This chapter examines the practices that provide a means for enacting transformative pedagogies in physical education teacher education programmes (PETE). By transformative pedagogy I mean an approach that aims to enable neophyte teachers to examine what educational, moral, and political commitments help guide their work as professional teachers and to encourage and engender critical citizenship, reflective thinking, social consciousness, and disposition for social justice (Ukpokodu, 2009, p. 47). The philosophical arguments for and against such a pedagogy, particularly as it is enacted as a form of critical pedagogy, have already been well discussed by a number of different authors (for example, see Fernández-Balboa, 1995, 1997; Gore, 1993; Kirk, 1986; O’Sullivan, Siedentop, & Locke, 1992; Sicilia-Camacho & Fernández-Balboa, 2009; Tinning, 2002, 2006) and will not be revisited here. In fact, there has been an enthusiastic advocacy for PETE to address social inequality and foster social justice stretching back for at least 30 years (Tinning, 2006). At the same time, there has been a corresponding number of concerns raised about the inability to render such an orientation in effective pedagogical practice (for example, Curtner-Smith, 2007; Gore, 1990; Devis–Devis & Sparkes, 1999; Hickey, 2001; Standal & Moe, 2013; Ruiz & Fernández-Balboa, 2005; Velija, Capel, Katene, & Hayes, 2008). This has led Tinning (2002) to declare that advocating for critical pedagogy is not the same as doing critical pedagogy. In other words, what has been an ideologically attractive idea has struggled to demonstrate that it is either feasible in pedagogical terms or effective in changing future teacher behaviour. In this chapter I discuss the problematic nature of doing transformative pedagogy in PETE and review some of the aspirations and realities of enacting such a pedagogy in practice.

In considering predominant models or theories used to research PETE, Tinning (2006) provided a very good analysis of the key theoretical orientations that have been used over the last 20–30 years. He identified these as the behaviouristic, personalistic, traditional/craft, and critical orientations. Initially, much of this work conceived professional learning as a form of socialisation (Lawson, 1986; Templin & Schempp, 1989). According to Green (2010), socialisation “refers to the processes through which people are taught (directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, intentionally or unintentionally) and internalise the values, beliefs, expectations, knowledge, skills, habits and practices prevalent in their groups and societies” (Green, 2010, p. 167). Research into socialisation has provided valuable insights into the role that early experiences in schools
and sport have on shaping learning in PETE settings as well as the processes that professional and occupational socialisation have on the education and professional learning of PE teachers. However, in building on this, and celebrating a growing eclecticism of theories being used since Tinning’s 2006 analysis, it is evident that those working in the field of transformative pedagogy are using a variety of theoretical positions to inform their work. It is now increasingly common to find transformative inspired PETE research drawing from areas such as gender studies, postmodernism, neo-materialism, postcolonialism, queer theory, figurational sociology, poststructuralism, self-study, and neo-Marxism. In the following discussion I draw on complexity thinking (Ovens, Hopper, & Butler, 2012) as one way of acknowledging how this growing transdisciplinarity provides increased awareness of the situated, contingent, contested, and interconnected nature of professional PETE settings and to better highlight those progressive practices that might be useful in enacting a form of transformative pedagogy with PETE students.

