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# Pedagogical accompaniment as indicator of quality in education



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Acompañamiento pedagógico como indicador de la calidad educativo

## Abstract

Pedagogical support is a key element in improving the quality of education. This research describes the pedagogical accompaniment in the careers that are part of the piloting of the competency-based curriculum at UNAN-Managua. Regarding the methodological aspects, the research is qualitative, the sample is composed of the four careers of the Faculty of Education and Languages that started the piloting of the competency-based curriculum approach in 2020; the techniques to be applied are the survey, interview, focus group and classroom observation. As for the analysis of the results, content analysis, data cleaning and triangulation were carried out. The results of the research allowed us to know the development of the pedagogical accompaniment in the careers under study, the feelings of the teachers about it and the actions taken by the university to accompany the educational process. The results show that the pedagogical accompaniment is not very evident in the classroom and the feedback as part of it is not visualized in the careers. The accompaniment is centered on the fulfillment of the didactic planning.

**Keywords:** education, pedagogical innovation, pedagogical support, competency-based curriculum, didactic models.

## Resumen

*El acompañamiento pedagógico es un elemento clave para la mejora de la calidad educativa. En la presente investigación se describe el acompañamiento pedagógico en las carreras que forman parte del pilotaje del currículo por competencias de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua, Managua (UNAN-Managua). Con relación a los aspectos metodológicos la investigación es cualitativa, la muestra está compuesta por las cuatro carreras de la Facultad de Educación e Idiomas que iniciaron el pilotaje del enfoque curricular por competencias en el año 2020; las técnicas aplicadas fueron la encuesta, entrevista, grupo focal y observación a clases. Respecto al análisis de los resultados, se realizó análisis de contenido, limpieza y triangulación de datos. Los resultados de la investigación permitieron conocer el desarrollo del acompañamiento pedagógico en las carreras en estudio, los sentires de los docentes respecto a este y las acciones que realiza la universidad en función de acompañar el proceso educativo. De esta manera, se revela que el acompañamiento pedagógico en las aulas de clases es poco evidente y la realimentación, como parte de este, no se logra visualizar en las carreras. El acompañamiento está centrado en el cumplimiento de la planificación didáctica.*

**Palabras clave:** educación, innovación pedagógica, acompañamiento pedagógico, currículo por competencia, modelos didácticos.

## Introduction

Quality education is a wide concept referring to the educational system's proficiency, efficiency, and relevance in its ensemble. Equally, it entails results achieved by students in terms of learning, personal growth and life education, effective institutional administration and response society's demands regarding education of integral professionals.

This research was descriptive about the pedagogical accompaniment carried out at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua, Managua UNAN-Managua, on the degrees part of the competency-based curriculum's pilotage: Educational Informatics, Hispanic Language and Literature, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences. It aims for this analysis to be

an necessary element to improve the quality in education; once acknowledged the current phase of the degrees' accompaniment, it moves to the indicators of quality's analysis in the degrees' curriculum and reclaims the established on normative documents of Nicaraguan higher education where is denoted the connection of teaching, investigation, innovation, and extension, as well as internationalization, interculturality, and culture of peace, among others, are vital elements on the micro-planification to revitalize learning and guarantee quality education.

It allows us to answer the question of how does the pedagogical accompaniment adds to quality in education of the pilotage

competency-based curriculum's degrees of this study house? Thus, it is necessary to know the academic-administrative structure: how it is done, in which moment, and who carries out the pedagogical accompaniment.

## **Materials and methods**

The research applies a qualitative approach, centered on the insight and description of pedagogical accompaniment undertaken on the pilotage of the competency-based curriculum's degrees at UNAN-Managua. As an educational field research, and due to the depth of the study object, it is descriptive. It does not seek causal explanations or relation, but the grasp and documentation of variables and indicators.

The investigation is cross-section, conducted at a specific moment. Moreover, the instruments' application was done at a fixed moment.

### **Data collection techniques**

The applied instruments were: interview to the coordinators of four degrees and grade director, surveys to students and focus groups with teachers responsible of the Integrator Componentes of each class of the four degrees of pilotage, class observation and literary review. The last ones granted in-situ verification and view the systematic method in which specific items of investigation, innovation, extension, internationalization, interculturality, peace culture and others enhance an integral education are developed.

### **Information search**

Data collection was done through academic search engines, academic

databases, digital libraries, official websites, among others. Boolean operators were applied to filter searches and application of APA regulations.

### **Data collection**

Instruments for data collection were designed, such as interviews' surveys, survey questionnaire, observation guide, focus group guides, and literary review.

