

currents of change

exploring relationships between teaching,
learning + development.

Conversations from the Learning
and Teaching for Transformation
workshop



edited by
Lucy Stackpool-Moore,
Peter Taylor,
Jethro Pettit &
Juliet Millican



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Exploring relationships between teaching, learning and development

Lucy Stackpool-Moore, Peter Taylor, Jethro Pettit and Juliet Millican

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Preface

This publication emerged from a workshop hosted by the Institute of Development Studies at Dunford House Conference and Training Centre, 25-27 April 2005. The workshop formed an important milestone in the wider initiative on 'Learning and Teaching for Transformation' (LTT), begun in 2002, engaging with a wide range of participants around the world through various forms of networking. Rather than seeking to capture everything discussed by participants, we highlight some of the key issues, ideas and strategies that emerged throughout the conversations. Participants expressed stories and ideas in diverse ways including drama, dialogue, drawing, song, woodland walks and silent reflection. As much as possible, we seek to authentically represent the voices, the stories, and the way they were shared. The report has been edited by Peter Taylor, Jethro Pettit and Lucy Stackpool-Moore from IDS and Juliet Millican from Brighton University, with additional contributions from Susan Boser, Dennis Shirley, Peter Boothroyd, Tanya Taype, Nanci Lee and Anand Kumar —all participants at the LTT workshop and members of the wider LTT initiative.

The ideas captured in this report have crystallised throughout extended conversations within the LTT initiative. We would like to thank all the diverse voices and personalities who have engaged in the dialogue over the last 3 years. Special thanks to the 28 participants at the April workshop, whose ideas, stories and experiences have profoundly shaped this report, and in particular to Dennis, Nanci, Tanya, Peter and Susan who prepared case studies and 'next steps' pages to be included in the publication. We are also grateful for the support of the Participation Group at IDS, and to Rosalind Eyben, Kattie Lussier and Julie McWilliam for their contributions to finalising this report. We look forward to how these conversations will continue in the future.



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Overview

“ I think participatory education is about transforming people. And transformative education is the process in which we, first of all, challenge power relations in order to create a safe environment so that different voices can emerge and be heard—but we cannot stop there. People need to say things, but they also need to reflect and question themselves in relation to what they are saying.”

Participant in e-forum

Decisions are made every day by government officials, donors, NGO staff, researchers and other development actors about policies and priorities that can profoundly affect the lives of millions of poor people throughout the world. But development actors are an extremely heterogeneous group, who may exert different levels of influence and power. Those operating at higher levels of institutions and organisations tend to have completed many years of formal education, often gaining qualifications in institutions of higher learning. But to what extent has their education prepared them to make critical decisions? Does the learning they have experienced help them to shape the development agenda in the most effective way to better serve the world's poorest people and bring about pro-poor social change? Institutions of higher education are challenged to support learning that can promote pro-poor, inclusive and participatory approaches to shaping development policies and practices. The planning, delivery and management of teaching and learning can either help or hinder such ambitions. We need to consider alternative approaches and perspectives to teaching and learning that can challenge current educational paradigms, which are often taken for granted yet fail to meet their transformative potential as contributors to development and social change.

Social change requires individuals, alone and collectively, to undergo shifts in understanding what is possible in shaping the human condition. Education, when based on a continuous cycle of reflection and action, grounded both in theory and practice, may support deep and transformative learning processes and outcomes, potentially leading to changes at a wider organisational and societal level. Participation, through a range of successful innovations and practices, is perceived to have the potential to influence pro-poor social change and contribute to poverty reduction and greater social justice by strengthening citizen rights and voice, which can in turn influence policy making, enhance local governance, and improve the accountability and responsiveness of institutions. But meaningful participation requires learning, changes in behaviour, attitudes and power relationships. What are the relationships between education, participation and social change? What needs to be learned, and how, in order to achieve transformation of individuals and society? And where and with what means should such learning be convened?

The 'learning and teaching for transformation' (LTT) initiative seeks to address these questions and look critically at how development actors learn (and are taught) within institutes of higher learning. The LTT initiative seeks to deepen thinking about pedagogical approaches within higher learning that can challenge potentially influential development actors to adopt participatory, inclusive and pro-poor decision making processes in shaping the development agendas. Although focusing explicitly on institutes of higher learning, the ideas emerging from the LTT initiative have implications for the education sector more widely.

Who comes to a workshop on learning and teaching for transformation?

I am Tanya Taype. I work in the Faculty of Public Health and Administration (FASPA) of Cayetano Heredia University. Our efforts are directed to promote changes in the society and to contribute to the process of scientific, political, economic, cultural and social development in Peru.'

'I am Paul Kibwika from Uganda. I have been working at Makerere University. My major interest at the moment is facilitation of learning, change and collective action processes.'

'My name is Nanci Lee. I'm an adult educator, a social constructivist, a microfinance practitioner and a poet (not necessarily in that order). I tell you this because I believe that these faces or hats perhaps influence my pedagogy more than what I have studied or where I have worked.'

Workshop participants

Inspired by the discussions at the LTT workshop 25-27 April 2005, this report seeks to deepen understandings about the key issues concerning the interrelationships between education, participation and social change. The report is structured around the metaphor of a river, which emerged at the workshop as a way of identifying landmark events that have shaped the course of the LTT initiative as a whole, as well as the individuals within it. Because cycles of reflection, experience and action are at the core of the LTT initiative, these distinct yet overlapping 'rivers' have played a significant role in guiding our thinking about the main issues.

In the workshop, four key areas emerged as common concerns confronting the implementation of transformative teaching and learning:

- 1** Power and relationships, specifically how these can promote or impede transformative learning and teaching;
- 2** Challenges in designing and implementing innovative curricula;
- 3** Ways of working within particular institutional environments that generate broader institutional change and acceptance of innovative practices; and
- 4** The personal relationships and identities that underpin all aspects of teaching, learning, participation and social change.

This publication is divided into three parts. Part 1 introduces the LTT initiative by presenting the background and processes involved. Part 2 provides a framework for understanding the interrelationship of the main issues concerning teaching and learning for social change, and outlines how the LTT initiative will continue to explore these issues collaboratively with an international network of partners. Part 3 explores the main issues in more depth. The concepts are discussed and then challenged and questioned as they are grounded in the realities of four specific contexts around the world.

The processes of the workshop as well as of the LTT initiative as a whole have been integral to the outcomes described in this report. It reflects the diverse experiences shared by participants, identifying short term and longer term strategies that will shape how we collaboratively take the LTT initiative forward in each of our own specific contexts and realities.



PART 1:
SOURCES

Workshop background and process

Key quotes re learning and teaching for social change:

“At the end of the workshop I realized that transformation is a process and it is not easy to suddenly transform your way of doing things to new styles of thinking and behaviour.”

Vusumuzi Sithole, South Africa

‘All the big experiences and wow moments have been in other countries and other cultures.’

Steff Deprez, Belgium

‘All of it has been bloody good fun. That’s a very important element—fun and excitement.’

Robert Chambers, UK

‘Common sense is what you learn by the age of 18. Transformational learning is when this common sense is challenged.’

Juliet Millican, UK

Why ‘learning and teaching for transformation’?

There is increasing global interest, by many actors engaged in development, in promoting the institutionalisation and spread of participation in society. From grassroots projects to voluntary organisations, and from governments to large funding agencies, ‘participation’ has been embraced as a way to build greater voice, accountability and trust into relationships between people and institutions. Successful innovations and practice have resulted in participation being seen as a desirable end as well as a means, with the potential to reduce poverty and social injustice by strengthening citizen rights and voice, influencing policy making, enhancing local governance, and improving the accountability and responsiveness of institutions.

Efforts are now being made to support organisational and institutional learning and change which will enhance the overall quality and impact of participation. Many development theorists and practitioners are concerned, however, that the momentum towards ‘scaling-up’ of participation may lead to its ‘dumbing-down’, where the principles and theory underpinning approaches such as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) are being diluted. There is a growing fear that lip-service is being paid to participation simply out of deference to fashion and without sufficient analysis of power relations. In order to promote and increase participation effectively, and also ethically, there is a growing need for experienced and well-trained people who are active and open to its meaning, methods and practice. Many higher learning institutions (including universities, schools and colleges offering formal graduate and post-graduate programmes, as well as ‘non-formal’, governmental or sectoral institutions offering specialised training programmes for experienced professionals) have a role in developing the capacity of institutions and individuals to understand and practice participation. But how can they ensure that they deepen the quality and sustainability of participation in their learning programmes, whilst avoiding the promotion of simply ‘more participation’ of dubious quality? How may participation be learned, and how can institutions of higher learning facilitate this learning?

Introducing the LTT initiative

Questions such as these prompted the beginning of a dialogue on ‘Learning and Teaching Participation’ (LTP) in institutions of higher learning, in April 2002. Hosted by the Participation Group of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) at the University of Sussex, UK, the original purpose of the dialogue was, through the sharing of experiences, to enable institutions of higher learning to develop and deliver more effective education programs and to contribute to a wider transformation of individuals, institutions and society. The dialogue has gathered steadily in momentum, depth and breadth. From the experimental contributions of the participants who joined the initial e-forum, through eight subsequent e-fora and an international workshop (April 2003), the initiative has become a truly globe-spanning network of people involved in learning and teaching for

transformation, both through theory and in practice. This development and growth of our collective understanding through the ongoing dialogue is acknowledged in the new name for the initiative, 'Learning and Teaching for Transformation'.

In January 2005, we launched a new webspace for the initiative that synthesises the main insights that emerged throughout the eight focused email discussions. The themes spanned power and hierarchy; assessment and evaluation; action research; reflective learning and reflective practice; curriculum; learning from experience and institutional change. The launch of the webspace supported an overall shift in the LTT initiative towards collectively developing a platform for action learning and action research to take the initiative forward.

Participants in the dialogue

The wider initiative on Learning and Teaching for Transformation has appealed to people from very diverse walks of life, institutions, countries and disciplines.

As participants in the LTT dialogue, many of us are self-defined as educators concerned with how our practice may contribute to positive change, both in individuals and society, but there is more to what really unites us:

- an un-ease with the established concepts and practices of teaching and learning embraced by many of the institutions we are connected with;
- a conviction that there are alternatives we can share and adapt that can make a difference in the way education is positioned and carried out;
- a belief in the need to attend to the personal, reflective and relational dimensions of our practice, beyond the usual professional standards;
- an understanding that process and content cannot be separated, and that our ways of working are as vital as the content we manage;
- an appreciation of knowledge and learning as constructive processes, in which learners and their experience must play a vital and active role;
- a respect for the inherent worth and dignity of learners, as individual beings, with agency for transforming themselves and their societies.