The complexity of transformative practice

When considering whether transformative practice is possible, the research evidence tends to provide a rather unsatisfactory answer of, “it depends”. Its very possibility appears contingent on a range of social, political, and material factors that constitute the landscape of teacher education and that enable the forms of student subjectivity and sets of experiences that act collectively to enable a transformation taking place. Viewing teacher education as emerging from a constellation of factors in play at a particular moment problematises the notion that there is a universal concept called ‘transformative pedagogy’ that can be applied as some recipe for action in PETE programmes. Instead, it replaces it with a view that pedagogical practice is partial, decentred, and grounded in the particulars of history, place, and language. From this perspective, there is no subject or identity fashioned outside of its own history and contingency (Giroux, 2009). Instead, there is a sensitivity to the emergent nature of transformative pedagogy as the precondition of its agency and a recognition that, whatever practices are enacted in PETE settings, they are enabled by a system of social relations and differentiations constituted by multiple, interpenetrating, and layered systems (Alhadeff-Jones, 2012). Put more simply, it is rarely possible to succeed in enacting a transformative pedagogy in PETE when the teacher educator works alone. Likewise, the ability of programmes to be transformative is rarely mono-causal (Mordal-Moen & Green, 2012). Improving the possibility for transformative practice appears to involve attending to the creation and sustenance of social systems operating at different levels of the education system as much as it does on using particular methods and strategies in PETE lessons (Lorente & Kirk, 2013).

The enabling influence of a supporting policy environment

At the macro level, it can be argued that the ethos that underpins a particular national or state education system influences the possibility for transformative pedagogy in practice. Certainly, the current neoliberal climate framing much of the education sector discourse, with its emphasis on standards, measurement, and competitive individualism, seems to close down the opportunities for enacting forms of pedagogy oriented around issues of social justice, democracy, and critique (Apple, 2006). In the past, it has been argued that attempts to help PETE students become socially and pedagogically critical are undermined by the strong influence of their traditional training and the conservative micropolitics of schools (Fernández-Balboa, 2000). More recently, Kårhus (2010, 2012) observed how neoliberalism and its associated efforts to introduce market dynamics into Higher Education in Norway affected how the national providers in the field of
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sport and physical education configured their degree programmes, and this in turn affected the content knowledge of the PETE programmes involved.

In recent times some glimmer of hope has been provided by curriculum developers in different national contexts who have drawn on social-justice discourses to help frame new school curriculum developments. For example, as Tinning (2012) notes, the contemporary Australian curriculum documents state that teachers in the learning area of Health and Physical Education (HPE) have a responsibility to [teach] the socially critical liberal curriculum as defined by the State and that these clearly articulate the principles of diversity, social justice, and supportive environments. Similarly, the writers of the New Zealand HPE curriculum moved PE from a very technocratic conception to a position that favoured a more socio-critical pedagogy (Culpan & Bruce, 2007). As a result, New Zealand schools are expected to “reconceptualise their orientations in order to meet the new socio-critical thrust of which bi-culturalism is a unique, important and critical aspect” (Culpan & Galvan, 2012, p. 40). While the nature of ‘social justice’ may be highly contested in such policy texts (Rivzi & Lingard, 2011; Tinning, 2004), the use of such discourses can be seen as encouraging alternative pedagogies to emerge in school settings.

Such policy texts may influence two key factors that have traditionally constrained the transformative potential of teacher education. The first is that the prior knowledge and beliefs that student teachers bring to PETE programmes have been seen as a major influence on what and how students learn in teacher education. There is strong support for the idea that PETE students draw on their own experiences of PE and have already developed their own beliefs about PE and teaching from school, sport, friends, family, and the media (Curtner-Smith, 2007; Velija et al. 2008). This allows for the possibility that future students, who emerge from critically oriented school programmes, may be better able to problematise the subject area and engage with the emancipatory politics that structures their PETE programme. The second factor regards the schooling contexts and dispositions expected of them as teachers. Typically, there has been a tension between university and school contexts (Standal, Mordal-Moen, & Moe, 2014). However, when curriculum policy supports a critical orientation, the possibility for a more consistent professional language and set of discursive practices between schools and university settings increase and work to support the transformative aspirations of the PETE programme students are part of (Zeichner, 2010).

