

Beyond the Classroom: Reconsidering the Role of Learner-Centered Teaching using Paulo Freire's Philosophy of Education

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Abstract

Employing a textual analysis of the concepts of learner-centered teaching (LCT) and Freire's philosophy, this paper reconsiders the role of LCT beyond the classroom setting by infusing the principles of Paulo Freire's Philosophy of Education in his Pedagogy of the Oppressed. LCT is a promising pedagogical approach utilized in different educational levels among different academic disciplines. It incorporates psychological principles allowing meaningful learning through different teaching-learning activities. Studies on LCT showed an increase in student motivation to learn, involvement in the learning process, and understanding of content via meaning-making activities formulated specifically to suit the students' needs. Paulo Freire, a Brazilian philosopher and revolutionary, criticized the traditional educational practices which cause "narration sickness" among learners. Freire argued that a "banking method" of teaching alienates both educators and students as they are being treated as objects instead of human beings in the learning process. As such, Freire proposed a problem-posing method based on a dialogic paradigm between educators and students to liberate them from the alienation of traditional narrative teaching. This dialogic or problem-posing approach incorporates an anthropological, political, and spiritual paradigm shift which ultimately allows educators and learners to attain authentic meaning.

Keywords: Constructivism, Critical Theory, Democratic Education, Learner-Centered Teaching, Paulo Freire, Philosophy of Education

Introduction

The learner-centered teaching (LCT) strategy is a constructivist approach in the teaching-learning activities within the classroom setting which focuses on the idea that knowledge revolves on making meanings from previously-known concepts in connection with new learnings from a school set-up. This paradigm of learning challenges the traditional teacher-centered approach where information is passively transferred from the teacher to the students. As such, there is a growing research interest among educators in discovering new ways to practice learner-centered teaching among various academic levels and across different disciplines.

LCT promises more engaged students with the learning process, compared to the passive attitude in a teacher-dominant method. In such approach, students take more responsibility with

their learning process, become more self-directed learning, and become less dependent to their educators to advance their learning. Moreover, the LCT focuses more on the learning process from the student's perspective rather than the content or skill that must be learned. As a result, LCT has been considered as a teaching pedagogy to promote better learners for the 21st century.

Albeit its potential to transform the educational landscape, LCT lacks the justification to go beyond the classroom scenario. As a psychologically-based pedagogy, LCT may want to broaden its role in the educational spectrum where learning goes beyond the classroom borders. To be truly transformative, LCT needs a more universal perspective which cannot be solely supported by empirical data. In the current educational system, students and educators are restrained because of the conflict with the existing pedagogical practices of educators and the prevailing systematic limitations. These restrictions include high-stake standardized tests and institutionally-mandated curriculum (Salazar, 2018). In this light, the philosophy of education by Paulo Freire can be applied to re-think and redefine the role LCT in education.

Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator, philosopher, and reformist provided one of the most important foundations of what is currently called the Critical Pedagogy, a teaching approach which adapts the principles of Critical Theory and other closely-related philosophies which encourage students to challenge forms of social or political domination (Giroux, 2011). Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, which remains as one of the most fundamental sources of Critical Theory, accentuated that true transformation towards the democratization of educational experience is brought by learning content which enables growth among societies. This Freirean Transformation focuses on the concept of a humanist education influenced by different intellectual traditions, including the Christian and Marxist concepts of humanism. These concepts have been employed to explore and analyze the meaning of humanity (Salazar, 2018). Dale & Hyslop-Margison (2010), as cited in Salazar (2018), accentuated that humanism, the core element in Freire's philosophy, is important to fully understand such thinking. In his evaluation of the banking system of education, Freire formulated a democratic approach to education grounded on "problem-posing" education, where learners attempt to liberate themselves from the old system of education. The term "Freire" denotes a summary of his methods to education, while "pedagogy" is inferred as a teaching method instead of a philosophy or theory. In this educational philosophy, Freire offers a system focusing on the learning process of students in a broader social canvass rather than being teacher-oriented and limited within the bounds of the classroom setting (Aronowitz, 2018). This transformative-humanist-liberating philosophy of education of Paulo Freire serves as the theoretical underpinning of this paper to provide a philosophical perspective which can expand the role of LCT in education.

