

# Quality in Teaching and Teacher Education

*International Perspectives  
from a Changing World*

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**PART 2**

***Quality Teaching and Teacher  
Education in Times of Crisis and  
Uncertainty***

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## **Developing Emancipatory Online Learning Environments in Quality Teacher Education**

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### **Abstract**

The chapter discusses the development of emancipatory online learning environments in quality teacher education. Under the uncertainty of a changing world caused by COVID-19 pandemic, teachers were required to adapt their teaching to online learning environments. Additionally, they had to learn how to design interactive and quality online learning environments. Against this backdrop, it is necessary to raise new questions about what quality teaching means in online learning environments. Discourses on quality teaching are commonly associated with teacher effectiveness. We argue, however, that quality teaching in teacher education also implies thinking about emancipatory pedagogical approaches in the development of (online) learning environments. In this sense, we explore emancipatory ways of understanding quality in (online learning) teacher education. First, we elaborate on quality debates in teacher education. Second, we focus on a specific dimension of quality teaching, that is, the development of (online) learning environments. Third, we explore critical perspectives and emancipatory pedagogical approaches in teacher education. Last, we advise teaching strategies to create online learning environments with a focus on emancipatory pedagogical approaches. As a result, teaching strategies are suggested to connect quality online learning environments to emancipatory pedagogical approaches.

### **Keywords**

Quality teaching – Teacher education – Pedagogy – Emancipation – Online learning environment – COVID-19

## **Introduction**

In times of crisis, under the uncertainty of a changing world, teacher educators have been required to adapt their teaching from face-to-face to online learning environments. This shift has been a tendency around the globe caused by Covid-19 pandemic. Teacher educators not only have faced the need to learn how to design quality online learning environments, but also most of them have had to learn how to work and to integrate technologies to their educational practices (Arroyo et al., 2018; Tur Porres & Ires Correa, 2020). Furthermore, this shift has also implied a challenge for students, regarding connectivity, internet access and electronic devices to be used during lectures. For instance, some families must share one computer with various family members and students access lectures with their cell-phones.

In this chapter, we tackle the issue of developing emancipatory online learning environments in quality teacher education. Taking this on board, this chapter raises questions about what quality teaching means in online learning environments and what are potential implications for teacher education. We claim that online teaching is not only about learning how to use Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) tools, virtual platforms, among other resources, and adapting teaching strategies to online learning environments, but it is also about thinking education in new emancipatory ways. To address this issue, quality debates in teacher education, and more particularly, quality online learning environments in teacher education are elaborated. Then, critical perspectives and emancipatory pedagogical approaches with a focus on quality teacher education are discussed. Last, we share some teaching strategies to inspire emancipatory pedagogical approaches within (quality) online learning environments.

## **Quality in Teacher Education**

Quality in teacher education is a concept that can be understood from different traditions and debates; it can be related to evaluation, effectiveness, among other standpoints. For instance, debates on quality teaching are commonly associated with teacher effectiveness (Borich, 2000; Hénard & Roseveare, 2012; Ko & Sammons, 2012; Mincu, 2015; Lampert et al., 2018; Rice, 2003; Sakarneh, 2011). Nonetheless, we argue that quality teacher education also implies thinking about pedagogical approaches that enhance the emancipatory potential of both face-to-face and online learning environments. Hence, we explore ways of understanding quality

teaching in online learning teacher education along with critical perspectives and emancipatory pedagogical approaches in education.

With regards to quality in teacher education, Hénard and Roseveare (2012, p. 7) have paid considerable attention to the dimensions of quality teaching,

including the effective design of curriculum and course content, a variety of learning contexts (including guided independent study, project-based learning, collaborative learning, experimentation, etc.), soliciting and using feedback, and effective assessment of learning outcomes. It also involves well-adapted learning environments and student support services.

