Abstract

In my attempts to developing students’ critical and reflexive world-view, I have seen three problems: the first was students’ lack of ability to critically problematize their learning. The second was students’ unawareness of their own preconceived ideas on important theoretical concepts. The third was the difficulty in learning abstract concepts. To find a way to tackle these problems, I developed an associative drawing-exercise. In this paper I will describe and reflect on this pedagogic method. The aim of this paper is to reflect upon how visual practices, such as drawing, can be used in learning processes where abstract theoretical concepts are to be learned and understood.

My empirical material is based student-interviews as well as autoethnography. Theoretically I lean on a cultural Bourdieuan and feminist power-perspective, and to understand practical epistemology I use Young, Schön, Dewey and Aristotel, and to hooks, Taguchi and Selander & Kress for creating critical agency through multi-modal ways of learning.

My main findings are, that by creating an anomaly for students, by using drawings and communal painting, instead of expected traditional-desk-lecturing
for the “teaching” of abstract theoretical concepts, students learn more. The
drawings become tools for illuminating preconceptions, raising awareness, and
getting a fuller understanding of the meaning of concepts. By drawing and dis-
cussing together, students are faced with different images of the same concept
and are enabled to develop (self)critical approaches to their learning. Through
the aid of a simple drawing exercise, students have thus managed to both learn,
and develop a critical approach to learning.

Keywords

Drawing, Theoretical concepts, Critical reflection, Learning by doing, stereotypes.