These are some of the shared principles which underlie the powerful bond that we all felt in sharing our disparate experiences. This common ground arose against a familiar backdrop of quite challenging institutional cultures and educational practices. Many institutions of higher learning, and the approaches to teaching and learning which they reproduce, are inherently conservative and risk-averse. The stability and continuity of academic disciplines, received knowledge, bureaucratic procedures, professional standards, career paths and funding sources are all perceived to be at stake – even if in reality, change and innovation may be precisely what is needed for both institutional relevance and for meeting the needs of learners in addressing real-world issues.

The April 2005 LTT Workshop

The April 2005 workshop was an exciting moment for the LTT initiative as it provided the impetus to step back and reflect on these issues, and to then move forward with renewed energy and the dynamism of a committed network of participants.

The e-dialogue fed me and reminded me of why I do this. It sustained me and reminded me of the importance of community— a community that is not limited geographically.'
Susan Boser, USA

'There is always a pattern that announces a new beginning, and for me that pattern was the LTT workshop.'
Vusumuzi Sithole, South Africa





Photo by Wendy-Lyn Bartels

“Being in a beautiful and homely environment, removed from all distractions, was an important aspect of what made this time so valuable”
Jennifer Margaret, New Zealand

“I imagine a workshop where we clarify different aspects regarding the LTT approach. We can then discuss this approach in relation to our experiences and the different realities of each participant.”
Sandra Boni, Spain

A diverse group of people from 14 countries and 20 different institutions came together at Dunford House. We shared stories, ideas and challenges about our unique experiences. We heard of the challenges of teaching statistics in Kenya, of working with community development in Mexico, of teaching agricultural extension programs in India, and of making space for reflection within research institutions in the UK. We heard about the role of horizontal power relationships as well as vertical ones in effecting institutional change in Peru. We listened to stories of curriculum development and challenging students' expectations in a postgraduate programme in rural development in Mexico. We came and left as individuals, working in very different contexts in very different corners of the world. Yet in coming together, we shared a common space, listened to stories of innovative educational practice, and were united by a shared commitment to learning and teaching that makes a difference in the world.

The workshop took place in the idyllic countryside of West Sussex, at Dunford House Conference and Training Centre. Set in 60 acres of woodland and rolling hillside, Dunford dates back to the late eighteenth century when it was a traditional Sussex farmhouse, and shares a vivid history of training, education and entertaining famous statesman and liberal proponents of free trade. This venue enabled each of us to leave our 'institutional environments' and make the most of the unique opportunity that the workshop provided. Dunford House was an ideal setting with access to woodlands, the South Downs, and the open space for reflection and extended conversations. The bar and large fire place were also perfect locations to continue the conversations into the night.

Processes within processes— How did we collectively plan a participatory workshop?

- Building on existing LTT networks and the webspace, we invited expressions of interest in attending the workshop
- A small steering committee reviewed the applications
- 28 participants were accepted, from 14 countries and 20 different educational institutions
- We held an initial round of email discussions among workshop participants to introduce ourselves and to collectively design the agenda for the workshop
- Many of the suggestions from participants included ideas for incorporating diverse avenues for expression such as small group discussions, plenary sessions, and non-dialogical forms including role-plays, drawing and silent reflection. The sessions at the work-shop aimed to combine these different opportunities for engaging in the conversations
- A parallel e-fora occurred alongside the face-to-face gathering at Dunford House, facilitated by one of the LTT participants, Dianne Allen, in Australia
- Carla Shafer and Kattie Lussier, two participants, pioneered 'blogging' and 'chat sessions' and the use of internet technology to connect the conversations at Dunford House with the wider LTT network
- At the workshop itself, there was a process steering group which gave daily feedback on the facilitation and process of the workshop
- We had a follow-up email discussion among workshop participants providing feedback about the workshop and outlining ideas for next steps
- Editing and producing the report collectively

“I sometimes felt we were losing the focus but somehow we managed to steer the boat to the relevant outcomes. The atmosphere amongst participants and you as facilitators was so pleasing and one couldn't tell who was facilitating who? That I found intriguing.”

Vusumuzi Sithole, South Africa

Different ways of knowing



Most approaches to learning in higher education, even those embracing ideas of deep learning, learning styles and learning cycles, give relatively little attention to those forms of knowledge - and ways of expressing knowledge – that lie beyond intellectual and conceptual sense-making. Yet educators have long recognised the diverse ways in which knowledge and skills may be understood and expressed, including many non-dialogical, experiential and artistic forms neglected in higher learning (Heron, 1999; Kolb 1984; Bolton 2001). These include: lived experience; intuition and wisdom; values and ethics; aspects of emotional and spiritual being; artistic forms of expression such as creative writing, drama, movement, music, dance and storytelling; and forms of practical knowledge and professional skills. Higher education privileges conceptual sense-making as the highest form of knowledge. While recognising the great value of conceptual development, we need to ask whether there are situations in which learning should be designed to allow intellectual capacities to be strengthened in creative combination with these other, less dialogical forms of knowledge.

The role of non-dialogical and experiential knowledge is particularly relevant for those learning to work with people of diverse backgrounds and cultures, and to facilitate more holistic solutions to complex social, political and environmental problems. Because power relations, inequalities and environmental imbalances are all deeply embedded in social and cultural norms, values and perceptions, any efforts to understand and address these issues need to be multi-faceted – not just in the inter-disciplinary sense, but in truly bridging, transcending and challenging the diverse representations of truth and knowledge which underpin our social orders. In the growing fields of action research, experiential learning and reflective practice, there is recognition of the need to integrate these other ways of knowing and expression into higher learning strategies (Reason and Bradbury 2001). The era of the single discipline and the purely academic claim to knowledge is waning, as much as these do indeed have to contribute to learning and professional growth.

What does non-dialogical expression look like?



The value of presenting ideas non-dialogically

Jennifer Margaret, New Zealand

I was excited, inspired and energised by the workshop. For me the people, process, location and content all contributed to this. The 3 days provided opportunities to connect with each other in a range of ways—through sharing food, discussing, telling our stories, creating, laughing and singing.

I resist having to present ideas non-dialogically, because I don't feel creative in that way, so I emitted an internal groan when that activity was described. On reflection it was my favourite plenary feedback session. I valued it because:

- *presenting in this way allowed for everyone to be involved rather than just a few voices being heard*
- *it allowed for different strengths in people to be shown*
- *the analysis provided good insight into peoples' different ways of seeing*
- *it generated lots of laughter*
- *it kept us awake, energised and engaged*

Key process quotes:

Upon reflection, I feel that it was the free space, participation created by the facilitators, the organizing team, that really helped. My goals did not change, but my attitudes towards my goals and openness to other goals or rather other ways of achieving these goals—was added to my repertoire.'

Anuradha, India

The drama was a real learning moment. It didn't come from our discussions; it came from the failure of the discussions.

Carla Shafer, USA

Some things can be learned but cannot be taught

By Kattie Lussier, Quebec Canada

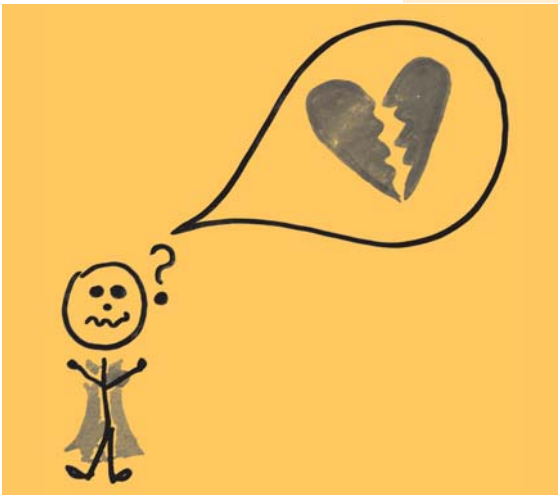
'How does it feel to have a broken heart?' asked a Buddhist monk when I was a visitor to his temple in Thailand. I was surprised by the question, and started to try and describe how it feels to have your heart broken. I said it's like losing something that you are really attached to and feel pain because you will never have it back.

The monk had spent all his childhood with other monks and was discovering the 'outside' world only through his readings and the people who visited the temple. He told me about his life among the monks and I told him that I was a teacher working on development projects in Vietnam. He said he had read a lot of books of all kind, but he was still yearning to understand what it meant to have a broken heart. Surely I would be able to help him since I was a teacher.

At the end of my description, the monk shook his head. He replied that he had never possessed anything and never desired to possess anything. I was determined! So I said it's like when someone you love dies. He replied that they would come back in a new life... I tried over and over again but I could see in his eyes that I failed to make him understand how it feels to have a broken heart.

As an experienced teacher and trainer I used to think that as long as I knew a topic well, I would always be able to find a way to teach it. I was convinced that a good teacher could explain anything as long as s/he could find the proper examples.

This was a very powerful experience for me. It made me realise that there are some things that can be learned but simply cannot be explained.



Cartoon by Wendy-Lin Bartels

PART 2:
CURRENTSAn emerging framework
for action learning
and research

The workshop provided an opportunity for us to explore at a deep level, both personally and collectively, a framework by which it is possible to navigate the extremely complex territory of education, participation and social change. To enable us to chart our way forward, agreement was reached quickly that the evolution of the 'LTT' title, of both the initiative and the workshop, had been natural and iterative, reflecting the twisting byways of this dialogue over the last three years. 'Transformation' we agreed represented a non-binding expression of notions of personal and social change that ultimately are beneficial to individuals and wider society.

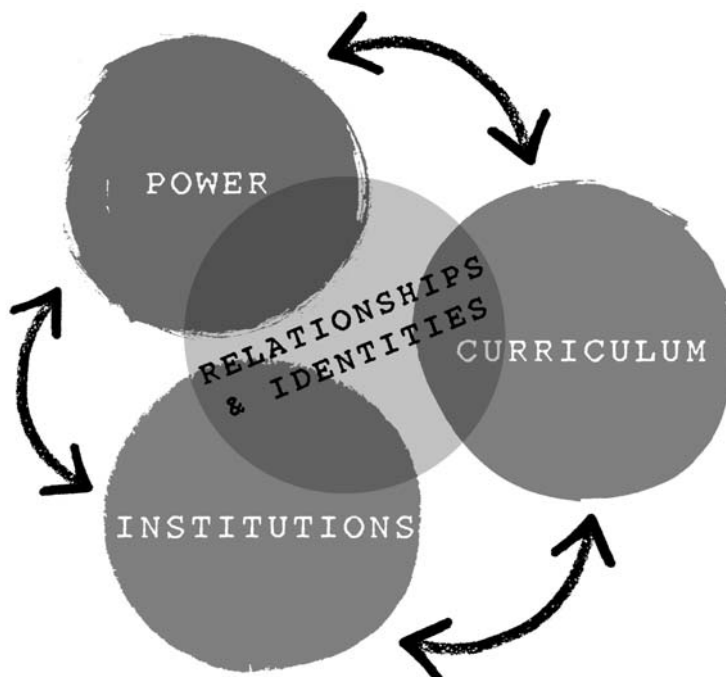
For transformative learning to take place, inclusive approaches are needed that address diversity and difference. The world for which learners are preparing themselves is itself enormously complex, and we are challenged to create more effective learning environments in which both teachers and learners can develop our capacities to access, create and share knowledge. There is much we need to know and learn, but just as importantly, we need to understand why and how we know and learn, and to use these capacities critically and reflectively.

