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DEBATE AS A METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF GENERIC COMPETENCES OF THE TUNING PROJECT FOR LATIN AMERICA

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Abstract. This work focuses on the analysis of three competences of the Tuning Project for Latin America. Its purpose is to determine to what extent does debate, used as a methodological strategy, enable the development of three generic competences of the Tuning Project for Latin America in students in the curriculum of Philosophy at the Pontifical Catholic University in Ecuador (*Spanish acronym* PUCE): the ability to communicate orally and in writing; the skills to search, process and analyze information from various sources; and, the ability to apply knowledge in practice. The research uses a quantitative approach, with a quasi-experimental design, based on groups of students in two courses, albeit with subgroups constituted through pairing, with a single post-test and with the assumption of a causal relationship between variables. The instrument used in the analysis and developed by the research team, is the basic questionnaire for establishing the contribution of the debate for the development of generic competences. The provisional results of the study indicate that the debate could favor the development of those analyzed competences. However, due to the size of the sample and the current state of the research, its results cannot be extrapolated to other groups and contexts, which requires further study applications.

Keywords: Education and Philosophy, Dialectics, didactic strategy, generic competences, competence development.

EL DEBATE COMO ESTRATEGIA METODOLÓGICA PARA EL DESARROLLO DE LAS COMPETENCIAS GENÉRICAS DEL PROYECTO TUNING PARA AMÉRICA LATINA

Resumen. Este trabajo se centra en el análisis de tres competencias del Proyecto Tuning para América Latina. Su propósito consiste en determinar en qué medida el debate, utilizado como estrategia metodológica, permite el desarrollo de tres competencias genéricas del Proyecto Tuning para América Latina, en los estudiantes de la carrera de Filosofía de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador: la capacidad de comunicación oral y escrita; las habilidades para buscar, procesar y analizar información procedente de diversas fuentes; y, la capacidad de aplicar los conocimientos en la práctica. La investigación aplica un enfoque cuantitativo, con un diseño cuasiexperimental, basado en grupos preexistentes de estudiantes de dos asignaturas, con subgrupos constituidos por emparejamiento, con una sola posprueba y con la presunción de una relación causal entre variables. El instrumento de análisis, elaborado por el equipo de investigación, es el "Cuestionario básico para establecer el aporte del debate para el desarrollo de competencias genéricas". Los resultados provisionales del estudio señalan que el debate podría favorecer el desarrollo de aquellas competencias analizadas. Sin embargo, debido al tamaño de la muestra y al estado actual de la investigación, sus resultados no son extrapolables a otros grupos y contextos, por lo que se requiere ulteriores aplicaciones del estudio.

Palabras claves: Educación y Filosofía, Dialéctica, estrategia didáctica, competencias genéricas, desarrollo de competencias.

Introduction

The Tuning Project has highlighted the importance for university students to develop a set of generic competences (González and Wagenaar, 2005: 12). The 17 generic competences mentioned by Tuning are as follows: 1) Basic knowledge of the field; 2) Capacity for analysis and synthesis; 3) Capacity for learning; 4) Creativity, 5) Applying knowledge in practice; 6) Adaptability; 7) Capacity for criticism and self-criticism; 8) Basic knowledge of the profession; 9) Research skills; 10) Interdisciplinarity; 11) Oral and written communication; 12) Ethical commitment; 13) Interpersonal skills; 14) Knowledge of a second language; 15) Elementary computing; 16) Decision making; y 17) Diversity and multiculturism (González and Wagenaar, 2005: 141-142).

In this same way, the Tuning Project for Latin America has defined its list of generic competences: 1) Capacity for abstraction, analysis and synthesis; 2) Capacity for implementing knowledge in practice; 3) Time organization and planning capacity; 4) Knowledge on the field of study and the job; 5) Social responsibility and civic commitment; 6) Capacity for communicating written and orally; 7) Capacity for communicating in a second language; 8) Capacity for using information and communications technology; 9) Research capacity; 10) Capacity for learning and updating constantly; 11) Capacity for searching, processing and analyzing information from diverse sources; 12) Capacity for criticism and self-criticism; 13) Capacity for taking action in new situations; 14) Creative capacity; 15) Capacity for identifying, posing and solving problems; 16) Capacity for decision making; 17) Capacity for teamwork; 18) Interpersonal abilities; 19) Capacity for motivating and leading toward common goals; 20) Commitment with environmental preservation; 21) Commitment with the socio-cultural environment; 22) Valuing and respecting diversity and multiculturalism; 23) Capacity for working in international contexts; 24) Capacity for

working autonomously; 25) Capacity for formulating and managing projects; 26) Ethical commitment; 27) Commitment to quality. (http://www.tuningal.org/es/competencias/geologia)