In their contribution, the authors highlighted a multilevel interdependent approach to understand quality teaching at institutional, programme, and individual levels. At institutional level, the authors gave substantial attention to 'projects such as policy design, and support to organisation and internal quality assurance systems' (Hénard & Roseveare, 2012, p. 7). With respect to programme level, they elaborated on actions for measuring, enhancing the design, content and delivery of the programmes within a department or a school. Finally, the authors discussed the individual level, including

initiatives that help teachers achieve their mission, encouraging them to innovate and to support improvements to student learning and adopt a learner oriented focus. These three levels are essential and inter-dependent. However, supporting quality teaching at the programme level is key so as to ensure improvement in quality teaching at the discipline level and across the institution. (Hénard & Roseveare, 2012, p. 7)

According to Wang et al. (2011, p. 333) quality teaching in teacher education is not only a matter of applying cognitive resources, but rather of 'changing prospective teachers' beliefs through engaging them in reflections about their own learning and teaching experiences and challenging them with alternative ideas and models of teaching'. Similar findings emerged from Loughran (2017) who reflected on the context wherein teacher educators work and how quality teaching and learning environments can be promoted. This approach indicates that quality teaching implies thinking about specific teaching and learning contexts. In common with Greene (1988), quality suggests a link between teaching, thinking, and transforming the reality.

In following this argument, quality debates that prescribe outcomes in teacher education, based on dominant discourses of effectiveness, 'marks the end of diversity, movement and experimentation (...), fixing it in perpetuity to a tried, proven and unchanging formula' (Dahlberg et al., 2013, p. viii). This 'unchanging formula' in an uncertain world does not work. Moreover, a contextualised research is needed to face with rapid changes; what works in a particular context, may not work in another one. In this light, there are no 'universal' answers for good/quality practices, rather, there are local practices that may teach us what works in local contexts and perhaps can be transferred to other contexts as lessons learned. To some extent, these studies challenge our understanding of quality teaching in different local contexts and the required transition from 'in-person' to 'online' teaching contexts.

### ***What is Quality about in Online Learning Environments?***

First, it is necessary to define what online learning is about; it refers to teaching and learning processes that are mediated by virtual learning environments. In contrast with traditional classroom contexts, interactions can occur at different times and places through the web platform (Bernard et al., 2014; Chigeza & Halbert, 2014; Northey et al., 2015; Pellas & Kazanidis, 2015; UNESCO, 2002).

To discuss about quality in online learning, we must address the distinction between online education and remote teaching. Interesting discussion on this issue one might find in the work: *Reimagining the new pedagogical possibilities for universities post-Covid-19* (see Peters et al., 2020).

With regards to learning environments, even if it is generally agreed that are a relevant dimension in quality teaching, quality online learning environments need to be studied further in COVID-19 pandemic and post-pandemic contexts. Interestingly, the design of collaborative and challenging online learning environments become significant to support students (Bransford et al., 2000; Brindley et al., 2009; Capdeferro & Romero, 2012; Kumi-Yeboah, 2018).

Quality discourses on prescriptive solutions about technology applied to education practices should be challenged to the context and the local needs (Biesta, 2009, 2016; Dahlberg et al., 2013; Snoek et al., 2012). Despite the use we can make of open educational resources platform, cultural diversity required a thoughtful design of online learning practices.

In line with this, it is relevant to discuss what will happen after COVID-19 pandemic and what will be the place of school and face-to-face learning against online education. König et al. (2020, pp. 168-169) pointed out that

... school remains the obligatory environment for student learning with teachers responsible for providing structured learning opportunities (...) [S]chools should develop their concepts towards blended learning, that is, a strategic combination of presence at school and structured approaches to student learning at home.

Against this background, a crucial question is 'what makes an online learning environment good in COVID-19 times? Studies about learning environments have suggested that interactive environments may support quality and meaningful students' learning (Bascia, 2014). Accordingly, we argue that quality online environments may support learning when reflective practices play a role (Schön, 1983, 1990). An environment, therefore, that engages teachers and students with reflective practices and action, with clear purposes and challenges, will have an impact on the learning experience. Like Reggio Emilia schools' approach, the environment may become a 'third teacher' that 'opens' the doors for participation and culture (Ceppi & Zini, 1998; Tur Porres, 2020). The concept used in Reggio Emilia schools of the environment as third teacher was elaborated by Malaguzzi (2001). Also, Hoyuelos (2005) pointed out that learning environments should be collectively designed to motivate participation of all stakeholders within education contexts; that is, the teacher, the students, the community. Moreover, Rinaldi (2009) highlighted the flexibility of learning environments to collect personal and group stories documented through dialogue. We agree that the design of learning environments is also important in online learning and it can transform the experience of teachers and students to engage with the content. A central issue in developing contextualised online learning environments is to consider culture relevant content and to encourage participation and critical reflection. Accordingly, integrating interactive tools to motivate the discussion, the content appraisal and critical reflection among participants is central to promote change in education during COVID-19 times.

