

Section III The Civilian Academe and Professional Military Education

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Military Education and Educational Modernization: The Argentine Case

Abstract: This chapter addresses the pedagogical reforms implemented in late-20th and early 21st century Argentina across both civilian and military educational institutions. It argues that the overt emphasis on research competency within these reforms, alongside a failure to account for students' own preferences, resulted in an incorrect balance between theory and practicum, a reduced emphasis on professional competences, and the loss of military pedagogical concepts that remain vital to the basic functioning of a military force. The chapter contends that a potential solution to this scenario can be found in the field of 'labour pedagogy' and the wider principles of competency-based education.

Keywords: PME, military education, military pedagogy, labour pedagogy, Argentine Army, Colegio Militar, Military College, CoNEAU

Introduction

This chapter seeks to assess the impact of evolving pedagogies in Argentina, by comparing the civilian and military educational spheres. Although the term pedagogy derives from the Greek *paidagōgos* (παιδαγωγός), meaning 'to lead a child', this chapter uses the term pedagogy in its broader sense, that is, the field of knowledge that has education as the object of its study. As established by Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, education is a lifelong endeavour (Heafford, 1967, pp.74–78) that seeks to create "the achievement of freedom in autonomy for one and all" (Soëtard, 1994, p.308).

Although many educators subscribe to various learning taxonomies, it is self-evident that pedagogies and educational philosophies necessarily vary across sectors, institutions and individual educators. Underlying this chapter, is the perception that military pedagogy must be understood both alongside and separate to wider educational philosophies, since the intentionality of military training has particularities that distinguish it from the liberal or independent professions. The goal of forming soldiers for the act of war has its own specific complexities and requires diverse and integrated competencies.

It could be argued, for example, that Military Pedagogy constitutes one subcategory within the wider field of Labour Pedagogy. If we consider the definition of Pineda Herrero (2002, p.29), we can say that Labour Pedagogy is a science of education that adapts the basic principles and norms of pedagogical knowledge and applies them to the context of employment. Pineda Herrero identifies two types of relationship between education and work. Firstly, the initial preparation of a person to practice their chosen profession. Secondly, the need to provide employees with continuous training, to update them and empower their skills. This second goal is designed to generate multipurpose professionals who are adaptable to new situations. It is necessary due to the nature of organizations as social entities that are constantly evolving in line with continued social and cultural change.

Based on her analysis of the different definitions obtained from Edwards et al. (1983, p.103) and Rodriguez and Medrano (1993, p.10), Pineda Herrero (2002, pp.35–36) also establishes four conditions for training in a labour organization:

- It is a process.
- It is linked to the job of the person who is being trained.
- It is aimed at eliminating the difference between the abilities of a person and the demands of their job.
- Its ultimate goal is to help the organization achieve its central objectives.

Pineda Herrero does not provide a specific example of these conditions in practice. However, these principles could easily be applied to the education of an individual soldier with a specific specialty (e.g. tank driver) and function that will in turn help that soldier's platoon to fulfil a range of missions.

In accordance with these principles, we will now consider the pedagogical changes that have occurred in both civilian and military education within Argentina, with a specific focus on the Argentine Army. These changes are the result of a major socio-cultural shift that took place in the late 20th century, which was astonishingly close to the predictions of Alvin Toffler. As argued by Toffler, in this new era the "prime objective" of education would be to develop students "who can weave their way through novel environments" and to increase "the speed and economy with which [they] can adapt to continual change" (1970, pp.402–403).

Amongst other things, this shift meant that traditional educational methods such as “lectures must inevitably give way to a whole battery of teaching techniques, ranging from role playing and gaming to computer-mediated seminars” (Ibid., p.361). Yet, whilst civilian and military education in Argentina did change in line with these modern pedagogical priorities, the process by which this change was achieved resulted in an uneasy balance between the teaching of theory and practicum, and a vision for national education that did not necessarily account for the needs of students themselves.

Pedagogical Disputes in University Education

It is a practical certainty that the educational systems designed several centuries ago and fully deployed towards the end of the 19th century no longer respond to the realities and needs of the 21st century. In Argentina, this need to achieve significant pedagogical improvements in the national education system led to the creation of the Federal Education Law of 1993, by which education was reoriented at all levels (Ley Federal de Educación, 1993).¹ In the same year, the government created the Comisión Nacional de Evaluación y Acreditación Universitaria (National Commission for University Evaluation and Accreditation – CoNEAU).

In addition to implementing an accreditation process for postgraduate academic careers, CoNEAU developed standards and evaluation methods for the accreditation of educational offerings across different universities. This was done in order to ensure quality within higher education and facilitate the recognition of university professionals across every field. As part of its wide-ranging reforms, in 1995 the Argentine government issued the Higher Education Law seeking the integration of all higher education institutions in Buenos Aires, and at the provincial and national level. This integration was mandated to occur regardless of whether they were military or civilian institutions or whether they provided artistic, sociological

1 It should be clarified that in 2006, the Argentine Government also passed the National Education Law No. 26.206, which continued and expanded the process of change that had already begun with the 1993 Federal Education Law (Ley de Educación Nacional, 2006).

or vocational education (Ley de Educación Superior, 1995, Art.5). Such institutions, therefore, lost significant autonomy in determining key aspects such as their curricula, statutes, instructors and job titles.

Amongst other achievements, these government reforms placed greater emphasis on the pedagogical training of university professors. Although many of these professors were highly recognized professionals in their research fields, they possessed minimal pedagogical training. As Zabalza Beraza (2002, p.14) points out, there exists a difference between the university professor and the teaching profession:

“university professors present their own cultural characteristics (in the way they construct knowledge and present it to their students, in the way they conceive their work and their professional career) largely due to the selection process and their socialization as members of the ‘university faculty’”.²

This cultural characteristic may be compared to that of a physician, whose role is to treat a patient rather than to teach anatomy. Each role requires specific competencies and therefore specific training. In order to create a “balanced and effective” faculty, a university should seek to combine “people with strong pedagogical training alongside others with broad experience as teachers of specific disciplines” (Ibid., p.162). Unfortunately, the new emphasis placed on pedagogical training was not always well received by university professors, especially those who had been teaching for a long time and who retained “a certain vision for the profession and the conditions for exercising it” (Ibid., p.15).

Another area of significant change was in the teaching methods used at universities. Traditionally, university education revolved around the use of lectures, that is, the presentation of content to a group of students, whose role is limited to taking notes and repeating these notes punctually on the day of their exams. This traditional learning format requires teachers with significant content knowledge and students with a considerable capacity for memorization, but it does not ensure the acquisition of knowledge.

2 All quotes which were originally written in Spanish have been translated into English by the author of this chapter. Although it has not been explicitly indicated which quotes were originally in Spanish, the bibliography has retained the original publication language for all articles used within this chapter.

Nor does it ensure the competencies required to apply that knowledge in professional life.

At the beginning of the 21st century, there occurred a new emphasis in higher education within Argentina, focused on the need for professional competencies. This emphasis was derived in part from “the dominant Anglo-Saxon paradigm” (Mollis, 2011, p.321) imported particularly from Europe, and had a direct correlation with key proposals of the International Labour Organization and the professional standards that were being promoted by the European Higher Education Area (Bologna Working Group, 2005).

In order for students to develop these professional competences during their college experience, it was necessary to integrate a greater level of *practicum* within curricula. This new emphasis allowed students to discover, from the very beginning of their career, the day to day realities of the profession, and thus to have greater confidence in their career choices. This practice was, of course, already common in courses for the medical sciences. such as medicine, dentistry, or nursing, and vocational courses such as engineering or architecture. Yet, due to variations in how practicum was integrated within these courses, sometimes occurring throughout the course and sometimes with trainee jobs after graduation, there existed no ‘best practice’ model of how to apply this more widely.

As such, there was contention surrounding the question of how to integrate practical training within curricula, with some academics arguing that “practicum makes more sense if its functions are linked to different modules or training blocks integrated across different subjects” and other specialists arguing the complete opposite (Zabalza Beraza, 2011, pp.39–40). For some prestigious academics, this cultural shift from content-centred learning to student-centred learning, and the new emphasis on practical sections of study was considered detrimental to the quality of teaching. This opinion was based on the traditional ideal of university education as a method of imparting a diversity of views, critical thinking and academic skills, with a focus on deepening students’ abilities to carry out scientific research in their own fields of knowledge.

