

## CHAPTER 4: MUSING THROUGH PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES

In Chapter 1, I came with my research problem of culturally disempowering teacher education and research practice. In Chapter 2, I attempted to explain and explore my first theme of the inquiry—where dictating and communicating leadership approaches gave rise to transformative dimension of leadership. Arriving at Chapter 3, I discussed second theme of my inquiry—where narrowly conceived images of curriculum gave rise to a morphing view of curriculum as montage. Given this background, in this chapter, I present my 3<sup>rd</sup> theme i.e., ‘Conventional and somehow learner-centered pedagogies’ (chapters 4A and 4B) and envision a critical-creative pedagogies (chapter 4C).

In this chapter, with these three research questions, the aims of my inquiry are to (1) explore key features of the reductionist approach to teaching that seems restricting learners to develop wider view of their learning within lower order thinking skills, (2) discuss constructivist approach to teaching with use of CTs to improve TLPs at my disposal, and (3) envision an empowering nature of teacher education pedagogies to accomplish an emancipatory interest of education in Pakistan. With the aim to develop a transformative vision, I used multiple logics and genres e.g., letter writing genre, dialogical, metaphorical and poetic logics etc., for my inquiry in this Chapter.

## CHAPTER 4A: JOURNEYING INTO POSSIBLY DEFINITIONAL PEDAGOGY

In this Chapter, I am discussing the problems and issues of teaching methods as definitional/informing pedagogies by asking the question- *How have I encountered key*

The key to being a good mentor is to help people become more of who they already are not to make them more like you- Suze Orman

*facets of definitional/informing pedagogies that disempower learners to develop a broader view of learning to understand real life situation. In so doing, my purpose is to understand the features of teaching practices as dictating pedagogies<sup>53</sup> as telling that shows ‘a strong traditional text of teaching-as-delivering’ (Barak, 2010, p.48).*

### **Teaching as Loading on...**

*"Knowledge from which no benefit is derived is like a treasure out of which nothing is spent in the cause of God." (Al-Tirmidhi, Hadith, 108)*

*It may be any Wednesday of June 2008. I picked a course book on the subject matter, a white board marker and an attendance sheet before going to teach a class on ICT in Education in School of Education at TU. As it was a little bit early around three minutes to the class time, I came to know that a teacher inside was busy with a written test from her students. Probably that might be an end of Unit test to check her students learning of her own teaching. On my concern for the class time, she excused and requested for taking ten more minutes to done. Looking at the situation, I did not want to*

---

<sup>53</sup>One dimensional flow of teaching as re/telling without creating spaces for interaction and discussion for meaning making that seems to restrict learners to develop a broader meaning of their learning to link with their real life situations.

*disturb the students giving their test, so I allowed her to continue but let us know accordingly.*

*In the meantime, I noticed my new/old student Ms Lily, who appeared on the scene and greeted. 'Ms Lily, please let me know when the teacher finishes her class. The students are busy with a written monthly test. So, I am waiting her in office', I explained to her (and other students on the scene) by assigning the task to let me know if the exam was over. I remained in the office waiting un/productively for around 13 minutes, and went to the class again.*

*As the class was occupied by other students, my students were waiting outside the class. I myself was not in comfortable position because my students were waiting me outside when I was there in the office. To provide myself with little relief from this ill feelings for their waiting, I asked for excuse. I said, 'Sorry guys, I could not arrange other room as it was engaged with a test.' 'It's okay sir, no problems', the class respond normally!*

### **Performing as Announcer of the Topic**

*I briskly started writing my topic of the day, 'as I have already lost 15 minutes, I should not wait any more and should accelerate my flow of lecturing', I thought. And*

*intending to stuff my learners with maximum information, I went with my fast way of 'telling as loading pedagogy' as that was the last class of the semester (Major & Palmer, 2001).*

*The students read whiteboard– third generation computers. And I tried to settle myself within a very formal way of delivery of my lecture, which was my adopted*

A kind of behaviorist pedagogy 'Traditional instruction, such as the typical lecture-based session ... often involves delivering as much information as possible as quickly as possible. The lecture method was one of the most effective and efficient ways to disseminate information and has often been used for this end (Major & Palmer, 2001, p.1)