Without a map to help guide dialogue and collective learning by individuals who form part of a wider group of professionals and practitioners, efforts to address these needs may become incoherent and diffuse. Excitingly, the contours and defining elements of this landscape began to emerge as the workshop progressed; and by the final session, almost intuitively, a map was made in its first draft, rich in its imperfection and promising in its yet unexplored regions. Four elements were identified, which help to form the basis for a new phase of enquiry, reflection, conceptualisation and practice within the LTT initiative:

“ At the end of the day, participation is about being given the space to have a say in the world we live in, to learn to understand this world, but on the other side, to want to do so, and to know how. Not an easy thing to learn!”

“ Learning is a process of doing, reflecting and relearning. In other words, it is a dynamic process of growth and development which is what makes us human ”

Participants in e-forum



In the following pages, we describe these elements in a little more detail, and propose ways in which the LTT initiative may help to explore these further:

“Are institutional cultures and power hierarchies constraints or dimensions of transformation? Maybe a slave has no fear because s/he has nothing to lose. Maybe the problem is not fear, but is rather not being able to understand what is happening. I think transformation therefore is a process of identifying individual problems and constraints while also understanding the relationships at a social level.”

Carlos Cortez, Mexico

1 : POWER

Many participants came from locations within universities, and brought interest in finding strategies for expanding participatory practices in their institutions. Power emerged as a cross-cutting issue, and many participants recalled a sense of feeling “blocked” within institutions or groups by a particularly powerful individual or unit. Reflection on this issue led some to consider the question of their own constructions about power; constructions that may delimit what an individual sees as options, thereby limiting potentialities.

The ‘power’ group discussion began from this place, seeking to shift the focus away from the frustrations about feeling ‘blocked,’ and onto sharing the strategies that had proven useful in addressing power blockages. The group began by generating a list of strategies:

- **Develop a ‘living document’** expressing the principles and values of the community that can be given to outsiders to facilitate understanding and improve relationships
- **Lifelines** identifying ‘blockages’ experienced, including both internal (personal) and external factors
- **Institutional Venn diagrams** identifying champions, power holders, blockers, movers, etc. and common interests. Use those commonalities as a starting point for building collaboration, understanding and mutual support. This strategy helps to uncover the ways in which constituents are interdependent
- **Shared Histories.** A Shared History is a group process tool, adapted from a process described by Marvin Weisbord and Sandra Janoff (2000) in *Future Search - An Action Guide to Finding Common Ground in Organizations & Communities*. Participants in the process may reflect different constituencies, though will have some common link or shared interest among them. The objective is to surface and explore the different constructions participants have of the history of this common interest. A long sheet of paper is put on the wall, and a timeline drawn on this. Participants are broken into dyads, and asked to talk briefly about key events in the history, and then to each draw a picture representing the event in its place on the timeline. The facilitator then begins at the first picture and asks the ‘artist’ to tell the story of that particular event. The facilitator proceeds with each picture in sequence, until all stories are told
- **Use of ‘I’ statements** in addressing problems; describing the impact a behaviour had on the speaker, rather than blaming
- **Active listening** to the other; illustrated by the Ethiopian custom of designating a listener who repeats back. Includes repeating back a summary of what was heard, and use of clarifying questions
- **In administering projects, identify stakeholders** for key decision points and hold short-term, focused meetings to negotiate a decision and implement a plan. Invite powerful people (e.g. deans) to take part in planning
- **Senior staff shadow other staff** and vice versa (not allowed to speak = enforced silence)
- **Recognize that crisis provides an opportunity for change.** Allow frustrations to emerge, naming them in order to mobilize energy for change
- **Use of non-threatening language** in seeking to institute processes (for example, ‘evaluation’ can be a loaded and threatening term)
- **Immersion in families and communities;** preparing people for immersion experiences emphasized, including:
 - Dealing with difference and fears
 - Depersonalise – using a model person (what does that person fear)
- **Facilitator shares** own fears/ mistakes



One outcome of this group work was the decision to expand on this list, locate it on the LTT website, and provide an interactive component where others can share their experience in adapting such tools for use in their own contexts. This would generate a 'living resource' to support reflection and the sharing of practice.

A second outcome was a plan to systematically explore these issues further using action research. Specifically, a small group of individuals agreed to select a few of these strategies to implement within their own contexts, followed by collective analysis of experiences across contexts. The objective would be to determine what can be learned about power through deliberate, systematic efforts to alter power relations. Participants will link this analysis to the theoretical debate on power, seeking to explore the ways in which Hayward's (1998) model of power might provide a useful framework for designing institutional interventions to redress power asymmetries.

Key Next Steps:

- Developing a 'living' document outlining case studies, ideas and contextual experiences
- Continue building the list of activities and ideas through the LTT webspace (www.pnet.ids.ac.uk) and email discussion fora
- A publication outlining key lessons, concepts and practices in transformative teaching and learning

Contact Susan Boser (sboser@iup.edu) or LTT@ids.ac.uk for more information.

What is a 'conquiry'?

A conquiry is a long-term process where academics collaborate with others to conduct cumulative collaborative action research on how academic social engagement can be promoted institutionally. Through a Conquiry, institutions could share lessons learned on transformation-oriented innovations, such as including community members in governance structures and teaching/research programs, or creating cross-disciplinary co-ops of academics to aid formation of worker co-ops in the community, or undertaking participatory design "charrettes" and policy advocacy for sustainability.

Peter Boothroyd, Canada

2. INSTITUTIONS

Much of the discussion on how to move forward with enquiry and learning about institutions focused on the Conquiry idea and electronic networking. An important point made was that we should not restrict our thinking about higher education to thinking about universities. There was an instructive discussion on that point. One conclusion was that transforming universities may mean challenging the elitist cultures that dominate universities to explore what higher education means.

The key messages and points for action that our group came up with are:

1. Structural change in higher education institutions is essential if learning and teaching processes are to be personally transformative for learners and teachers, and are to contribute to positive social change through social learning.

'Positive social change' means movement toward what are now virtually the universal goals of international development agencies and NGOs: poverty reduction, social inclusion, protection for human rights including the rights of minority cultures, gender equality, sustainability, strong civil society, and honest, participatory governance. Structural change in higher education includes evolutions in curricula, degree requirements, admissions standards, teacher qualifications, promotion criteria, governance, and budget allocations. An example of potential structural change that offers promise in contributing to positive social change is better integration of the (often marginalized) community service and outreach functions of universities with universities' pre-eminent core missions of knowledge dissemination (education) and discovery (research).

2. Cultural/personal change and structural change are mutually reinforcing. Structural change both facilitates and is facilitated by change in the culture of an institution, that in turn reflects, or constitutes, the sum of personal transformations. For example, increased

Institutions are people. The more hierarchical an institution, the less truth gets to the top. It's because of fear.

Participant in e-forum

Higher education is at an important crossroads. Student numbers have increased in the last four decades worldwide but budgets have gradually stagnated and no significant funding has been provided by IFIs. As a result, higher education and in particular teaching quality is in crisis.

Kim Tres, Spain

holistic thinking and spiritual awareness can lead to, and be encouraged by, curricula that address all dimensions of learning (not just the narrowly cognitive), or programs that involve learners (students, teachers, and others) in participatory social problem-solving.

3. The positive feed-back loops that can create a virtuous circle of structural and cultural/personal change within institutions can equally create a vicious circle—for example, when mean-spirited or narrow-minded intellectuality generates, and is exacerbated by, budgets, hierarchies, or promotion criteria that overly reward specialization.

4. Institutions need to encourage self-reflection, and to develop their own capacities for adaptive management to determine what actions might be taken to strengthen the virtuous circle and reverse the vicious.

5. Networking and mutual learning by people of like minds, from a number of institutions around the world, would likely be helpful to the cause of institutional transformation. In the now globalised system of higher education, where institutions compare themselves with each other according to standardized criteria, it is difficult for a single institution to change significantly on its own.

Together, we can do more than individuals or small groups at each institution to develop and test strategic ideas for making small changes that lead to bigger changes-- just as each specialized scientific discipline gains strength by bringing together a few people from many universities. International networking offers the benefits of synergy and critical mass.

6. International networking oriented to institutional transformation can make use of existing e-fora space, including a forum created by IDS after the Dunford workshop to continue and expand discussions.

7. Establishing a 'Conquary' i.e. an ongoing process of cumulative, collaborative action-research by institutions on their own transformation challenges, processes, and capacities might be an appropriate way to continue the discussions. An annual colloquium under the aegis of the Conquary could provide the venue for sharing lessons in both traditional scholarly and community-friendly formats, and for developing joint agendas for action-research. The Conquary could provide output for scholarly and popular publications. The first Conquary colloquium might be held about a year after the Dunford workshop. The University of British Columbia has been asked to host the first Conquary colloquium, June 5-8, 2006.

Key Next Steps:

- Conquary colloquium, 5-8 June 2006, possibly hosted by the University of British Columbia.
- Continuing the dialogue through email discussion fora.
- A publication outlining key lessons, concepts and practices in transformative teaching and learning.

Contact Peter Boothroyd (peterb@interchange.ubc.ca) or LTT@ids.ac.uk for more information

What to hold on to, and when to let go? Is it when we let go that we learn?

Participant in e-forum

3. CURRICULUM

Curriculum has been an important topic of conversation and dialogue throughout the LTT initiative and emerged, unsurprisingly, as a key theme by the end of the workshop. It was acknowledged that our understanding of 'curriculum' goes far beyond lists of content, or even sets of learning outcomes and methods. Instead its meaning becomes as much

“Curriculum issues are a matter of embodied values, people as theory, living theory”
Participant in e-forum

philosophy as sets of guidelines or instructions, encompassing all the learning which is planned and guided by a training or teaching organisation, and is derived explicitly from ideologies, philosophies and epistemologies of knowledge and learning. Many questions have arisen around issues of curriculum. Is curriculum in part a dialogue about roles and responsibilities for learning? And how do beliefs and values influence the way in which the curriculum emerges and comes to life through the learning process?