These debates, however, often overlooked the perspective of the students themselves. Indeed, the question that must always be considered before deciding what emphasis to place on professional competences versus

research skills in higher education, is what the students themselves wish to achieve: greater professional skills or broader research and thinking skills? This question does not have a single answer since no individual solution can be applied across the “complex and heterogeneous” range of public and private universities in Argentina “consisting of more than 1700 establishments at the non-university tertiary level and 102 universities” (Mollis, 2011, p.315), each with its own vision and development objectives, politico-economic agendas, and social, religious and geographical influences.

This solution would also have to be applied across many different professions, each with their own inherent particularities. In reality, content specialization in different fields such as law, medicine and architecture requires different teaching methods. Awareness of these requirements, however, can only be achieved if educators are able to put aside their role at the higher management level of the university system and place themselves at the level of the student. In a dialogue with my own students at the Catholic University, for example, the question of what could be done to improve the learning process led to a clear answer ‘we want more practice of what we have learned’. This need to provide more practicum within university courses, in order to help students prepare for the world of work, has been reinforced in discussions with colleagues from diverse subject areas during pedagogical cycles at the University of Salvador, and in wider academic studies conducted at the local level by the Universidad de Oviedo (González Riaño, 2011, p.223).

In order to ensure the development of research competence and as a precondition for gaining the professional certificate itself, students in the majority of university courses are required to present research papers with certain scientific standards and formalities. Their ability to plan and produce a piece of investigative research is then confirmed again through a final degree paper or thesis. Undoubtedly, research is one of the central axes of any university, along with teaching and wider community services (known as ‘extension’), but not all students participate in extension or teaching activities. In general, these are offered as elective options for those select students who are interested. The question remains, therefore, why should we practice testing and competition in the area of research and not in other general areas which are equally relevant to a student’s future profession?

The case study of civilian universities within Argentina reveals that educators should listen to students and interpret their interests far better. This includes realizing that not all students are interested in the field of research, but that most need to know how to develop their professional skills in the daily life of a specific career. This dispute is likely to continue into the foreseeable future, with a range of different potential solutions related to individual universities and career paths. Moreover, as we shall now consider, this central question of just how far professional-specialization and practicum should overtake broader learning and thinking skills within education has also affected military education over the last several decades and can be seen especially in the pedagogical evolution of the Colegio Militar de la Nación (National Military College – CMN) before and after the Malvinas War.

Pedagogical Disputes in Military Education

Military education has undergone a major process of change in Argentina since the 1980s. As we shall consider later in this section, many of these changes are related to the return of democracy and the withdrawal of the armed forces from domestic political issues. One issue that military education institutions have faced throughout this period, however, is balancing the need to train officers for specific roles whilst also educating them to adapt to broader, rapidly evolving challenges (as predicted by Toffler).

This issue is particularly conspicuous in the work of the Colegio Militar de la Nación (CMN), which is charged with the initial formation of officers. In over 140 years of history, the CMN has undergone many changes to meet the requirements of the national education system. At the heart of these changes is one key question: how far should junior officers be trained to understand higher-levels of strategy? This problem has been faced by many (if not all) military academies throughout modern history. Yet it is especially relevant today in Argentina considering the continued prominence of wider debates on practicum within higher education. Should the training of young cadets focus on the task they will perform when they graduate from the CMN? Or should the CMN focus on higher-level conceptual skills and educate its students in accordance with Napoleon's famous assertion that "every soldier carries a marshal's baton in his rucksack" (Bowyer, 2004, p.25).

Although these arguments are complementary, in that both options are designed to form a military leader, they remain highly contested. If we consider the Colegio Militar de la Nación in the 1980s, for example, the training of officers was divided between the content provided in the fields of 'academic studies' and 'military instruction'. Even though both areas contributed to the established objective of the academy, there existed a clear lack of coordination and articulation between the goals of 'academic' studies and military instruction, and the junior officer's career path.

The military instruction provided on 'tactics', for example, gave students training on brigade- and division-level organizational and operational warfighting. Cadets also learned the operational functions of the echelons below that of 'company', until they reached their 4th year where they qualified as a section leader of their branch. This training was designed to create combat organizations (company, section, group and patrol) composed of cadets, and was achieved through classes led by junior officers and the use of practical field exercises.

Meanwhile, the academic subject of 'military history' focused on the great campaigns and operations of ancient, medieval and modern warfare, and the great conflicts of the 20th century, including their causes and consequences. This included studies on higher command, theatre warfare, and battle command of the Second World War. This wider historical focus was supported by an abundant bibliography, including a formative use of the *Manual de Historia Militar* (Campos, 1975). Moreover, military history was only one subject of many within an academic field that included education in disciplines such as mathematics, physics, Argentine history, geopolitics, language, philosophy, political sciences, electronics, branch technique, chemistry and military justice.

In the mid-1980s, however, this system began to be questioned (along with many other practices in the Argentine military), due to the defeat suffered against the British Armed Forces in the Malvinas War of 1982. In the CMN, the debate focused on the significant amount of teaching provided on combat and operations for junior officers who would ultimately graduate with the rank of Sub Lieutenant and with the role of platoon leader in a battalion, and, therefore, would not have to deal with these higher operational and strategic challenges until much later in their careers. Among other arguments, it was pointed out that during a

standard military career there are other formal stages of education where these aspects of leadership and command skills are deepened. Here, we find another point of coincidence with Pineda Herrero's (2002, p.31) assertion regarding the need to provide workers with continuous learning that makes it possible to update, strengthen and evolve their competencies on a regular basis.

As part of this debate, military educators started to question the use of prevailing pedagogical models and to reorient their focus from content-based to student-based education. This did not mean that cadets were able to decide what form their training would take, but instead it allowed teachers to alter their classes in ways that better motivated students and clarified the purpose and meaning of the topics which they were being taught. The subject of military history, for example, was altered so that its contents became more focused on the development of battles, including logistical difficulties, manoeuvres, tactical errors and examples of military leadership, rather than on the political leadership surrounding the wider conflict. This helped significantly in improving students' interest in the subject matter.

By the 1990s, with the creation of organizations such as CoNEAU and the implementation of various educational laws, the armed forces also underwent many changes that were not specific to them as an organization, but that were part of wider reforms occurring throughout the nation's higher education system. In 1990, for example, the Argentine Army founded the Instituto de Enseñanza Superior del Ejército (Higher Education Army Institute – IESE). This organization was designed to bring Argentine military education and the formation of officers into line with the standards of the national education system, achieving a “permanent culture of educational quality through the diagnosis, evaluation and continuous feedback of the system” (Sarni, 2005, p.32). This remit provided the IESE with the responsibility to reform all of the Army's higher educational academies, including institutions that had achieved significant historical recognition and had pre-existed the IESE, sometimes by over a century, such as the Colegio Militar de la Nación, the Escuela Superior de Guerra (Superior War College – ESG), and Escuela Superior Técnica (Army Technological College – EST).

As part of the new legal framework for education, the IESE requested accreditation for its careers by CoNEAU in 2000 and renewed these

accreditations in 2008. This certification demonstrated the quality of education that was provided at the military institutes. Yet, as within the civilian universities, this process required the military to achieve a difficult balancing act between the theoretical and practical aspects of education. The pedagogical currents that had circulated in the general education system over the last decade of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century stressed the need for greater freedom, less supervision and less formality for students.

Under the auspices of the Ministry of Defence's 2007 modernization strategy, which advocated the "Adaptation of subsystems for civil and military education and training" (Ministerio de Defensa, 2007, p.9), officials within the political hierarchy started to question and challenge the educational methods being used within the military profession and recommended new pedagogies. This resulted in greater flexibility in the types of courses, schedules and level of supervision required of cadets; a reduction in the level of interaction required with their drill officers; and an increased emphasis on academic research which in turn reduced the time available for experiences in tactical leadership. Finally, in line with the predictions of Charles Moskos (1982, p.299), these reforms created a shift in educational priorities from the goal of forming military technicians to the "democratic formation" of public officials, prompting students to consider themselves as state employees, with reduced institutional and professional commitment. This process undermined the sense of sacrifice that had previously permeated the education of officers and that remains vital to the basic functioning of a military force in a conflict scenario.