The review of specialized literature in Spanish language evidences the growing importance of the subject in the last years (Bujan, et al., 2011; Climént, 2011; Espíndola, 2011; Pimienta and García, 2012; Ruiz, 2010; Tobón, 2013). However, no systemic studies have been found which indicate the way students should develop each one of those generic competences. On the contrary, there are isolated studies on the development of some generic competences. For instance, on the development of communicative competences (Sánchez and Brito, 2015), on argumentative competences (Sabaté de Sirgo and López, 2010), on the development of critical thinking in university students through problem-based learning (Núñez-López et al., 2017), etc.

Theoretically, many educators both in Europe and in Latin America acknowledge the importance of competences in higher education. According to them, it is essential that students' graduation brings to light the development of those generic competences discussed above. However, the way of achieving this goal is yet to be detailed. In other words, 'how do we proceed in order to get our students to learn and develop said competences?' (Montenegro, 2005: 57).

We do not try and deny that there are differing voices concerning the actual purpose of competences. In that sense, some question their possible motivations associated to the so-called 'age of quality', where 'tangible results' are required ((Díaz-Barriga, 2011: 5), wishing to highlight its 'inconsistence' (Planas-Coll, 2013).

Beyond the debates about the importance and motivations of the incorporation of competences in professional training, this article analyzes the way they are develop. It reviews the way in which debate enables the development of the three generic competences mentioned in the Tuning Project for Latin America: 1) Capacity for written and oral communication; 2) capacity for searching, processing and analyzing information from diverse sources, and 3) capacity for implementing knowledge in practice. The research on the field is carried out by students from the Degree in Philosophy in the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador (*Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador*) during the first and second semester of the academic year 2016-2017 (September 2016 - February 2017; April - August 2017, respectively).

The following is the question that led the way in the research: To which extent does the debate, used as a methodological strategy, enable the development of those three generic competencies of the Tuning Project for Latin America, as mentioned above, in students studying Philosophy at the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador? The hypothesis of the present research work states that the frequent use of debates promotes the development of the three aforementioned generic competences: oral and written communication; capacity for searching, processing and analyzing information; and the capacity for implementing knowledge in practice.

According to Vila, Dávila & Mora: "The acquisition of the necessary competencies for innovation by graduates depends (...) on which learning methods they were most exposed to during their lives as university students." (2010: 8). This study aims to establish the extent to which the debate contributes to the development of the three chosen generic competences. So, if the results support the research hypothesis, the degree's professor should use debates as a teaching, learning and assessment strategy more often.

According to the Royal Spanish Academy, "debate" (*debate*) comes from the verb "debatir" (to debate) and has two meanings: 1) controversy and 2) strife, fight (http://dle.rae.es). For the purposes of this research, the term debate is used to refer to an organized academic discussion, between two groups of students within the same university subject, with a theme, times and places determined by the teacher; and with the participation of a student as moderator.

On the other hand, competences can be defined as a "a set of knowledge, attitudes, dispositions and skills (cognitive, social-affective and communicative), all interrelated to help students during the learning process, including the development of a new sense of activity in new and challenging contexts. Therefore, competence implies knowing, being, and knowing how to do" (http://www.mineducacion.gov.co). This research uses the term competence according to the spirit of the Tuning Project: "Competences represent a dynamic combination of knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities" (González & Wagenaar, 2005: 32).

Method

Design

The research was developed by means of a quantitative approach, with a quasi-experimental design, because the study is carried out with groups of students from two subjects of the Philosophy degree, with subgroups established by pairing without the existence of a control group: The groups were integrated by pairing, taking into account their academic performance history. The design foresees a post-test and presumes the existence of a causal relationship between the independent variable that is the debate, and the dependent variable that are the generic competences (competences 6, 11 and 2 of the Tuning Project for Latin America).