Discussions at Dunford raised several issues:

1. Assessment

- How can more participatory teaching and learning approaches be assessed, particularly those that are more experiential and grounded in the reflective act?
- Who moderates assessed outcomes that are process and outcome oriented (both internally and externally)?
- What impact is felt on the administrative system which might lead to institutional resistance?
- How do you design innovative assessment tools and methods?
- Where might extensive assessment products be physically stored?!

2. Different roles in the curriculum development process:

- How can students contribute or even lead on curriculum design, in practice?
- How can curricula be radicalised within wider institutional strategies?
- How can the power of the facilitator be transferred and shared with the students?
- How can we ensure that curriculum development is more participatory?

3. Knowledge and the curriculum.

Is there a tension between knowledge 'out there' and construction of knowledge by individuals? We need to try to understand how individuals actually construct their understanding, and what meaning they make of this. Learning is a wonderful experience, and we need to bring the wonder of the child to the education of adults. The curriculum becomes grounded in the context in which learning takes place, and we need to contextualise experiences that lead to wider generalisations. In sum, a curriculum is needed which provides space for all this to happen.

As these strands of thought emerged from the discussions, the curriculum working group agreed to continue the collective inquiry through action research and action learning. By valuing different ways of knowing and honouring different ways of working, the group also intends to establish a meta-learning initiative about the way we learn together in the LTT initiative. This meta-learning initiative will aim to both understand and support the process of collective enquiry.

The group suggested using different modes of communication and being together, including

- Webspaces for materials and case studies
- E-fora
- Face to face meetings, which would create 'an opportunity to work together, understand together, and bring our strengths together'.

Some of the specific follow-up actions identified include the joint design of courses and the sharing of ideas about participatory curriculum design, sharing stories and detailed descriptions of case studies around specific themes (e.g. assessment), joint writing of 'think pieces' and collaborative empirical research studies. Other ideas included exchange visits between members of the LTT initiative and participating in other innovative courses such

as in the e-learning course (VUT, South Africa) on PAR and the foundation course for facilitators (Gnostic Centre, India).

In discovering the other, I discover myself.

Participant in e-forum

'Is curriculum in part a dialogue about roles and responsibilities for learning? And how do beliefs and values influence the way in which the curriculum emerges and comes to life through the learning process? The very act of 'designing' a curriculum suggests a rational, cognitive process; but in our dialogue about learning participation, the importance of emotions, beliefs and values has been stressed so often. Are teachers being pushed frequently into trying to rationalise 'learning' by creating a curriculum which is approvable and accreditable?'

Peter Taylor, UK

Key Next Steps:

- Develop case study materials for the webspace
- Curriculum follow-up meeting, with an offer to host this by the Gnostic Centre in India, Fall 2006
- A publication outlining key lessons, concepts and practices in transformative teaching and learning

Contact Peter Taylor (P.Taylor@ids.ac.uk) or LTT@ids.ac.uk for more information

4. RELATIONSHIPS AND IDENTITIES

A great deal of attention was paid to the nature of personal relationships and identities during the workshop. Although not explored in depth by any assigned working group, the issue of relationships underpinned many of the other discussions.

A recognition and understanding of the nature of personal relationships in the teaching and learning process becomes absolutely central, even though there is no doubt that this issue is one of the most challenging of all to address. For many educators, the development of relationships with colleagues and students/learners seems to be viewed as additional or extraneous to the learning process. Indeed developing relationships that go beyond provision of instruction or information may even be seen as dangerous in some institutional contexts.

Connecting with others is a way of knowing oneself

Olga Gladkikh, Canada

At Dunford, the need to develop forms and methods of communication that break down traditional barriers associated with 'teachers' and 'students' was recognised as critical. Engendering a culture of respect for the knowledge and experience of others as well as of one's own becomes a basis for inclusivity that is key to transformative learning processes. Relationships that are egalitarian, based on mutual trust and respect, and valuing the differences that may be offered are difficult to nurture but are absolutely critical. The recognition that traditional academic discourses on education have failed to explore the nature and importance of such relationships requires new ways of encouraging interdisciplinary approaches to research in teaching and learning. The LTT initiative will seek to support and encourage these in the future.

Key Next Steps:

- Continue personal reflection and professional innovation with transformation teaching and learning
- Deepen our own awareness and understanding of relationships and identities through participating in learning networks
- Cultivate innovative ways of exploring the nature of relationships between teachers and learners, in the classroom and beyond
- Continuing the conversations

Contact LTT@ids.ac.uk for more information.



Acknowledging and addressing challenges of change

“Change doesn't always happen at the time. Sometimes it takes another question being asked before people take the next step”
Olga Gladkikh, Canada

The previous pages of this report highlight directions towards forms of education that are transformative, making a real contribution to social change and development. But we recognise that the challenges associated with undertaking these initiatives are often substantial. In the earlier rounds of the LTT e-fora, we came to realise how many of those participating in the dialogue felt marginalised within their own institutions. Contributors often mentioned hard choices about forming alliances that could effect real change. They referred to decisions and ways of working that sometimes felt like an uneasy compromise due to a range of institutional and individual pressures. From the dialogue and from our own experiences, we realise that it is not easy to confront the 'ivory towers' of higher education. Establishing a culture that encourages all people involved in teaching and learning (i.e. students and teachers alike) to reflect on their own behaviour, to recognise and value a range of experiences gained in different contexts, and to express knowledge in alternative ways is itself a challenge.

Ultimately, existing cultures and norms may need to be challenged and changed, but this is no easy matter when teachers themselves face constraints on their own capacity to support transformative learning. As we have heard, the inter-relationship of these constraints, hierarchies, power structures and barriers to change have tended to promote mechanistic approaches to teaching and learning, where students can be homogenized into a generic 'group' instead of being recognised as a number of individual learners occupying the same space. The more entrenched such perceptions become, the more difficult it is to initiate and carry forward change processes, whether at individual or institutional levels.

So how can constraints such as these be brought to the surface, shared and addressed? What kinds of guidelines and processes are needed to help institutions convene spaces where diverse voices may be heard? And how are these to be made use of without a resultant negativity, confrontation and defensiveness preventing constructive change and entrenching existing positions? Is there a 'manual' to help institutions, and if so when should it be used, and when should it be torn up?

In essence, there is a need to foster change at many levels, and to develop some guiding principles for achieving this. One is about naming and addressing issues of power and hierarchy, while also remembering that some hierarchy is necessary in complex systems. Where there is space to do so, we need to be willing to identify and negotiate the differences and conflicts, and to identify common goals and priorities. Interdisciplinarity and collaboration, seen as major challenges, can often be addressed through practice and experimentation. This may involve creating new alliances and networks as a problem-solving response, generating examples of alternatives, linking research and teaching, 'capturing' opportunities such as funding sources and special issues of journals, and designing and accrediting new curricula outside the established boundaries. We need to do all of this with awareness of the risks and limitations, but with courage and determination, managing uncertainties, and also just being willing to be flexible, open and adaptable. We need to build on what is private and individual to help form and indeed challenge what is public and collective. Timeliness is key, with certain conditions coming together at a particular moment, to create an opportunity for transformative learning and change.



Some institutional systems may need re-imagining. Innovative approaches to assessment, for example, may require a reframing of educational product as process, redefining or broadening the definition of 'success' thus creating space for achievement beyond normal standards and measures. This can be done in part by fostering critical thinking and reflection, and by using emergent approaches to creating knowledge together. Complementary forms of knowledge that build on existing theory and experience also play a vital part in teaching and learning that is truly transformative; developing ways of combining and integrating different forms of knowledge is a critical role for the teachers. At the level of personal change, mentoring by teachers and facilitators may be helpful to those who are starting to try out such approaches and innovations, thus giving guidance over a longer timeframe. This is important since as teachers we need to find and make time to develop relationships and connect with our students, and with each other.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we also need to learn; to be aware not only of our need to learn, but to acquire, develop and use strategies that facilitate our continued learning. In a reflective and transformative learning environment, we all need to pay close attention to both content and process, and support sufficient structure to encourage diversity and nourish growth as an integral part of development.

*Relationships with
other persons help
provide the energy
for the engine of
development*
Tanya Taype, Peru



Navigating the river: How can the LTT initiative support innovations in transformative learning and teaching?

It seems that the most valuable part of the LTT initiative is bringing together ideas, people and energies from different corners of the globe and creating a space for collective discussion, reflection, and ultimately action. The value of the workshop seemed to be as much in coming together and recognising the similarities and differences across cultures and educational contexts, as in the issues and strategies discussed.

To support the next steps for each of these working groups, the LTT hub at IDS is taking some concrete actions. These include:

- expanding the webspace to host a space for the 'power' live document to be developed
- writing proposals for additional resources to put together a book with case studies, ideas, reflections and tools structured around the three themes that emerged in the thematic framework
- continuing to host the e-fora as a platform for international dialogue on these issues. This space is open to any members of the network to convene their own time-bound discussion
- being part of and supporting the formation of the 'conquiry'
- developing a literature review about key resources in learning and teaching for social change
- working collaboratively on writing a 'think piece'

Sailing off

Many of the participants left with as many questions as they had brought with them. As Anandkumar, an Assistant Professor at the Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru College of Agriculture in India, commented, 'the workshop questioned my questions. And at times was silent on my questions.' Elias went back to teaching statistics in Kenya, wondering if the 'baggage (i.e. ideas)' he carried from the UK would equip him to introduce some new methodologies and ways of teaching statistics. 'My main goal was to acquire and share ideas on our diverse backgrounds of learning and training activities to enhance our work. I left the UK with an open mind, knowing that teaching can really be fun while making it more interesting' said Elias, reflecting on the processes of the workshop.

As the sun set on the LTT workshop at Dunford House and the dust settled from the departing taxis, we left to return to the unique and diverse contexts from which we had all come. Jennifer returned to New Zealand, Carlos to Mexico, Elias to Kenya and Tanya to Peru. Even those of us who drove back to our institutions in the UK took away deeper and enduring questions about identity, identities, and their impact on processes of learning, teaching and transformation. Perhaps Elize said it best, after returning to the Vaal University of Technology in South Africa, that the most significant nugget she was taking away from the workshop was 'that it is as necessary to be as it is to do'.

Part 3 of this report now explores teaching, learning and development in greater depth.

“The process of the workshop helped to bring people of diverse cultures together in a supportive and friendly environment. It helped to collate our ideas together and to collect them in thematic groups of shared common interests. It ended with a way forward!”

Ameeta Mehra, India

The complex ecologies of teaching and learning

By Jethro Pettit, USA

I put the small tomato plant in the middle of the room and picked up a trowel, and started to talk about how 'I' had made the plant with 'my tool', and how skilled I am and wonderfully advanced my tool is (high tech, wireless, etc.). Then I shared the thought that if teaching is at all like gardening, we need to learn to understand with great sensitivity both the plant and its habitat, and work with the natural forces both within the plant and in its surroundings (soil, moisture, nutrients, light), and try to shape and feed the environment, in order that the plant itself can grow.