Although these new learning methods were not always effective, the Argentine Army acquiesced to political pressure and implemented the recommended modifications. This course of action was not supported by many officers at the lower levels, who believed that these new educational methodologies would have potentially negative effects in the medium-term. Many military professionals, and even cadets, argued that greater demands and formality were necessary, and that the changes would bring little value to their duties on the battlefield.

Critics of the reforms also noted that, instead of balancing the need to study topics such as military history from both an Argentine and international

perspective, the new model sought simply to emulate other armies, without adapting their logic and traditions to the various socio-cultural and politico-military requirements of the Argentine security context. Indeed, cultural traditions such as naming military units in honour of those people, battles and paradigm-shifting leaders that preceded them, still provide a vital foundation, reference point and impetus for the Argentine military.

It is important to note that, especially in the years immediately following the CMN, junior officers in the Argentine Army can undertake specialist training in areas of command, diving, parachuting, hunting, special operations or air assault, among others. This process allows cadets and junior officers to gain in-depth practical experience in combat tactics, leadership and command of troops, which cannot be properly transmitted in the classroom. As junior officers, they also continue to gain further practical learning and experience in their daily roles, as is traditional within both the military-specific development path and in general labour pedagogy.

Upon promotion to the ranks of Captain and Major, these officers can then attend courses at the army staff college (*Escuela Superior de Guerra 'Teniente General Luis María Campos'*), where they are trained for staff roles at brigade-level or even higher echelons. This is followed by the 'Master's in National Defence' which is performed at the rank of Colonel. These higher officer courses have also undergone changes in their pedagogies, schedules and content. In the 1990s, for example, specialist courses and wider curricular reforms were implemented at the staff college level due to clear deficits in the areas of logistics management, both in terms of personnel and materiel, which had been highlighted by the Army's performance in the Malvinas War.

This need for adaptation is likely to continue in line with the rapidly evolving character of conflict in the nation, the region and the world. Indeed, as in most Western countries, legal norms for defence and security in Argentina have become more complex. In order to achieve an integrated national security strategy, it is necessary to train specialists who can collaborate in the administration of state resources and personnel, in positions that range from the lowest tactical units to the highest levels of government. Such specialists will require an ability to assess the challenges facing military campaigns and to analyse and propose doctrinal improvements appropriate to current and future conflicts.

In accordance with this, it could be argued that the tension between divergent views on the initial formation of officers within the Argentine Army has resulted in an intermediate learning path, which has managed to both adhere to and mitigate the political impositions of the Argentine national education strategy. This path has required the military to take advantage of proposals for pedagogical improvement, whilst simultaneously altering its educational and strategic orientation in order to successfully prepare cadets who can develop and adapt to the complex and changing world they will face as future officers.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to relate the disputes that have developed in the civilian university sector to the pedagogical changes seen in the higher education institutions of the Argentine Army. In making this comparison, it is possible to find contact points between those officials in military education who wish to train cadets to be 'Generals' rather than junior officers, and those officials in civilian universities who wish to train students to be academics rather than professionals. In practice, the number of military students in a cadet class who can reach the rank of General does not ordinarily exceed 3 %, as no more than 5 Colonels are allowed to be promoted each year, unless there are exceptional political circumstances. It can also be expected that the number of civilian graduates who find academic careers dedicated to the field of research they studied within university will be within the minority.

This imbalance has led to a scenario in which students do not have all of the tools required to develop efficiently in their chosen professional field. If the educational system is unable to correct this imbalance through higher levels of practicum within curricula, it may still be possible to find a range of useful tools for the development of these professional competences in the field of labour pedagogy. Perhaps the most valuable aspect of this labour pedagogy is that, as previously discussed, it can be applied both to military and civilian professions.

Above all, civilian universities and military education institutions need to listen far more to the needs and opinions of their students rather than relying on the opinions of higher-ranking staff and politically orientated

policy makers. Only by increasing the impact of student feedback on curricula and pedagogy can civilian and military universities fulfil the responsibility that they owe to society: to help produce future generations capable of succeeding in the professional roles required for a functioning society, as well as the specialist research skills needed to expand the breadth and depth of scientific knowledge that can be used by nations, organisations and individuals to adapt to future challenges.

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Ho Shu Huang

‘Outsiders Inside’: Experiences of Privately Contracted Educational Staff in the Singapore Armed Forces

Abstract: This chapter addresses the challenges faced by ‘outsider’ educational contractors in scenarios in which the academic education of military officers has been outsourced to a civilian university. Focusing on the Singapore Armed Forces’ Tri-Service Warfighter Course, the chapter assesses the potential challenges resulting from different notions of ‘time’, teacher-student rapport, student motivation and student ability within a military educational environment. It emphasises, in particular, the challenges faced by lecturers who are only present in the military environment during teaching hours. The author argues that this scenario requires a process of compromise between the military client and academic contractor. It also concludes that academics should view these experiences as learning opportunities which can benefit their own work and generate a culture of self-reflexivity in the application of civilian pedagogy.

Keywords: PME, military education, civil-military relations, Singapore Armed Forces, military contractors, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, RSIS

Introduction

The professional development and education of career soldiers, sailors and airmen in the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) is taken very seriously, as they form the military’s leadership core (Ng, 1998, p.197). Rather than conduct academic courses with its own faculty, as is common in other professional militaries (Brown and Syme-Taylor, 2012, p.453), the SAF contracts the teaching of the academic components of its professional military education (PME) to civilian providers. One contractor is the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) within the Nanyang Technological University (NTU), which provides instruction in military history and strategic studies.

This chapter seeks to assess the challenges faced when the academic education of military officers is outsourced to a civilian university. Specifically, it will focus on the SAF’s Tri-Service Warfighter Course

(TSWC), a mid-career route-of-advancement course for SAF officers, with a military studies component taught by RSIS academics. The chapter will firstly introduce the TSWC (including its objectives, structure and staff demographics), before exploring four key challenges faced by ‘outsider’ educational contractors when teaching in a military environment: the notion of ‘time’, motivation, ability and rapport. A key theme of this analysis is the differences and similarities faced by RSIS lecturers, who are only present in the military environment during teaching hours, in comparison to academics who are full-time employees of the PME institutions in which they teach. The chapter concludes with the hypothesis that despite or even due to these challenges, the military classroom provides academics with an opportunity to rethink their traditional pedagogies, even in their own native teaching environments.

It should be noted that, although the chapter focuses on the Singaporean context, it situates this within a broadly Western canon of military pedagogical theory and case studies. In doing so, it neither seeks to reify nor problematise this link. However, it is understood that the application of such pedagogies to Singaporean contexts could be interpreted as tacitly reifying either the broad universality of military pedagogy or the historical standardisation of global educational practices. One methodological goal which the chapter does seek to achieve, however, is to contribute an alternative ‘civilian’ perspective to a pedagogical discourse which has a tendency to explore the role of civilians in PME from a military viewpoint. Much of this discussion concerns what should be taught, how to incorporate academic classes within existing military curricula, and risks to the military profession generated by outsourcing its education (see, for example, Higbee, 2010 and Avant, 2005). Yet, as noted by Brown and Syme-Taylor (2012, p.453), PME is an academic activity as well as a military one.

The Tri-Service Warfighter Course (TSWC)

Introduced in May 2006, and built upon the principles of the original Tri-Service Staff Course which started in 1997, the TSWC is one of three route-of-advancement courses in the SAF.¹ The course is conducted four times a

1 The other two are the Undergraduate Professional Military Education and Training (UGPMET) course and the Command and Staff Course (CSC).

year, with a maximum of 78 students (MINDEF, 2010). Four weeks long, it is attended by Captains from the army, navy and air force who have typically served for just under a decade, though there are often exceptions.² The course provides an opportunity for these mid-career officers to learn about and discuss issues concerning “SAF Joint Operations, the Strategic Environment & National Security, Military Technology, as well as Leadership and Values” (SAFTI MI, 2016, p.89).