### **Data processing and analysis**

Analytical tests corresponding with data were applied to give strength to their analysis. Content analysis, data cleansing, and triangulation data.

Analysis of quantitative data was done using statistical software SPSS. Specifically for the survey.

With the obtained results, it was proceeded with the discussion of results.

## **Results and discussion**

Pedagogical accompaniment is an academic action to strengthen the educational program. It is designed considering the academic and administrative aspects with educational act's implications. It describes the applied interviews' product to the director of Undergraduate Teaching, teachers career coordinators, responsible of integrators, surveys to students with foundations on pedagogical literature.

Pedagogical successes are not supervising or ensuring teachers and students are in the classrooms or spaces where it corresponds, according to the field or area of knowledge of subjects.

The objectives, instruments, participants, how, and at which moment it will take place must be clear.

The UNAN-Managua, as one of the largest universities nationwide, strives to secure quality in education. Thus, pedagogical accompaniment is raised as a strategy to be permanently developed due to the logic of competency-based curriculum approach. Thereafter, the current state of the pedagogical accompaniment on the pilotage degrees of the competency-based approach on this Higher Education Institution is described.

From the Undergraduate Teaching Department at UNAN-Managua, it is noted pedagogical accompaniment has an internal model, not individualized on the degrees part of the pilotage but carried out with all the ones requesting it. This is a constant companion and boosts working together with the faculties' authorities and degrees, given the accompaniment can be done yearly or semi-annual on different degrees.

The purpose of the accompaniment at university is attend, observe the educational process and contribute elements for the continuous improvement of educational practice. The teaching department works with deans and department directors to guide the pedagogical accompaniment. Therefore, once recognized the successes and failures during the educational process, the actions for improvement are established.

As a product of the previous work dynamic, it is stated guarantors of the accompaniment are departments' directors and degrees' coordinators,

together with the teaching community and, mainly, teachers responsible for the integrating components must plan this process. Execute and follow up the integrating action to allow the development of competencies stated by year in each degree.

The presence of academic authorities in reflexion spaces about pedagogical accompaniment unveils the interest for continuous search of quality education, an important finding on the study and evidenced an accompaniment starting from an institutional structure lead by academic authorities and dynamized by degrees' collectives. This coincides García (2012) as "an operation in compliance with the principles, rather than limiting, ensures clear directionality, consensual ethical horizon and institutionalization of the spaces, programs, and projects linked to accompaniment" (p. 17).

It is important to recall the four degrees from the pilotage of the competency-based curriculum approach obtains the same treatment as other degrees in terms of pedagogical accompaniment. Truth is, from Undergrad Teaching, more attentive of these to align and analyse the success and failures shared with other degrees for improvement purposes. This is punctually related to how practices and graduation modality in 2023 will be carried out.

Degrees' coordinators refer they obtained continuous pedagogical accompaniment on behalf of the Direction of Undergraduate Teaching on the creation of curricular designs for the competency-based approach and guided them on how to carry out the accompaniment on academic unities. However, during the development

of educational process is not performed from the direction, since each degree implements the accompaniment while trying to comply with the established on the competency-based curricular approach. Equally, degrees' coordinators mentioned this accompaniment is applied as follows:

In Hispanic Language and Literature, the coordination explains accompaniment is done by the teacher in charge of the level, the same of the semester's integrator component. They accompany teachers in charge of other components, aiming to ensure the integrator strategy. The coordination, for its part, guarantees the accompaniment is carried out; if any difficulty with students or teachers exists, it is sought to be solved together. Also, if necessary, changes on the components (objectives, didactic strategies or topics) are analysed and recorded.

In Educational Informatics, coordination refers at the start of the semester is scheduled with each year's responsible for the integrated didactical planning, and assistance is pursued by all teachers on meetings. This is aiming to guaranteeing the competencies defined by level's fulfilment, development of integrator strategy by semester, planification of the assessment period and elaboration of a Basis for Guiding Action (Base Orientadora de la Acción, BOA); this last if necessary.

Once the semester begins; periodic checks are done to ensure compliance with teacher's plans. This through the virtual platform of Moodle, where a follow-up is made to the development of planned contents, creation of necessary didactical resources, evaluation, and assignment

of grades on time. Upon the semester's completion, compliance with the didactical planification and integrator products elaborated by students is evaluated.

The coordination of Natural Sciences states accompaniment is performed when the integrator teacher requests it, or students expose a difficulty with a teacher. In the degree, regular accompaniment is not done as the teacher coordinator has classes when the meeting is developed. Yet, on the week, ensures meetings with teachers in charge of levels; also, didactical planning, development of the integrator strategy and solve the difficulties which may arise during the educational process.

