

DIALOGICAL LEARNING

GENERAL METHODOLOGY OF ÀGORA ASSOCIATION

The methodologies that we are using are giving very good results: they accelerate the learning and they obtain that the people acquire the new capacities and abilities required in the society of the knowledge. The methodologies that we used are being stated like innovators and of very good quality by the own participants but also from the new currents of critical pedagogy and the results of the main searches in Education of Adult People.

The dialogic learning is the methodology that we used in all our workshops and classes. It consists of an egalitarian dialogue based on the argumentation and the cultural intelligence that we have all. In addition to the acquisition of capacities and knowledge, the dialogic learning is based on solidarity, the equality of differences.

The interactive groups are a methodological innovation that we are taking upon maturity in the school. One is the work in groups in which and others are helped in the learning process. Thus everybody joint party the knowledge and the explanation: who know a reasoning or content reinforces explaining it the companions and who did not know it they learn it more easily because a companion or a companion explains to him who is a person whom he has had to make the same process of learning and that can facilitate strategies that help in this learning.

The seven principles of dialogic learning are¹:

1. Egalitarian dialogue

A dialogue is egalitarian when it takes different contributions into consideration based on the validity of their reasoning, instead of valuing them for the positions of power held by those who make them.

In egalitarian dialogue both students and teachers learn, since they all construct interpretations based on the contributions made. Nothing can be taken as definitively concluded, as assertions will always be subject to future analysis.

¹ Flecha, R. 2000. Sharing words: Theory and practice of dialogic learning. Lanham, MA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Habermas's theory of communicative action² helps point out ways to organize human relations around dialogue and consensus. Freire's studies³ show how to fight for egalitarian dialogue within situations of inequality.

2. Cultural Intelligence

Everyone is capable of participating in egalitarian dialogue, although each person may demonstrate his or her ability in different environments. Those who perform better in the market or the factory may feel completely inhibited in the classroom; those who feel at ease in an academic milieu may be of no use at a neighborhood association meeting or in a discotheque.

3. Transformation

Dialogic learning transforms people's relationship to their environment. As Paulo Freire says⁴ as people we are not beings of adaptation but of transformation.

4. Instrumental Dimension

Dialogical learning embraces every aspect of learning. It therefore deals with gaining all instrumental knowledge and skills considered necessary. Dialogic learning is not opposed to instrumental learning, but to the technocratic colonization of learning.

5. Meaning Creation

The energies and referents for that process are found in human beings themselves, in their relationships, in the dreams and feelings they constantly generate.

² Habermas, J., 1984-1987. *The Theory of Communicative Action*. Vol I: *Reason and the rationalization of society*. Vol II: *Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason*. Boston: Beacon Press (original work published in 1981); Habermas, J. 1996. *Between Facts and Norms*. Cambridge & Oxford: Polity Press & Basil Blackwell (original work published in 1992).

³ Freire, P. 1997. *Pedagogy of the Hearth*. Continuum Pub Group (original work published in 1995).

⁴ Freire (1997/1995).

We can all dream and feel, give meaning to our lives. Each of our contributions are different and, therefore, irretrievable if not taken into account. Each excluded individual is an irreplaceable loss for the rest.

6. Solidarity

In order to foster solidarity you cannot hide behind eclecticism but must be willing to reject radically antisolidarist theories and practices. No one is neutral, particularly not those who claim to be. As Freire says:⁵ it is not possible to be for someone without being against someone, who is against the one I am for.

7. Equality of difference

Reforms in diversity have created educational inequalities. To overcome them, teaching needs to be reoriented in two ways: the aim of diversity should be changed to equality of differences, and the outdated conception of meaningful learning should be exchanged for that of dialogic learning

⁵ Freire, P. 1989. "La práctica educativa", *Temps d'Educació*, no. 1. pages 292-300, University of Barcelona, page 296.