*(un/willingly) didactic style in the socio-cultural context of TU, which did not seem to allow me to go little bit flexible in my behavior during the time of teaching. As I had to be within the structural setting of fixed content to teach with no changes, 'reproduction of particular knowledge' was my focus. 'I guess, this behaviorist pedagogy seems working well in this context', I continuously said to myself.*

*Dear readers, let me tell you that my purpose of writing this topic was to inform my learners to make meaning on how I taught my students under such conventional, and linear settings. Let me continue it again. And addressing my students I announced formally, 'yes, dear students my topic of lecture, for today's class, is on third generation computers'. Becoming more formal was one of my compulsions which seemed as if I was acting on a stage.*

*Looking at the students I said, 'as you are well aware of our previous lectures, I guess, your readings of texts on first and second generation computers could be helpful*

The Production of Education and Productive Confusion The pedagogies of pure reason have great power to order, direct, and accelerate linear modes of learning (Davison, 2008, p.66)

*because this is one of those in the series. I hope you have already developed your understanding of the previous topics, haven't you?' I heard students talking to each other. 'I think they are making themselves clear about what I was expecting them to know', I thought. It was a kind of one directional flow of information, and a way of power over learners (Davison, 2008). Without waiting for some possible responses from my students, I continued. 'And today, hopefully, I will teach you what the new developments in third generation computers are made in comparison to the previous ones.' And then I went back to my previous question to get some expected answers before I went ahead.*

## Questioning as/for Confirming

*'So, would anyone of you like to recall your memory to let us know about your learning, what was in the first generation computers and then in the second generation?' I asked them another question. However, I had no expectation of the answer from them. I was just asking them, and it was just a formality sort of things. 'I expect you to have a very sharp memory, as you are growing older now, and very much regular in your*

'Freire's position is, of course, against the *godly* presence of the teacher in the classroom. He condemns the *teacher as the almighty* who is responsible for creating inferiority complex in learners' mind. In the chapter 2 of Pedagogy of the Oppressed Freire says that education is suffering from narration sickness. *Traditional teacher- student relationship* disclose its fundamentally *narrative character*. This relationship consists of teacher as a narrating Subject and students listening Objects. The task of the teacher is to 'fill' the students with the contents of his narration. *Narration of the teacher leads the students to memorize* mechanically the narrated content. This process turns them into '*containers*' and '*receptacles*' to be filled by the teacher. "The more completely she fills the receptacles the better teacher she is. The more meekly the receptacles permit themselves to be filled, the better students they are' (1970, p. 72).

*classes as well' . It reminded me to do their attendance, and so I assigned the task of circulating attendance sheet to each other, 'please sign on the attendance sheet as usual to ensure your attendance', I directed my students.*

*On my call, around half of the students in class raised their hands showing their willingness to answer my question. However, only few of them could speak of their memories about these historical developments in the field of computers. I*

*could not allow most of them due to shortage of time. But I reinforced their views (few of them who spoke) with few additions, deletions and corrections for their memorizing, remembering and expecting to develop an understanding. Perhaps, it was a wishful thinking.*

*As I look at the clock, I realized I was running out of the time, which was yet another constraint. So, I quickly returned towards the topic of the day that I had started.*

## My Pedagogy as Banking/Transferring

*Talking around twenty five minutes on the topic in this mode of delivery, in addition to using whiteboard somewhere to note key points, I realized that I did my part of the job. I thought I could speak enough to transfer my knowledge about the topic in order to let my learners know about what were the things they need to remember (Freire, 1970). I was little bit faster, perhaps that might be due to few minutes I lost in the beginning of the class. So, in my speech/lecture I was somehow doubtful about slow*

**'In Pakistan** a student behaves and interacts in a classroom in the same way he/she behaves in the family or in other community structures. Learners are passive listeners and they religiously note down every word of the lecture (p. 106). Traditional teaching method is followed in Pakistan where the role of the teacher is like that of an **authoritative dictator** who has final say in his classroom. Paulo Freire would use the term 'banking education' to describe Pakistan's educational system (Alam, 2013, p.4).

