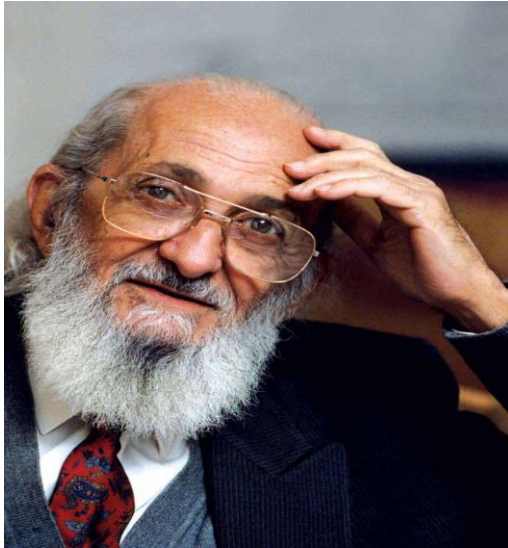


Lecture 9

Pedagogy of the Oppressed



Paulo Freire

PHIL-SOC 202

Freire's Life

- Born in Recife, Brazil in 1921
- After making it through a difficult time at school, finds his calling as a **teacher**
- Decides to focus on teaching illiterate adults how to read (“**culture of silence**”)
- Frustrated with “**well-intentioned bank-clerk teachers**” who are teaching literacy but in a method which **serves to further oppress**



Freire's conflict with authorities

- In 1963 government appoints him **Director of national literacy program**
- In 1964 there is **military coup** and new government considers him a **threat**
- Imprisoned as traitor for 70 days
- Goes into exile for many years



GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS of Banking System of Education

TEACHER.....STUDENTS

(active voice).....(passive voice)

-teaches.....-are taught

-knows everything..... -knows nothing (“empty”)

-thinks..... -are thought about

-talks..... -listen..meekly

-disciplines (authority)..... -are disciplined (behave/obey)

-chooses (& enforces it).....-comply

-acts.....-illusion of acting through action of the teacher

-chooses program content-adapt to it

-confuses professional authority.....-unfree except what authority permits with
authority of knowledge

-Subject of learning process.....-objects of learning process

Banking” regards humans as ADAPTABLE & MANAGEABLE beings

What method of education does Freire propose: (Page 319)

Problem Posing/Libertarian Education

The Problem- posing education advocated by Freire is a teaching method based on the instructor posing problems so people can think critically and participate in a dialogue. Such an approach acknowledges and makes use of learner's prior knowledge and experience. It allows for a more open-ended curriculum that is co-created within the classroom and acknowledges the learning that goes on by all involved - the instructor and the students.

Characteristics of Problem-posing Education:

1. Learners are Conscious and Capable (p.319)

- Friere argues that learners are in fact conscious and capable.
- Learners are no longer considered as passive recipients of knowledge. They are no longer presumed as not to having any prior knowledge or inherent intelligence. Their job is not to simply to absorb information that is deposited into their minds by their teacher.

It therefore follows that:

- **Cognitive Approaches are best:** Learning occurs through cognitive processes. In other words, we learn when our minds are exercised, and we're asked to think hard about something.
Prior Knowledge matters: Students' prior knowledge and existing intelligence should be used to [help them think](#) about new topics.

2. Students and Teacher are Co-investigators (p. 322)

(Through dialogue)

When teachers are co-investigators:

- The teacher does not have to be an expert on every topic.
- The students and teachers work as a team rather than having opposing roles.
- Students are given the chance to exercise agency (ability to impact the learning process) in the classroom.

3. Learning takes place through Problem Solving.

- One of the best ways to support students' learning is by presenting problems to them.
- Instead of students being given answers, they are given problems. Once a student is given a problem, they need to use their intelligence and research skills to seek out an answer.
- The answer is not given or 'gifted' to the student like in the banking approach. Instead, the answer must be discovered by the students alone.

4. Learning is a Process of Becoming (323)

Friere believed that learning is an endless process. Teachers and students combined are constantly learning throughout their lives.

He therefore argued for learning to be considered a 'process of becoming'. Whenever we learn something new, we change our ideas and even ourselves. We *become* more knowledgeable, wiser, thoughtful, etc.