#### Emancipatory pedagogical approaches in teacher education

The tension between autonomy and adaptation to the status quo is a core process to understand emancipation in education (Adorno, 1998). Interestingly, the concept of emancipation has different roots, according to political, philosophical, economic, social, and educational perspectives (Biesta, 2008; Bingham & Biesta, 2010). For instance, in the critical theory tradition, emancipation is



acknowledged as an act of liberation of oppressive circumstances. This central notion of autonomy and liberation can be identified in Freire's well-known book, *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (Freire, 2014) that develops a pedagogical approach to think liberatory and emancipatory education opportunities through critical dialogue, conscientization and change, for individual and social transformation.

With regards to emancipatory pedagogies, we agree with Nouri and *Sajjadi* (2014, p. 78) that they involve

a way of thinking about, negotiating, and transforming the relationships in classroom teaching, the production of knowledge, the institutional structures of the school, and the social and material relations of the wider community, society, and nation-state.

In this work, emancipatory pedagogical approaches are understood as a critical dimension that challenges and transforms pedagogical relations among the teacher, the students, the content, and the online learning environment. This approach is related to the work of Freire (2014) wherein emancipation emerges in the pedagogical relation through critical dialogue and conscientization, that ultimately leads to action upon individual and social transformation.

The ideas developed by Freire (2014) with regards to education as a means of liberation for the oppressed population, gained a relevant place in social, political, and educational movements of resistance towards oppressive structures. Freire's problem-posing education helped teachers and students engaging with processes of inquiry and critical thinking to overcome oppression and to achieve equality. For Freire (2014), the world is the object of reflection and action for change. Thus, social and cultural reality matters in education for emancipation and change. In this regard, a critical reading and dialogue of the world may lead to become aware of power relations and possible mechanisms of oppression operating in society.

Moreover, for Freire (2014) by reading the 'word' we could read the 'world', and hence, we could decode and transform reality. A pedagogical approach used for decoding the word and the world was 'culture circles' that enabled participants to read the world in meaningful ways (Tur Porres et al., 2014). In this way, Freire's pedagogical approach involved political engagement within educational practices and emancipatory processes that lead to individual and social transformation. As a result, through education individuals may become emancipated and orient their actions towards broader social struggles to achieve social emancipation.

Consequently, Freire (2014) believed that through education we could change existing conditions of inequality (oppressed/oppressors) through a three-step process:

- naming the world (Word),
- reflecting on it (Work), and
- acting upon reality towards social change (Praxis).

In common with Freire's view (2014), we argue that bringing the world into 'virtual' classrooms may contribute to promote critical dialogue, conscientization and action towards thinking and transforming the world surrounding us. Furthermore, reading the world within COVID-19 pandemic may provide teachers and students the opportunity of acting upon the transformation of pedagogical approaches and relations mediated by technology and online interactions.

Likewise, Peters et al. (2020, p. 2) we agree that 'the COVID-19 pandemic offers us the opportunity to rethink not only new digital, online, and pedagogical possibilities but also the basic purposes of education, and how renewed vision of education might be harnessed to develop more democratic and just societies.'

Following from the above, we argue that online teaching in COVID-19 pandemic should not be framed as a simple adaptation from in-person teaching to online learning with the use of ICT tools. Instead, we state that creating emancipatory online learning environments is a renewed way of understanding education.

## **Method**

This study used a review on the move from face-to-face pedagogical approaches to virtual learning environments that teacher educators have faced with the emergency of COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the review and conceptual framework were oriented to relevant published scholarly works on three domains: (a) quality in teacher education, (b) online learning environments and (c) emancipatory pedagogical approaches. This method helped us gaining understanding of quality and online learning environments in teacher education, to suggest teaching strategies that motivate quality online learning environments with a focus on emancipatory pedagogical approaches.