Social Sciences' coordination adduces the accompaniment is firstly done with teachers responsible for integrator components. Generally, it is worked in function of the integrator strategy, the six-month planning is oriented. Thus, the same teachers operationalize and guide the didactic planification with teachers of other components. They oversee the semester's evolution, keeping a steady communication with the degree's coordinator.

Generally, communication between the degree's coordinator and level teachers, regarding the semi-annual planning, display the existence of coordinated work. This has harmony with Martínez y González (2010) referring pedagogical accompaniment is conceived as a non-linear process, rather than holistic, integral, and interdisciplinary. Moreover, emphasize it comes from constructivist conjectures and socio-critical theory of knowledge building; in which reality is the starting point, and the agreement

of political-pedagogical actions. This is because the human being creates its own reality through their experience, intuition, thought, and performance, comprising the result of individual and collective meaning.

By consulting teachers responsible of the four degrees' integrators, they manifest they do not receive pedagogical accompaniment in classrooms, but follow-up by the coordination about the didactic planification for each level does exist. Also, reiterates the expressed by the degrees' coordinators according to the work done as integrators responsible; they guide and ensure each component's didactical planification for the fulfilment of the integrator strategy.

Teachers responsible of the components of Integration Practices mention the creation of conducting pedagogical accompaniment to others. In the following figure the form

in which is performed in each degree is described. See figure 1.

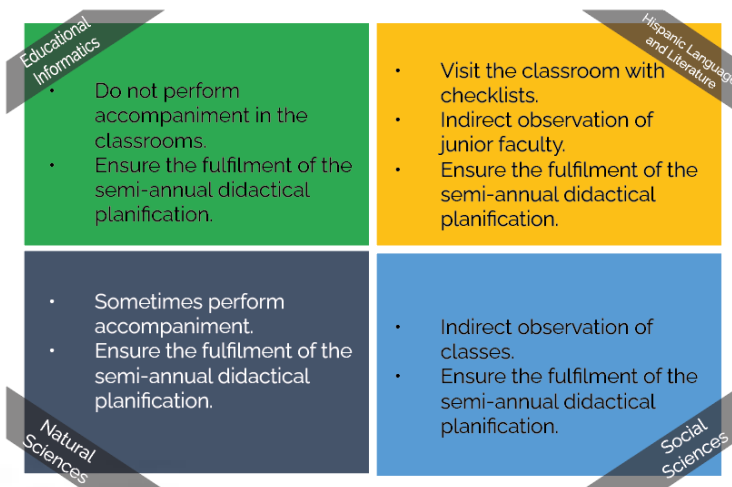
The teachers responsible of the integrator components and coordinators of degrees, carried out in the encounter modality (Natural Sciences and Social Sciences), convey struggles to perform the pedagogical accompaniment. Owing it to teaching loads on the day they perform the encounter (Saturday). The four degrees' coordinators coincide in the insurance of didactical planification and constant communication with level responsible to secure adequate development of the educational process.

Cardemil, Maureira & Zuleta (2010) propose five modalities or accompaniment forms, finding coincidences with three of the five suggested:

*Class preparation*, referring to didactical planification.

**Figure 1**

*Accompaniment realized by the responsible of Integrator Practices*



Own Work

*Workshop for the review of knowledge and didactical strategies of teaching*, contextualizing, it is performed on the meeting with the degrees' coordinators, responsible of integrator components and level who decide how the semester will go.

*Non-participant observation*, done, at times, by teachers' coordinators of degree of Natural Sciences and Social Sciences.

Conversely, when consulting students of the four degrees, if during class teachers are accompanied by someone else, most in the degrees of Hispanic Language and Literature and Educational Informatics indicated not noticing someone external on classes. Students of Social Sciences and Natural Sciences pointed out sometimes the teacher is accompanied by someone else. However, during the class observation, no companion was seen in any of the four degrees; but it does exist coincidence between the affirmation of teachers and students.

To summarize, pedagogical accompaniment developed in the degrees part of the pilotage is the same for all degrees on the Faculty of Education and Languages and others from the University. The Direction of Undergraduate Teaching oversees guiding and evaluating the accompaniment done in the degrees, also accompanying when requested directly. This establishes mechanisms and strategies of improvement for the educational process, together with faculties' authorities.

The competency-based curricular approach has integrated its own system of pedagogical accompaniment. This is directly implemented by academic unities

with directors of department, degrees' coordinators and responsible of levels as responsible who, simultaneously, oversee integrators by semester. Teachers responsible of integrators ensure the semi-annual didactical planification for the fulfilment of the assessment period and integrator strategies. Moreover, follow situations presented during the semester that could affect students or teachers.

