
Dialogic teaching in the higher education: Difficulties, challenges and the opportunity for critical, active and engaged learning

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Abstract

In this article I present my experience over the past five years developing a Freirean dialogic teaching approach in the Oranim College. The goal of the research is to examine every aspect of this experience in an attempt to initiate comprehensive academic discussion of the topic. The issues addressed are important to the educational field in general and to academic studies in particular. I employed a self-research method based primarily on verbal and written feedback from the students. The article includes a brief review of the principles of critical pedagogy and a definition of dialogic teaching according to Freire. A dialogic lesson is described along with a discussion of the difficulties and challenges I faced in applying this approach. The experience shows that the approach is not only effective but also essential in the academy, especially in teacher training. The approach contributes to the students' learning process and development, while also developing their ability to deal with the abundance available of knowledge. The students speak about the importance of the approach, despite the difficulty of applying it in the classroom. It is important in addressing an array of difficulties that the teachers face, particularly those stemming from a school system which is "geared" towards reaching measurable achievement more than developing personality and independent skills – a system that prevents any attempt to develop the students' critical thinking skills in order to maintain the quiet.

Key words: learning, critical pedagogy, dialogic teaching, higher education, teacher trainees.

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