

Life of pablo friere



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Based on the demands of our educational system, our society is forced to conform to the level of education that they want us to be at. This educational distortion is beneficiary to the educator's realm and the way of governing education. We are seen as merely objects rather than subjects and are fed only facts/information that the educator only wants us to memorize not actually comprehend it or even ask questions or give our opinions to given facts/information. This is what makes the educator the oppressor and us the oppressed. Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" deals with the concept of oppression in the school system and suggests an alternative method of education. There is an absolute need for students to "Tear down the wall" (Pink Floyd) of conformity in education and express their individuality.

Education in itself can be a contradiction. The teacher (oppressor), is there to educate/teach the student (oppressed) but is he really? As Freire indicates "Narration (with the teacher as narrator) leads the students to memorize mechanically the narrated content. Worse yet, it turns them into "containers," "receptacles" to be "filled" by the teacher. The more completely she fills the receptacles, the better a teacher she is.

The more meekly the receptacles permit themselves to be filled, the better students they are." (67). He also goes on to say "Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiques and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat." (67), and he refers to this as the "banking system" where the student goes "only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits." (68).

This "banking system" method of teaching, really is not teaching the student (oppressed), but rather they are given facts/information by the teacher (oppressor) that they do not fully understand, and so there really is no learning. Also the "banking concept" holds the student down because he is told what to learn, and he is not allowed to work to his full capacity. It is because of this that the student lacks "creativity, transformation, and knowledge in this (at best) misguided system." (68). If this type of educational method keeps on, then there will be no change, therefore the minds will be filled with facts/information that the student will not always understand.

This "banking concept" method of education also keeps a restraint to knowledge for the student to a certain level because it doesn't give the student initiative, motivation, and drive to actually go out and want to learn. In other words this isn't the way to go about education. As Freire states "This solution is not (nor can it be found in the banking concept. On the contrary, banking education maintains and even stimulates the contradiction through the following attitudes and practices, which mirror oppressive society as a whole:" (68). They are as follows:

"(a) the teacher teaches and the students are taught

(b) the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing

(c) the teacher thinks and the students are thought about

(d) the teacher talks and the students listen--meekly

(e) the teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined

(f) the teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply

(g) the teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher

(h) the teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it

(i) the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his or her own professional authority, which she and he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students.

(j) the teacher is the Subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects."(68-69).

Freire suggest that the educational system use an alternative method of teaching. He calls this " problem posing" education. Freire goes on to say " Those truly committed to the banking concept in its entirety, adopting instead a concept of women and men as conscious beings, and consciousness intent upon the world. They must abandon the educational goal of deposit-making and replace it with the posing of the problems of human beings in their relations with the world.

" Problem-posing" education, responding to the essence of consciousness-intentionality-rejects communiques and embodiescommunication."(74).

Freire suggests that the students(oppressed) must break free from this system of things and liberate themselves and free their minds. " Problem-posing" is an excellent way to break free from oppression in our educational system. Freire suggests that " Indeed, problem-posing education, which

breaks with the vertical patterns characteristic of education, can fulfill its function as the practice of freedom to overcome the above contradiction."(74).

The oppressed, once free, experience their world, and as a result question it. This is where they break free from oppression and begin the journey to freedom from this restricted educational system that Freire calls " banking system". Freire also mentions that " Problem-posing education, as a humanist and liberating praxis, posits as fundamental that the people subjected to domination must fight for their emancipation.

To that end, it enables teachers and students to become Subjects to the educational process by overcoming authoritarianism and an alienating intellectualism; it also enables people to overcome their false perception of reality. The world-no longer something to be described with deceptive words-becomes the object of their transforming action by men and women which results in their humanization."(79).

In other words, based on the " banking concept", students are told what to learn and expected to learn it. Being told what to learn creates a necessity to rely on an authoritative figure not only in school but also in life, and reject responsibility. This is what the " oppressors" want, the " oppressed" who rely on authority and reject responsibility because that puts everyone under some form of power, and the " oppressed" are then prepared for the next oppressor.

The educational system needs " problem-posing" methods of teaching because it makes the student becomes a critical thinker, and not only that

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but no longer becomes an object but rather a being who can share ideas with the teacher. In that fashion of education the teacher could also learn from the student and all can give different input on a given subject. This would allow each student to break the mold and become individual thinkers who can express their knowledge in different ways.

Overall the methods used for teaching are very inadequate. Instead of telling the students what is to be memorized, the teachers should apply problem-posing techniques to get the students learning themselves. Once this teaching method can be applied, students shouldn't actually just rely on the facts/information given to them but rather go out and seek and find out for themselves the truth and reality of all things. Everyone

Is able to share their ideas and can learn from each other.

I feel that Paulo Freire does an excellent job in making us aware of the reality of things in our educational system. I agree with the fact that we should have more of the problem-posing method of teaching, because it will not only involve us and make our ideas heard but will actually expand our way of thinking.