Participants

The study has been carried out with two groups of students from two parallel semesters of the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador. The first group consisted of 18 students from the third semester of Philosophy within the Ontology subject. The second was made up of 11 students from the sixth semester of the Political Philosophy subject. For the sample's estimation, it should be noted that there are 60 students on average in the degree.

The distribution of activities for the Ontology students in the third semester is detailed below. Two 96-minute debate days were planned with the 18 students. The following responsibilities were assigned with one month in advance: a student-moderator for each day was appointed, along with a group coordinator and their respective members. In addition, the general conditions of participation were established, such as the timetable for the debates, the groups that would assume the role of defense of classical metaphysics and those who would oppose it, and the evaluation rubric for the debaters and moderators. Lastly, two teachers were invited as observers and evaluators of the debate. The first debate included a moderator, 5 students from group 1 and 4 students from group 2. The second debate included a moderator, 3 students from group 1 and 4 students from group 2. At first, both groups from the second debate were made up of 4 students, but one of them withdrew from the university before the end of the semester. At the end of each debate, participants were asked to answer the questionnaire.

With the 11 students from Political Philosophy in their sixth semester, three debate sessions were planned, each lasting 38 minutes. Approximately two weeks before the first debate, an informative document that included a description, the roles, and a summary of the procedure of the directed debate was distributed (ANNEX). A relevant course topic was identified one week in advance for each session, and a moderator and a secretary were appointed, as well as members for the defense (group 1) and the opposition (group 2). Students who were not assigned a role within the debate were allocated jury responsibility. The following were the topics discussed: "Socrates must accept the capital punishment pronounced against his person"; "The use of the atomic bomb was permitted to put an end to the Second World War"; "The government must guarantee total freedom of expression." The first debate included a moderator, 3 students from group 1 and 2 students from group 2. The second debate included a moderator, a secretary, 2 students from group 1 and 3 students from group 2. The third debate included a moderator, a secretary, 3 students from group 1 and 3 students from group 2. Both debates planned to include 3 students per group, the lower figures are due to the unjustified absences of students. At the end of the three debates, participants were asked to answer the questionnaire.

Measuring instrument

The instrument, designed by the team is called the "Basic questionnaire for establishing the debate's contribution to the development of the generic competences." This questionnaire is divided into 5 parts: In the first one, 13 generic competences of the Tuning Project for Latin America are listed; and students are asked to select the 3 that they consider they have developed by working in the debate. In the second part, the skills developed in the field of oral and written communication are investigated. In the third part, questions are asked about the skills related to the search, processing and analysis of information from several sources. In the fourth one, the application of previous knowledge during the debate is considered. Lastly, the fifth is about the possibility of using the three analyzed competences. The questionnaire is present in the appendix section.

Procedure

The two debates of the Ontology subject were held during the week of the final exams of the first semester 2016-2017. For this purpose, the classroom was adapted by assigning physical spaces for the groups, the moderator and the evaluating teachers.

The debate began with the greeting and the general indications of the moderator (4 minutes). Then each group made the first presentation on their position of the topic, 15 minutes each. The first part concluded with the summary of the two positions 3 minutes and time for both groups to exchange opinions for 5 minutes. The second part enables the reply for each group for 10 minutes and the moderator's summary for 3 minutes. The second part enables the rejoinder for each group for 5 minutes and the moderator's summary for 3 minutes. The debate ends with the moderator's conclusions for 5 minutes.

Finally, there is a space of 10 minutes for the students to answer the questionnaire and the checklist. The evaluators also rate the individual rubrics of the participants and the moderators.

The 3 debates of the Political Philosophy subject were held at three different times during the course of the second semester 2016-2017, in weeks 3, 8 and 14 respectively.

The debate began with the greeting and the general indications of the moderator (2 minutes). Then each group presented their position for the topic, 4 minutes each. The first part concluded with a summary of the two positions, and a 2-minute deliberation time for both groups. The second part enabled the reply for each group for 4 minutes and the moderator's summary for 2 minutes. Both groups then had the opportunity to exchange opinions for 5 minutes.

Results

The results of the "Basic questionnaire for establishing the debate's contribution for developing generic competencies" are presented. This questionnaire was filled out by 16 third-year students from the Philosophy degree and by 9 sixth-year students from the *Political Philosophy* subject after the debates. Students who were moderators in the debate were excluded.