Most of the officers attending have, thus far, spent much of their career narrowly focused on attaining technical or operational proficiency in their respective vocations. The TSWC provides an opportunity to contextualise their role within the broader mission of the SAF and its wider strategic setting. Lessons are pitched at an undergraduate level and learning is assessed through a research paper (pre-course), as well as class participation and group presentations. The majority of lessons in the TSWC are taught by officers from the SAF, Ministry of Defence (MINDEF) and other government agencies. Other lessons such as country-specific briefings, citizenship education and strategic studies are contracted out.

The RSIS’ Military Studies Programme (MSP) is the biggest contractor for the TSWC, providing all of the teaching for the Strategic Environment and National Security (SENS) component of the course. The MSP comprises both senior staff (with doctoral qualifications) and junior staff (with master’s degrees). Its primary task is to provide academic instruction to the SAF (RSIS, n.d.) across a wide range of subjects in strategic and military studies, from the level of officer cadet up to senior commander. The MSP allocates six instructors for the TSWC, who each provide teaching for eight sessions over six days. This is comprised of four lectures of two-hours’ length each, three tutorials of three-hours’ length each and a six-hour session for group presentations. The lectures and group presentations are conducted in a lecture room with the entire cohort present. The tutorials are held in smaller groups of eleven to thirteen officers. As will now be considered, in delivering these sessions, civilian staff face a range of different challenges.

2 It is useful to note that the rank structure of the SAF is unified across all forces. Thus, officials within the army, navy, and air force possess identical rank names and insignia.

Challenge #1: Time

How time is understood and valued, vis-à-vis learning, can differ in the academic and military worlds. Academics tend to have a broader understanding of time. Research and fieldwork are not fast processes and require flexible scheduling. Learning cannot be rushed and the end results of one's efforts (such as peer-reviewed journal articles and academic books) can take months, if not years, to reach fruition. Learning for its own sake is time well-spent, and generating new knowledge is vital, even if its value is rarely immediately obvious.

On the other hand, military officers are used to seeing visible and immediate results from training, generally determined by measurable standards. After all, the military's objective in battle is a decisive victory, achieved with speed and precision. Education, with its often-unquantifiable benefits, sits uncomfortably within this mind-set. As noted in Daniel J. Hughes' exploration of the U.S. Air War College (2010, p.153), some military officials dismiss academic classes on non-technical subjects as unimportant. How time is allocated in the TSWC hints at this. Significant allowance for 'study time' is provided in the SAF's other 'route-of-advancement' courses because university accreditation for some modules in these courses mandates such periods. However, the TSWC possesses only a few of these dedicated study periods. Moreover, these periods are often used for other purposes such as administrative tasks. TSWC officers are also required to write a pre-course research paper while working an often extremely demanding full-time job as a mid-career officer. Finally, in addition to a heavy schedule of lectures and pre-course readings, there are also other assignments that compete for students' attention. In addition to the SENS assignments, for example, officers attending the TSWC have to deliver two group presentations for the other course components, as well as a vocational presentation on their service and branch during the four-week course.

Consequently, while the SAF Leadership Competency Model does emphasise the importance of "conceptual thinking competency", which includes critical and creative thinking (MINDEF, 2016), there is limited interest in allocating time in the SAF's shorter courses, such as the TSWC, to the broad study of the social sciences which could promote such skills. To fully benefit from such studies would require extended immersion in a

discipline with no direct relevance to an officer's job and a value proposition that is difficult to tangibly quantify. This belief in functionality in education is not restricted to the Singaporean military (see, for example, Keaney, 1998, p.151). To mitigate the lack of measurable standards, many lesson plans in U.S. PME courses explicitly state how to apply the subject of study to an officer's career (Carter, 2010, p.171).

These shared cultural contexts shape a key challenge faced by civilian PME contractors in Singapore: timetabling. The modularisation of military tasks means that classes are seen as 'plug-and-play' and pre-defined periods are shifted around to make the timetable work. Given the array of lessons in the TSWC and the number of external parties involved, this is partly an administrative necessity. Priority for 'preferred' slots is given to senior guest lecturers from the military and government, who work separate full-time jobs and must be accorded due deference in line with their rank. As a result, civilian academics are often parachuted into the remaining available slots, with schedules occasionally changing at the last minute. Practically speaking, such academics do have greater flexibility to accommodate unforeseen changes in comparison to government officials, due to the nature of their work and their own university schedules. As a contractor, there is also an unspoken obligation to accommodate the needs of the client and forge a harmonious working relationship.

This flexibility, however, presents issues for the quality of learning provided by educational contractors. Although contracted hours are met, less priority is given to when they are met. RSIS lecturers are usually allocated two periods for lectures, each of two-hours' length, which occur back-to-back. As noted by Middendorf and Kalish (1996, p.2), requiring students to sit through hours of long lectures is not ideal for effective learning as "adult learners can keep tuned in to a lecture for no more than 15 to 20 minutes at a time, and this at the beginning of the class". They recommend working a "change-up" into classes to "restart the attention clock", based on a typical university class length of fifty to seventy-five minutes long (Ibid.).

At the TSWC, however, the four SENS lectures that RSIS is contracted to deliver are split into two four-hour blocks (i.e. two two-hour lectures back-to-back on two different days). While RSIS instructors have the

flexibility to conduct their lessons as they deem fit, varying class activities cannot mitigate the student (and instructor) fatigue that invariably occurs across four hours of instruction. Although a concerted attempt is made to spread tutorials out across three separate days, they tend to be on consecutive days or, in some instances, on the same day. This system stands in contrast to the policies of most civilian higher education institutions, which consider long lectures to be pedagogically less effective and which seek to keep sufficient space between lessons to allow students time to reflect and prepare for the next class, especially when new, unfamiliar material is taught.

Challenge #2: Motivation

Passing the TSWC is a requirement for an officer's promotion to Major. Although students gain no new operational qualifications, the SAF prioritises the course through several means. Firstly, it gives officers a full month away from work to attend the course. This purely educational endeavour is atypical for a military course of this duration. Secondly, superiors of those attending the TSWC are informed that the course is protected time and that officers should not be assigned work during this time. Thirdly, RSIS staff are asked to distribute lesson materials two months in advance through the SAF's online learning platform for ease of accessibility. The RSIS also delivers a pre-course briefing for students with an overview of the forthcoming classes, modes of assessment and a short writing workshop.

Despite these attempts to create a conducive learning environment, student motivation remains a challenge. Although some officers wholeheartedly embrace the opportunity to focus on learning, they are often within the minority. Others continue to prioritise work over education, even covertly participating in tasks and assignments for their current job role. Some see the course as a chance to rest and recharge for a month – an observation which has also been made in the U.S. (Hughes, 2010, p.152). Most view the TSWC as a networking opportunity to better understand the other services, or even the different branches within their own service. The level of motivation that officers possess within their classes is a function of the proportion of each attitude they take.

Building sufficient rapport to encourage unmotivated students is particularly difficult for RSIS staff, as their tutorials are held towards the end of the course. Contracted civilian staff also possess limited carrots or sticks to encourage better behaviour. Thus, although RSIS staff are responsible for almost half of each student's final course assessment, many officers place less emphasis on preparing for RSIS lessons than would be expected from students at a civilian university. This lack of effort can be frustrating for external academics. In tutorials, for example, few officers reference the material provided or come prepared with detailed responses to the tutorial questions, significantly limiting the depth of discussion. It is easy for an officer to submit a hastily written research essay and drift through the tutorials for the duration of the course.

A lack of time is an oft-cited reason for this. However, a lack of time can mask other causes that are less palatable, including a basic lack of interest. Similar to the scenario outlined by Hughes (2010, p.152), for some officers, attendance is simply a means to achieve promotion. These students apply just enough effort to pass, as the actual grade received has little bearing on one's career. This stands in stark contrast to students at civilian universities who, at a basic level, are motivated by tuition fees and a desire to graduate with a transcript of respectable grades. The absence of these factors means that the expectations of academic contractors have to be adjusted when teaching officers in the TSWC.