The enabling influence of the institutional environment

At the institutional level of teacher education (typically university settings), the collective constitution of programmes, the forms of pedagogical experiences they enable, the subjectivities of all the participants, and the structure of relationships between all the participants affect the possibility of transformative pedagogy. The collective entanglement of these factors shapes the political and cultural arena in which student experiences and subjectivity are produced and mediated. Support for this notion is provided by Mordal-Moen and Green (2012) in their study of PETE in one Norwegian university. They suggest that the particular configuration of factors, including student expectations, the nature of school mentoring, the orientations of the teacher educators, the research culture of the university, all collectively created a programmatic culture that is likely to sustain and reinforce the conservative philosophies of the teacher educators rather than support the development of transformative pedagogies. Likewise, in their study of 17 PETE educators, Ruiz and Fernández-Balboa (2005) found that more than half of their teacher educators did not fully understand the principles and purposes of critical pedagogy as presented in the literature and this had a strong influence on how they enacted critical pedagogy.
in practice. Another example is provided by Ovens and Tinning (2009) who concluded that the nature of the student teachers’ reflectivity was contingent on the discursive community the student was part of, suggesting that the potential for a transformative pedagogy is dependent on the professional learning and work culture in which the student is situated.

The enabling influence of pedagogical practice

At the individual course or module level, the way theory becomes manifest in practice also influences the transformative potential of that practice. Theory is not only the content being taught, but can also shape the instructional practices and structures being used to teach the content. Giroux (1994) cautions that this can set up a tension between what he calls a theory of pedagogy and a pedagogy of theorising. The distinction is subtle but important. When the teaching in a course is oriented around a theory of pedagogy, the core ideas and concepts central to that pedagogy become knowledge to be learnt or absorbed by student teachers and applied in school contexts. The implication is that in the desire to enact a transformative pedagogy, it becomes reduced to theory taught through a transmission pedagogy where the teaching is either telling (the lecture), modelling (the demonstration lesson or microteaching), or apprenticeship (the practicum) (Ovens, 2013). In contrast, when the teaching in a course is oriented around a pedagogy of theorising, the focus shifts to examining how the core ideas and concepts central to transformative practice become enacted within and lived through the instructional practices and structures of the course.

As Segall (2002) points out, the issue here is that, while PETE students may be encouraged to ask critical questions in their teacher education courses, they are often not encouraged to ask the same question of their teacher education courses. For example, teacher educators encourage students to think about how teachers and schools meet the individual needs of their students, but rarely do they ask them how their teacher education lessons meet their own individual needs as student teachers. As Segall (2002) notes, if theory is not reflexively applied to understanding one’s lived practice, the pedagogy involved becomes an exercise in separating theory from practice, while effectively disguising the process of doing so. By teaching a detached theory of social justice, power, oppression, and privilege, students are anesthetised from challenging their own education and the methods used to ensure that theory is disconnected from everyday practice because it becomes content to be learnt rather than lived (Segall, 2002).

To summarise the first half of this chapter, a sensitivity to the complexity of transformative pedagogy in PETE ensures that the mere use of methods, such as writing reflective journals, teaching critical theory, or using more democratic forms of assessment, does not lead with any certainty to making a pedagogy transformative. Rather, the potential for enacting a transformative pedagogy relates to how the use of such methods is embedded within specific relations of power that enable a transformative learning culture to emerge. This is not meant to suggest that teacher educators should avoid engaging with innovative, democratic, and alternative forms of practice. Instead, it acts as an important caveat on those who seek certainty and expect a utopian form of collective emancipation (Tinning, 2012).

With this in mind, the remainder of this chapter is focused on ways teacher educators working in PETE enact forms of pedagogy “that empowers students to examine critically their beliefs, values, and knowledge with the goal of developing a reflective knowledge base, an appreciation for multiple perspectives, and a sense of critical consciousness and agency” (Ukpokodu, 2009, p. 43). The aim in discussing these is not to suggest they are an effective way of teaching about social issues, nor that they are recipes that work in each situation. Transformative pedagogies are always tailored to individual contexts (Gur-Ze’ev, 1998; Hinchey, 2006). Rather, the aim is to demonstrate how each enacts a form of pedagogy in line with a set of values and beliefs that
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may, by becoming part of a broader assemblage, help highlight particular social issues and be transformative for PETE students.