Generic Competencies

As shown in Figure 1, the most important generic competency in both groups is the capacity to identify, pose and solve problems (9); while the capacity for teamwork, (10) and commitment to quality (13) were not addressed in the debate. For both groups, the capacity for abstraction, analysis and summary was involved in approximately 50%.

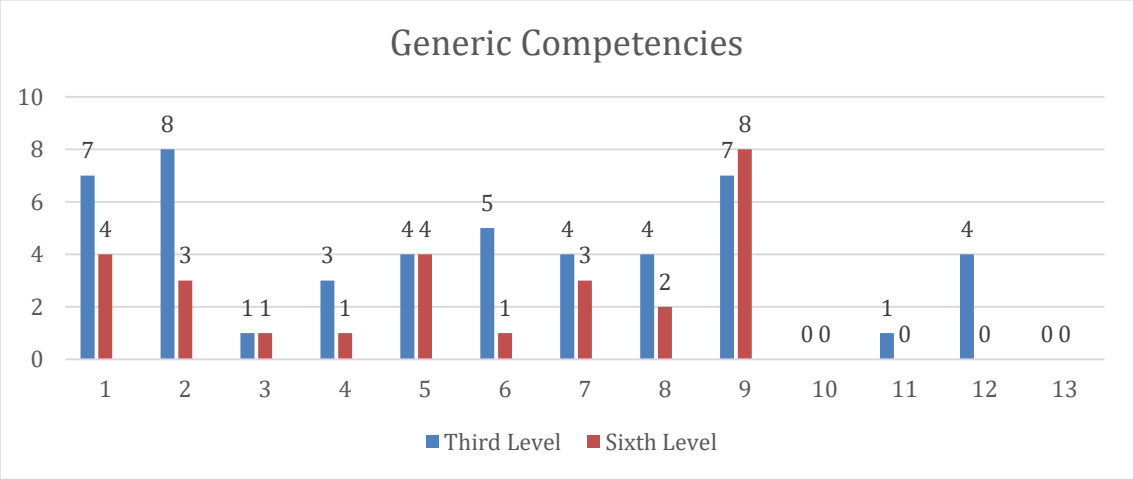

Figure 1. Generic competences from the third and sixth level

In the third level, the capacity for implementing knowledge in practice (2) has been selected by 50% of the participants. In the sixth level, the capacity for research (5) was considered as representative.

Oral and written communication

The personal difficulties that students experienced when verbally expressing their ideas during the debate were the following:

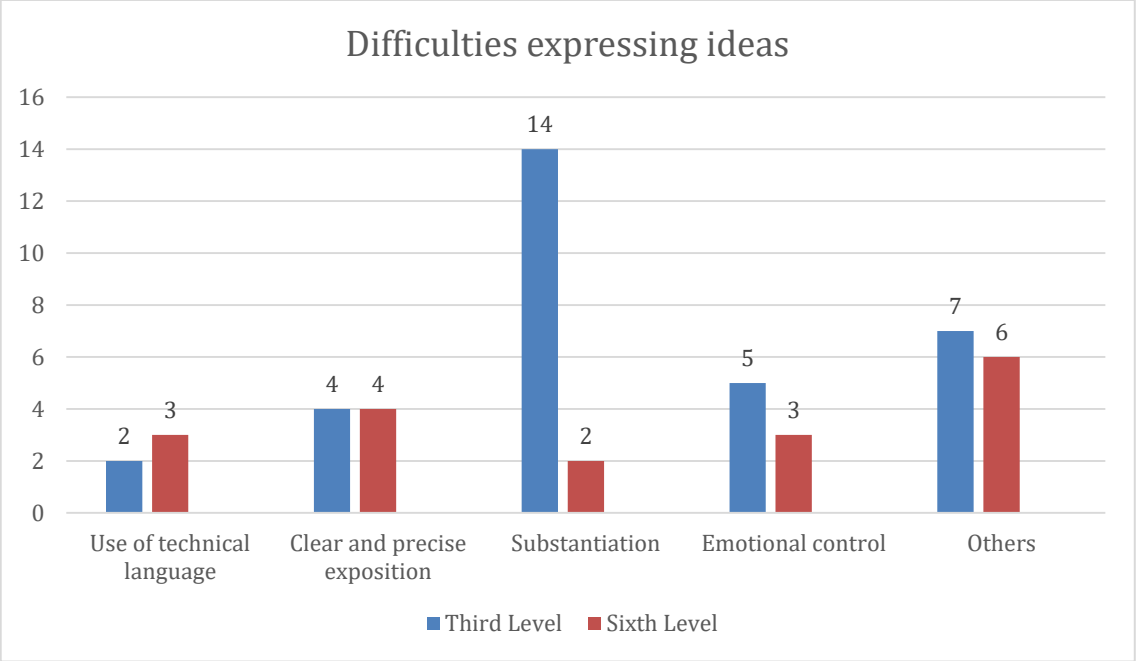

Figure 2. Personal difficulties expressing ideas

When processing information for such open-ended questions, the answers were classified into the five fields pointed out in Figure 2: Use of technical language, clarity and precision when explaining, substantiating, emotional control and others. The difficulty for substantiating can be seen to be significant in the third level, while the most representative difficulty in the sixth level is another one due to the variety of views expressed.

Regarding communicative skills developed during the debate, which can be useful in the future, five categories were established: clear and precise exposition, reasoning, analysis of points of view, information search and others. For both student groups, information search was the least developed communication capacity during debate, while reasoning was the most applied.

Skills for searching, processing and analyzing information

In the skills for searching, processing and analyzing information from diverse sources, different resources which students used for this purpose were set out.

Table 1
Resources for information search

List	Resources	Third Level	Sixth Level
1	Books	15	9
2	Recurrent publications: Journals, bulletins, series, annuals	5	3
3	Scientific reports	4	2
4	Technical reports	2	2
5	Research programs	1	1
6	Congressional Acts	0	0
7	Doctoral thesis	4	2
8	Library or periodic publication catalogs.	5	0
9	Patents	1	0
10	Bibliographies	8	3
11	Official publications or from public authorities.	1	1
12	Indexes and summaries	5	2
13	Reference works: dictionaries, encyclopedias, monographs, treatises	11	4
14	Search engines and Internet directories	6	4
15	Specialized Internet data bases	7	3
16	Others	2	0

In Table 2, we can see that Books (1) resource has been the most selected one by both groups, except for a single a third-level student. No one in both groups chose the Congressional Acts (6) resource.

In third level, there was a significant use of Reference works: dictionaries, encyclopedias, monographs, treatises (13). Approximately 50% of students considered that the following aspects (bibliographies (10), Search engines and Internet directories (14) and Specialized Internet data bases (15)) were important resources for searching information.

In the sixth level, the following resources were important: Reference works: dictionaries, encyclopedias, monographs, treatises (13) and Search engines and Internet directories (14), whereas the Library or periodic publication catalogs (8), Patents (9) and Others (16) resources were not significant either.

The following are the steps that students apply to processing information. For both groups, the review and organization of information is highly significant, with approximately 50% favoring data classification and compilation. In both cases, it was observed that the step of presentation by means of graphs and tables was almost not used.

The actions used by the students for the analysis of information are summarized in the following table and graph:

Table 2
Actions for information analysis

List	Actions	Third Level	Sixth Level
1	Identifying the question(s) you want to answer	12	7
2	Selecting the required information	10	3
3	Ensuring the quality of the available data	9	5
4	Establishing interrelationships between data: causal relationships or chains through which questions can be answered.	7	5
5	Interpreting the data: drawing generalizable conclusions from the analyzed data.	9	3
6	Making recommendations	4	1

Of the respondents in the two groups, they primarily applied the action 'Identify the question(s) to be answered (1)' All other actions are considered important, except the 'Making recommendations' (6), as this is the least recorded option.

The two difficulties experienced during the search, processing and individual analysis of the information are mentioned below. About half of the students in both groups have difficulty searching for information in the fields: Criteria for determining the importance of the material found. The students at the third level consider that their greatest difficulty consists of 'Access to quality printed materials'.

Difficulties encountered during information processing. We can conclude that approximately half of the students in both groups included among the difficulties during information processing the 'Lack or organization of the group for information review' and 'Lack of group organization for data classification'. Sixth-level students also considered that the 'Lack of group organization for the information' is important, with no significance for the 'Lack of group organization for data compilation'.