## **Rethinking online (emancipatory) learning environments: a call for quality in teacher education**

Designing quality and emancipatory online learning environments implies a contextualised exploration of good practices required in the transition from 'in-person' to 'online' teaching contexts. With 'good practices' we refer to consider local needs and cultural diversity towards the development of online contents and learning environments. In this light, we argue that an emancipatory approach to online learning includes considering environments that respond to the emergency of COVID-19 and reflect on new ways of understanding education.

Following from the above, the design of emancipatory online learning environments may allow us – in agreement with Freire (2014) – to bring the 'world' into discussion in 'virtual classrooms'. Online learning as well as face-to-face teaching may contribute to promote critical dialogue and conscientization towards individual and social change. Thus, emancipatory online learning environments need to create conditions for participation in meaningful ways. A collaborative approach must be supported, to share opinions with respect and an in-depth level of understanding.

In common with Simons and Masschelein (2008) who elaborated on learning environments that redefined teachers as designers, we argue that teachers' pedagogical approach is not to become a 'designer' of virtual environments; however, the development of reflective and inquiry-based environments may help supporting emancipatory pedagogical approaches in online learning teacher education. Furthermore, likewise Masschelein and Simons (2015, p. 93) we agree that

ICT may have a unique potential to create attentiveness (indeed, the screen has the ability to attract our attention in an unprecedented way) and to present and unlock the world – at least when ICT is freed from the many attempts to privatise, regulate and market it. (...) but the challenge is whether and how it can truly bring something to life, generate interest, bring about the experience of sharing (gathering around a 'common good') and enable one to renew the world. In this sense, making information, knowledge and expertise available is not the same as making something public. Screens – just as a black board – might have a tremendous ability to attract attention, exact concentration and gather people around something, but the challenge is to explore how screens help to create a (common) presence and enable study and practice.

Against this background, online learning environments that support the attention of students and teachers towards 'a thing in common' may also create opportunities for emancipation with a Rancièrian's (1991) perspective. Thus, 'directing the students' attention to observe, to think, to verify and to translate for themselves' (Tur Porres et al., 2020, p. 30) represents a challenge to connect online learning with emancipatory learning environments.

Equally important to direct students' attention towards a thing in common is to transform online learning environments in communities that construct knowledge in own creative ways. This includes becoming familiar and directing one's own attention to ICT tools, virtual platforms and interactive resources that embrace diversity for action.

### ***Teaching Strategies with a Focus on Emancipatory Pedagogical Approaches***

The conceptual framework has been oriented to review and analyse relevant published scholarly works concerning quality in teacher education and (emancipatory) online learning environments during COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. This qualitative analysis of scholarly works on quality teacher education and online learning environments is accompanied by some teaching strategies proposals in view of emancipatory pedagogical approaches.

A model that includes an emancipatory pedagogical approach in the pedagogical relation among the teachers, the students, the content, and the online learning environments is used (see Figure 7.1):

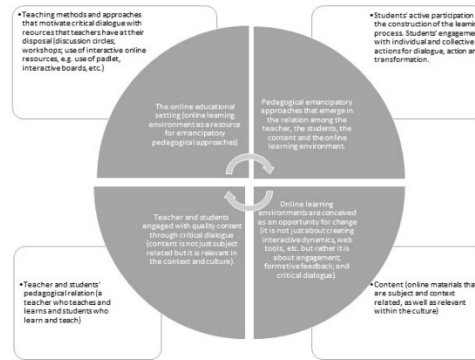


FIGURE 7.1 Emancipatory pedagogical approaches in online learning environments

In this model,

- The educational setting matters, hence, the online learning environment becomes a source for emancipatory pedagogical approaches.
- The emancipatory pedagogical approaches are situated in the pedagogical relation among the teacher, the students, the content, and the online learning environment.
- The teachers and students engage with opportunities for dialogue, discussion groups/boards, pre-session and live session talks, activities, challenges, projects.