Aims and Objective

This paper aims to reconsider the role of learner-centered teaching (LCT) beyond the classroom setting by infusing the principles of Paulo Freire's Philosophy of Education in his Pedagogy of the Oppressed.

Methods

Employing a qualitative design, pertinent empirical research and philosophical theories on learner-centered teaching and Freire's Philosophy on Education were search over research databases such as Scencedirect, PubMed, and EBSCO Host. These papers were critically reviewed, appraised, and analyzed using textual analysis approach (Kuckartz, 2019).

Results

Constructivism: The Foundations of LCT

Constructivism is a learning theory which stresses that human knowledge is grounded on perspectives of their understanding of the world. Constructivism diverts from the Aristotelian “*tabularasa*” in which the mind is empty and is filled by experience. In the context of education, constructivism recognized the difference of traditional teaching in a classroom environment called objectivist or behaviorist practice (Miranda, 2011). Constructivism posits that the formation of knowledge is based on pre-conceived knowledge. Within the context of teaching, constructivism reminds educators that students come from different socio-cultural backgrounds which may affect the learning process. Furthermore, constructivism entails the active engagement and control of learner with their learning (Clark, 2018). It was even accentuated by Loyens, Rikers and Schmidt (2010) that students in a constructivist learning environment prefer constructivist learning approaches such as knowledge construction and cooperative learning. In this environment, learners must select and transform data, form ideas, and make decision based on their cognitive structure (Brandon & All, 2010). The notion on learning has changed: it is not considered a “meaning-making” process rather than the previous ideology of being a static, absorbing process. The knowledge constructed are used for practical purposes of the learner. That is, how such knowledge can help the learner survive and progress. This type of construction adds to a learner’s framework of understanding (Clark, 2018) thus, building new foundations for future learning. It was even claimed by Miranda (2011) that constructivism is a possible means to transform the present practices in education.

Within this theory, a constructivist will ask, “*How do we know*” rather than, “*What do we know?*” Cognizant that constructivism implies subjectivity of human knowledge, it also that a learner’s knowledge is affected by different social dimensions. Moreover, the rational and liberal features of constructivism encompass making sense of the world and generating unrestricted knowledge. In summary, constructivism is a learning theory focusing on the dimensions of the learning process, on how learners form knowledge and understanding, and on how learners can utilize such learnings in real-life scenarios.

Learner-Centered Pedagogy

Learner-centered teaching (LCT) is a teaching-learning framework grounded on the principles of constructivism. It begins with the basic idea that not all teaching leads to actual learning and focuses on the learner’s capacity and skills to learn (Megwalu, 2014). This pedagogy refocuses the learning process from the content and the educator to the learners – considering differences in learning styles, socio-ethno-economic backgrounds, interests, skills, and other diversifying elements of the students. Thus, LCT uses different teaching approaches which can address the diversity and variability among learners.

According to Weimer (2012), there are five characteristics which make learning learner-centered. These attributes are: (1) engagement of students in the learning process; (2) inclusion of clear skill instructions; (3) promotive of reflection among students on what was learned and how it was learned; (4) motivation of students through some control over the learning process; and, (5) promotive of collaboration. This description of LCT accentuates the refocusing of the teaching-learning process from as teacher-focused to a student-oriented approach. Moreover, Weimer (2012) did not adhere to any specific method of teaching but promoted many teaching styles which can address these characteristics. Therefore, learner-centered education is the exemplifies the use of different methods to place the student the focus of education (Altay, 2014).

Educational institutions are now shifting from their traditional teaching styles into LCT. This growing interest to employ student-centered learning is essential in advancing the primal goal

of higher education institutions, which are to communicate and to produce knowledge (Stamm, 2011). However, Megwalu (2014) emphasized that LCT is not merely a theory or philosophy in education, but a teaching method deeply connected with other theories like radical and critical pedagogy, constructivism, feminist pedagogy, and transformative learning. LCT, as an approach to teaching, is primarily about the formation of learning rather than the transmission of knowledge from teacher to student. Using learner-centered education, educators can utilize the power of individualized learning and make the learning experience more meaningful to learners (Cloud, Lakin & Leininger, 2011). Ignacio (2018) even highlighted that LCT facilitates student motivation to learn, self-efficacy, and critical thinking. As such, more strategies and techniques are being experimented to further the practice of LCT to produce meaningful learning and ensuring the essential outcomes in each discipline.