As we shall consider further in the next section, however, it is important to acknowledge the role that ability may play in this scenario. For example, a lack of prior experience or training on how to prepare for classes may partly explain why some officers do not. The same can be said of poorly written research papers. This may help elucidate why most SAF officers – even those who have not made an effort to prepare – participate in tutorials as best as they can, with a curious and open mind, even extending discussions beyond the allocated time. These officers also bring a wealth of career experience that can help to clarify abstract concepts in a way that academics may sometimes struggle to achieve. Motivation, or lack thereof, to engage fully in course preparation and self-study outside of class, therefore, may be partly understood as a function of the officer's confidence in their own academic abilities.

Challenge #3: Ability

In university, all students are required to meet specific academic criteria before they are admitted. Prospective students need to demonstrate that they have the ability to learn at that level. The TSWC, however, has no academic pre-requisites for attending, even though the course is designed to be conducted at an undergraduate level. Admission to the TSWC is achieved either by exceeding a certain number of years of service, or due to one's likely career potential based upon current career performance. Both are typically taken into consideration.

Admittedly, educational attainment in Singapore has been rising. In 2015, 52.3 % of residents in Singapore between the ages of 25 and 34 (the general age band for officers attending the TSWC) possessed university qualifications (Department of Statistics Singapore, 2016, p.11). These figures may well be equivalent to or even lower than those in the SAF, due to its policy of recruiting broadly across society and actively encouraging regulars to seek better academic qualifications. Opportunities for regulars to attain undergraduate and postgraduate degrees have also been created. The UGPMET and several modules in the CSC, for example, have been accredited by the Nanyang Technological University, and these credits can be used in the attainment of a diploma in other Singaporean universities.

An undergraduate degree, however, does not automatically equip an officer with the reading and writing skills necessary for the TSWC. English language proficiency in Singapore remains a topic of concern for the government (Sim, 2015). Moreover, a large number of officers opt to study science and engineering courses, in comparison to the types of humanities and social sciences courses that would enhance wider reading and essay writing skills. Finally, whilst there may be officers on the TSWC who are as academically qualified as some of the tutors, there still remain a large share who may not hold any university qualifications or any experience writing research papers, and thus who possess comparatively low reading and writing skills for such a course.

This wide range of abilities adds another layer of complexity for educators. The intention of the TSWC is to equip mid-career officers with a broader perspective on the context in which the SAF operates, and not a formal education in strategic studies. Whilst RSIS lessons form only a

small part of the TSWC syllabus, these lessons must still be taught professionally. This poses a dilemma for civilian educators: should we lower the content and teaching methods of the lesson to the level of the lowest qualified officer, or should we focus on the minority who can participate at the level we are accustomed to and expect the rest to step up?

Challenge #4: Rapport

Research has demonstrated the importance of instructor-student rapport, the positive interpersonal relationship between instructors and students leading to classroom connectedness, in effective learning (Frisby and Martin, 2010, pp.146–148). Fundamental to establishing rapport is mutual understanding and respect in a “classroom made up of multiple interpersonal relationships which contribute to the construction of a unique community” (Ibid., p.146). In PME, this “unique community” is made more complex due to the distinct cultural differences that exist between the academic and military worlds. Brown and Syme-Taylor (2012, p.453), for example, describe the university environment as “[standing] apart doctrinally and institutionally from daily military life and training”. Vernon (2002) notes that “academe tends to value tolerance, dialogue, and creativity, and strives to nurture multiple points of view, the military tends to value authority, utilitarianism, and physical force”.

This difference is, in part, an unavoidable reality. While the professional soldier is subordinate to political control, they are physically and culturally removed from wider society due to the nature of their work. Bases where soldiers reside tend to be in rural areas because of the land required. War fighting, fundamentally the legal killing of an opponent in defence of one’s country, is antithetical to typical perspectives on the taking of another’s life within civil society. This “civil-military gap” (Garb, 2005, p.83) can engender a professional military culture that relates uneasily to the rest of society.

When these two cultures come together in PME, there is a tendency for academia to be subordinate to the military. Some critics claim that academic subjects are “corrupted at military schools to fit the ‘needs’ of the military” (Kennedy and Neilson, 1998, ix). A kinder observation is that PME tends “to reflect the wider military culture” (Brown and

Syme-Taylor, 2012, p.454). At its very worst, the clash of cultures results in misunderstandings, raising tensions between military officers and academic civilians (Bruscino, 2010, p.139).

Although cultural differences do exist between RSIS lecturers and SAF officers, they are professional and non-antagonistic. The nature of civil-military relations in Singapore is a major reason for this. Singapore's civil-military relations have been described as one of "fusion" (Tan, 2011, p.148). Singapore is a young nation with no prior military tradition or battle experience. The SAF has therefore developed alongside wider society, not separate from it. This is amplified by Singapore's policy of National Service, through which most able-bodied male citizens (and some Permanent Residents) have to serve two years full-time in the SAF, and often come back for annual training as a reservist for at least a decade afterwards. Military service also features at the highest levels of government. A fifth of Singapore's cabinet are retired SAF Generals, and many others have experienced National Service. Cultural boundaries between the military and civilian worlds are therefore blurred, and some have even described Singaporeans as "militarized civilians" (Chong and Chan, 2016, p.2).

Thus, officers at the TSWC are more unfamiliar with academia than vice-versa. They tend to view RSIS lecturers with curiosity. Lecturers are often asked why they chose to be academics, or what exactly it is that academics do. RSIS staff are made to feel at ease, by students who are generally open minded, respectful and almost deferential. At worst, students are indifferent to RSIS staff. This stands in contrast to the suspicion that is typically directed at "outsiders" within the military (Ben-Ari, 2014, p.32). Nor do lecturers have to teach combative officers who are fundamentally "anti-intellectual", as observed in Lloyd J. Matthews' commentary on the U.S. military (2002, p.17). As Thomas Bruscino (2010, p.141) playfully observes:

"when academics introduce some of the contentious but highly specialized debates from their respective fields into [A military environment], they are often accused of arguing over how many angels can dance on the head of a pin, or, less charitably, for contemplating the fuzz in their navels".

The difficulty of establishing rapport with officers that is faced by RSIS staff, however, is far less related to this cultural gap. Instead, it is the

plug-and-play approach of the SAF's academic outsourcing model that provides lecturers with minimal time to develop rapport. The custom of parachuting lecturers into teaching slots during the middle of the course means that lessons are delivered quickly, impersonally and without any additional social interaction or post-lesson follow ups. The plug-and-play model also makes it more difficult to relate lessons to the rest of the course content, as RSIS lecturers are not allowed to audit other lectures requiring security clearance. This scenario amplifies the 'outsider' identity of RSIS staff, thus providing a systemic inhibitor for developing rapport.

This is not the case within the RSIS where opportunities to develop rapport are promoted. There, social events are organised across the semester for faculty and students to interact with each other informally. All instructors maintain regular office hours where students can meet with them in person outside of class. Alternatively, students can correspond with faculty by email or through the university's virtual learning community. Admittedly, given its brevity and the fact that the RSIS is only contracted to provide one of several components of the course, the TSWC arguably cannot be expected to run like a typical extended university course. That having been said, the TSWC could well adapt some of these practices. For example, RSIS instructors could participate in the team games played by the student cohort several times a week at the end of the working day. The SAF has its own virtual learning community, LEARNET, that RSIS instructors can be, and have been, given access too. Instructor email addresses can also be easily distributed to the officers.

The main obstacle to this is inertia. Structurally, there is little incentive to facilitate the development of instructor-student rapport by both the contractor (the RSIS) and the client (the SAF). The client specifies what exactly has to be delivered quantitatively, typically in terms of class hours, number of instructors required, and the number of assignments to be graded. The contractor provides teaching services in accordance to what is spelt out in the contract. There is no need to provide more than the contract demands. Presently, the focus is more on ensuring that relevant content is taught over a specific number of teaching hours, rather than how the content is taught, and whether it is done so in the most effective way. While there is some motivation amongst individual officials on the ground (be they RSIS instructors or liaison officers from the SAF) to improve the learning

environment for both student and instructor, there is organisational indifference due to the fact that RSIS' involvement in this PME remains comparatively small. RSIS is not formally invited to participate in discussions on pedagogy in the SAF or 'train the trainer' programmes. Perhaps the issue, then, is a lack of rapport between the officials who undertake the commissioning and contracting of teaching services between the SAF and RSIS. Focusing on the legalities of the contract reinforces the 'outsider' identity which trickles downwards.