**Negotiated learning**

The idea that the teacher educator may negotiate what content is taught in a course, how it is taught, and how the course work undertaken by students contributes to a final grade, has been one way of deliberately making transparent the power relations and hierarchical structures that are part of the fabric of academic fields and teacher education programmes and regulations for accreditation (Boud & Falchikov, 2006; Lorente & Kirk, 2013). Negotiated learning goes beyond providing students with options from which they may choose, such as selecting projects of interest or selecting from two or three provided by the teacher. The two most common approaches to negotiated learning are that of inviting students to be co-contributors to course design and the use of individual grading contracts (Boud & Falchikov, 2006). In the first approach, the students enrolled in a particular PETE course are provided with the opportunity to participate in contributing to the design of the individual course or module they are enrolled in. In the second, the coursework options, marking, and processes for aggregating assessment information into a final grade are mutually negotiated between the course lecturer and students on an individual basis.

The critical element in each approach is not that students merely participate in the design of course and assessment procedures, but that each approach promotes a democratic educational process that engages students in thinking about issues of power, equality, and social justice (Giroux, 2009). This does not mean that the teacher educator is out of the equation, nor does it mean a sharing of power. Rather, the teacher educator is using their authority to create opportunities for students to co-participate in the design process. The teacher educator is involved in a process of negotiation, not the handing over of all decision making to the student. In other words, the implementation challenge for the teacher educator is one of setting boundaries about which course/grading aspects are negotiable and being willing to engage in dialogue around the needs, interests, rights, and responsibilities of the student in relation to their own professional learning.

As a long-time proponent of transformative pedagogies, Ross (2010) describes how he used a self-assessment strategy with first and fourth year PETE students. The goals of integrating this technique into classwork were to foster individual and collective thoughtfulness, to encourage students to examine their own realities, to question ‘truth’ or ‘fact’, and to determine how ‘fact’ has influenced personal actions and beliefs. Coupled with his approach to teaching that constantly challenged students’ entrenched beliefs, he required students to collate a dossier or record of their own work in response to how they were engaging with the ideas presented. At the end of the course they met with him to propose what mark they believed best represented their level of learning and the final decision was by consensus between the lecturer and student. Many of the students reported that they found the approach thought-provoking, challenging, and transformational.

We have never been questioned like this before. For most of us questions and answers were shallow places without much real thought, only spoon-feeding without much real thought. This was the beginning of the critical thinking impressed upon us ... How do I evaluate what I have learned when the process is not black or white? I cannot put this on paper. I do not know where it will lead or how much farther there is to go in this journey. (RB, 2000 as cited in Ross, 2010, p. 210)
In reporting on their ongoing work with negotiated grading contracts, Brubaker and Ovens (2012) systematically reflect on the issues involved with implementing alternative grading practices. Overall, the study affirms the idea that organising a more democratic classroom involves using the teacher educator’s authority to create opportunities for students to be more actively involved in defining their learning. The study also highlights the difficulty of practising an alternative pedagogy in university settings organised around conventional assessment practices, particularly in respect to issues related to time, student anxiety, and necessity to report achievement in institutionally approved ways.

In Spain, Lorente and Kirk (2013) used an action research design to develop the use of democratic assessment strategies in Lorente’s teaching of an optional assessment course for PETE students. By using forms of negotiated assessment with her students, Lorente aimed to create a learning culture that enabled students to engage in critical dialogue, experience democratic participation, and critically analyse the social messages that impact on assessment practices. The research reports a range of benefits from using negotiated assessment, including consistency with course learning outcomes, the ability to adjust assessment methods for particular groups, a high level of student engagement and motivation, increased student reflectivity, and awareness of their own learning processes. They conclude by stating that, “for student teachers in particular, we argue that the experience of participating in democratic forms of assessment is vital if they are to have the confidence and knowledge to apply these practices in their own work with students in schools” (p. 92).