Learner-Centered Teaching in Practice

As previously stated, LCT uses an array of teaching techniques to address the diversity of students. There is no single way to become learner-centered in teaching. In Weimer's (2012) description of LCT, the outcomes of practicing LCT were clearly defined. Nonetheless, the question of how to practice LCT still remains.

In Weimer's monumental work, *Learner-Centered Teaching: Five Key Changes to Practice* (Weimer, 2002), she presented five teaching characteristics which can be modified to make the process more learner-centered. Nonetheless, it must be realized that there is no perfect method in becoming learner-centered. Pedagogy is a continuing process, and the only real hope is that practitioners continue to evolve in becoming more learner-centered in their teaching. In addition, it is highly improbable to immediately change all five areas. The changes, if were to be made, must be done gradually as both teacher and student adjust to the changes (Blumberg, 2008).

The first area of teaching which can be changed to become more learner-centered is the Balance of Power. The shift of power is essential to make students more engaged in the learning process, making balance of power the key characteristic to developing learner-centered teaching practices. The task for teachers is to foster learning skills and to develop confidence in using these skills (Race, 2003). Without power or control, students will remain passive learners and wait for the teacher's instruction. The key concept about power is that it is "shared" and not just "transferred" from the teachers to the students. Although educators retain most of the decision-making, they must make these decisions with the student's input (Weimer, 2002).

The Function of Content is the second area for change. In an education system that is controlled and/or regulated by the state, it is difficult for educators to go around the content of their discipline because the content is mandated. Yet, the big question about content is, "*how much content is enough?*" In a learner-centered environment, learners derive meaning from their learning through transforming and reflecting its contents (Blumberg, 2016). Focusing on the content strengthens learning strategies which focus on memorizing, regurgitating, and forgetting (Weimer, 2002). McCombs (2015) cited Centra & Gaubatz (2005), Klein-Collins (2013), and Rotherham & Willingham (2009) who highlighted that student learning and engagement has become the current objective outcome for meeting the student's 21st century learning needs. In a learner-centered environment, content is not just covered to provide foundational knowledge, but content is also used to promote more learning.

The third area that Weimer (2002) presented is the Role of the Teacher. Obviously, the teacher is no longer the center of the learning process in LCT. Nonetheless, the question is, "*what role does teachers perform in this new environment?*" Learner-centered teaching uses an array of teaching strategies beyond traditional lecturing and gives educators a facilitative role while students are

active participants of learning (Schroeder, 2012). Further, in a learner-centered classroom, educators become facilitators of learning as they employ approaches to inspire student to take the lead with their learning (Stamm, 2011). Weimer (2012) even asserts that an educator's role as a facilitator, guide, coach, and even as a midwife has been existing for centuries, but this was presented as a mere alternative in the instructor-centered practice. However, in a learner-centered environment, this role is no longer an option but a necessity.

The Responsibility for Learning is the fourth area of teaching necessary to develop LCT. When power and role shift, it is inevitable to encounter a shift in the responsibility for learning. In a learner-centered environment, students are expected to be responsible with their learning. Thus, learners become independent learners and develop intellectual maturity and nurture appropriate learning skills (Weimer, 2002). Moreover, educators must provide adequate avenue for the learners to assume their learning responsibility and to achieve their learning objectives (Blumberg, 2016). This shift in responsibility, however, does not equate that students are left on their own to handle the content. Educators must facilitate the assumption of this learning responsibility through student-led content reviews to ensure that the teaching is learner-centered (Blumberg, 2016).