This sparked a wonderful discussion about the need to cope with unwanted weeds and pests, and about the complex ecologies of learning and teaching. We also reflected on the importance of sensitivity and self-awareness by 'tool holders' (reflective practice), recognising that we and our tools are not actually making the change happen; at best we are facilitating the conditions for change, using our values to make choices every step of the way.

'We use the tool to prepare the space where plants can grow.

We don't use the tools to grow plants.'

Carla Shafer, USA



PART 3: DEPTHS

A deeper exploration of transformative teaching and learning

Following on from part 2, this section seeks to deepen understandings of the main issues concerning the interrelationship between education, participation and development by exploring the concepts in more depth in light of the conversations at the LTT workshop. Participants have also submitted case studies to help ground the concepts in reality and provide concrete examples of transformative teaching and learning in widely different contexts. These include an account of personal and institutional change through Boston College in the USA, innovative incorporation of dance into the curriculum at the Coady Institute in Canada, promoting learning and critical thinking in health education at Cayetano Heredia University in Peru, and inclusive curriculum development for an MA in participation at the Institute of Development Studies in the UK. These may be used as resources for ideas and alternative ways of approaching teaching and learning, but hopefully they will also stimulate further reflections and questions. A list of references is also provided as an annex, which includes resources that participants in the LTT initiative have found useful and may be of value for further reading.

“Clash of paradigms and worldviews can be paralyzing, but can also be fertile ground for transformative learning”

Jethro Pettit, USA

The common challenges we face can broadly be considered within four areas. The first is the question of what we teach and how we teach it, regardless of our subject matter; what does transformative curricula actually look like? The second is how we can recognise and transform power relations, both in the institution and the classroom, and how to build constructive relationships that may enhance transformative learning. The third is how we go about re-shaping our institutional contexts and handling the resistance to change. And the fourth is the role of relationships and identities that underpins all aspects of teaching and learning.

Part 3 concludes with an invitation to join the LTT initiative and contribute to the conversations that will continue to deepen our understandings about transformative teaching and learning.

What to teach and how to teach it?

Traditional education contexts promote pre-determined learning outcomes and fixed assessment criteria—environments where it is not always easy to find space to negotiate a learning programme that has personal relevance for participants. As practitioners aiming to facilitate transformative learning, we need to be creative in identifying ways of working within, while also seeking to challenge and redefine, these contexts.

Innovative curricula can play a crucial role in creating and supporting existing spaces that are conducive for transformative learning. Students have often been schooled into passivity and didacticism, and will need to ‘experience’ different ways of working for themselves. This might involve teachers taking risks and expecting learners to do so, if they are to ‘do things differently’.

A case study about the design of experiential learning: creating a new MA curriculum

Jethro Pettit, Institute of Development Studies, UK

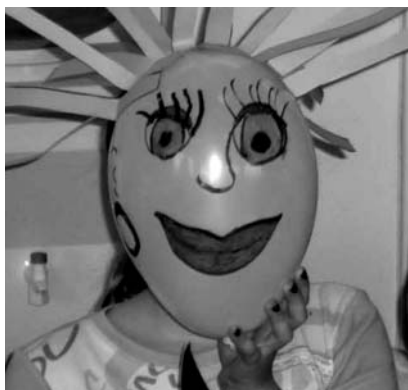


Photo thanks to Iñigo Retolaza

Some key related links:

Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice (CARPP):
www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/

Experiential learning articles and critiques of David Kolb's theory:
<http://reviewing.co.uk/research/experiential.learning.htm>

The IDS MA in Participation, Development and Social Change:
<http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/teach.html>

“ I think participatory education is about transforming people. And transformative education is the process in which we, first of all, challenge power relations in order to create a safe environment so that different voices can emerge and be heard—but we cannot stop there. People need to say things, but they also need to reflect and question themselves in relation to what they are saying.”

Participant in e-forum

Throughout the world, practitioners in the field of international development are facing complex challenges in their efforts to bring about changes in favour of poor and marginalised people. Whether working with governments, aid agencies, NGOs or social movements, many want to learn about approaches that can strengthen the voice and power of excluded groups, and help formal institutions to become more participatory. How can such changes best be facilitated, and how can those working as change agents become more effective? What skills, capacities and understandings are needed, and how can these be learned in ways that draw upon both experience and theory? What are the roles of practice, reflection and conceptual analysis within such learning, and how can these be integrated?

These are some of the questions that sparked our decision, at the Institute of Development Studies, to offer a new MA degree in Participation, Development and Social Change (MAP). Following two years of curriculum design, the first round of MAP was successfully completed in July 2005. Here we reflect on some of the key lessons emerging from the design and implementation of the MAP curriculum – a process which has helpfully taken place in parallel with the LTT initiative.

Designing the MA in Participation

The core idea for MAP was a 3-part 'sandwich course', with a field work placement (of 9 months) between two intensive 10-week periods of coursework in residency. Students, who are expected to have a significant amount of professional experience, would carry out an action research project within their own work environment, analysing and reflecting upon their experiences and connecting these to their understandings of key concepts and theories introduced in the programme.

The core idea behind action research is that one's work environment should be a place of learning, using everyday activities as a basis for inquiry. Understandings of theory and concepts would be developed iteratively with action and experience, in repeating cycles. Reflective practice is one important dimension of this learning—strengthening one's ability to look at oneself, to question one's assumptions, to develop awareness of one's identities, behaviour and impact on others, to explore contradictions between stated values and practice, and to link one's personal development with wider processes of social change.

Unusually for an MA at IDS, the students would only be spending 20 weeks at the Institute for their formal contact time, and there was some concern at first that this idea would not be approved. In fact, there was strong support from the University, and we were guided in how to meet academic standards. The official boundaries were not as rigid as we had imagined they would be – an interesting example of how educators may sometimes censor themselves in response to perceived rules and expectations. (In retrospect, we did find the 20 weeks too short and plan to expand it slightly).

In the programme design, we were asked to define specific learning outcomes for each part of the course, and to identify teaching and assessment strategies aligned with these outcomes, all expressed in terms of four categories of knowledge and skills: knowledge and understanding, intellectual skills, practical skills and transferable skills. While this was a useful

“Really grounded my practical experience and has given academic/theoretical context to my work - challenged my thinking and helped me grow.”

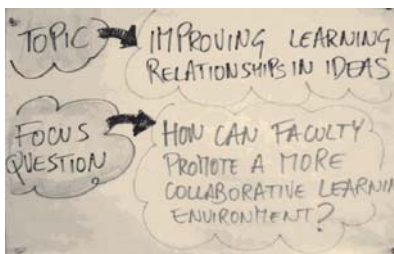
“The course is one of a kind... that builds on practical experience and an approach that should be furthered to replace the traditional way of desk research. I feel I have learned a lot within the 15 months period.”

“The programme has exposed me to key current development concepts which are relevant to my work. It has stimulated my critical thinking and interest.”

“My learning has greatly been influenced by the lectures, seminars, and group work, where I had a chance to express myself but also learning from others.”

“Generally, I have enjoyed being taken through participatory group processes by doing them. On a few occasions, has felt like we are ‘participating for the sake of participation’.”

Students in the MAP



exercise, we were thankful that we did not know about these requirements from the start, as we may well have created a different programme. We adapted our vision to the guidelines, rather than starting with the rules – an important lesson in curriculum design.

For example, IDS has been quite traditional in its approach to assessment, focusing on term papers and the final dissertation. In MAP, we proposed more continuous and diverse approaches, including a learning plan, progress reports, seminar presentations, a reflective essay and portfolio, and a synthesis paper. When trying to align these with IDS- and University-approved modes of assessment, however, we found that most had no equivalents. Still, we were encouraged to seek approval for them and succeeded. Would this have happened if we had started with a list of existing assessment modes?

Evaluating the design of learning

The first round of the programme, known as MAP 01, attracted an interesting and diverse group of 19 women and men from 14 countries: Ethiopia, Uganda, Namibia, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria, India, Tonga, Suriname, Brazil, Spain, the UK and the US. The students came from NGOs, governments and aid agencies, and worked on a range of issues including agriculture, animal health, the environment, education, community development, disability, migration, conflict, governance, youth empowerment, organisational learning and leadership. Of this original group, 16 completed the course. They formed a strong learning community and produced some extraordinary work.

While it is too early to evaluate the outcomes of the programme, there are some tentative lessons:

- We found that gaining an understanding of action research and reflective practice methods requires more time and preparation than we had thought. 10 weeks may be too short a time in which to introduce these approaches together with concepts and theories of participation and social change.
- The design of action research and reflective practice requires a supportive structure for continuous cycles of action, reflection and conceptualisation. We found it challenging to keep this process alive and fully supported during the field work period.
- A major strength of the programme was the creation of a strong and mutually supportive learning community, including the students' shared residential experience and mid-placement seminar held in South Africa.
- There was a need for more coherent academic structure and content. Participatory learning methods do not replace the need for advance preparation of curriculum and inputs, and support for the deepening of conceptual knowledge.
- It was important for faculty to develop a shared understanding of learning approaches, support and supervision needs. At the same time, the level and abilities of students must also be realistic in relation to academic requirements.

Recognising and transforming power relations

Power issues within relationships around teaching and learning are of critical importance, but frequently are underestimated or ignored. This may be because of their complexity, because of vested interests in maintaining existing power structures, or because of insufficient time and too many pressures that impinge on teachers and students alike.

Some key resources on power, knowledge and relationships in education:

Chambers, R. (1997).
Whose Reality Counts? London: ITG.

Gibbons, D. and J. Jiggins (2000)
Interdisciplinarity, Internationalisation and Learning Systems for Agricultural Education in Transition
Paper presented at Conference on Higher Agricultural Education, Seale Hayne.

Lyotard, J-F. (1984).
The Postmodern Condition: A report on knowledge
Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Lukes, S. (1974).
Power: A radical view
London: Macmillan

In all these instances, come hail or shine, I start as one with authority to design and create learning environments, and gradually as the process takes shape I become a co-learner with the participants

participant in e-forum

Power in itself is a challenging concept, and has been debated extensively throughout the LTT dialogue. At Dunford, particular focus was given to power dynamics emerging through the relationship between teacher and student, between teachers and between students, and also between both these groups and wider institutions. These include the teaching institution itself, but also societal institutions which help to generate the expectations that society has for higher education, and for those who find themselves within it.