*learners who might have some difficulty in catching my words fully (Davison, 2008). However, I had no time to do something for them so I had to switch to, probably, the last activity of the class before saying goodbye.*

Arriving at this point of my inquiry, I begin to reflect that I was in a monologue form most of the time and my method of teaching was a kind of *informing pedagogy*<sup>54</sup> (Alam, 2013; Freire, 1970). And I can realize that, perhaps, with my dictating kind of traditional pedagogy, I could hardly develop few lower order cognitive skills with limited knowledge of reproduction (Armstrong, 2012). In this class, for example, you hardly see some spaces for dialogues and/or discussion that I created with active involvement of learners in the whole process of teaching and learning. It was rather highly teacher centered mode of delivery. However, you can also notice one mode of limited involvement of learners i.e. the form of answering my questions to let me know their learning.

---

<sup>54</sup> A kind of teaching that is based on telling to students. It is a one way flow of information from teacher, as source of knowledge disseminator to students as receiver and/or acceptor

Admittedly, that might be a recommended method of teaching in the context of TU that I had adopted. And that seemed acceptable way of doing things, and might be appreciable in the context. It might be the result of un/willingly becoming part of the culture in which interruption in between the lectures was undesirable in order to accomplish learning outcomes within the prescribed time period (Armstrong, 2012; Davison, 2008). So, the students were very much aware of not only the way I was doing in the class, but also they were aware of the fact that it was like a *professorial*<sup>55</sup> way of lecturing method in that culture. I understand it now that this traditional way of teaching through one way flow was a kind of didactic learning, which seems taking its roots in the culture by focusing on *superficial learning*. Perhaps, that might be an influence, as I thought, of behaviorist pedagogies adopted in that culture where talking in front of elders (the teachers) was considered a kind of misbehavior. However, the mode of delivery reflects that it was a kind of *loading on learners' heads a concept* of teaching not different than what the Freirean perspective of banking education (Freire, 1970).

Still for my own satisfaction and probably, as it was part of the my teaching activity as well, to know to what extent my learners got the points, I came to the last activity of the class by asking few questions regarding the lecture of the day.

I presumed with some satisfactory answers of four to five selected learners from a class of 30 students that I have accomplished the learning outcomes of the lesson. I must have thought, I got good students who know the culture of the university. And they are very good at how to remember things, keep teachers comfortable without disturbing with

---

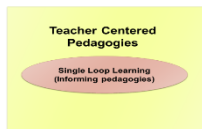
<sup>55</sup> Lecturing like a learned person. The concept of teacher in this particular mode of teaching and assessment reflects that teacher is all in all who knows everything and learners have to listen and reproduce when the lecture, unit or the course is finished and they are asked with a written or verbal test.

unnecessary questions, and get good marks by focusing on whatever they are taught to reproduce in their exams.

It reflects that the learners seem, to some extent, clear about the expectations of the academia and the academy. And they seem good at how to listen very carefully without creating any problems in the class (no questions or very few questions, no movements, and no disturbances) as *responsible* adult learner who knows well the norms. Though this sort of listening may help them to get ideas about the topics, and it may also help them to reproduce in their papers and tests like questions and answering, it seems preparing like *puppets* not creative learners.

### Selective Responses as Expected Outcomes

*Few students show their courage to ask some more questions to know new things for their information. One of the front line seaters asked a question, 'sir, how you can see*



*these historical developments with reference to the future of the new technologies in education?' Another middle line seater put yet another question in this way, 'sir, what would be the mode of communication and sizes of these machines in future, as it seems the size of these machines from generation to generation is reducing?' Going with some right answers to their questions, I concluded my lecture and said good-bye, hopefully to see them in next class.*

Reaching at this stage, I begin to reflect on my own role as a teacher who has come with some taken for granted *assumptions* (my teaching will understand whatever I teach in class) and *expectation* (students will listen to me carefully and remember my lessons). I come to realize that with this notion of thinking and teaching in adult classrooms seems a kind of colonizing their thinking (Armstrong, 2012). Perhaps,



un/wittingly I tried to give the impression that teacher is the *source of knowledge* and learners have to receive the knowledge within a structural setting in order to accomplish desired learning outcomes. Perhaps, it was a kind of *means and ends dilemma*(In teacher centered classes the *means are students considered as objects, as receivers of information, whereas the ends are goals* -the lessons to deliver, learning to test, and course to complete, etc.). Perhaps, this view of my own learning about teaching was a kind of single loop learning that did not help me how to improve my own practices (Schon, 1983).

