

# Transformative pedagogy and learning



One of the most exciting changes that have occurred in education during the past decade has been the increase in knowledge in the areas of brain research and cognitive science. This research has produced a wealth of knowledge about how the brain functions and the kinds of conditions under which it learns most effectively. This new knowledge has significant implications for pedagogy and curriculum, and also for how schools are organized because the reality is that the kinds of conditions that are needed to promote learning are not seen in most schools. Increased knowledge about new research related to pedagogy and curriculum is vital to making decisions about new strategies or innovations.

The term pedagogy is defined as the art and science of being a teacher, refers not only to strategies or styles of instruction but also to the facilitation and management of sustainable transformations, whether individual, social, structural or institutional. The transformative dimension of pedagogy deserves to be clarified, revisited and eventually changed the responsibility of educators to transcend the traditional role and expand the scope of the work towards an active participation to knowledge enrichment.

### **What is Transformative Pedagogy?**

A transformative pedagogy is based both on a realistic view of contemporary and on possible paths to improvement in our human life. Knowledge is a social concept and it emphasizes the value of multiple perspectives in the teaching/learning experience. It is well known learners construct their own knowledge, based on their interaction with the environment. It is within the constructivist perspective that we find insights about transformative pedagogy. It is in this environment that the critical questioning can lead to

deeper self-reflection as students absorb with knowledge and perspectives that differ from their own. The process of transformative pedagogy opens the door for the development of problem-solving skills that promote active responses within the larger society, making transformative pedagogy far more than the transmission of information.

It also expands the view of students and teachers alike, leading to greater self-awareness, deeper compassion for others and a commitment to produce change in self and the world.

Teachers should be enfranchised to take meaning from what their pupils bring with them into the classroom. Children's cultural exchanges with other children are important and dominant in the negotiations of interests between home, school and peer group,

### **Present day system of teaching and learning**

In today's educational scenario the curriculum is classified and framed.

Teachers have little opportunity to introduce new ideas. Teachers don't have autonomy in curriculum matters. Schools still use printed and linear pedagogy that was developed in the past. Teachers tend to use new technologies which can be adapted to their old styles of teaching following the syllabus guidelines. Young people learn more by peer group interaction than engagement with adults. In the process of learning evaluation is done by conducting tests. It is believed that all human beings are alike. Every learner was assigned same lesson. Teaching was teacher centered and the curriculum focused on subject matter. The information was organized in sequenced topics and units and the teacher delivered and students have to

master them. The intended outcome is to pass the test by memorizing and mastering the transmitted information.

### **Advantages of Transformative Pedagogy**

Transformative pedagogy places the student at the center of learning.

It help learners find their own inner voice and power, therefore they feel empowered to effect social change.

Teachers have to respect and will have compassions for co-learners.

All ways of knowing are interconnected and enriched by each other.

The desired outcome is to change- to transfer learning into social action outside the classroom.

Transformative pedagogy is closer to collaborative approach.

The power is more likely to be shared between students and teachers.

The curriculum focuses on problems and solutions by both teachers and students and they jointly construct meaning that informs learners' personal growth.

Learning is measured by observing each student's growth and thinking process, inquiry process, and students' predisposition to lifelong learning.

“ Transformative learning involves experiencing a deep, structural shift in the basic premise of thought, feeling, and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and permanently alters our way of being in the world. Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self-

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locations; our relationships with other humans and with the natural world; our understanding of relations of power in interlocking structures of class, race, and gender; our body-awareness; our visions of alternative approaches to living; and our sense of the possibilities for social justice and peace and personal joy “– Edmund V. O’Sullivan (2002)

### **Process of Transformative Learning**

The process of transformative learning involves four vital concepts known as experiencing, conceptualising, analysing, and applying. Experiencing understands in our own ways the interests, perspectives and expressions that learners form in their mind. Conceptualising is drawing and calling something with distinctions of similarity and difference with interpretative framework. Analysing is a process of reasoning, drawing inferential and deductive conclusions, establishing functional relations. It also involves evaluation of your own and other people’s perspectives, interests and motives. Applying is the application of knowledge and understandings to the complex diversity of real world situations and testing their validity.

The technology has the potential to inspire all of us to transform the way we live, the way we teach, and the way we learn. It is a radical transformation in educational practice, especially who learns from whom, where, under what circumstances, and for what and whose purpose. Hence the notion of a transformative pedagogy in the environment of ubiquitous learning (Cope & Kalantzis, 2008) is not to start from the side of the teacher, but from the side of the student. Internet resources can uniquely facilitate advocacy by helping students obtain necessary information, promoting communication, and enabling coordination with others who have similar concerns.

**Conclusion**

The importance of preparing teachers for transformative learning cannot be emphasized enough. If the persistent achievement, learning, and community gaps ((Lee, 2005) are to be closed, and if we are to foster a multicultural democracy, we need teachers who possess the habits and minds of transformative practice. To facilitate successful learning in multicultural education courses, professors must be proactive and engage in pedagogies that are empowering, humanizing, and liberating yet engaging enough to foster meaningful knowledge construction and yet critical enough to challenge students' conservative and myopic beliefs and values.

We have to study, think, and dialogue about the future of our schools in a time when global knowledge, information technology and the constancy of change are altering the environment of learning. When students make the transition from the classroom into the work force, they are by and large, simply not equipped to handle the challenges they face. They have not acquired the real world skills they need to thrive – not just survive in today's laser fast, high-tech globally competitive environment but to help face a future that is more volatile, competitive and complex than ever before.

Learning is a community endeavor. The corner stone of a prosperous nation is its intellectual capital. Its true wealth is the treasure of the collective minds of its populace. Creating an ideal, true learning society is the real challenge for the future schools. The future schools will be a workplace for creative, innovative and productive learning for children to make them live with more confidence and to be useful to the society and community and to a large extent to be the good citizen of a nation. The main challenge for

tomorrow's schools is creating a knowledgeable creative society.

Transformative pedagogy is one of the important concepts of learning every pedagogue should know for transforming children of today.

- P. Vijayachandran