Power relations sometimes are made explicit, for example through the categorisation of 'teachers' and 'students', and even 'managers' and 'administrators'. Each of these titles comes ready-packed with specific roles, responsibilities and expectations that can be difficult to challenge. Students may arrive unsure of themselves, as well as being unclear about their rights and obligations. This lack of assuredness and confidence in what is expected of them may lead to students facing difficulties in forming constructive relationships as co-learners with other members of the student body, as well as creating a distance between themselves and teachers, who may make assumptions about how best to push students towards achievement of learning outcomes set by the institution.

One participant described the challenge associated with questioning society and forging political positionality within her university, and the need to enable young people to articulate for themselves their needs, goals and objectives, thus giving them greater self-respect, a sense of identity, and an appreciation of difference. Through this they begin to challenge the notion that they have no role in decision-making for their own learning, within their educational institution, or within their interactions in the wider community.

Reflective practice is becoming more common within the disciplines of health and education in institutions of higher learning, however often the focus is on reflection on professional practice rather than involvement in and reflection on personal learning. Just as what and how we teach is intrinsically linked, so too is what and how we learn. Encouraging students to challenge their deep-seated assumptions and interrogate how they accommodate new learning within their existing ideas is a skill that needs to be consciously built into many learning programmes. Linking theory to practice and personal world views can be an uncomfortable process for learners, and raises both ethical and pedagogical questions for many teachers.

Yet in transformative learning processes, teachers are learners just as learners are teachers. A transformative educative process involves reflection and self-awareness for all involved while also promoting meaningful, and meaning-making, engagement with the curriculum itself. Horizontal, egalitarian relations between individuals facilitate transformative learning where impersonal, hierarchical relationships tend to impede it. Innovative curriculum approaches can help achieve 'horizontal relationships'.

Teachers need to go beyond their traditional roles as 'knowledge-providers' and develop a whole range of capacities that enable them to guide and facilitate, provide information as and when needed, but also to shift barriers and positions between those at the 'top' and the 'bottom' of the learning environment. All of this helps us to develop an 'open view' to alternative views and opinions. By confronting what we have taken for granted, we begin to see the unseen, even to the extent of recognising our own privileges which may be part of the foundation of existing power dynamics. We need also to create spaces and opportunities whereby failure can be acknowledged as an opportunity for growth, where dissatisfaction can form a basis for deeper levels of engagement, and where we are forced to acknowledge that 'common sense' may indeed not be common at all, but a valued source of difference and variation.

Our biggest constraint is our own humanity. Our biggest opportunity is our own humanity"
Paula Horrigan, USA

Thanks to the workshop and the spirit of all who have allowed me to evaluate me, to observe me, who I am, what I am doing, and what I desire as an educator"
Tanya Taype, Peru

"Transformation is something that is uniquely yours and occupies a unique individual space. Space is very important for a learning experience because it allows a person to be themselves.
Ameeta Mehra, India

Explicit efforts can be made to incorporate a wide range of presentational or artistic activities such as music, dance and other forms of non-dialogic expression. These creative modes of knowledge and communication have the potential to stimulate deeper reflection and exploration of the roots of feelings and reactions, not just their visible manifestations. This may lead to different levels of consciousness – of being conscious and present as learners, coupled with an affirmation of the legitimacy and contribution of different forms of knowledge and learning.

A case study about relationships: Personal and collective reflection in teaching health professionals in Peru

By Tanya Taype Castillo and Eduardo Vidal Soto, Cayetano Heredia University of Peru
(Original Spanish version in the annex)

Health professionals face a number of difficulties daily, including changes in pathology and obstacles to providing a better service. Working in the classroom with a comprehensive view of the immediate needs of the population and of social services warrants an educational focus on the deconstruction of knowledge and practices that have emerged from the reflexive and practical experiences of the participants throughout the teaching-learning process. The objective of the educational process should thus be to offer a space for the formulation of alternative perspectives.

The teaching of different professionals from the health sector in the Masters of Public Health in Peru held as its overall objective the deconstruction of concepts, practices, representations and meanings - facilitated by a critical analysis of daily life in connection to the local, regional, national and global contexts. The curriculum was based on texts covering the process of globalization, the process of health-sickness-treatment and the theoretical and methodological aspects of 'being' (subject, professional practices and the field of health itself conceived as a network of relations). The analysis and critical readings were supplemented largely by participants' interventions and reflections on the written texts, guided by the instructors' questions.

The process of personal and collective reflection was welcomed more by some than others, due in part to political issues of a collective nature and to concerns over the immediate need to respond to problems in the health system. Immediate measures are of greater urgency than a deliberation of the medium and long-term strategy. This priority is reinforced by the policies emerging from the higher levels of the health sector.

Nonetheless, it was interesting to see how the participants incorporated themselves into the debate, some in order to understand a reality beyond their daily life and others to deepen or to relate their experience to information from different sources and mediums. One large group comprised of professionals that work in rural areas, showed a greater engagement with the needs and problems of farm communities, and as a consequence responded with a vision of health that involved citizens themselves in service delivery.

This analysis of reality and its implications for daily practice highlighted the necessity to revise the tools that, as health professionals interested in the improvement of services and epidemiology, should be used. The general consensus was a recognition of the importance of the tools, though it was also suggested that that the tools should be recreated along with new innovative schemes for providing services.

A moment central to the participatory work of the professors and students was the declaration by a participant: *'how can we possibly change the situation, the problems, in health without changing the system...?'* The question itself suggests two potential answers with distinct underlying philosophies:

- 1) The first potential response is to 'go behind the system's back,' suggesting actions take advantage of room for manoeuvre without changing the status quo, while
- 2) The second possible answer is to directly challenge the system.

Some key resources on institutional contexts:

Pasteur, K. (2004)

Learning for Development: A literature review.

Lessons for Change in Policy and Organisations No 6, IDS/DFID, Brighton/London: Livelihoods Connect

Senge, P.M., Kleiner, A., Roberts, C., Ross, R.B. & Smith, B.J. (1994).

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In both cases, there are inherent risks, but also advantages. This explains how participants tend to shape their commitment to greater participation within the limits of the immutability of the system and the forces exerted by the central planners to impose their will at the local level. Consequently, there would be an obstacle to innovative thought, since within this context it is common to emphasize barriers and obstacles that do not allow change, no matter how small. What's more, the power of concepts themselves and of systems of thought constitutes yet another barrier or 'straight jacket' that acts against transformation.

This brings us to reconsider planning in health, as well as how to address the need to create greater spaces of discussion than already exist, asking ourselves the question, *'how can we manage the diversity of the processes that are emerging?'* This applies not only to the processes of this course, but also to other courses and indeed to the entire curriculum.

We also observed exclusion and self-exclusion – a result of the vertical, hierarchical authoritarian structure – that was expressed in the participation of some and the silence of others. Some discovered allies where they had least expected, often assuming that there had existed an ideological distance: 'I didn't know that the nurse thought like I do', 'together yet separate.' These comments also demonstrate various levels of recognition of the 'other' that are shaped by the structure of how people interact in the same work space. Thus the issues arise of how to promote the will to participate among those with a difficult life history, how to build proactive participation with them, how to facilitate individual self-liberation, how to transform the institution to make it more inclusive and how to insure that social difference and professional differentiation do not create a vertical structure.

Everyone, including instructors, has to be prepared to understand and incorporate diverse individuals and the expression of complex personal experiences beyond, as well as within, the classroom.

Battling resistance to change within the institutional context

Just as potential for transformative learning depends on the quality of relationships, the quality of relationships in turn depends on the wider institutional and environmental context. Trust, empathy and openness are important elements of transformative curricula and horizontal relationships, but in many higher education institutions relationships are in fact characterised by fear, hierarchy and reluctance for change. Institutions may actually control information as a means of preventing transformation. This creates pressure and further constrains teachers and students alike.

Many educational institutions are inherently quite conservative, if not politically then at least in their willingness to be innovative, creative and flexible. Higher education institutions often appear to be tasked with taking the world in a specific direction. There are increasing market pressures on most institutions, which want to be seen as competitive and delivering outputs and results. We all share the challenges of working against the grain, trying to be

authentic in competitive environments, knowing when to speak out and when to keep quiet, introducing participatory approaches in didactic cultures, scaling up new approaches, promoting interdisciplinarity. How do we move forward in this climate, and respond to the larger environmental pressures? How can we link to prevailing cultural and social structures and norms that place boundaries on what is possible, what might be learned, and how?

Some institutions are committed to certain goals and ideals that we can associate with, thus creating a platform upon which transformative learning may be supported. It was acknowledged at Dunford that individual or societal transformation cannot be predetermined, but the context may help to provide conditions, through availability of certain kinds of space, amenable to a more transformative process of teaching and learning. Even the constraints present in that context are critical dimensions of the transformation.

Assessment is another complex feature of the institutional as well as curricula context where teaching and learning take place. The environments we work in are often very focused on standard measures of achievement, grades and outputs, with little scope for more creative forms of evaluation or alternative definitions of success. We often lack the tools we need to show how more process-oriented and transformative approaches to learning actually work, and how the effects of these approaches can be measured.

A case study about institutional change: Institutions and working in a wider context

By Dennis Shirley, Boston College, USA

The participatory framework you provided created a space that enabled me to learn from others on multiple levels—personal, political and spiritual

Dennis Shirley, USA

For many years I have been involved in work linking higher education courses with community-based organizations that are struggling to advance a wide variety of social justice issues affiliated with access to education, housing, jobs, and health care. This work has been challenging not only because of the demands placed upon social activists but also because the inherent messiness of political processes often does not mesh neatly with the careful controlled, if somewhat contrived, culture of learning in most higher education courses. Like many educators with commitments to social change, I have sought to link university studies with real-world issues confronting urban communities so that students can fuse theory and practice in the on-the-ground lives of real people in real communities.

Recent experimentation in this area led me to discover that it was possible to develop positive outcomes with schools and community-based organizations with which I have collaborated. At the same time, a paradox opened up: while community stakeholders might express great enthusiasm for their collaboration with the university, university students themselves can express discomfort and even outright resistance to participatory practices. I have had to learn that for some students—often, those who have excelled in traditional university settings—the openness, unpredictability, and contestation that occurs in participatory courses can be highly unsettling. For others, the creativity unleashed by participatory courses can provide new opportunities for reconceptualising learning and for linking their university activities with the social needs of children in urban communities. In one recent course I taught, these two groups of students became strikingly polarized, with the former group insisting upon hierarchical and traditional university practices and the latter group accusing the former of complicity in systems of oppression. The class was very

stimulating, but I worried that the adversarial tone of some of the class discussions may have produced a defensiveness and rigidity that undermines the critical goals of open inquiry and dialogue.

