



ENHANCING CRITICAL THINKING THROUGH INCORPORATION OF CRITICAL PEDAGOGY IN THE POSTMETHOD SCENARIO

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Abstract

A meticulous analysis of the pedagogy that focuses on the teacher-student relationship at any level whether it is inside or outside the school, discloses its essentially narrative character. The contents whether values or empirical dimensions of reality, tend in the process of being reported to become inert and terrified. The entire discourse assumes all the more importance on the dissatisfaction with the limitations of the concept of method and its transmission model of teacher education. The entire process precipitates in to "Banking" concept of Education which takes the teacher to put periodic deposits of knowledge in to the heads of the students. It also narrows down the education to the teacher and the curricular texts which have right answers and the students are supposed to vomit periodically on to the standard tests. Eventually it results in rendering the students gullible, close-minded, and false intuitional and emotively clouded. Trying to strike a harmonious blend between the three dimensional system consisting of the parameters particularity, practicality and possibility propounded by Kumaravadivelu (2001) and the dialectical theory by Paulo Friere(1970) enables to tease out the accepted meanings and appearances, tracing interactions from the context to the part, from the system interior to the event. Instilling critical pedagogy with a cautious observation of the three dimensions helps the students and teachers become actors in figuring out the world through the process of reciprocal negotiation and communication.

Key words: Postmethod, critical pedagogy, Banking concept, practicality, gullible and close-minded.

Introduction

Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity or it becomes the practices of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively to discover how to participate in the transformation of their world. It is on the onus of the policy makers at the top brass and the practitioners of the pedagogy in the four walls of the classroom to be discrete enough to ensure the orchestration of the entire processes be focussed towards exploring the ways so the students can critically partake in the ongoing discussion to understand the historical, social, political and philosophical traditions underlying contemporary conceptions of language, culture and knowledge. On contrary to this, the statusquo in the present education scenario is outstanding in it's narrative character. Education is suffering from the narration sickness. The teacher talks about the reality as if it were static, compartmentalized and predictable. Or else he expounds on a topic completely alien to the existential experience of the students. His task is to fill the students with the contents of his narration which are detached from the reality. The outstanding characteristic of this narrative education is, then the sonority of words, not their transforming power. "Five times five is twenty-five; the capital of India is Delhi." The student records, memorises, and repeats these phrases without perceiving what five time five really means, or realizing the true significance of "capital" in the affirmation of "the capital of India is Delhi" that is, what



Delhi means for India or vice versa. Education thus becomes an act of depositing in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is depositor. It results in the lack of creativity, transformation, and knowledge in this misguided system.

Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing hopeful inquiry men pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other. In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing. Projecting an absolute ignorance onto others a characteristic of the ideology of oppression, negates education and knowledge as a process of inquiry. This oppression like ignorance precipitates in reducing the individuals to become gullible to believe readily what others assert or ask one to believe without an iota of doubting or questioning. It also resists an individual to change one's existing beliefs and practices apart from resisting to welcome criticism. It also forms a tendency to form quick and automatic impressions on the basis of information, ascribe the impressions to our intuition, convert the impressions in to judgements, and feel confident in them. It also deprives him from further learning and renders him emotively clouded so that he gets easily influenced by emotions at the cost of rational consideration.

To avoid such undesirable ramifications critical pedagogy compels changes in educational roles, curricular content, and classroom practices in a linguistic multiplicity classroom circumstance to create a learning space that supports and emboldens to reflect on the social nature of knowledge and the curriculum that helps them to participate in critical commentary. This space surfaces when power in the classroom is decentred, an atmosphere is replicated where the students feel secure and self-assured enough to introspect and relate it to their own realities, disciplinary borders become permeable and matters are problematized. Critical pedagogy in language education retain the capacity for increasing students with a greater compassion to the emancipatory and transformational possibilities in the upcoming times. Even the three dimensional system proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2001) consists of three parameters namely particularity, practicality, and possibility. The parameter which aids the progression of a context-sensitive language education based on a true understanding of local linguistic, sociocultural and political popularities. The parameter practicality breaks the reified role relationship between theoreticians and experts by enabling teachers to create their own theory of training. The latter one emphasizes the need to take an advantage on the socio-political awareness that the participants/students bring with them in order to aid their search for identity formation and social change.

To illustrate Paulo Freirian perspective of a teacher, one fine morning a child brings a street dog in to a classroom and the conservative traditional teacher sees and makes sure it is removed straightaway. The progressive teacher takes it as an advantage and tries to capitalise on students' interest; possibly measures and weighs the animal with children, and assigns the children a task to neatly sketch and scribble about the dog, and ultimately call the civilised society. But the Freirian teacher does more than a liberal one. He uses the dog as a classroom aid of reflection. "Why are there so many street dogs in our vicinity?" "Why are there more here than in the rich outskirts?" "Why do people have dogs as pets at home?" While accommodating street dogs into a classroom isn't the mark of a Freirian teacher, while



engaging children to negotiate in an insightful discussion on topics of their interest is what stands him apart.

The liberal education lies in its effort towards understanding. Education must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of conflict so that both simultaneously swap the roles of teachers and students to arrive at a meaningful thought. This solution is definitely not found in the banking concept of education. On contrary the teachers should fashion their attitude and practices that debunk from the following myths which mirror an oppressive society as a whole.

- a) The teacher is of the belief that he teaches and the students are taught.
- b) The teacher assumes he knows entirety and the student knows nothing.
- c) The teacher ponders and the students are thought about.
- d) The teacher lectures and the students listen-humbly.
- e) The teacher is a boss to discipline and the students are disciplined.
- f) The teacher selects and imposes his choice and students oblige.
- g) The teacher acts and the students have the delusion of acting through the action of the teacher.
- h) The teacher selects the content of program, and the students (who are not consulted) adjust to it.
- i) The teacher obscures the authority of knowledge with his own professional authority, which he sets in opposition to the choice of the students.

Only when these myths are debunked and it heralds a robust beginning in the mind-set of the teachers to fundamentally pledge to the progress of a culture of schooling that backs the empowerment of culturally side-lined and economically regressive students. By doing so the, this pedagogical perception seeks to help change those classroom structures and practices to perpetuate democratic life and enable politically emancipatory and humanising culture of involvement, voice, and social action within the classroom. This change not only identifies the massive potential of the students in their academic performance that is gradually occurring in the academia but would also help them to undergo a pedagogical process of dialogue, reflection and interaction which turns them out as autonomous learners.

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