subject. In the inverse order, they locate the abilities to locate in time (temporary location) and establish circumstantial relations between historical facts.

In general, there is correspondence between the assessment made by students of the importance of the specific skills of the subject and the development they demonstrate in class with respect to them. The skills related to temporal and spatial location have poor development; this determines, in part, that it is less successful to establish circumstantial relations between the facts.

The professors of the History of Cuba discipline have mastery of the integral importance of this in the training of primary teachers, but they underestimate the potential of work with some of the specific skills of the subject from a professional perspective, focusing more attention in those that demand the revealing verb and the judicious word. This appreciation is evident both in the opinions issued by the professors themselves and the treatment and effects in the History of Cuba II classes.

To strengthen the work with the skills, the postulates of various researchers who have approached the subject, in general, are followed. Among them stand Alvarez de Zayas and Diaz

Pendás (1981), Leal García (1991), Fabe González (2014), among others.

The work with certain skills of this subject is not yet conceived with all the professional approach necessary for the training of primary teachers who, without becoming specialists in the field, will have the high responsibility and privilege of being the first to provoke schoolchildren emotions and feelings from the knowledge of our homeland history.

Taking into account that *placing in time* was one of the most difficult skills in students and at the same time one of the undervalued by teachers from the perspective of *the professional approach* that it may have, a didactic strategy was developed to contribute to the change of that situation.

On the teaching and learning of History of Cuba have explored the authors Bravo Abreu and Fabe González (2018), Also Lopez Ramirez and Rojas Tur (2017) limiting to the challenges of teaching the subject itself in the university context. Likewise, the considerations of García López, Amechazurra Oliva, and La Rosa Hernández (2018) on the teaching of the History of Cuba in Higher Education have been valuable.

Bonilla Vichot, Breijo Worosz, and Cruz Ordaz consider (2017) that in order to achieve the feasibility of this strategy, a developmental conception of the teaching and learning of History and its intellectual abilities is aspired, especially the temporary location skill with a professional approach, in order to be able to transmit the historical development better, understanding by this the gradual, orderly and continuous transformation of the human being, not only as an organism, but also as a conscious and social being,

expressed in the biological, psychological, social and historical past.

Positions are assumed by Diaz Barriga and Luna Miranda (2014), who consider the teaching strategies can be applied before, during or after the subject treated.

Likewise, the authors coincide with the criteria of Rojas González, CA, Breijo Worosz, T., and Novo Cazorla, M. de los Á. (2018) on the relevance of the use of teaching strategies that can favor the development of this skill from this perspective. The strategies, in general, are aimed at the fulfillment of objectives, which presuppose a set of actions to be carried out in certain compliance deadlines (short, medium and long) depending on the degree of complexity of the tasks and objectives, and are controlled.

By a way of conclusion, the work carried out shows the need for changes in the way of directing the process of training and development of professional skills in general and this in particular, during the undergraduate, and expresses the need for didactic changes in the forms in which the History of Cuba is taught and learned based on the professionalization of the primary teacher. Likewise, the existence of inadequacies in the History of Cuba classes in the treatment of skills for their subsequent professional performance is demonstrated. A comprehensive educational projection is required both of the specific historical content and of the students' own training elements.

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#### **Conflict of interest:**

Authors declare not to have any conflict of interest.

#### **Authors' Contribution:**

Authors participated in the writing process of this article and in the analysis of documents.



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