

Reseña descriptiva El diario del profesor

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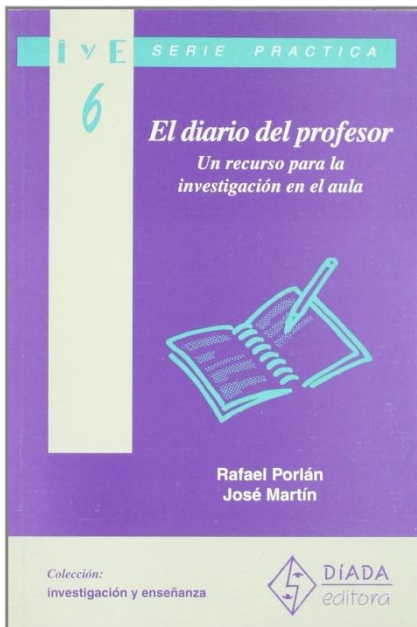
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DESCRIPTIVE BOOK REVIEW “EL DIARIO DEL PROFESOR”

Porlán, R. & Martín, J. (2000). *El diario del profesor, un recurso para la investigación en el aula*. Diada Editora S.L. España. ISBN. 84-87118-56-9.

If you want to start to study about action-research, this book will be your *best friend*. First, because this book only has 86 pages, full of passion, knowledge and reflection. Second, its chapters are developed since traditional way of teaching trough how the journal can help us to turn the educative practice, a trip you will never forget, and last but not least, it is an amazing book which has a revolutionary point of view: change the teaching process through the reflection of the professional practice.



As it was mention before, the narrative starts with the description of a traditional way of teaching, and mentions two alternatives to face it: the technological alternative and the spontaneous alternative. That is where comes up *the school research*, then, the teacher as the researcher and finally, the journal as a guide for the entire investigation.

Chapter two is extremely friendly with teachers and trainee teachers, even with whoever not related with teaching. Here the authors describe in detail what a diary is “*permite reflejar el punto de vista del autor sobre los procesos más significativos de la dinámica*

en la que está inmerso” (Porlán y Martin, 2000, p. 23). This is one of the definitions that Porlán and Martín share in their book, a definition that keep us thinking but also after every important definition they give us an explanation or examples to start our own journal from the beginning. According with them: from the general to the specific. They present different examples of journal teachers and give you advice to improve it step by step. It is essential to mention that the writers explain that the

implementation of the journal as a research tool is not going to be an easy task, due to teachers must change their beliefs and perceptions of reality.

The purpose should focus on offering a general and significant panoramic view of what, from our point of view, arises in the class, describing the activities, reporting processes and categorizing as far as possible the different observations.

The journals of a class, in the sense in which they receive in this work, are documents in which teachers collect their impressions of what is happening in their classes. The spatial framework of the information collected is usually the area of the class or classroom, but nothing prevents other areas of teaching activity from being equally reflected in the diary.

Both authors states that teachers are the mediators and transformers in classroom and education, because professors have to take into account the characteristics of the context, student´s needs, their theoretical background, experience and beliefs to plan and design the activities which help them to create a meaningful learning for pupils. This, giving teachers a sequence and evaluating their intervention by monitoring their teaching practice; or researching the learning processes of their students.

Section three of the book tells us that the diary can be done individually, in a group, with the students since they are participants in the classroom. In the diary, not only the course of the *action* is perceived (strategies, dynamic, affective filters), but what is more important, it tries to study the thought of the teacher, the evolution of the thought of the teachers throughout the course of the period covered by the diary.

Moreover, it is recommended *el diario* to identify problems and change professional practice. A teacher, compares, links the information collected and draws conclusions; with this, they can make decisions to improve their educational practice. That is, the journals, help to rescue the weak and strong points of the teacher's educational practice. It is required beginning with small changes, taking into consideration interviews, quiz, analysis of documents, the journal of the teacher, student and an external observer, and the constant evaluation in the process.

As a teacher and reader of these statements I would like to mention that both authors are right because most of the time teachers prejudge students and their context, inducing that the activities and attitude are blocked. Students do not have the opportunity to express their ideas about their schooling. In the other hand, teachers tend to robotize their classes, sometimes they do not realized but when you start to write about it and register the reactions that students have is when the hard part begin. Change, turn, transform, is not easy when you believe in what you learn before, and sometimes you do not need to change your class completely your class just need a *plus* it could be a word, an image, a place, something simple.

To sum up, I consider that the implementation of *el diario* is a magnificent idea, however, in my experience as a teacher of a secondary school, the narration of the *diario* gets hard as a consequence of the amount of groups that a teacher has. They constantly change of classroom and sometimes without a break which allows them think and analyse the behaviour of the students. In the journal there is an important aspect which is to write at the moment that the events of classroom life take place, if it is not possible, you should write keywords and then make the diary when you have time building the situations through the written keywords, also, it could be maps, drawings, diagrams or worksheets done by students. Do not give up, and read the book more than twice your students will be grateful.

Referencias bibliográficas

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