Conclusion: Who Is Teaching Whom?

As regulars form the minority of its forces, it is unlikely that the SAF can justify the cost of dedicated PME institutions with their own academic faculties (Menon, 1995, p.60). Outsourcing academic instruction, therefore, is a practical way to enhance the professional development of SAF regulars. It is also part of an established trend of contracting external providers for non-essential functions, including the provision of meals in military camps, management of rifle ranges and the conduct of physical training during Basic Military Training.

Using the TSWC as a case-study, this chapter has sought to highlight both the broad challenges faced by external academics whilst teaching military officers, and the ways in which these challenges are compounded by the plug-and-play scheduling system. In analysing civil-military relations in Singapore and comparing the Singaporean PME system with its international equivalents, the essay has shown how practical realities, rather than fundamental differences in cultural values, have created difficulties for RSIS lecturers in helping officers prepare for lessons, teaching officers with vastly different academic abilities and developing rapport with officers.

These inhibitors are not insurmountable. Indeed, the way forward is a well-worn cliché: compromise. The challenge, of course, is determining who should give way to whom, and when? To my mind – and some of my colleagues may disagree with me – it is academics who should be more accommodating, particularly in the area of teaching methods. In a military environment, civilian educators must adjust their notion of what a 'proper' academic lesson looks like. "Practitioners form a distinct type of student," observes John Craig, "and the design of the learning experiences provided

should reflect their particular needs” (2015, p.28). Even the highest levels of PME provided to senior officers at U.S. war colleges “are not designed to produce scholars and researchers; they develop operators and leaders” (Reed, 2014, p.15).

Although some would argue that the adaptation of traditional academic methods may compromise academic standards, this shows a lack of pedagogical imagination. Most importantly, we cannot indiscriminately impose the intellectual standards or pedagogic approaches from civilian universities upon military officers within a military environment. As Thomas Brusino (2010, p.148) argues, “academic expertise will never be an appropriate standard to expect for members of the military”. Thus, educators should adjust their teaching methods according to the objectives of the course (Kennedy and Neilson, 1998, xi), rather than blindly hoping that officers will ‘step up’ to university standards. This may require greater investment on the part of lecturers and a reassessment of the value of traditional lecture-tutorial formats. Alternatives such as war games and crisis simulations have been found to convert disengaged officers into (pro)active learners (Lacey, 2016). More can be done by academics to conceive of and implement alternative learning methods such as these.

One current impediment for the implementation of alternative learning formats, is the ability to communicate the value of non-conventional teaching methods in terms suitable for both academic and military officials. The natural evolution of higher education in Singapore, however, provides room for hope. Universities, such as the Nanyang Technological University, are now encouraging the use of “Outcomes-Based Teaching and Learning” (NTU, n.d.), in which one must explicitly outline the relevance of a specific course or module for the career or skill-sets of the student. This method bears clear comparison to those used within the military environment. Under the Discretionary Admission scheme, Singaporean universities are also hoping to increase “holistic admissions” (Davie, 2017), by admitting more students who may not have met the academic admission criteria but have demonstrated talent in other areas. While the variance in ability will not be as wide as those in the TSWC, pedagogic approaches will have to be adapted to accommodate the changing profile of university students. Teaching military officers, therefore, provides an opportunity for academics to rethink how they approach classes in their own native

teaching environment. Indeed, if we are open-minded, we may find that military officers are not the only students in the classroom.

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Andrea Falla Rubiano

Creating a Pedagogy for Peace for a New Generation of Military Officers

“The core of the problem of how to create new forms-subjects – and with them new forms of being, new forms of power, new ways of thinking, new sensibilities – resides, in my opinion, in the type of lines of force that connect the arts of forming the other with those of self-creation. This connection is prototypical of human experience”.

(Sáenz Obregón, 2007, p.82)¹

Abstract: This chapter addresses the challenges faced in designing education for military students in Colombia’s post-FARC era. It highlights how Colombian professional military education must balance the needs of future officers who may be ‘digital natives’ with heightened multitasking abilities, and who have known no scenario other than internal conflict within Colombia. In its analysis of pedagogical techniques used in certain socio-humanistic modules at the Escuela Militar de Aviación ‘Marco Fidel Suárez’ (Military School of Aviation ‘Marco Fidel Suárez’) and the Colombian Government’s ‘Cátedra de la Paz’ (Chair of Peace) initiative, it highlights methods through which this balance may be achieved. In doing so, it demonstrates the importance of providing multiple perspectives on Colombia’s politico-military history and more interactive pedagogies tailored to individual students.

Keywords: PME, military education, Colombian Armed Forces, FARC, peace studies, cátedra de la paz, Escuela Militar de Aviación, EMAVI

1 All quotes which were originally written in Spanish, have been translated into English by the author of this chapter. Although it has not been explicitly indicated which quotes were originally in Spanish, the bibliography has retained the original publication language for all articles used within this chapter.

Introduction

However problematic it seems to be to ask the question ‘how’, at some point in pedagogical practices it becomes necessary. By analysing the educational practices of the Escuela Militar de Aviación ‘Marco Fidel Suárez’ (Military School of Aviation ‘Marco Fidel Suárez’ - EMAVI) and in particular the history module of the Programa de Ciencias Militares Aeronáuticas (Program of Military Aeronautical Sciences – PCMAE), this brief chapter aims to show how it is possible to inspire new ways of thinking in a school that remains immersed in the avatars of contemporary Colombian society and anchored to a specific cultural context. The process of forming the future Colombian officer to meet these evolving contexts both requires and results in an act of reformation of teaching methods and teachers themselves.

As noted by Javier Sáenz Obregón (2007, p.75), since its origins in the 15th to 16th centuries, the modern school system has appropriated “a series of practices that were previously scattered and circumscribed to certain social groups” for transmission to the whole population, including customs and philosophies from military, medical, religious and academic institutions, and the aristocracy. For Sáenz Obregón (2004, p.34), however, this system of “traditional education” resulted in a range of effects that were counterproductive to the primary goal of education itself:

“These effects can be summarized as the generation in students of an attitude of docility, passivity, receptivity, and obedience; the hypocrisy and unrestrained and secret functioning of individualism; insensitivity to ideas; loss of motivation towards learning and culture; and their inability to act in situations different from those of the school itself”.

As argued by Philippe Meirieu (2007, pp.43–45), in order to create a fulfilling educational experience, it is necessary “to question the obsolescence of the traditional model that constitutes the class” and to empower students with an active “desire to learn”. Military education, however, is founded upon the premise that “orders are fulfilled or the militia is over” (Valencia Tovar, 2002, p.247). Thus, in the context of educational psychology, it could be said that military instruction is situated in the behaviourist paradigm. Specifically, teaching-learning dynamics are oriented towards encouraging students to reproduce practices by following orders and patterns provided to them by the military instructor, in which

scenario learning is manifested as behavioural change (Woolfolk, 2014, p.247).

In the case of the EMAVI, however, the training process not only covers military training, but also extends to academic training. This alma mater of the Colombian Air Force educates students in four academic programmes. Specifically, it provides a ‘core’ academic programme on aeronautical military sciences that contains a socio-humanistic component, including modules on law, ethics, history, environment and foreign languages. This academic programme is complemented by three additional programmes on aeronautical administration, mechanical engineering, and computer engineering. Until the 93rd officers’ course, which commenced in 2017, cadets and ensigns at the school were required to study these undergraduate subjects in parallel with their military training.² From 2017 onwards, however, the academic programmes were studied independently, one at a time, to enhance the study time available to cadets.

The challenge facing the university, therefore, is how to mobilize its students’ desire for learning whilst also mobilizing its humanities teachers to provide students with the necessary tools to become future officers – specifically, officers capable of fulfilling direct orders within the framework of Colombia’s political and legal constitutions, and with a respect for human rights and international humanitarian rights. In order to address this challenge, I will first consider two key difficulties facing military education in Colombia. Firstly, the increasingly ‘digital’ modus operandi of future officers. Secondly, the emergence of a new culture of ‘peace’ in Colombia since the 2016 peace deal with former guerrilla organisation, the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – FARC). After a brief assessment of these factors, it will then be considered how socio-humanistic pedagogies can be applied to enhance military educational objectives, with a particular focus on the PCMAE in the EMAVI.