Problem posing education is very beneficial for the process of becoming because the things we learn are directly relevant to the troubles in our lives. We come across a problem and we consider how to overcome it. In the process, we learn new things and 'become' more knowledgeable in the process.

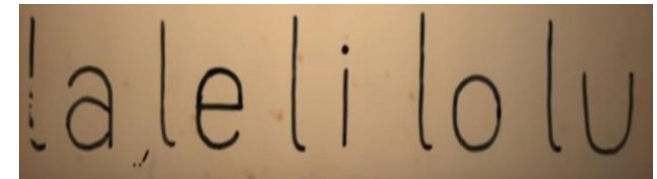
Words/terms Associated with Problem-Posing Education

- Dialogue indispensable
- Based on Creativity
- Makes students critical thinkers
- Encourage higher-order thinking skills

Develops a different teaching process: “**culture circle**” or “**problem-posing**” or **liberatory** education.

Freire's Approach to Teaching Literacy

- 1. DIALOGUE:** during informal dialogues about problems and their **meaning** in daily life, educator gathers **most used words** e.g. **bote**
- 2. SYLLABLE:** selected words from the list are broken down into syllables and used to teach sound combinations
- 3. New Words:** Using syllable families now known, group forms new words.
- 4. Awareness:** continued dialogue on daily problems and how new skills can be used for social change

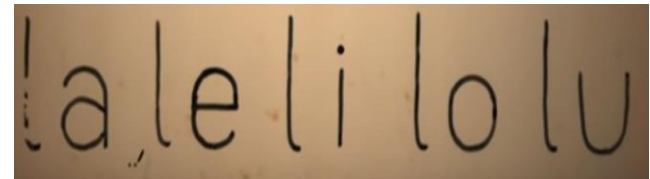
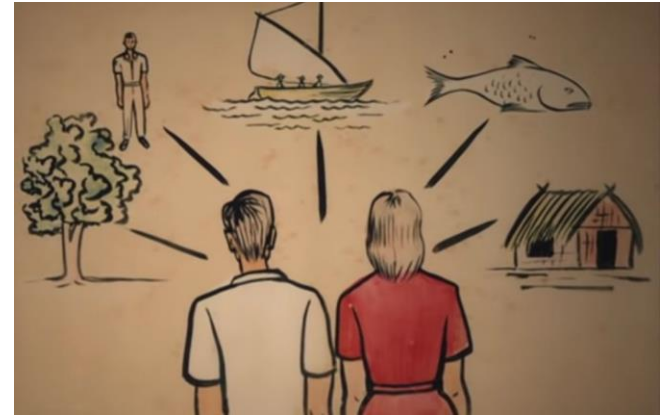


Freire's Approach to Teaching Literacy

Awareness: continued dialogue on daily problems and how new skills can be used for social change:

Examples?? –

- Write letters/posters to others, to organize (union)
- Vote! (pass literacy test)
- Learning about candidates
- Know their rights (law)
- Apply for jobs, different jobs



Freire Notes

Some Key Terms/Contrasts

Banking	Libertarian/ Problem-posing
Traditional methods: narration, memorization, repetition, etc.	Progressive methods: dialogue, discovery
One direction: teacher teaches and student learns	Teachers and Students learn from each other
Dichotomy: "man is <i>in</i> the world"	Integration: "man is <i>with</i> the world"
passive	active
oppressive	liberating
dehumanizing	humanizing
necrophily	biophily
preserves relations of power; reactionary	revolutionary
attempts to maintain <i>submersion</i> of consciousness	strives for <i>emergence</i> of consciousness & <i>critical intervention</i> with reality
education as the practice of domination	education as the practice of freedom
world is a static reality	world is a reality in process/ in transformation
mythicizing (conceals facts)	demythologizing
resists dialogue	dialogue is indispensable
inhibits creativity	based on creativity
fails to acknowledge men as historical beings	takes historicity as starting point

II. Biographical notes on Paulo Freire

- (1921-1997)
- faced poverty and hunger as kid
- **in time he started teaching, literacy was requirement for voting in presidential elections**
- 1964 military coup → was imprisoned for 70 days as traitor
- 1967: Education as the Practice for Freedom
- 1968: Pedagogy of the Oppressed
- was Christian - into "liberation theology"
- his method came to be called "**CRITICAL PEDAGOGY**"

https://helpfulprofessor.com/problem-posing-education/#Definition_of_Problem_Posing_Education