**Storytelling**

Using storytelling in the form of fictional narratives or retold experiences has been one way to provoke critical thinking and foster critical and inclusive approaches to teaching in PETE settings. Storytelling is simultaneously a means to express identity, communicate, and connect with others; describe experience; and construct knowledge. Garrett (2006) reports on how she incorporated the practice of critical storytelling into an undergraduate PETE class. In this study, 60 undergraduate primary and secondary school PETE students were presented with stories written by five women about the lived experiences of their body, gender, and physical activity (see Garrett, 2004). The PETE students were asked to read the stories and consider how they, as student teachers, could create change, challenge, and/or support the storyteller in a PE setting. They were then asked to prepare written responses for three of the five stories prior to engaging in a group discussion. All of the written and verbal exchanges between the PETE students were compiled by the research team and analysed to identify dominant themes. The results from this qualitative coding exercise suggested that the students experienced significant transformation in their thinking. More specifically, they reported engaging in much deep, critical reflection about their practice, their role as educators, and the lived experience of their (female) students. Further, many reported a deepening of their capacity to empathise with the other. The researchers attributed the effectiveness of the pedagogy to the ‘realness’ of the stories and the ability for so many of the students to personally relate.

**Peer teaching**

As a pedagogy for teacher education, peer teaching aims to shift the organisation and structure of the lesson away from a lecturer-focused, transmission style of teaching to one where students participate in a learning community focused on the practice of teaching. Specifically, peer
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teaching involves the students taking turns to teach their peers and learning from being in the
teaching role, receiving peer feedback, engaging in discussion, and reflecting on the experience
(Garbett & Ovens, 2010). The aim is to create a learning context embedded in the practice of
teaching in which students can experience and reflect on the relational complexities and dilem-
mas of teaching, the situational nature of professional knowledge, and the role of discernment
and decision making in the act of teaching (Garbett & Ovens, 2010; Wilson & I’Anson, 2006).
In this way, the knowledge for teaching is not represented as certain or generic, but enacted as
a way of solving the specific pedagogical problems embedded in the teaching situation opening
up possible teachable moments for the teacher educator to open this knowledge to challenge
and reflection.

Ovens (2014) describes how he uses peer teaching with fourth-year PETE students to create
a conceptual space where students can unpack and reflect on their prior knowledge. Using a
self-study research methodology (Ovens & Fletcher, 2014) he has found there is support for the
idea that working in smaller teaching groups can be particularly effective for enabling deeper
thinking as students are able to discuss new ideas and share diverse viewpoints. However, the
efficacy of such an approach is dependent on the pedagogical skill of the teacher educator to
focus attention on students’ pedagogical decision making and reframe their understandings
through reflection. It is also dependent on the perception of authenticity of participants in the
peer teaching activity and how the vulnerability created in such an intensive activity could be
protected (Ovens, 2014). In respect to authenticity, he focuses on the importance of distinguish-
ing between students acting in the role of teacher and enacting the role of teacher. Acting implies
the task is framed by the participants as a theatrical performance in contrast to enacting, which
implies the performance is enmeshed with, and emerges from, the immediate context. Focusing
student attention on this distinction became important to structuring the experience.

When the students acted bored, the situation became a parody of a school classroom; the au-
thenticity was low and the opportunity for meaningful learning from the activity was reduced.
However, if the students were actually bored during a lesson taught by one of their peers, it
became something that could be discussed meaningfully. What acts, ideas, and words promoted
the disengagement that led to boredom? How does a teacher cope with a diverse range of
students – whose interests were being served? In such discussions the participants were able to
share their genuine feelings and thoughts (Ovens, 2014).