Finally, the last area of teaching on Weimer's (2002) list is the Purposes and Processes of Evaluation. In the "old school" context, evaluation has been the end goal of teaching where it is assumed that learning occurred when students achieve high marks in examinations. Learner-centered teaching, however, strongly rejects the assumption of automatic learning. Instead, evaluation is utilized to make a grade which may facilitate better learning (Weimer, 2002). In a learner-centered environment, educators provide different forms of assessment and evaluation to get a "bigger picture" of the learning process. Within this paradigm, the grades of assignments and other reports or documents only serve as indicators of an educator's success to engage students in their learning. These indicators can be utilized to evaluate the instructional and teaching strategies and make necessary adjustments to guarantee better learning outcomes (Stamm, 2011). More importantly, in a learner-centered environment, instructors must constantly integrate formative assessment and constructive feedback (Blumberg, 2016).

Weimer's (2012) five areas of change truly transformed the concept of teaching and learning, not only in basic education but also in higher education. LCT practices promise to produce students who are prepared to face real-life situations in the 21st century. In the age where information is readily available and accessible, the emphasis of meaning-making is more important than simple acquisition of knowledge. LCT can be the way to provide authentic transformative learning for today's learners to respond to a rapidly changing global community. However, LCT is all but easy. It has faced a lot of challenges and setbacks in different academic institutions. Changing an academic paradigm cannot be done in just a few years or even a decade. Institutional changes may occur in small scales, the country has yet to see a truly learner-centered educational institution.

Challenges and Barriers in Learner-Centered Teaching

Implementing LCT practices in one's teaching is not without any challenges. Studies have raised some issues with the transition from traditional teaching methodologies to learner-centered approaches. A plethora of literature on LCT have been focused on the application of the practices and its results on student performances and achievements thus, creating an illusion that LCT is the perfect solution to most, if not all, pedagogical problems. However, there is no single method in becoming learner-centered hence, implying the limitations of LCT. The practice of LCT is limited by the different contextual backgrounds the teacher and students are working in; therefore, assuming one practice is applicable to a different setting is an immediate fallacy. This paper will categorize the challenges of LCT into two: Abstract Challenges and Physical Challenges. Abstract

challenges are the non-material barriers of LCT but are quantifiable to a certain extent. These barriers include knowledge, skills, attitudes, and concepts which are imbedded in the practice of LCT. Physical challenges, on the other hand, pertain to material, financial, and human resources barriers which are needed in the transition from traditional teaching to learner-centered.

A significant abstract challenge is the emphasis on the method rather than the essential learnings. According to McKenna (2016), “*the focus on the students’ needs should not be at the expense of a focus on the powerful knowledge the students seek to get access to and what the specific legitimation rules are for that knowledge.*” Since LCT is a pedagogy, some practitioners might be too concerned with the method of teaching and take for granted the essential learnings that students really need. Although Blumberg’s (2008) different components in LCT practices can address this issue, there are several components to address in using LCT that practitioner can be side-tracked and become less focused on the essential knowledge and concentrate more on the delivery method.

A students’ mindset (Reigeluth, 2015) is another abstract challenge in LCT. Students who have been taught using the traditional method for several years will have trouble in assuming new roles and responsibilities in a learner-centered environment. Educators using LCT must spend more time to address this concern to facilitate student adjustment into the new learning environment. Another notable abstract challenge are the existing national and institutional educational policies or regulations. State regulated education systems can be a hindrance to the full implementation of LCT, especially in degree programs which require licensure examinations. In a study in Turkey, results showed that even the direct recommendations of John Dewey in 1916 were not followed because of the government’s insistence to have control over the education system (Yilmaz, 2009). Schools, colleges, and universities also showed resistance in the practice of LCT. Educational institutions are burdening teachers with standardized tests and the strict implementation of prescribed syllabi to ensure students are getting the same level of education.

Freire’s Critique on Education: The Banking Model

Freire’s approach to education was mainly concerned with adult education outside the walls of a formal learning institution. However, these concerns were not limited to the technical skills of reading and writing but also involves the realities lived by students (Mejia, 2004). This reflection allows students and educators to realize that education is not just a simple transfer of knowledge, but also a political realization that education is a liberating experience.