Against this background, it is worth mentioning that we do not aim at designing online tools or websites to work with students; rather, we elaborate on the need of creating conditions for critical dialogue, reflection, and action. In this sense, a mentoring teaching approach in online classes is important, thus, the number of students per group is also significant to achieve an emancipatory pedagogical approach, and to reconnect quality in teacher education with online learning. Also, formative assessment and feedback is needed in this approach. In doing so, the use of 'breakout rooms' with a purpose for discussion are useful to help students actively engaging in the discussion. It is also interesting to have a spokesperson per group that shares the opinion of the small group to motivate the discussion in the broad

group. Additionally, the way we interact in the broad group can be adapted to the group needs; for instance, students' opinion can be shared through a *Padlet*, the interactive whiteboard annotation tool of *Zoom*, among other options. These tools are a way of facilitating dialogue, but they do not replace the content and conversation that emerge within the group. This is a significant point of departure to create quality online learning environments, the interactive tools are not the aim and outcome of online learning, rather they are ways of facilitating education. Moreover, a model that develops quality online learning environments needs to be advanced on inclusive and intercultural perspectives to fulfil the potential of all participants.

#### Examples of emancipatory practices

To illustrate the proposed model, below we describe two examples that are directly connected with the model and ways of putting it into practice.

##### *Example 1*

In this example,

- The educational setting is online; it considers asynchronous activities (pre-live session tasks) and synchronous activities (during the live session).
- The emancipatory pedagogical approach emerged in the pedagogical relation among the teacher, the students, the content, and the online learning environment through the creation of online 'discussion circles'.
- The teachers and students engage with opportunities for critical dialogue through 'discussion circles'. It is significant to consider that the selected text for discussion must accomplish the prerequisite of being inclusive, context related and hence relevant within the culture.

The example of practice to integrate emancipatory approaches in line with Freire's view is to include 'discussion circles' (similar to Freire's 'culture circles') during live (online) sessions. 'Discussion circles' can also be adapted from 'Dialogic Literacy Circles' for sharing readings and creation of meanings (Martínez-Valdivia et al. 2021). In doing so, first, students should read a suggested text assigned for the pre-task session. Then, students are asked to highlight the ideas and/or concepts that call their attention. These ideas and/or concepts can include statements that students agree with or not, statements that they do not completely understand and want to share with the group and open the discussion of the 'circle' during the live session. It is advisable that the selected texts are relevant for the context,

culture, subject matter. And furthermore, it is important that the text reflects the students' world and includes 'power relations', current challenges and constraints that engage teachers and students with action and change.

Once in the live session, the teacher or students will facilitate dialogue within the 'discussion circle'. Critical dialogue must emerge in a safe and secure place to express opinions, to listen, and to show respect with the opinion of others. Thus, critical thinking is encouraged as well as an effective use of the language. Like in learning communities, it is necessary that the person who facilitates the dialogue, asks participants to register on a list for sharing their opinions. A list that is flexibly constructed with the purpose of facilitating dialogue.

In this manner, the first participant on the list will share with the group the idea, concept and/ or paragraph selected. The person shall mention the page number of the highlighted paragraph to help participants directing their attention to that part of the text and discussion. The person will read the concept and/or paragraph; after reading they will share with the circle why they have decided to select and share that idea; what have called their attention; what kind of agreement and/or disagreement, concepts and/or paragraph imply.

Once the discussion is opened, all participants are asked to comment and give their opinions in relation to the idea, concept, and/or paragraph discussed. The person who facilitates the discussion shall ask to other participants if they have chosen the same concept or idea and why. Then, the second participant on the spokesperson list will be asked to share the idea and/or concept selected and will follow the same process for the discussion.

It is important to stimulate the discussion with open-ended questions that the facilitator will wrap-up with main ideas and/or concepts discussed during the 'discussion circle' in action.

Following from the above, the suggested 'discussion circle' is a practice that can be implemented for the active participation of teachers and students in the construction of learning. Also, it allows participants to questioning and constructing own knowledge whilst learning from others. This practice, in line with Freire's pedagogical approach supports pedagogical relations that abolish the position of the teacher 'who knows everything' and students 'who know nothing'.

In this light, the 'discussion circle' proposal for online learning environments is closed related to Freire's 'culture circles' (Freire, 2014) whereas the selected ideas and/or concepts that are context related become Freire's 'thematic universe'. Additionally, the selection of words and themes that belong to familiar contexts of the

participants may be identified as Freirean' generative words and themes' because they will enable students to generate other words and themes to read the world. Last, the decoding process of becoming conscious of possible social, political and/or economic oppressive conditions and/or power relations take place to act upon change. Becoming conscious of oppressive conditions is the first step towards individual emancipation (or individual liberation) and social emancipation (liberation of the collective towards social change).