Case studies

Student-authored case studies, as a form of shared inquiry, have been presented as a transforma-
tive and effective teaching (pedagogical) tool in some PETE environments. In these examples,
case studies were defined as “richly detailed, contextualized, narrative accounts of situations or
experiences related to a given field that are intended to promote critical thinking about real-life
events” (Levin, 1995, p. 63). In the United States, Richards, Hemphill, Templin, and Eubank
(2012) introduced a culminating case study project in a junior PETE seminar course. Students
were then required to draft a sample case study based on a topic or issue of great import to
training PE teachers. Each case study was developed over the course of a 12-week term and
went through a series of peer and instructor review processes. The purpose of the exercise was
to promote critical thinking and reflection on the part of the student. According to the authors,
the case-study writing process was successful. Students chose to address meaningful and salient
issues that were likely to arise in real-world settings. They also demonstrated personal growth
and evidence of critical self-reflection (Richards et al., 2012).
Lesson-study

Like case studies, lesson-studies are a form of shared inquiry that are aimed at structuring an inquiry-oriented approach to professional learning (Lieberman, 2009). In lesson-study, the students are organised into groups to collaboratively design and investigate a ‘research lesson’ they teach in an applied or authentic setting (Fernandez, 2010). The process includes cycles composed of collaborative planning, teaching, lesson observation, analytic reflection, and ongoing revision. As part of the process, lesson-study groups develop a written reflective report of their work (Fernandez, 2010).

Working with a group of elementary-school PETE students in the US, Cluphf and Vogler (2008) reported using a lesson-study-based approach with their students. In this study, students reported an increase in knowledge of the subject matter, methods of instruction, and increased motivation and self-efficacy (Cluphf & Vogler, 2008). In a follow-up study Cluphf, Lux, and Scott (2012) explored students’ perceptions of using lesson-study in practicum. For this exercise, students were asked to work collaboratively with their associate or cooperating teacher (CT) to design and conduct a series of PE lessons. Over the course of their final practicum, these students were interviewed at regular intervals about the experience. Each participant (n=4) reported improvements in planning and personal confidence; however, they also reported struggles to overcome a visible power differential between themselves and their CT. In conclusion, they report that the students improved in their ability to understand, operationalise, and contextualise their learning in a real-world setting (school) (Cluphf et al., 2012).

Place-based pedagogies

There is a growing awareness of the important link between ‘place’ and pedagogy, particularly in respect to how and what learning is enabled. A strong example of using place to provoke and extend PETE students’ cultural understanding and values is provided by Legge (2008). She describes how, in the mid-1990s, she approached an iwi (Maori tribe) in Northland, New Zealand and requested access to their Mārae as pedagogical experience for second-year Bachelor of Physical Education (BPE) students. A Mārae is a series of buildings constructed to form the cultural hub or home point for a Maori tribe. By requesting access to the Mārae, Legge was intentionally seeking more than an opportunity to teach about the cultural knowledge of the Maori. It was expected that participation in a first-hand, situated (or immersive) learning experience within the traditional Mārae setting would support cultural understandings that were necessary for later instruction in culturally responsive pedagogies. Immersion in the Mārae setting was also expected to provoke more meaningful and authentic experiences with the values and customs inherent to the indigenous Maori as well as extend the ethic of outdoor and experiential learning for students in the BPE programme (Legge, 2010). Over the course of their visit, which is generally four to five days, students were confronted with new experiences that enable them to question their dominant cultural values to “locate their personal identity, cultural differences and understanding of the world alongside the Māori world-view” (Legge, 2008, p. 89). According to Legge (2010), this experience has numerous transformative effects on the students’ identities, personal belief systems, world-views, and personal practice as training PE teachers. Most notably, it has challenged the students to develop specific cultural skills that enable them to cross the divide between the familiar (their own culture) and the unfamiliar (Māori) (Legge, 2010). In the process, they have confronted assumptions, stereotypes, and misunderstandings about the ‘other’ and became more culturally competent pre-service teacher applicants (Legge, 2010).
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Inquiry-oriented practicum learning

The practicum experience has been long valued as a core location for learning about teaching (Zeichner, 2010). It recognises that many of the lessons students will learn about teaching can only be done in the context of a school, working alongside, and with, experienced teachers and immersed in the culture and problems of everyday practice. The practicum provides an ideal location for students to investigate the nature of school environments and appreciate the diversity and complexity of modern schools, but only if it moves beyond an apprenticeship approach to structuring the experience (Tinning, 1987).