With this approach to teaching, I kept my *expectations* high from students about how to behave in class and what to re/reproduce. Perhaps, this kind of teaching approach pushed me to adopt a superficial learning strategy in my teaching and resultantly, students were forced towards rote memorization, and reproduction of information that I delivered. Arriving at this point of inquiry, I begin to realize that my way of dealing students with more engaging questions was not appreciative rather corrective towards their one single answer, showing my reductionist pedagogy (Ahmed, 2013). Perhaps, the way of teaching was a kind of controlling learners through filling their minds rather than encouraging them to get more insights through interactive discussions and dialogues.

### **Reminding as/for Controlling**

*In the end of question-answering session, I reminded the students about the deadlines on submission of assignments. Perhaps, I was expecting them to submit within two working days, just after our next class on fourth generation computers. The purpose of reminder was to make sure that everyone should know how to do assignments and*

*what to do in order to get good marks. It was a king of controlling my students to follow certain rules of doing assignments for graded purposes.*

Perhaps, this had a very strong link with that of the assessment. I mean to say that my teaching of particular topics was based on the nature of assessment; unknowingly I was admitting that my pedagogy was a reductionist one (Armstrong, 2012). This limited view of teaching for assessment- telling to reproduce was perhaps culturally desirable way of teaching in that context.

### **Reflection on my Teaching as Transmitting**

Arriving at this point of inquiry, I begin to reflect on my teaching approach and the implication for student limited learning outcomes. I come to realize that my *culturally adopted pedagogy*<sup>56</sup> appeared to be unhelpful to learners. They could not apply the knowledge that they gain rather remain limited to reproducing the text through rote memorization to pass their exam. However, this reflection without any action for improvement in teaching/learning conditions seems to be a kind of just raising awareness about what has happened, and it can be called as single loop reflection (Argyris & Schon, 1974, 1978; Halai, 2006; Punjwani, 2013).

Perhaps, this single loop reflection, at least, helped me to think about my values. For example, I started to think about myself as a teacher educator and my values that should influence my student teachers while nurturing their minds as learners. And I began to ask question- *How do I live out my values in my practice?* (Whitehead, 1993).

Perhaps, this question led me to think about ‘Bloom’s revised taxonomy’ (Krathwohl, 2002) that cautioned me about the contradiction between what I valued and what I was

---

<sup>56</sup>A pedagogy that sociocultural others, the teacher educators were using that I adopted in the context.

doing. This reflection on my practices could be one of the bases for my awareness about what was happening with my pedagogy.

However, at that time I could not take any action towards doing something that could help me to improve my practices because I was not aware of how to create my own *living-educational-theory* (Whitehead, 1993) as a form of ‘improvisatory self-realization’ (Winter, 1998), by delving into educative encounters within the context. At a very latter stage after engaging with my doctoral project and having interactions with the father of living-theory, Jack Whitehead, I came to realize that my single loop reflection during my reductionist pedagogy was just awareness about what happened in my class. Perhaps, that must have led me to think about reforms in my practices, yet with very close visions.

### **Closure and my Way Forward**

Teacher centered pedagogical approach seemed to push learners towards superficial learning for promotion to the next level of their studies. Believing that excessive use of technologies in TLPs can reduce creativity of learners, and yet relying on conventional methods with very limited or no use of CTs in such subjects seems ironic (Sulaiman et al., 2012).

I came to realize that reproduction of knowledge through informing pedagogies seems outdated and less supportive to develop thinking skills of the learners out of the box ways to understand everyday lifeworlds. Based on this meaning making, in the next chapter, I will look at reforms in teacher education, and the impact on TLPs with use of CTs to improve practices.