2 It should be noted that students are given the title of cadet (cadete) until they reach their fourth year, when they are given the title of ensign (alférez).

Strengthening the Culture of Peace for the Digital Generation

As noted by Caulfield and Ulmer (2014), the ubiquity of digital media in contemporary society has led to a scenario in which:

“the adolescent generation (‘digital natives’) have a more adapted working memory to media multitasking than do older generations (‘digital immigrants’) and can perform effectively in the presence of multiple media streams. This could have a significant impact on teaching styles and curriculums with the newfound presence of media in schools”.

This increased capacity to develop and carry out various tasks simultaneously, such as listening to music while reading a news article, or writing an essay while chatting with peers, presents the educator with a range of challenges. For example, when multitasking and distractions are second nature for contemporary pupils, what methods should educators use to attract and maintain their students’ attention in class? This challenge is heightened by the increasing presence of digital devices in the classroom, providing students with constant access to real-time news and information circulated by a range of scholarly sources, online discussion groups and social media channels.

This scenario is not only pedagogically complex from a technological standpoint, but also from a standpoint of cultural diversity. Taking into account the notion of a complex human subject, we must acknowledge that one individual student alone may “belong to diverse social groups, organizations, institutions, inscribed in a specific society and in broad socio-geographical groups”, whilst simultaneously possessing “membership or non-membership to a religion, a socio-economic class, a political regime, a health system, etc.” (Rheume, 2000, pp.3–4). This constantly evolving web of human relationships is present in both the virtual and physical environments, linking students with friends, family, teachers, social networks and other groups (often in real-time), who all contribute to the continual construction and deconstruction of the individual’s interests, opinions and personal identity. When considering the scope and needs of a training programme, therefore, it is necessary to consider how pedagogical strategies can be used to guard against both informational and cultural fatigue, both for the students and the teachers.

This cultural and technological shift has occurred at a time when the Colombian Government is focusing on a new culture of peace and

sustainability, after the signing of a peace agreement with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC). In 2014, the Congress of Colombia enacted Law No. 1732, which aims to “create and consolidate a space for learning, reflection and dialogue about a culture of peace and sustainable development that contributes to general welfare and improvement of the quality of life for the population” (LEY No. 1732, 2014, Art. 1, Par. 2). In line with this shift, the curricula and educational plans of all Colombian schools and universities must incorporate a “Cátedra de la Paz” (Chair of Peace), designed to ensure the integration of concepts such as peace-making, education for peace and sustainable development. In combination with Decree 1038 set out by the Ministry of Education (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2015), the cátedra de la paz laws have prompted educators to consider a range of alternative pedagogical strategies. At the EMAVI, the syllabus of the cátedra de la paz was formed around three subjects: constitutional law, human rights and international humanitarian law (IHL), and history.

Based on current practices used within the history module of the PCMAE, I shall now outline some potential pedagogical strategies that may be used to engender this culture of peace for a new generation of students.³ This includes a range of interactive teaching methods and the use of multimedia such as songs, videos, stories, poems, images, interpretation of cartoons, animations, and the use of photo-motion applications and technologies. As we shall see, these pedagogical practices seek to respond to the broader educational question highlighted by Phillippe Meirieu, as to how one can provoke students with a desire to learn.

Life Line (Línea de vida)

As presented by the Internationale Weiterbildung und Entwicklung (InWEnt, 2007, p.29), the “Life Line” technique prompts students to draw up a timeline of the most significant events in their lives, and asks them

3 It should be noted that some of these activities and techniques are inspired by contemporary work in the field of Pedagogy for Peace (Educación para la Paz), particularly that seen in the framework of the course “Creating a Culture of Peace” Dirnstorfer (2008), and the methodological proposals of the *Internationale Weiterbildung und Entwicklung* (InWEnt, 2007).

to highlight the lessons that they have learned from scenarios in which they achieved their goals or in which they did not achieve their goals, and moments of loss that they have encountered. There are two key aspects to this activity. The first is the page-by-page elaboration of their life histories in a textual or Power Point format, or through other digital methods. The second is the socialization of their stories, which occurs when they present their life lines to their peers. This activity allows students to engage in autobiographical self-reflection, as well as reflecting upon the history of their peers. It facilitates the consolidation of their friendships and the formation of a language community, which enables them to participate in a more active and open manner throughout the other activities they will undertake during the course.

Take What You Need (Toma lo que necesitas)

This activity is inspired by photography found on Pinterest, a website and smartphone application that allows users to present collated images on various themes or topics of their choice. Specifically, the teacher organizes a template on a half-sheet of cardboard, upon which are placed lots of small pieces of paper/cardboard with specific qualities and values written on them. These pieces are removable. The teacher then instructs the students to take a specific quality or value from the board and give it to a peer who they feel is lacking that quality. This activity promotes the strengthening of links between students, a recognition of those aspects and qualities that students must improve in themselves, and an atmosphere of reflection and dialogue between peers.

A Look at History (Mirada a la historia)

Based on the concept of “Learning from others to influence oneself” (Dirnstorfer, 2008, pp.21–22), this technique involves the analysis of historical events and experiences, designed to facilitate self-reflection on issues that are either directly or closely related to oneself. It uses memory exercises that investigate historical facts derived from internal armed conflict, and that compel students to utilize their critical thinking skills in analysing the dangers or benefits of repeating history. In this way, “the past becomes a principle of action for the future” (Todorov, 2000, p.31).

In the Colombian context, this activity reinforces the value of civil-military dialogue as a means of conflict resolution, in contrast to violence and armed conflict.

Analytical Chart (Ficha analítica)

The analytical chart provides a framework by which students can undertake a comprehensive reading of a text, fragment, news article, video or film. This tool is available to students through the Ambiente Virtual de Aprendizaje de la Fuerza Pública (Virtual Learning Environment of the Armed Forces – AVAFP) website, hosted and developed by the Colombian Armed Forces. The goal of the analytical chart is to guide students in terms of the aspects they should account for when assessing the text or specific fragments that they have been allocated for study. These aspects include identifying the thesis of the document and the arguments used by the author to support their proposal. The chart also allows the student to express their point of view in relation to the documents they are studying through exposition and conversations with other colleagues, both within the classroom and, in some cases, on virtual chat forums. This learning activity helps to increase competencies in comprehension, reading and writing, public speaking and debating skills.

Sandbox (Cajón de arena)

The Sandbox method is inspired by the military doctrine of the National Army of Colombia, used to instruct infantry troops. It involves a recreation of a battle with the objective of analysing the military strategies involved in the battle and making alternative proposals regarding these strategies. This teaching method can be achieved with the use of basic materials such as crayons, plasticine, plastic figures and cardboard among others.

Open Digital Educational Resources (Recursos Educativos Digitales Abiertos)

Open Digital Educational Resources (ODER/REDA) are increasingly available online. However, students are not necessarily aware of these tools. As such, educators can promote the use of resources to their students. Key examples include oCam (video recording software), Evernote (note taking,

organizing and archiving), Tagul or Word Art (word cloud generator), PowToon (animated video creator), Photo Motion (3D photo animator), and Cmap (create and share electronic charts) among others.

These strategies that are used in the socio-humanistic modules of the PCMAE curriculum (i.e. law, ICT, ethics, environment, history and foreign languages), are designed to enable students to be the protagonists of their own learning process. They aim to make the teacher invisible or at least to give them a secondary role, as a parallel participant alongside the student 'protagonist'. This follows Paulo Freire's concept of continuous exchange in the roles of teacher and student, or master and apprentice (1970, p.52), with the sole aim of dynamizing the process. This new dynamic generates within the training process a dialogic relationship that enhances the value of training, and that allows for visibility and recognition of the student as an active subject who can make contributions based on their previous experience and knowledge.