In their attempt to challenge the status quo and encourage critical reflection from PETE students about the purpose and design of PE in contemporary schools, Oliver et al. (2013) have developed an innovative field-based model for delivering a secondary PETE methods course. In their participatory action research study there were 11 pre-service teacher education student participants from a university in the Southwest USA. Each student, along with the course coordinator, met with youth from a local high school (aged 14–15) and, over the course of the semester, designed a PE curriculum that privileged the student voice and gave precedence to the needs of these youth. By the end of the term, the authors reported significant transformations in the pre-service teacher’s attitudes, understandings, and beliefs about the purpose and design of school-based PE. They also reported the emergence of a new sense of identity or community amongst those involved in the study (Oliver et al., 2013). Within the new community of learners individuals reported a repositioning of the power dynamic between youth, pre-service teachers, and professors. According to one student, in her past experiences,

it was an authoritarian figure commanding everybody down here whereas Dr. Oliver has created a way to help us be a part of the decision making and … take into consideration what we feel and how we feel about it and if we don’t like something then she’ll work with us and try to figure out how to fix it while it’s still accomplishing what she wants to get accomplished … She has created a sense of community with our class modelling how to do it with [youth]. (Oliver et al., 2013, p. 8)

Reflecting on the ‘doing’ of transformative pedagogy in PETE

A core focus for many educators researching and rethinking their practice as PETE teacher educators has been on understanding how to enable a transformative pedagogy in their own unique context. As the preceding examples show, a variety of strategies and settings have been used with varied degrees of success in the PETE environment. In general, each enacts a transformative pedagogy as a form of professional learning that emerges from within a particular political and cultural arena where forms of student experience and subjectivity are produced and mediated in ways that enable students to engage in critical activities that may challenge the status quo, reconstruct social-political-historical knowledge, question dominant ideologies, and make public the histories of those marginalised, disenfranchised, and/or disaffected. Underlying these efforts is an acknowledgement that teacher education is a setting where the practices of teaching must be interrogated, particularly as they shape, produce, and challenge student subjectivities and experiences central to working in contemporary schooling contexts and that are themselves implicated in the social and the political of life in modern society. It is important to remember that the social and political are present in all pedagogies, since it is the discursive nature of any practice that makes it seem natural, neutral, apolitical, and asocial. The very idea of
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transformative pedagogy is to expose and problematise the already social and political in those practices.

In general, students appear to initially struggle to embrace unconventional approaches and push back against the unfamiliar, particularly if these experiences are confined to individual courses or activities. There is support for the idea that, over time, sustained involvement in transformative pedagogical experiences does lead to deeper and more critical thinking about the purpose of education, one’s personal disposition, stereotypes, and previously held beliefs as well as the needs and interests of the students, but that such outcomes are difficult to predict and do not constitute some desire for a collective empowerment. Rather, the intention is more modest (Tinning, 2002), aiming instead to enact a common core of values in practice that themselves enable students to participate in informed and skilful ways in their role as educators in twenty-first century society. Unfortunately, at present, the efficacy, or long-term effects, of using these transformative pedagogies have yet to be examined in detail. It is certainly a gap in the literature and an area for future study.

Reflective questions for discussion

1. Why would it be rarely possible to succeed in enacting a transformative pedagogy in PETE when the teacher educator works alone?
2. How do the discourses circulating at the macro- and meso-levels of the education system influence how transformative pedagogy is enacted at the micro-level of the individual course?
3. What is the difference between a theory of pedagogy and a pedagogy of theorising?
4. How should the teacher educator use the pedagogical strategies discussed to ensure they are ‘transformative’ and not simply ‘innovative’?

References


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