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Methods of Teaching Learning Process

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Abstract: ***Promoting the learning and achievement of pupils is a main aim of school education. Teaching is the main way of achieving this. Teaching and learning are what ultimately make a difference in the mind of the learner, and thus affect knowledge, skills, attitudes and the capacity of young people to contribute to contemporary societies. Most teachers retain a strong sense of commitment to teaching and learning, despite workload pressures and often unwelcome external requirements. Many work assiduously to improve the effectiveness of their practices, for instance through undertaking classroom inquiry and other reflective activities. From this perspective, the role of education policy is to provide guidance, resource and accountability to support high quality teaching and learning. Educational research complements it by using careful description and analysis to offer insights and new knowledge about educational processes and outcomes. The Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP) is one such contribution.***

1. Introduction

According to **Vygotsky, 1978, p. 90** - *"Learning is not development; however, properly organized learning results in mental development and sets in motion a variety of developmental processes that would be impossible apart from learning."*

These words by Lev Vygotsky address one of the most fundamental concerns for anyone dealing with children - parents, teachers, developmental psychologists and others. How are teaching, learning, and the development of children's minds related? Are these processes independent, or do they influence each other, and if the latter, then in what way and by what means? For example, can qualitatively new levels of intelligence or critical thinking be achieved as result of learning? If so, what kind of learning can lead to such results and how should teaching be organized to ensure that this kind of learning takes place? The way we answer these questions depends on what we believe about such basic theoretical matters as the very nature of mind and its development. These answers also crucially affect the ways we organize the processes of teaching-and-learning. For example, if we believe that children's minds develop according to 'internally-driven' laws, then we will be mostly concerned with detecting these laws so that we can tailor teaching processes to students' naturally unfolding mental capacities. If, on the contrary, we believe that children's minds can be developed through properly organized teaching-and learning, then our primary concern should be to construct those forms of teaching-and learning that do have a developmental impact on the minds of our students. We first take a brief look at how the relationships between teaching, learning, and development have been approached in several historically prominent theories in psychology. Then we focus on how this issue has been conceptualized in sociocultural theory. After that, in the major part of this chapter, we focus on how these theoretical formulations were elaborated and empirically tested by Gal'perin and his colleagues. In particular, we demonstrate how their research helps us to understand why and how developmental processes are fundamentally dependent upon educational practices and associated learning. Finally, we argue that, by breaking the vicious circle that prevails in traditional thinking about learning, teaching and development, this approach suggests how to arrange teaching-and-learning processes in such a way that they indeed lead to a profound developmental change in children's minds. It is important too that the learning environment of the school be extended to involve the home and the community for health is so intricately related to both. Health education will take on more meaning as partnerships with the home, school, and community develop and grow. Throughout the teaching and learning process instruction should be guided by the goals and objectives of the program. Students must be actively involved and provided with the opportunity to experience success. Learning must be meaningful and appropriate for the child's cultural environment. Learning experiences must be varied and an atmosphere of support must be provided. The active involvement of the whole child: the cognitive, aesthetic, physical and social dimensions, is key in a comprehensive school health program. **In 2000,** an initial group of TLRP projects was funded to investigate aspects of teaching and learning in formal and informal educational settings in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. By 2010, all phases of education, from early year's provision to the learning of older people, will have been investigated. Because many of the early projects were concerned with teaching and learning in schools, we can conduct a 2006 'stocktake' of some of the big themes which are emerging in relation to this sector. Twenty school-focused projects, networks of projects and individual research fellowships are drawn on, directly or indirectly, in this TLRP Commentary. Further analyses will be published in due course.

In the review of TLRP's school-focused research that follows, we have clustered projects under five headings representing a progressive widening of focus. They are:-

- Learning in specific curriculum areas
- Learning across the curriculum
- The use of ICT to enhance learning
- Environments for better learning
- Schools and improvement

2. Research on Teaching, Learning, and Development: Traditional Gaps and Persisting Controversies:-

The relationship between teaching, learning, and development has an interesting history in psychology, characterized more by a shifting of attention and

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prioritization between these processes than by a focus on their inter-relationships. With some notable exceptions, such as the work of John Dewey, these relationships were largely ignored in psychological theories at the beginning of the last century. The role of learning in development came to the fore with the rise of behaviorism, which attempted to specify the learning mechanisms that underpinned changes in behavior. Behaviorists, however, excluded mental processes from the scope of their analyses, and therefore could have nothing to say about the development of these processes. Besides, behaviorist theories were grounded in research on how animals learn to perform behaviors. Children's learning, particularly at school, was not the direct focus. Although some inferences were drawn from animal studies about the teaching and upbringing of children, this approach Could not and did not offer much insight into how teaching-and-learning affects the development of mind. However, by the mid-1970s, with the waning influence of behaviorism and the rise of the new cognitive theory, learning itself ceased to attract attention **(cf., Stevenson, 1983).**

Thus the complex role of teaching-and-learning in mental development has essentially been ignored in most of the prominent approaches in psychology. How specific activities in which learners engage, and the mental tools that they learn to use, affect the development of their minds is a question that has rarely been clearly formulated, let alone satisfactory resolved. Today, teaching, learning and development continue to be viewed by many as processes that are essentially different from each other or only superficially related. For example, despite growing evidence that intelligence can be learned and taught (see e.g. Ceci, 1991; Perkins, 1997), there is practically no debate about the mechanisms that make this possible. Even when links between learning and development are highlighted (e.g., Human Development, 1995, special issue), learning tends to be restricted to individual experiences rather than seen in relation to schooling. In otherworld's, large gaps remain in the study of the mechanisms that underlie and possibly link all three processes - teaching, learning, and cognitive development. It took a whole new approach to mind and human development-- sociocultural, or 'cultural-historical activity' theory -- to make the analysis of links between teaching, learning and development both possible and necessary. In fact, conceptualizing this relationship has been a pivotal element in this approach.

3. Professional Learning Processes

Three professional learning processes and their associated outcomes are proposed: cueing and retrieving prior knowledge, becoming aware of new information and skills, and creating dissonance with a teacher's current position. These processes are not mutually exclusive: all may be present in a given professional learning opportunity. The three processes and their associated outcomes are set out in Figure 2.2. The first process, cueing prior knowledge, occurs when the professional learning experience serves to surface for teachers what they already know. The second involves developing teachers' awareness of information and skills that are consistent with their current values and beliefs. This may occur at a relatively superficial level, or involve deeper learning. The final process involves creating dissonance with a teacher's current position and is activated when what is currently known and believed is incongruent with what is proposed. The more inclusive term, 'position', is used in this third process instead of 'knowledge' because knowledge is only one component of possible dissonance. Incongruities are also likely to involve attitudes and values and cover a range of possibilities, such as the nature and motivations of students, forms of effective pedagogy, and what might count as important curriculum content. In presenting this model of learning, we make the underlying assumption that adult professional learning is fundamentally similar to that of student learning10. It is not intended to discount the obvious differences between adult and student learning situations, such as the richer life experiences from which adults draw, the learning contexts in which they occur, and the greater demand adults place on the relevance of learning in order to engage11. Rather it is assumed that the underlying processes and the conditions that promote them are similar in each case.

TLRP findings confirm that pupils, teachers and schools require a sense of purpose and agency, active engagement, an attitude of critical inquiry, and the motivation, will and knowledge to bring about change. But they cannot do this alone. Communication and collaboration are at the heart of learning and change, between pupil and pupil, pupil and teacher, teacher and teacher, teacher and parent, and teacher and researcher. Communication and collaboration between practitioners and policy-makers are also vital, and we believe that researchers can contribute helpfully to this conversation too.

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