

ENTREVISTA. REVISTA BOLETÍN REDIPE: 7 (12) DICIEMBRE 2018 ISSN 2256-1536

RECIBIDO EL 14 DE AGOSTO DE 2018 - ACEPTADO EL 15 DE OCTUBRE DE 2018

ENTREVISTA CON HOWARD GARDNER SOBRE

“ PENSAR EN LOS DESAFÍOS DE LA EDUCACIÓN DE LA MENTE A TRAVÉS DE LA CONSTRUCCIÓN DIDÁCTICA DE LA EDUCACIÓN INCLUSIVA”

INTERVIEW WITH HOWARD GARDNER ON

“THINKING ABOUT THE CHALLENGES OF THE EDUCATION OF THE MIND THROUGH THE DIDACTIC CONSTRUCTION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION”¹

By: Aldo Ocampo González



Bionota:

Howard Gardner es profesor de la Cátedra de Cognición y Educación John H. & Elisabeth A. Hobbs en la Graduate School of Education de Harvard y director del Harvard Project Zero. Es autor de obras fundamentales sobre inteligencia, cognición y desarrollo del potencial humano. En 2011 ha sido galardonado con el Premio Príncipe de Asturias de Ciencias Sociales.

¹ Dialogue conducted within the framework of the Interview Cycle to outstanding personalities of Critical Thinking, Education and Social Sciences, organized by the Center for Latin American Studies of Inclusive Education (CELEI) of Chile.

Aldo Ocampo González (A.O.G.): Good morning, Professor Howard Gardner. First of all, I want to thank on behalf of the Center for Latin American Studies of Inclusive Education (CELEI) of Chile, the privilege of talking with you about such relevant and contingent topics for education and human development.

Howard Gardner (H.G.): thanks to you, Aldo.

A.O.G.: *I would like to start with the next question. ¿What is the education of the mind?, ¿what is its position within this scientific and research program?*

H.G.: Education of the mind has two meanings. From the perspective of science, education of the mind is based on what we know about psychology, neuroscience and genetics about how to teach and how one learns. From the perspective of citizens, education of the mind means the kinds of knowledge, skills, and values that we want our young people to have. The challenge is to align what we know about the science of the mind, with what we want to achieve in our schools and other educational institutions.

A.O.G.: *¿What are the main weaknesses of human cognition that the processes of schooling tend to promote and what go unnoticed transversally in the different educational levels?, ¿what are the main limitations of cognitive science regarding the understanding of human learning?*

H.G.: The human species evolved to survive in different climates and ecologies. The species did not survive to read, write, conduct, science, arts and so on. Indeed, we need schools and other educational institutions just because these abilities are NOT natural acquisitions—explicit teaching and training is needed.

My own research has revealed that young people are not blank slates, not tabula rasas. Indeed we all have many misconceptions, misunderstandings, biases, which make it more difficult to learn. Unless educators are aware of these misconceptions and direct their efforts to dissolve them or replace them with better ways of thinking, we can fool ourselves into thinking that learning has taken place when in fact it has not.

Cognitive science and other disciplines—ranging from history to biology—are helpful in education. But education is also—and perhaps primarily—an area where human values are primary. And we can never simply take values from science—values involve discussions of human beings about what is important to them and how best to achieve those values.

A.O.G.: *In your opinion, ¿how should the training of teachers in the field of teaching and human cognition be structured, in order to consolidate revolutionary educational practices that are closer to their human nature?*

H.G.: I am not comfortable with the expression ‘training’. I think that young aspiring teachers come to master their profession by experiencing good education themselves, by observing educators who generally considered to be excellent teachers and mentors, and have many opportunities to practice their craft, to get skillful feedback, and to move from apprentice to workman to master over a period of time.

Put differently, I don't think teachers can be successful educators unless they have witnessed and experienced excellent education, and have had a chance to practice their skills with appropriate feedback. This characterization applies both to ordinary educational practices and more revolutionary or radical ones. But I would not talk about practices that are closer to or further away from human nature—I would talk about practices that are appropriate for our time and that we know how to nurture. Human nature can be a facilitator but it can also be an obstacle.

A.O.G.: *¿To what extent does his theory of multiple intelligences become a device for educational justice? What are the main limitations that this theory faces today, especially in the presence of capitalist-type educational policies that govern a large part of educational systems worldwide?*

H.G.: The theory of multiple intelligences is a theory of how the human mind is organized. Rather than being one central computer, the mind is better thought of as a number of relatively independent computers. And people differ in which computers are stronger or weaker and which ones they want to nurture and develop and why.

The theory of multiple intelligences is value-free. One can use any intelligence for benign purposes or for malignant ones.

That said, I prefer an educational system that recognizes multiple intelligences and helps individuals to develop those intelligence that they want to develop and those that are valuable in a culture at a particular time. And in that sense the theory of multiple intelligences can be thought of as an instrument of educational justice.

A.O.G.: thank you very much for this valuable dialogue.

H.G.: It has been a pleasure.