In his monumental work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (2002) criticized the “banking model of education.” He exploited that banking education is a means to oppress the students and expressed his dialogic praxis to battle this authoritarian pedagogy (Duarte, 2018). In the old pedagogy, teachers are expected to transmit or deposit knowledge and information to their students then, withdraws the same through examinations and tests hence, the banking model of education. This old pedagogy, according to Freire, is a form of social and intellectual oppression as it merely imposes knowledge, which may or may not be relevant, to the students or learners. Oppression domesticates the oppressed thus, preventing them from becoming authentic humans who can impact society (Kirylo, 2011).

In the banking model of education, knowledge is deemed a present of the knowledgeable to those who are not knowledgeable (Freire, 2010). This model, therefore, cultures passivity, submissiveness, and acceptance of the students to the teachings of the educator (Salazar, 2013). Moreover, this model treats students as if they were complete ignoramuses and merely rely on the teacher to impart knowledge. The banking system considers students as spectators in an event prepared in advance by the teacher (Bingham, 2016). Not only does the traditional pedagogy treat the learner as a lesser being, but the curriculum as well alienates them by providing irrelevant

knowledge. The detached nature of the banking model of education oppresses the learners, and this is what Freire described as the “dominating” and “authoritarian” classroom, an environment ruled by a monological dissemination of knowledge (Duarte, 2018). As a result, it is common for students to passively accept and remain silent as they received teachings from their educators (Salazar, 2013). Freire (2010) even wrote that the development of critical consciousness is further hindered among learners as educators constantly fill them with information thus, straying them from their capacity to contribute in the transformation of the world.

In addition, learning becomes an alienating memorization and verbalization in banking education, turning students into containers waiting to be filled by their teacher (Mejia, 2004). Not only does this old pedagogy alienates the students, it also dehumanizes them by denying the opportunity to find true meaning and purpose from education. Banking education oppresses the students by limiting their creative power thus, benefiting the oppressors who refuse to enlighten the students or have the world transformed by these students (Freire, 2010).

The banking model, in summary, alienates and dehumanizes students. These alienation and dehumanization reject the full potential of students to become authentic human beings capable of creativity and become purpose-driven individuals in society. Freire further argued that education must be a liberating endeavor in any society. Hence, education must involve a psychoanalysis of the historical, cultural, and political underpinnings to understand its dynamic and dialectical relations (David & Glass, 201). Changing the approach in education is, therefore, imperative to transform the greater aspects of society. The concept of banking education must be rejected, and the idea of people as conscious being must be adopted (Freire, 2010). Freire’s pedagogy points to the liberation of the oppressed within the framework of revolutionary objectives (Aronowitz, 2012). Freire’s project was to introduce a pedagogical approach which does not only humanizes the learner, but also allows the educator to become more than a supplier of knowledge. Therefore, education must start with dissolving the dichotomy between educator and learner and adopt the unified ideology that both individuals are educators and learners.

A Humanizing Pedagogy

Salazar quoted Dale & Hyslop-Margison (2010) who emphasized that humanisms is a key element in Freire’s philosophy, and it is essential to comprehend such ideology (Salazar, 2013). Freire follows Pierre Furter (1996) on the notion that authentic humanism consists in allowing awareness of full humanity as a condition, obligation, situation, and a project (Freire, 2010). Humanism, from a pedagogical point-of-view, treats both the educator and students as subjective participants in the learning process. As subjects, both educator and students are recognizing the potential authenticity of each other – an authentic human being capable of reaching self-realization and becomes an important component in the progress of society.

This humanized pedagogy liberates educators and students in the learning process. By recognizing the humanity of each other, educators and students realize they are not confined to a one-sided transfer of knowledge. The Freirean liberation pedagogy practices politics within the classroom: a praxis with the aim of nurturing a democratic and polyphonic learning environment where all learners can communicate and interact (Duarte, 2018). Freire views the classroom learning environment as a democratic-political exercise where both educator and student participate in the learning process. This process, according to Freire (2010), is a dialogue wherein all participants are co-investigators of knowledge and collaborate in achieving learning.

Dialogue seems to be the key in Freire’s eyes to formulate a true humanized pedagogy. From true dialogue, educators and students can reach critical consciousness. Salazar quoted Souto-Manning (2006) and accentuated that dialogue for critical consciousness is rooted in one’s experiences which ruminate various conditions that promote inequity and oppression and is geared

towards actions to disrupt this oppression (Salazar, 2013). In the learning process, the lived experiences of educator and students are relevant thus, eliminating the objectification of education.