Concerning the difficulties for the analysis of information, the following was considered: the ability to identify questions, to select this information, to determine the quality of the data, to establish relationships and to interpret the data.

For third-level students, the difficulties related to 'Problems in identifying the question(s) to be answered and 'Problems for the quality of the available data' are more important. In the sixth level, it is considered that the most representative difficulty is related to 'Problems with interpreting the data'.

Application

It was then asked, at which of the three moments during the debate did the students consider it was required to apply the knowledge developed during the present course: during the exposition, during the reply or during the rejoinder. The third-level students consider that the knowledge developed in the course was useful during the reply; while the sixth-level students gave equal importance to the application during the three moments of the debate.

It was then consulted at what point in the debate did they need to apply the knowledge acquired during their research prior to the debate. In this case, there was no significant difference between the two groups with respect to the times when they needed to apply the knowledge acquired in the research prior to the debate. The third level students gave greater importance to the exposition and rejoinder, and the sixth

level students gave relatively greater importance to the moment of exposition, with less consideration to the rejoinder.

Prospective

Students were then asked to list the communication, research, and application skills developed during the debate that would serve them in the future. In this open-ended question, third-level students assigned almost as much importance to language development, argumentation, and others, while sixth level students considered language development to be more significant.

Regarding the research skills developed during the debate, the answers were classified into three categories: search and selection of sources, information analysis and others. Third level students give more importance to the search and selection of sources compared to information analysis, with little relevance in interest. The first two options were selected by 4 students in sixth level, while only one selected interest.

In the skills for implementing the knowledge developed in the debate, four options were identified. In the third level, the skills, presentation of ideas and debate gain more representation, whereas the "other" category (time, teamwork and nerves) was not very much represented. In the sixth level, they give greater importance to the skills, analysis and the synthesis of ideas or data and what they consider teamwork and stress.

Discussion and Conclusions

In the results analysis, some of the characteristics of research must be taken into account. The results are obtained from a sample of 29 students, except for four students who acted as moderators. While the use of a debate by its nature lends itself to small groups, the consequence is also that the results do not always have the same persuasive force. In addition, the composition of the two groups is different. The first group consisted of students from the first levels of Philosophy (third level), 17 of which would transfer to Theology after the fourth level. The second group is from an advanced level of Philosophy (sixth semester), which come from the degree of Philosophy and other degrees (Sociology, for example), and which study these subjects by choice. It turns out that the commitment to the subject, as well as to the methodology of the debate, could differ between the two groups, constituting a variable that has not been considered in the analysis of the results. There is no doubt that this difference in the composition of the groups may have had conclusive impact on the final results of the study.

It should also be mentioned that other variables that could be determinant in the analysis of the results, such as gender, age, nationality, social class of the participants, were not considered. Despite this concern, the following observations could be made.

General competence 1: capacity for oral and written communication

A notable result in both groups is the relatively low importance attached to learning collaborative skills. Thus, in terms of the competencies developed (question 1), both "teamwork competence" and "interpersonal skills" receive little or no mention, even though one might have expected to find some emphasis on these skills due to the nature of the degree.

The previous observation can be cross-checked with the answers to the question that focuses on the "exposition of ideas and debate", which is a knowledge application

skill developed during the debate of major importance to the students in the first group. This possible contradiction could be interpreted, precisely, by the consideration that such oral skills are commonly taken as secondary skills in Philosophy. When identifying generic competencies relevant to the degree, expressive skills are not mentioned. However, when it comes to application skills, in other words, the most recurrent topic is that they are understood as skills that are not necessarily used in the studies themselves but may serve outside the academic context in everyday life or in a future professional environment.

General competence 2: the skills for searching, processing and analyzing information from diverse sources

The great importance recognized by both groups in the capacity for identifying, posing and solving problems, together with the notable mention in the first group of the ability to abstract, analyze and synthesize, enables us to assume that the second general competence mentioned in the Tuning Project for Latin America ("the capacity for searching, processing and analyzing information from diverse sources") must be achieved by both groups.

This observation is first and foremost confirmed in the first group, expressly in the answer to the question “personal difficulties in verbally expressing their ideas during the debate”. The high presence of problems of theoretical basis illustrates a difficulty encountered by students in conducting the debate. And considering that one learns precisely through encounters with difficulties and challenges, one can consider that such difficulties have provided a significant moment of learning for the students.