So far, the pedagogical accompaniment in the degrees is deemed to be done impartially. Per the established on the Accompanying Strategy at UNAN-Managua and the findings of this study, it is determined this ensures the didactical planification. Also, the difficulties presented during the semester are solved. Yet it is vital to establish actions to integrally secure it.

Consequently, the role of a pedagogical companion in the degrees, completely, cannot be identified as is still necessary to dynamize the accompaniment in a classroom setting. This with the aim of giving feedback and watch over the application of the semi-annual didactical planification, is performed by teachers.

Four years have transpired since the competency-based curricular approach has been implemented, evidencing a significant work on the potentization of educational process. Yet, the need of enhancing the pedagogical accompaniment as key element to dynamize and improve pedagogical innovation from the didactic micro-planification is identified. The accompaniment could have a meaningful improvement if developed to detail the established strategy at UNAN-Managua for this purpose. Additionally, to implementing

approaches of Acuña, Bejerano, et al. (2017), Martínez & Gonzáles (2010), Cardemil, Maureira, et al. (2010), See figure 2.

The degrees' coordinators mention the need of reinforcing the pedagogical accompaniment in their degrees, specifically in classrooms; initiating with raising awareness about the importance of the accompaniment and organize by degrees multidisciplinary groups of companions who collaborate in this process. Also, express the need to take ownership of the already existent strategy for this purpose in university.

Teachers also agree accompaniment is key for the development of pedagogical innovation. Outcomes of good practices could reinforce strategies which allowed getting pleasant results in the educational process and access a validation process with other groups, aiming to search for continuous improvement, getting high levels of educational innovation. It is valid to remember educational innovation is a set of ideas, processes and strategies, systematized, seeking to introduce and trigger changes in the educational act (Cañal de León, 2005).

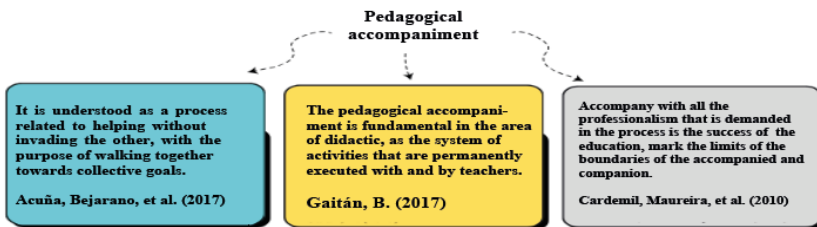
It becomes essential to cultivate our pedagogical practice with the goal of addressing the demands of professionals with high competencies focused on knowing, knowing how to be, knowing how to do, and knowing how to coexist. Thus, self-evaluation of the educational processes is key; it enables to establish actions of improvement to implement at university; on a short, medium, and long term in community, with sense of longing, harmony, and love for a quality education.

Finally, considering pedagogical accompaniment is an indicator for the progress of quality in education, it becomes essential to work based on it, as it is not enough to only secure the didactical planification. Accompaniment has other implication such as feedback, instruments preparation, workshops or other training mechanisms for the faculty education, establishment of actions to fulfil the one who accompanies and the accompanied, always keeping an active and effective communication between them.

### Conclusions

Analysing the results in the pedagogical accompaniment as a quality element in

**Figure 2**  
*Pedagogical accompaniment definition*



Own Work



education in degrees of the competency-based curriculum pilotage at UNAN-Managua, are as follows:

UNAN-Managua has defined as strategy of permanent pedagogical accompaniment requiring to be enhanced, specifically corresponding to classroom accompaniment.

Pedagogical accompaniment in the pilotage degrees at UNAN-Managua have the same management as other university degrees. The one variation is since they are leading degrees, it is pending to guide the new moments requiring them, such as practices or graduation modality.

Teachers have definite knowledge of a pedagogical accompaniment's implication and refer the need as a fundamental element for the improvement of quality in education.

Guarantors of the pedagogical accompaniment in degrees of study are directors of departments and degrees' coordinators to dynamize with teachers of level in the educational act.

In the four degrees of the pilotage, pedagogical accompaniment is similarly done, all coinciding on the assurance of didactical planification.

The pedagogical accompaniment in the UNAN-Managua from the micro planification is a fundamental element ensuring quality in education at this study house. Being aware the search of it is indelible, filled with love, enthusiasm, and compromise with the education of integral professionals for our country.

Results of this investigation will allow decision-makers at UNAN-Managua to analyse strategies the university could apply for the continuous improvement of accompaniment, already done and has had good results, but could be better in light of the authors' considerations and own strategy defined by the university.

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