Critical consciousness, for this part, means realizing the importance of meaning-giving in learning and not merely the memorization of facts and information as it was in the old banking model of education. Critical consciousness entails understanding of one's identity and the world, obtaining the instruments to change one's situation, and becoming fully conscious of one's history, achievements, and capabilities (Abdi, 2018). For an individual to realize his or her critical consciousness as an oppressed, one must recognize his or her oppressive reality (Freire, 2010). Freire advocated a dialogue grounded on real life experiences which is definitively interdisciplinary (Warner, 2012). Dialogue, as a praxis in the learning process, is crucial to attain critical consciousness. Dialogue, as democratic exercise, allows humanity to enter in education. Freire (2010) wrote:

Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and students-of-the-teacher cease to exist, and a new term emerges: teacher-student and students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach.

However, dialogue is not simply an exchange of discourse among the learning participants: it must transcend the mere trading of ideas and feelings:

Dialogues further requires an intense faith in humankind, faith in their power to make and remake, to create and re-create, faith in their vocation to be more fully human (which is not a privilege of the elite, but the birth right of all). Faith in people is an a priori requirement for dialogue; the "dialogical man" believes in others even before he meets them face to face (Freire, 2010) ...

Freire also constantly associated the work of educators with an unwavering faith in the oppressed, who are in a state of becoming anew (Darder, 2011). This sense of faith was derived by Freire from his Christian humanist viewpoint. His faith was not fundamentalist or authoritarian, but one that was rooted in love, freedom, justice, and an authentic relationship with Christ (Kirylo, 2011a). Freire continued with, "founding itself upon love, humility, and faith, dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the dialoguers is the logical consequence (Freire, 2010)." This unwavering faith on the "other" is a clear sign of a humanized perspective in the learning process. Faith on the other elevates the status of both learners and educators. For learners, they are to be treated as equal participants in the learning process and not just mere receptacles of information. For the educators, faith allows them to transcend from being transmitters of knowledge into guides and partners in the progress of human knowledge. Dialogue with faith allows trust to exist. Although faith in humankind is a priori prerequisite for dialogue, trust is formed through dialogue (Freire, 2010).

The Freirian Method

As a response to the banking method, Freire proposed his problem-posing method in the teaching-learning process. The banking method, as previously stated, dehumanizes both educators and the learners and further causes what Freire called the "narration sickness." This phenomenon is a result of the narrative character of traditional education where the educator simply "narrates" the information to the students, while the students remain static receivers of knowledge.

The teacher talks about reality as if it were motionless, static, compartmentalized, and predictable. Or else he expounds on a topic completely alien to the experience of the students. His task is to "fill" the students with the contents of his narration – contents which are detached from reality, disconnected from the totality that engendered them and could give them significance. Words are emptied of their concreteness and become a hollow, alienated, and alienating verbosity (Freire, 2010).

Problem-posing, in contrary, is a dialogic method where both educator and student engage in the discussion of real-world phenomena, correlating these with pre-knowledge and cultural background of the educator and students. Souto-Manning (2010) even posited that learners pose pertinent inquiries to understand a situation, particularly those which are neglected within their context. This methodology brings out the natural intellectual curiosity of participants. As Kant would say, “*reason’s natural desire to know.*” The dialogic or problem-posing education increases the innate curiosity to the level of epistemological reflection on the relation between oneself and world (Lewis, 2018). Notably, the ability to effectively communicate through conflict and to consider multiple perspectives are necessary to influence educational settings and to promote transformative education. Thus, breaking down barriers of social change is a part of the problem-posing education (Souto-Manning, 2010).