This 'ideal' pedagogy, however, faces difficulties in transmission across different educational cultures and institutions. Sáenz Obregón (2014, p.201), for example, points out that, at the primary and secondary levels of public schooling in Colombia, there exists "a specific schooling deployment mechanism that regulates teachers' practices", and that "tends to intensify their governmental practices on students and to weaken their practices of knowledge". Despite the inherent differences between civilian pedagogy and military andragogy, it is realistic to acknowledge that both retain a traditional classroom structure and that "as long as the school-form is still alive, it will continue to be a scenario of aesthetic battles" (Sáenz Obregón, 2007, p.84). As we shall now consider, therefore, when one seeks to implement socio-humanistic pedagogies in military educational institutions without transgressing against the institution's traditional form, it is useful to consider the duality of imagination and policy as outlined by John Dewey (1934, p.348):

"Imagination is the chief instrument of the good [...] a person's ideas and treatment of his fellows are dependent upon his power to put himself imaginatively in their place. [...] Hence it is that art is more moral than moralities. For the latter either are, or tend to become, consecrations of the *status quo*, reflections of custom, reinforcements of the established order. The moral prophets of humanity have always been poets [...]. Uniformly, however, their vision of possibilities has

soon been converted into a proclamation of facts that already exist and hardened into semi-political institutions”.

Using Socio-Humanistic Pedagogies in a Military Context

Taking this into account, how should one teach units of socio-humanistic subjects in a military context? Firstly, the student must be recognized as a complex social subject who, in this case, belongs to a generation of young people and adolescents for whom multitasking is more commonplace and who may also be a ‘digital native’. Throughout their life, this same student has known and experienced Colombia as a country with internal armed conflict but no international armed conflict. Since the signing of the peace agreement with the FARC, however, this student is now facing a potential change in the outlook of their country and a broader denaturalization of national violence. The individual has also chosen to enter the EMAVI, in which they will experience a training process with both military instruction and academic training.

Although a far wider range of cultural contexts exist for each individual pupil, the contexts listed above represent key factors that will likely influence a significant proportion of contemporary students at the EMAVI. In addition to accounting for students’ individual needs and cultural particularities, therefore, teachers must be able to draw the attention of their students through a variety of activities that account for these shared historical contexts. These activities must also acknowledge the educational implications of students with different forms of intelligence, such as a logical-mathematical versus linguistic intelligence, or interpersonal versus intrapersonal intelligence. In order to account for these “multiple intelligences” in education, the teacher should include within their range of strategies those activities that appeal to different senses, taking into account the appropriateness of specific teaching and assessment materials, and the social background of students (Gardner and Hatch, 1989, pp.6, 9).

It should also be considered that students may come from any district of Colombia and, in some cases, from neighbouring and friendly countries such as Panama, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic. So, it makes sense not only to teach in diversity but to evaluate in the same way. In this scenario, evaluation should be considered as a

process and not just a result. Educators should use ongoing improvement as a parameter for evaluation and measure this improvement through a follow-up process, rather than in-course segmentation. Recognizing the plurality of voices, based on respect for difference and, especially in the case of foreign students, through the exercise of listening to others, sharing personal experiences, validating the voices of the most timid, and linking each individual student to each individual activity. Yet, how can one create a pedagogical framework structured around such heterogeneity? As noted by Sáenz Obregón (2004, p.38), this challenge led John Dewey to propose “the formulation of a coherent theory of experience, since its absence does not allow us to develop a pedagogy that is practically operational”. What Dewey proposes:

“is a reflexive form of evaluation for these practices, not through tests and psychometric measurements - in the manner of the advocates of ‘efficiency’ - but through the teacher’s permanent observation and reflection, which allows them to modify the objective conditions of pedagogy for the production of educational experiences. There is not a pedagogy which is forever complete; it is the putting into play of a series of concepts to orient pedagogical practice and to assess its effects, so that it is reformulated and reconstructed permanently: pedagogy as a constant experimentation” (Ibid.).

Taking this into account, how can one introduce alternative historical opinions in order to encourage reflection in students? Specifically, how can one achieve this through the teaching and learning practices of the PCMAE, in the wider cultural context of military training for a culture of peace? In the first instance, we must acknowledge Adela Cortina’s statement from her book *Ética de la Razón Cordial*, that: “It is reasonable to work for peace, even if we are not sure that it will be established” (2007, p.180). This premise strengthens the pertinence of the culture of peace in the field of education in Colombia and can also be extended to the context of military training.

Although the ratification of the revised peace agreement by Congress occurred on 29–30 November 2016, academics had started to produce a range of initiatives years before the final agreement. These initiatives reflected upon the processes that would be necessary for structuring a culture of peace. This activity found its most notable examples in the aforementioned Law No. 1732, designed to formalize the establishment of a *cátedra de la paz* in all educational institutions in the country (LEY No.

1732, 2014), and Decree No. 1038 covering the regulation of the *cátedra de la paz* (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2015). Alongside the framework of the peace process initiated by the national government with the FARC guerrillas from 2012 onwards, these initiatives provided the first steps required to reconcile a country that has been suffering for more than fifty years from an internal, non-international armed conflict.

In order to comply with Law No. 1732 and Decree No. 1038, the Colombian Air Force and its training schools (including officers, NCOs and postgraduate schools) proposed a joint *cátedra de la paz* for all Colombian Air Force training institutions. From the headquarters of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the military forces, guidelines were created that formed the central axis of this unit of learning. The proposal from the PCMAE of the EMAVI involved the incorporation of the *cátedra de la paz* in a transverse way by which the contents of the *cátedra de la paz* were included in the subjects of human rights and international humanitarian rights, constitutional law and the history of Colombia. In addition, the EMAVI founded the Marco Fidel Suárez *cátedra*, run quarterly every year, which provided a means of discussing subjects of general interest to the academic community, and the opportunity of presenting lectures on topics related to the culture of peace and post-conflict.

In providing a structured space for reflection on peace, the Marco Fidel Suárez *cátedra* is committed to generating active participation from students, to initiate small-scale historical memory-building processes. This ensures that the dialogic relationship in the classroom is mediated by an understanding of the main events and circumstances in which the Colombian armed conflict developed. In addition, it creates a space for discussion and interaction between the academic community and society in general, to better understand the circumstances, events and phenomena that gave rise to the Colombian armed conflict, and the necessary political agreements and negotiations which led to an end to the armed confrontation and generated the possibility of a post-conflict scenario and a culture of peace.

One notable example of this exercise consisted of a working table with various institutions in the Valle del Cauca region, such as the Mayor of Cali, Universidad del Valle (University of Valle), Universidad Santiago de Cali (Santiago de Cali University), Escuela Superior de

Administración Pública (Superior School of Public Administration), Fundación Universitaria Católica Lumen Gentium (Catholic University Foundation Lumen Gentium), and the Corporación para la Defensa de lo Público (Corporation for Public Defence). This forum of the cátedra de la paz was conducted on 1 April 2016. As well as strengthening inter-institutional ties, the networks that were created from this forum resulted in new linkages between officials of the PCMAE and a number of other organizations. This included territorial entities, archdiocese, and other technical and higher education institutions. These connections helped fulfil the objectives of extension and projection proposed by the Ministry of National Education.

In line with its participation within these initiatives, it was proposed that the history module within the PCMAE feature a former member of the FARC, engaged in the social reintegration programme of the Agencia Colombiana para la Reincorporación y la Normalización (Colombian Agency of Reincorporation and Normalization – ARN). This demobilized person was able to elucidate their own experience in illegal activities, for the benefit of EMAVI students. In this way, the students (who will be future Colombian Air Force officers) were able to identify how, in some cases, one's admission into 'illegal' groups can be involuntary, due to various socio-economic and cultural factors, and forced recruitment.

Taking into account both the technological and cultural changes occurring in Colombian education and wider society, it is possible to reach two key conclusions on the future requirements for military education. Firstly, it is vital to provide alternative perspectives within the classroom, so that students can identify the importance of understanding the multiple perspectives surrounding Colombia's history as well as interrogating historical sources more broadly. It is critical both for a culture of peace and wider military thinking, for soldiers to know both the 'official' version of events, as well as alternative views and versions told by those who have been agents of such events. The current situation in Colombia provides an imperative to transfer the culture of peace into contemporary education, including the field of military training, with the aim that students should become more familiar with the contemporary contexts that inform the challenges they will face. Secondly, this process of education must occur through far more interactive pedagogies, designed to enable learning

across the multiple intelligences and complex socio-cultural contexts of each individual student, as well as the broader generational shift towards ‘digital natives’ with higher multitasking capabilities.

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