Given student discomfort with participatory practices, I experienced something of a pedagogical crisis that was not only academic but also personal in nature. Should I return to more traditional university course structures, even though the community-based organizations with which we had collaborated were enthusiastic about the nature of our partnership and wanted it to continue in the future?

“By linking the personal with the political, the workshop allowed me to experience a deeper integration of self that was very energizing and will help me to sustain my work in the future”

Dennis Shirley, USA

Yet such a reversion to traditional academic cultures bears certain difficulties with it as well. In a narrow sense, my job is to prepare student teachers to thrive as educators in American schools. Yet many future teachers have had limited experience with other cultures and no contact with poor and working class populations that live in American inner cities. I have learned that having students study about problems of urban education in their university classes but not to scaffold direct, intentional engagement with urban populations simply defers a critical need for encounter, dialogue and exchange. When student teachers have graduated from universities without extended contact and modelling of respectful engagement with urban communities, they are often unprepared for the realities of urban teaching and over 50 percent leave the teaching profession in the first three years.

In this regard the LTT workshop in April at Dunford House was especially helpful. By integrating high levels of participant experiences and sharing of common challenges, I was able to articulate my uncertainty at this current stage of my teaching career and to work through my concerns in a supportive and engaging setting. I learned that others who have worked in the area of participatory practices have experienced similar kinds of opposition and that the complex nature of participation entails a mindful balancing of different constituent interests and needs. The workshop facilitators and participants helped me to reconceptualise my course so that participatory strategies could gradually be infused throughout the course in a scaffolded manner so that oppositional students have opportunities to experience participation without feeling engulfed by it. The common acknowledgment of the challenges of participatory learning, and the encouragement to continue experimenting, made the LTT workshop an invaluable contribution to my personal and professional growth at an emotionally-laden juncture of my career.

‘The workshop changed the way I think’

The drama of the team in which Robert was the ‘king’ made me realise that when things are decided from the top and looking down at other people, even though we are aiming at the same thing, nothing moves. What I saw from the drama was that they were aiming at something but it didn’t work. When they decided that the person at the top would go down, things changed and people were happy.

The drama represented well what happened in my department. Our strategic plan started from the top and addressed challenges faced by the university but with the arrival of a new boss, everybody became involved in the strategic plan even technical staff.

I realised that long journeys begin with small steps’

Elias Obudho, Kenya

Addressing relationships and identities within learning processes

Identities and relationships are crucial factors underpinning all dimensions of transformative teaching and learning. Who we are, how we act and what we do are inevitably at the core of relationships in educative processes, and indeed also for development and participation. Identities and realities underlie the three key dimensions we have looked at so far in this report, and are intrinsic to power dynamics within a learning environment and the wider institutional context, and likewise fundamental to the design and delivery of curricula.

At the workshop, participants shared experiences of using 'alternative' pedagogies that seek to simultaneously address individual and collective realities. Such approaches tend to be characterised by self-examination, shared responsibility for learning, collaborative work, and recognition of the constructed nature of knowledge at both group and individual levels.

Several participants spoke of their experiences in actively acknowledging and working with identities in processes of social change. Jennifer Margaret, a participant from New Zealand, described how her work with the Treaty Resource Centre builds on Freire's theories of adult education, and links in strongly with the idea of working with the 'oppressors' as well as the 'oppressed' to facilitate transformative learning processes. 'In at least one way, our work does not fit his or most other models for transformative education: we are members of dominant groups working mainly with others in dominant groups.' Likewise Carlos Cortez, spoke of working with both powerful and powerless groups within a community to facilitate experiential learning opportunities. He described a postgraduate program with the Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana (UAM) in Mexico City that aims to 'relate local social action with the experiences of students from different disciplines. Through this program we collaborate with poorest social groups, communities, and social organisations in their efforts to change their situation'.

The questions of who we are and what we are doing became intertwined and co-dependent, as participants spoke of the different 'hats' we wear in different situations. These conversations emphasised not only the importance of being aware and self-critically reflective, but also the necessity of recognizing the unique and heterogeneous contexts in which transformative teaching and learning takes place.

I believe in political solutions to political problems. But (hu)man's primary problems aren't political; they're philosophical. Until humans can solve their philosophical problems, they're condemned to solve their political problems over and over and over again. It's a cruel, repetitious bore... What are philosophical solutions? There's got to be poetry and magic. At every level.

Tom Robbins

A case study about identities and alternative pedagogies:

Where is the poetry and magic? An experience in arts-based learning at the Coady International Institute

By Nanci Lee, Coady Institute, Canada

The following are some arts-related strategies that I've used at the Coady International Institute in a couple of courses with mid-career community development workers from around the world. These include activists, NGO and community workers and public servants, some with Masters-level studies and others with very little formal education although most have a first degree.

Poetry as a springboard to worldviews

I have been facilitating a course, 'Philosophy of Development', as part of our five-month Diploma programme in Community-Based Development. To begin the course, I place a number of excerpts around the room from various religious leaders, activists, visionaries

and poets. All of the quotations deal in some way with social change. Participants are asked to sit beside the one that speaks most to them. Then we have an open discussion about what moved us in that quotation, how it fits into our lives, what we might share or differ with others sitting there too. I don't give the authors/poets names until after they have chosen and it's quite interesting how universal many of the values are, crossing regions, cultures and religions. The activity draws surprises too such as avid activists taking less politically-loaded quotations or Catholic priests choosing something from the K'oran. I find the exercise always lifts me from my assumptions and clichés.

Dance production as a risk-taking activity

The other arts-based learning activity that I tried in a four-week Certificate on Women's Leadership was a dance activity. We talked about the concept of leadership as about risk, trying on new hats, and challenging yourself. This activity was an interesting opportunity to do just that. The participants were asked, outside of the normal curriculum, to collectively decide on some sort of creative production to do at the end--it could be theatre, spoken word, song, dance or any combination. This group chose dance.

What was important was that there was no grade attached. It was simply a process. Those who normally took charge were encouraged to take a back seat and play more of a generating role this time. Those who normally supported others behind the scenes were encouraged to take charge. Everyone was encouraged to take their own risks within what they felt comfortable trying in this time and space. People did try on new hats. The woman who stepped forward as coordinator described herself as someone who always carried out other people's ideas.

We brought in a dance resource person who took us through fascinating exercises walking around the room - trying to find our own dance, while keeping the dance of the larger group. When you saw the group begin to stop, you were to stop. At one point, when everyone had stopped, one woman realized the power that she had and ran through everyone saying 'I'm the only one left. I'm the only one left.'

In another exercise, we were asked to dance individually blind-folded while a partner watched. Just watched. These exercises and images provided great mental symbolism for later discussions about the tension between individual and community, about real participation and processes that genuinely don't invite participation.

Finally, at one point there was conflict--quite a big one. I believe that culture cultivated in the classroom by everyone allowed the conflict to be rendered explicit and dealt with openly. A few aspects allowed this culture to flourish: a relatively small (20) like-minded group of women; expression through the arts and trust built up over frequent shared reflection. The women genuinely cared about one another. Throughout the course, particularly in the first week on personal change, people shared about themselves, how they work with others, 'hats' that they would like to try, where they have difficulties with conflict. So, in some ways it was a fairly natural process to pick up on these areas. We used the class time (even gave up curriculum time) to work through it, talk through it drawing on all of the text book conflict-resolution, learning styles, leadership styles and human relation material that we had talked about in class. I facilitated and was part of the experience.

The dance production at the end was wonderful - eclectic and varied like the women in the class. But for me the process was one of my most powerful learning experiences in adult education.

Other case studies on the LTT webpage:

Candee Basford
Action Learning in the community
(Ohio, USA)

Susan Goff
**Capacity Building Strategies Used
with Local Councils**
(Sydney, Australia)

Irene Guijt
**Facilitating interactive process of
change course**
(Learning By Design, Netherlands)

*Nimat Haféz Barazangi and
Davydd Greenwood*
**Evaluation Model of Cornell
University Undergraduate Action
Research Program**
(Ithaca, USA)

**Follow the 'learning and teaching
for transformation' links at
www.pnet.ids.ac.uk
to read the case studies**



Elias, Nanci and Tanya
prepare to depart

What worked well:

- We had women from the university and community come into the class to share their life story. Life stories, while not a direct expression of arts, reinforced the non-linear nature of leadership and leadership as 'coming into yourself' in order to drive change rather than the traditional idea of someone 'out front'
- Having an external dancer as a facilitator gave the process legitimacy and another interesting perspective
- Near daily reflection and open discussion of some sort to foster the type of environment where art/expression could flourish
- Using the arts activities to complement or contrast some of the theory provided new ways of engaging with the materials
- Opportunities for risk-taking were important. Alongside the course was a literary event hosted by the Coady Institute. Discussion of risk and 'trying on new hats' was constant throughout the course resulting in many women reading some of their personal writing at the event. For many it was their first time reading in public. Both the expression and the risk were, I would argue, equally important.

What might be done differently:

- Some of the material felt rushed. In future, I would take out some content to allow for depth, skill building, emergent learning and the reflection earlier discussed
- We had four guest facilitators and I facilitated throughout. In future, I would keep two facilitators throughout for continuity and greater ability to build a trust environment
- Would explore other means of arts expression as well
- Would try to make more effective use of life stories. They were not originally part of the curriculum but were introduced part way through to demonstrate that shyness is not a block for leadership
- Would integrate arts approaches in development such as theatre of the oppressed/street theatre

Questions that I ask myself as facilitator based on these experiences:

- Does this learning experience have the potential to surprise or teach me as well? In other words, does it have potential to be emergent learning based on the dynamics in the room?
- What issues would I be interested to explore and how might I like to explore them? (As opposed to 'What do they need to know?' and 'How should they do it?')
- Are there ways to engage participation that take us 'out of our heads'?
- How can we support risk-taking in a 'safe' and constructive environment?

Now, I look to insert poetry and magic in my curriculum under the assumption that insights come from connections across areas and new thinking. Our rational minds certainly have something to offer but our creative minds just may have more.

An invitation to join the LTT Initiative

The discussions represented in this report have sought to deepen understandings about the interrelationships between how we learn, who we are, what we do, and most importantly how critically conscious we are of these relationships. The concepts and ideas discussed throughout the LTT initiative, at the April workshop, and in the case studies have raised as many questions as they have answers. We look forward to continuing conversations and seeking to explore further the complex links between participation, development, education and social change—we look forward to where the river will take us.