The problem-posing method makes learning intentional. The transfer and development of knowledge become purposeful and directed toward the needs of students, educators, and eventually, the society. Participants then engage in problem-posing, seek away with innocent and simplistic views of the work or any specific situation in place, look critically at, and transform the situation in place (Souto-Manning, 2010). With problem-posing, individuals can analytically recognize their essence in the world. As a result, they come to view the world as one that is progressive and transformational, not stagnant nor static (Freire, 2010). Participants in dialogic or problem-posing process learn to critically think and eventually, develop critical consciousness. This critical consciousness then allows the possibility of improving people’s lives and empowers them to build a just and more equitable society. Using the problem-posing method, the dialogue revolutionizes the roles of the students and educators. In this process, learners are no longer mere passive recipients but are active members of the dialogue. The educator, who acts as a facilitator, present materials which are considered by the learners. As such, problem-posing method facilitates learning through the unified efforts of the educator and the learner (Freire, 2010).

Through problem-posing, the roles of educators and learners become blurred as learners are educators and educators are learners (Souto-Manning, 2010). This “blurring” of the demarcation between educator and student is a humanizing phenomenon because it does not objectify the educators and students but subjectifies them to become more consciousness of their desire to reach authenticity. Furthermore, problem-posing balances the power in the learning process. Since participants are engaged in the learning process, the dialogue distributes the roles to promote critical discussion which prevents the type of alienation existent in the banking model. This balance of power contradicts the traditional narrative format of teaching. In problem-posing, there is a continuous cycle of discourse emanating from the participants’ awareness of their inter-changing roles in the dialogue.

Discussion

Learner-centered teaching, as a teaching-learning paradigm, attempts to change the old teacher-centered teaching. Similarly, Freire’s problem-posing method aims to destroy the narration sickness that the banking method of education causes. LCT focuses on meaningful learning as a process and not as mere transmission of facts, and Freire’s problem-posing method aims to achieve authenticity through critical consciousness of real-world dilemmas. The roles of educators and students in a learner-centered environment are balanced to ensure that the responsibility of learning falls on the educators and students. Correspondingly, Freire’s method blurs the distinction between educators and students due to dialogic process grounded on faith, trust, and humility. Finally, both LCT and Freire’s problem-posing method emanates from the premise that educators and students are individual human beings who are both in the process of becoming within their respective historical, cognitive, and cultural context.

Much is still to be learned about LCT as it is being applied to different learning environments, and Freire's method may lack some aspects required by the education system like assessment tasks and a concrete curriculum that can be applied to all disciplines. However, LCT's method provides promising results, and Freire's ideology provides a philosophical and political context about learning and education in general. In addition, LCT provides specific methodologies that can be applied to different classroom scenarios in different disciplines. LCT highlights that meaningful learning for both educators and students, which can be gained through different teaching-learning activities, is more important and covering the content is least relevant. Nonetheless, LCT is centered in a classroom and at most, in a curriculum. Thus, LCT alone is not enough to reform education as a system because it is strongly grounded on psychological principles based on empirical data gathered from a specific context.

Freire's Philosophy of Education is both pedagogical and political. Freire believed that education is not neutral and has a specific purpose. Education is non-neutral and political because it is always normatively grounded in specific philosophies, viewpoints, aspirations, and interests (Cortez, 2013). According to Freire, education is inherently political and must be considered as a focal point of change and process and not the end of such development (Souto-Manning, 2010).

Conclusion

Learner-centered practices can be grounded on the philosophical and political foundations of Freire's ideology. Congruently, Freire's philosophy of education is a stable justification to redefine LCT as a concrete step to modify the whole educational system and not merely as a classroom practice. Furthermore, it can be concluded that LCT assists educators and students within the classroom setting, and Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* provides a philosophical standpoint to revolutionize education. However, LCT alone cannot easily expand its role beyond the classroom setting as its application is grounded in the classroom environment. Freire's philosophy seems to lack the specific details needed in a formalized educational institution. Such limitation may be attributed to Freire's educational experience being within the bounds of adult education in an informal setting.

The philosophical justification of LCT using Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* has practical applications in education. First, educators should explore appropriate methodologies and strategies geared toward promoting learner-centered teaching. Second, cognizant of this paradigm shift in education, a carefully planned out transition from teacher-focused teaching to learner-centered teaching must be conducted by administrators of educational institutions. Finally, noting that this educational shift may imply role adjustments for both educators and students, administrators must provide appropriate support to facilitate the assumption of new roles for both educators and students.

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