Informed by Freire's view, we suggest that online learning environments that support collective interests and actions for social change show new ways of understanding education with a focus on emancipation. Moreover, the attempt to encourage critical dialogue through different texts, contexts and situations may lead to 'naming the word and the world' whilst acting upon change. In addition, students must be addressed as competent citizens in raising critical awareness. Conscientization is not straightforward; however, critical dialogue can be constructed within online learning environments in different times and places, for instance, in live sessions; discussion boards; videos; pre-(live)session tasks.

Online learning environments that promote a student-teacher relation of questioning and critical reflection, create opportunities of emancipatory discussion towards the design of virtual (emancipatory) pedagogical approaches and relations. In addition, COVID-19 pandemic may become a topic of reflection on unequal living conditions among students; lack of connectivity and/or access to technological devices; lack of space to work comfortably during live sessions. In this light, Freire's claim that education should lead to social change becomes possible, and hence, it is possible to understand that living conditions are potentially open to transformation.

#### *Example 2*

In this example,

- The educational setting is online; it considers asynchronous activities (pre-live session tasks) and synchronous activities (during the live session).
- The emancipatory pedagogical approach emerged in the pedagogical relation among the teacher and the students that integrates body self-awareness and metacognition practices ('thinking about the learning experience') in the online learning environment.
- The teachers and students engage with opportunities of metacognition and body awareness' exercises in the online pedagogical relation. Despite the pedagogical relation is mediated



by online learning settings (and devices), the 'physical' experience of our bodies matters.

Thus far, this example contributes to emancipatory approaches in online learning environments with the inclusion of body awareness and metacognition activities in this new way of framing pedagogical relations. Providing tools for body awareness in online learning environments suggests 'an integral process of metacognition of the body, culture, education, and emotions, which poses a challenge for an autonomous work based on research and self-education ...' (Tur Porres & Ires Correa, 2020, p. 84). In this sense, it is suggested to integrate teaching and learning practices that include techniques for integrating our body in teacher education, in both face-to-face and online learning environments.

One common concern among teachers is the lack of connection with students' body language and non-verbal communication that help teachers 'reading' or 'interpreting' e.g. if students are engaged with a suggested activity or discussion. In addition, there are ongoing discussions about the need of turning cameras on/off during live sessions to create a lively experience and/or to simulate 'in person teaching'. This mainly depends on the group needs and/or agreements made between students and teachers. For example, in the Ecuadorian context (where we used to work) it was difficult to ask students to turn the cameras on during live sessions because most students had connection issues and the 'video on' fast consumed their internet data. Other situations that may prevent students to turning their cameras on are related to privacy issues. In this new online learning contexts with live sessions, by turning their cameras off, students can preserve their privacy. For instance, in the Welsh context (where we currently work), many students share rooms and accommodations to alleviate university expenses, and for the majority of students finding a place to connect, in private, without disruptions have become a challenge.

Following from the above, in this example, we do not aim at requiring students to turn the videos on to become aware of the 'body experience' and engaged with the online (live) sessions; they can decide whether turning their cameras on/off according to their own living conditions and situations. Rather, we invite re-thinking ways of engaging with each other, of integrating the body in this pedagogical encounter mediated by online learning environments. Thus, we invite teachers and students to think about new ways of relating to each other in online sessions, and to explore emancipatory pedagogical approaches 'in terms of self-knowledge, self-education, and body metacognition' (Tur Porres & Ires Correa, 2020, p. 84). In this sense, inspiring body awareness' experiences in virtual environments will

allow teacher and students to create emancipatory opportunities mediated by ICT 'without having to redeem the body in such a process-and provoking critical reflection' (Tur Porres & Ires Correa, 2020, p. 85).