If you have found this discussion of interest and would like to engage further in exploration and dialogue relating to these issues, please join the LTT initiative. You can be involved in different ways:

- **Join the e-discussion.** If you wish to join the dialogue and email discussion group, please send an email to lyris@lyris.ids.ac.uk with the following first line: subscribe learning Your Name. E.g. if your name is Paolo Freire, the first line of your message should read: subscribe learning Paolo Freire. The Welcome message will give details on how to post a message and manage your subscription to the discussion group.
- **Join an action research initiative** looking at processes of institutional change and organisational learning within institutions of higher learning (contact Susan Boser at sboser@iup.edu)
- **Check out our webspace** at www.pnet.ids.ac.uk and follow the topic guide links to 'learning and teaching for transformation'
- **Send feedback and comments about this report**

For further information about the LTT initiative, contact:
Peter Taylor (P.Taylor@ids.ac.uk) or LTT@ids.ac.uk.

'Community of Light'
Picture thanks to Candee Basford,
Participant in the e-fora



Annexes

I: References and other useful resources

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2: List of online resources

The Learning and Teaching for Transformation (LTT) webspace:
<http://www.pnet.ids.ac.uk> and follow the 'LTT' topic guide links

The Participation Resource Centre at IDS:
<http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip/information/index.html>

Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice (CARPP):
<http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp>

ActionResearch.Net: <http://www.actionresearch.net>

Action Research Tools: <http://www.actionresearch.org/>

Jean McNiff's website on action research in education:
<http://www.jeanmcniff.com/>

Experiential learning articles and critiques of David Kolb's theory:
<http://reviewing.co.uk/research/experiential.learning.htm>

LTT Publications from IDS

IDS Policy briefing

Learning to participate: the role of Higher Learning Institutions as development agents informed by earlier rounds of the discussions and an International Workshop on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (Apr 2003). Available in pdf at:
<http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/bookshop/briefs/PB20.pdf>

PLA notes (No. 48) *Learning and Teaching Participation* (Eds. P.Taylor and J. Fransman); a special thematic edition which includes papers submitted by a number of participants in the LTP dialogue is available from IIED. More information from PLA Notes at:
http://www.iied.org/sarl/pla_notes/

IDS Working Paper 219 (2004)

Taylor P and J Fransman (2004) *Learning and teaching participation: exploring the role of higher learning institutions as agents of development and social change*, working paper 219, Brighton, Institute of Development Studies.

3: List of participants and contact information

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4: Agenda from the LTT workshop: Framework for the Conversations

SUNDAY 24 April

Dinner (buffet from 7pm, with food available for those arriving on late flights)

info bazaar Set-up stalls
Informal introductions and welcome
Agree norms/ group 'contract'

MONDAY 25 April

Breakfast (7.30)

morning session (8.30-12) **Introductions** Find volunteers for 'daily management group':
What has brought us here and where are we - process working group each day
hoping to go? - documentation each day

coffee break 10am

Lunch (12-2)

afternoon session (2-4) **What is 'learning and teaching for transformation'** Small group discussions, feeding back into a short plenary
Finding a common language and understanding the meaning
- What is it?
- What enables it?
- What constrains it? Groups to document for themselves and find creative ways of sharing ideas with others. Presentations on Tuesday morning

Afternoon tea and open space (4-6) Unstructured time for sharing of methods, ideas, activities, personal reflection etc

Dinner 6.30pm **Pub? Video? Drama/ music preparation?**

TUESDAY 26 April

Breakfast (7.30)

morning session (8.30-12) **Continuing on from 'what is learning and teaching for transformation'** Presentations integrated with plenary discussion

coffee break from 10am Synthesising and looking forward Small groups around 6 central themes on LTT web-space - discussion then presenting back to group

Streamlining emerging themes in the workshop and LTT dialogue

Lunch (12-2) possibly 1pm?

afternoon session (2-4) **Visioning** Questions to be agreed with whole group; depend on emerging themes
Is there a value in a collective approach to taking the LTT initiative forward?

Afternoon tea and open space (4-5) IDS guests arrive 4pm

Special session (5-6) **Presenting the highlights and themes of workshop so far** Plenary discussion and performance?!
Questions and comments from new arrivals

Wine & cheese reception 6pm

Special dinner 7pm

IDS minibus leaves at 9pm

WEDNESDAY 25 April

Breakfast (7.30)

morning session (8.30-12) **Building a platform:**
Where to from here?

Lunch (12-2)

afternoon session (2-4) **Thank you** Sowing seeds for continuing the conversations
Feedback and happy travels

5: Deconstrucción del proceso salud-enfermedad-atención como recurso metodológico

By Tanya Taype Castillo and Eduino Vidal Soto,
Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia

Los cambios en salud y las dificultades para brindar una mejor atención son algunas de las características del sector a las que los profesionales de la salud responden cotidianamente. Trabajar en el aula con una mirada comprensiva y de acción inmediata frente a las necesidades de los servicios y de la población, amerita una actividad docente centrada en la deconstrucción de saberes y prácticas y en la configuración de saberes y prácticas emergentes a lo largo de la experiencia reflexiva y práctica del participante a lo largo del proceso enseñanza-aprendizaje, a fin de ofrecer un espacio para la configuración de respuestas alternativas.

El trabajo didáctico con diferentes profesionales del sector salud en una Maestría en Salud Pública en el Perú, tuvo como intención deconstruir conceptos, prácticas, representaciones y significados, a partir del análisis crítico de su vida cotidiana en relación con el contexto local, regional, nacional, mundial. Se inició el trabajo con textos relacionados que trataban sobre el proceso de globalización, el proceso salud-enfermedad-atención y los aspectos teórico-metodológicos vinculados con el "ser" (sujeto, práctica profesional y el campo de la salud pensada como red de relaciones). El análisis y lectura crítica se apoyaron, principalmente, en las intervenciones de los participantes a partir de la lectura de textos y de preguntas motivadoras que dirigían hacia procesos de reflexión.

En los procesos de cuestionamiento personal y colectivo se encontró acogida en unos y no en otros; esto se debería en parte a las motivaciones políticas de carácter colectivo y a preocupaciones y necesidades inmediatas por atender y dar respuesta a los problemas de los establecimientos de atención. Las medidas o acciones inmediatas apremian por encima de lo que puede significar una respuesta a mediano o largo plazo, y a su vez están condicionadas por las políticas que provienen del nivel central del sector salud.

Sin embargo, fue interesante ver cómo los participantes se fueron involucrando afectivamente en el debate, unos para comprender una realidad mayor a su vida cotidiana y otros para profundizar o interrelacionar información que provenía de diferentes espacios y medios. Un grupo significativo fue el conformado por profesionales que laboraban en zonas rurales, en los que se observó una mayor involucramiento con las necesidades y problemas de las comunidades campesinas, y con ello respuestas que involucraban a la población en sus acciones de salud.

Este análisis de la realidad y del impacto o influencia de esta en sus prácticas cotidianas devino en la necesidad de revisar las herramientas que, como profesionales de la salud interesados en la gestión de los servicios y la epidemiología, debían utilizar o asumir. El sentir general fue de reconocimiento de la importancia de ellas, aunque se planteó la necesidad de re-crearlas y de generar otras propuestas innovadoras. Por lo general, en la discusión se identificaron los límites y vacíos de tales herramientas gerenciales y epidemiológicas.

Un momento central al trabajo participativo de profesores y estudiantes, fue la expresión de un participante: "¿cómo hacemos para cambiar la situación/la problemática en salud sin cambiar al sistema...?". Pregunta que significó dos posiciones: 1. la de "sacarle la vuelta al sistema", es decir actuar en el espacio en que se esté sin mover demasiado el status quo, y 2. la otra, más bien de cuestionamiento, frente al sistema y de acción inmediata.

En ambos casos se reconocieron los riesgos, pero también las ventajas. Esto explicita el posicionamiento de los participantes frente a la inmutabilidad del sistema, o a cuánta presión puede ejercer el sistema central para determinar qué ocurre en el nivel local, y con ello definir el compromiso personal por una mayor participación. Entonces, habría un problema con el pensamiento innovador, pues desde el entorno es frecuente el reconocimiento de barreras, obstáculos que no permitirían el cambio por más pequeño que éste sea. Asimismo, la fuerza de nuestras concepciones, o de nuestro pensamiento sistémico, se constituye en otra barrera o "camisa de fuerza" que no facilita la transformación.

Esto nos lleva a repensar la gestión en salud, así como atender la necesidad de crear espacios de discusión mayor a los ya establecidos y de respondernos la cuestión de "¿cómo hacer para manejar la diversidad de procesos que van surgiendo?" No solo en este curso, sino también en relación con los otros, y por tanto con el currículo.

Se observó, además, marginación/automarginación, que a su vez es expresión de una estructura vertical-jerárquica-autoritaria, de unos que participaban frente a otros que guardaban silencio, de unos que descubrían a sus pares, aunque no les era posible involucrarse con ellos, y otros que los asumían distanciados: "yo no sabía que la señorita enfermera pensara como yo", "juntos pero separados". Estas expresiones nos muestran también varios niveles de reconocimiento del "otro" que no pasa solo por saber que existen, sino también se trata de la interrelación entre quienes trabajan en un mismo espacio. Surge entonces el tema de ¿cómo despertar a la intención de participar en aquellas personas marcadas por un historia de vida difícil?, ¿cómo generar una participación intencionada o propositiva desde ellos?, ¿cómo promover la autoliberación individual?, ¿cómo transformar la institución, cómo hacerla más inclusiva? y ¿cómo hacer para que la diferencia, la diferenciación profesional, no sirva para instituir una estructura vertical?.

Este hecho muestra que unos y otros (incluidos docentes) tendríamos que estar preparados para interpretarlos e incorporarlos, pues habría de fondo en este grupo una complejidad mayor respecto de sus experiencias personales no solo en el aula sino también en los diferentes espacios donde se mueven. Habría de reconocer que esta experiencia aunque pequeña y puntual, asumió una carga pasiva bastante importante y nos plantea retos en términos de personas y rediseños curriculares en la formación de sujetos individuales y colectivos, en salud pública.

currents of change

“I think participatory education is about transforming people. And transformative education is the process in which we, first of all, challenge power relations in order to create a safe environment so that different voices can emerge and be heard – but we cannot stop there. People need to say things, but they also need to reflect and question themselves in relation to what they are saying.”

Learning and Teaching for Transformation e-forum participant

“There is always a pattern that announces a new beginning, and for me that pattern was the LTT workshop.”

Vusumuzi Sithole, South Africa

In April 2005, a diverse group of people from 14 countries and 20 different institutions came together for a workshop on learning, teaching and social change. This event formed an important milestone in the “Learning and Teaching for Transformation” (LTT) initiative. Based on international dialogue and cooperation, the LTT initiative aims to enhance the capacity of higher education institutions to develop and deliver effective programmes that contribute to a wider transformation of individuals, institutions and society. Inspired by the discussions that took place at the workshop, this report, “Currents of Change”, seeks to deepen understandings about the key issues concerning the interrelationships between education, participation, and social change.



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