The slightly lower confirmation in the second group in relation to this point could be explained by the fact that the students in the second group are at a more advanced level in their studies. Therefore, the strategies of searching, processing and analyzing information are already known to them, by which the debate does not seem to add a real new contribution to the appropriate knowledge and strategies.

Regarding the use of different sources to find the information required for discussions, it is evident that the use of books is the first source of information for both groups. Considering the general framework of the Philosophy degree, the result confirms a common presumption. The relative low use of search engines and Internet directories could be considered somewhat surprising, as well as periodicals such as magazines, newsletters, series and yearbooks. As for Internet use, as is seen in this indicator, the use of *Google* and *Wikipedia* may be less common than is often suspected. The low use of magazines and other periodicals is particularly surprising in the second group, where the content invites the use of the daily press and current examples. This observation confirms the results obtained in view of generic competence 3, which considers the ability to apply knowledge into practice.

Generic competence 3: capacity for applying knowledge into practice

The third generic competence identified in the Tuning Project, that of applying knowledge into practice, seems to be confirmed more in the first group than in the second, if only the answers to the first question from the basic questionnaire are considered. This difference between the two groups is, at first sight, even more

surprising when one considers that the debates of the first group dealt with an excessively theoretical subject *(Ontology)*; while the second group discussed the contents of a practical subject *(Political Philosophy)*. The researcher could easily assume that due to the practical nature of political philosophy, the students recognized its applicability.

A possible explanation for this apparent discrepancy arises precisely from the subjects covered. If we consider that students who enroll in the *Ontology* course can do so with the prejudice that it is a subject detached from daily reality, the application of the debate is a tool that enables them a remarkable practical approach. Expectations in the *Political Philosophy* subject were already more directed towards a subject closer to reality and more specifically, to the nature of debate, that the possible application of knowledge into practice remained less flagrant. It should be stressed that this is a presumption of the researchers, which requires further confirmation by means of field research.

This is based on the observation that the second group, due to their trajectory, has greater previous experience in debates. The contribution of that experience could have influenced other results. In general, the debate could be considered as a more appropriate strategy for the initial levels, since a more significant contribution was observed in those students in relation to the three generic competences studied.

Conclusions

With the intention of establishing the contributions of the debate for the development of the 3 generic competences of the Tuning Project for Latin America (C6: Capacity for written and oral communication; C11: Capacity for searching, processing and analyzing information from diverse sources; C2: Capacity for applying knowledge into practice) a single study was carried out with two groups of students from the Philosophy degree, during the two semesters of the academic year 2016-2017.

Before pointing out the conclusion, we should remember the research's initial question: to what extent does debate, used as a methodological strategy, enable the development of three generic competences of the Tuning Project for Latin America in students in the curriculum of Philosophy at the Pontifical Catholic University in Ecuador? From the students' point of view, it would not contribute anything to the capacity for teamwork and commitment to quality. The results of the study support the hypothesis that concedes importance to the debate for the development of the selected generic competencies. Above all, the capacity for oral and written communication and the capacity for applying knowledge into practice have resulted as being favored. On the contrary, both groups did consider that the debate contributed to the developing the capacity for teamwork. However, these results cannot be considered definitive, due to the sample size and the need to fine tune the measuring instruments so as to achieve a greater level of internal validation. An experimental or quasi-experimental chronological series of studies is also recommended that analyzes the experimental group throughout their career, and which includes the control group as well.

As has been noted, the constitution of the analysis groups is marked by some peculiarities and differences. Because of the preliminary results obtained during this research, it is suggested to conduct longitudinal studies with other types of student groups, both from the basic levels as well as the more advanced levels; enrolled in similar subjects in terms of their content, as well as those with different content.

One of the most obvious objectives in the use of the debate as a teaching method consists in its contribution to the development of social skills: teamwork, interpersonal skills, or even oral expression. Therefore, it is surprising that this element has not stood out from the results obtained. In order to achieve better results during the implementation of the classroom debate, greater support should be provided to the social dimension of the didactic strategy in the classroom.