A sequence of activities can be suggested for asynchronous or synchronous tasks that, e.g. include rhythm, movement, expression, and communication. For instance, we can suggest students some exercises, e.g. Tai-Chi, meditation in movement practices to go for a 'conscious' walk outdoors. Accordingly, we can invite students to write, recall and capture their memories on a diary of self-conscious learning experiences during COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, students can reflect on their own learning experience during the pandemic: How and where they feel more comfortable reading texts for pre-session tasks: outdoors or indoors? Do their concentration and attention span change if they start studying after a 'conscious' walk? Do they feel that integrating the body experience to online learning have an impact on their wellbeing? Some experiences of these self-knowledge diaries can be shared at different moments of the online modules, e.g. at the beginning, middle and end of term, to encourage a process of metacognition (to think about their own learning experience). The reflections will help teacher and students engaging with learning in meaningful ways; understanding education in online learning environments in emancipatory ways; and critically reflecting on self-education processes that include ways of being in the virtual classroom, whilst respecting students' learning pace, style and rhythm.

This diary practice helps students critically reflecting on online learning experiences beyond the specific subject content. It engages students to address their own concerns, strengths, and weakness of online learning during COVID-19 and post- pandemic. In this chapter, our focus is on teacher education, thus, this practice also serves for the purpose of students' reflecting on their own teaching practices and re-thinking their future as teachers. Likewise, the diary practice can be included in our teaching strategies as a pedagogical documentation tool to document the online learning experience with the use of written narratives, photographs, screenshots, among other ways of capturing the reflective practice (Tur Porres, 2020).

Integrating narratives of self-learning experiences, in both face-to-face and online learning environments, encourage critical thinking in the pedagogical relationship among the teacher, the students, and the online learning environment. Thus, critical dialogue may emerge within the pedagogical relation of the virtual classroom, 'that offered not only a theoretical debate about the link between body and corporality, but also generated a rich (...) encounter through the

practice of conscious body exercises proposed by the instructor.’ (Tur Porres & Ires Correa, 2020, p. 88).

In this light, the pedagogical approach is to ‘become conscious of the importance of integrating the body in their own pedagogical practices (...) and to increase critical and autonomous reflection, for example, through forums.’ (Tur Porres & Ires Correa, 2020, p. 89). Likewise, in person teaching, online learning environments may include asynchronous and/or synchronous activities that allow participants to develop a metacognition process of their own learning experience.

Consequently, the suggested diary and digital narrative is coherent with Freire’s emancipatory and liberatory education claim of ‘reading the word and the world’ to transform our living conditions. This pedagogical approach allows participants to critically reflect on online learning experiences during the pandemic and stimulate actions of change, to fulfil the best of individual and collective capacities.

### **Conclusion: Designing Online Learning Environments that Foster Emancipatory Pedagogical Approaches**

In this chapter, we have presented the need to re-think what good teaching means in online learning environments. Massively, during COVID-19 pandemic, face-to-face teaching has been translated to virtual classrooms. Despite the transition to online learning has been part of adaptation and mitigation strategies, we acknowledge that online teaching is not only about adapting teaching strategies to online learning environments, but it is also about thinking education in new emancipatory ways. Thus, online learning environments need to be thought as synchronous and asynchronous spaces that embrace current needs of integrating emancipatory pedagogical approaches in both face-to-face and online learning, in classrooms and online environments. Furthermore, we need to critically reflect on new ways of engaging in online learning environments without redeeming the body experience in the pedagogical relation (Tur Porres & Ires Correa, 2020).

Moreover, in online learning environments local needs and culture matter. Thus, it is necessary to reflect on own ways of doing, saying and thinking about online learning, that include emancipatory pedagogical approaches in the relation among the teachers, the students, the content, and the online learning environment in teacher education. We have argued that Freire’s emancipatory approach (2002, 2014) contributes to raise awareness to changing living conditions. More, in COVID-19 times, rethinking online learning

environments from a Freirean perspective that helps teachers and students creating conditions for conscientization and social transformation should be noted. This includes re-thinking self-knowledge and self-education experiences in view of emancipatory pedagogical approaches, to gain new understandings of online education and learning.

As a result, the inclusion of teaching strategies that connect quality online learning environments to emancipatory pedagogical approaches, focuses on a type of online education that is not a translation of in-person teaching experiences to online platforms caused by COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, this new way of understanding education requires teachers and students to engage with each other (individually and collectively), the content, and the online learning environment in critical and emancipatory ways. In this light, designing quality and emancipatory online learning environments in teacher education implies leaving behind 'universal' answers for 'best practices'. Instead, it invites thinking about quality in context, with inclusive and cultural perspectives that create conditions for meaningful and self-constructed ways of learning, doing and saying in online pedagogical relations.

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