This study constitutes a first approach to the analysis for the use of a debate as a didactic strategy in the career of Philosophy. It must therefore recognize the need to fine-tune the measuring instruments according to the obtained and non-obtained results. For example, the incorporation of open-ended questions (2.3 and 5) in the "Basic Questionnaire for establishing the debate's contribution for the development of generic competencies", has led to a range of answers that are hard to classify. In addition, some questions may have led to ambiguous results due to errors of interpretation. For example, the request for the "skills in applying knowledge, developed during the debate, which will serve for the future," could be interpreted in different ways.

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Appendix

Appendix 1. Basic questionnaire for establishing the contribution of the debate for the development of generic competencies

PONTIFICAL CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF ECUADOR
ECCLESIASTICAL FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHICAL-TECHNOLOGICAL SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY

STUDENT:…….

1. Generic competencies: From the following list of generic competencies, select 3 of the most important that you have developed while working on the debate (mark with an (mark with an "X")

List	Competencies	Option
1	Capacity for abstraction, analysis and synthesis	
2	Capacity for applying knowledge into practice	
3	Knowledge of the study area and the profession	
4	Capacity for oral and written communication	
5	Capacity for research	
6	Skills to search, process and analyze information from diverse sources	
7	Capacity for criticism and self-criticism	
8	Capacity for acting in new situations	
9	Capacity for identifying, posing and solving problems	
10	Capacity for teamwork	
11	Interpersonal skills	
12	Appreciation and respect for diversity and multiculturalism	
13	Commitment to quality	

2. Capacity for oral and written communication

2.1. Mention two personal difficulties that you experienced in verbally expressing your ideas during the debate

a) _____

b) _____

2.2. Mention two communication skills developed during the debate that may be of use in the future

a) _____

b) _____

3. Skills for searching, processing and analyzing information from diverse sources

3.1. The following resources were useful during the search for information (mark with an "X"):

List	Resources	Option
1	Books	
2	Recurrent publications: Journals, bulletins, series, annuals	

3	Scientific reports
4	Technical reports
5	Research programs
6	Congressional Acts
7	Doctoral thesis
8	Library or periodic publication catalogs.
9	Patents
10	Bibliographies
11	Official publications or from public authorities.
12	Indexes and summaries
13	Reference works: dictionaries, encyclopedias, monographs, treatises
14	Search engines and Internet directories
15	Specialized Internet data bases
16	Others

3.2. The following steps have been useful for information processing (mark with an "X"):

List	Steps	Option
1	Information review and organization	
2	Data classification and compiling	
3	Presentation through graphs and tables	

3.3. The following actions have helped for information analysis (mark with an "X"):

List	Actions	Option
1	Identifying the question(s) you want to answer	
2	Selecting the required information	
3	Ensuring the quality of the available data	
4	Establishing interrelationships between data: causal relationships or chains through which questions can be answered.	
5	Interpreting the data: drawing generalizable conclusions from the analyzed data.	
6	Making recommendations	

3.4. Select 2 difficulties that you experienced during your individual search, processing and analysis of information. (mark with an "X")

List	Difficulty	Option
1	Criteria for determining the importance of the material found	
2	Access to quality print material	
3	Access to quality virtual material	
4	Access to Spanish language material	

Difficulties during the information processing (mark with an "X")

List	Difficulty	Option
1	Lack of group organization for reviewing information	
2	Lack of group organization for organizing information	
3	Lack of group organization for classifying data	

4	Lack of group organization for data compilation	

Difficulties during information analysis (mark with an "X")

List	Difficulty	Option
1	Problems in identifying the question(s) to be answered	
2	Problems for selecting the required information	
3	Problems for assuring the quality of the available data	
4	Problems for establishing interrelationship between data	
5	Problems for interpreting the data	

4. Application

4.1. Identify 1 moment during the debate when you considered it was required to apply the knowledge developed during the present course (mark with an "X")

List	Moment	Option
1	Exposition 1	
2	Reply 1	
3	Rejoinder	

4.2. Identify 1 moment during the debate when you considered it was required to apply the knowledge acquired during your research before the debate (mark with an "X")

List	Moment	Option
1	Exposition 1	
2	Reply 1	
3	Rejoinder	

5. Prospective

Point out 1 communication skill, 1 research skill (related to the search, analysis processing of information) and 1 knowledge application skill, developed during the debate that may be of use in the future.

a) Communication skill: _____

b) Research skill: _____

c) Application skill: _____

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