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## **The Paralysis of Traditional Schools and the Future of Education**

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### **Abstract**

In an attempt to critically examine the effects of the abrupt shift from the traditional classroom-based education to distance education in the Philippines, this paper articulates pedagogical concepts that are necessary for a transformative and humanizing academic modalities despite the departure from the old approaches due to the unexpected rise of the new normal in education. I discuss a deconstructive, revolutionary, and inclusive pedagogy that aims to renew certain approaches in order to prevent educational paralysis and give way to alternative avenues that best fit the current and future situations notwithstanding the challenges that this pluralistic age poses to every academic site.

**Keywords:** deconstructive pedagogy, revolutionary pedagogy, new normal, genealogy, dancing and inclusive pedagogy

## Introduction

*“All great changes find their clear and effective power and their direct shaping force in the mind and spirit of an individual, or a number of individuals.” (Sri Aurobindo)*

*“We needed, then, an education which would lead men to take a new stance toward their problems – that of intimacy with those problems, one oriented toward research instead of repeating irrelevant principles - An education of ‘I wonder,’ instead of merely ‘I do’.” (Paulo Freire)*

The radical change in educational approaches occasioned by the abrupt shift from a classroom-based to an online-based education signifies the fact that we now live in interesting yet challenging times. As educators committed to the life of truthful reflection, the *zeitgeist* confronts us with the imperative to find ways by which human beings can still authentically dwell. In the context of the profound need to understand these educational crises, teachers are ordained to go back to the role of education in the administration of goodness, truth, freedom, and justice despite the lack of propinquity, and always be reminded of the reason why they teach.

This paper describes the current state of the Philippine education in the sudden shift from the traditional classroom-based education to distance education. Out of such observations, it provides reflexive explanatory remarks on the main reason why Filipino teachers should teach. This is followed by a discussion on deconstructive pedagogy as an essential component to renew the quality of education. After this, it explores the spaciology of the classroom, which is a redefinition of pedagogical spaces. The concept of revolutionary pedagogy is then introduced as an approach to the call of new normal. Towards the end of the paper, the notion of a dancing and/or an inclusive pedagogy is introduced, which is arguably a very important and effective response to the new normal. Finally, it ends with the challenge to reassess pedagogical assumptions.

## The Teleology of Education

Teaching is a craft that requires constant (re)assessment and renewal. It is supposed to be the ‘pedagogy of detachment’ where an educator should learn to denounce inefficient practices or not remain comfortable with existing knowledge and orientation. It must subject oneself to continuous education to learn more, unlearn less effective modalities, and re-learn new approaches, especially now that the traditional educational approaches have been cross-examined by the so-called ‘new normal’.

Looking at it via a circumspectival lens, teaching has both substantive and procedural aspects directed towards a certain *telos* – a final cause. There are three essential questions that should be given significant attention and that an educator should always be vigilant about. These are: what to teach? how to teach? why teach? The first question concerns the content of education; it raises substantive issues. The second question is a question on pedagogy; hence, it is procedural or remedial in character. The third question goes beyond substance and methodology; it is the very purpose or direction of both the ‘what’ and the ‘how’.

The ‘instrumental end’ of both content and pedagogy may vary from one curriculum to another or from one teacher to another, but all instrumental ends, whatever these are, must be (re)directed to nation-building as framed in the 1987 Philippine Constitution and further articulated by the Department of Education in its vision statement. Nation-building is the constitutional and statutory ‘final end’ or the main reason why one should teach at least in the Philippine context; or maybe, humanization in general context.

Teaching is a reflexive act of being human. Since it is a mode of being, it embraces the creation of new ways of looking at the world that ineluctably shape one’s lifestyle. It is essentially a modality of letting learning happen in the hearts and minds of every student. It is supposed to bring about a transformed person in everyone. The quintessential element of teaching is the quality

of the whole pedagogical style that defines the thrust of any academic institution; but how do we account for quality? Is it measurable enough to entertain the features of predictability and respectability?

Admittedly, any discourse about quality education must accommodate an important point about the kind of persons that students have become in the course of their academic life. The kind of persons that the students have become is essentially influenced by the kind of education given to them. The academic institution's failure to make students achieve a sense of self- authenticity with all the subjects taught to them is a structural possibility of a 'dehumanizing' educational institution, borrowing a term from Paulo Freire. It is this critical sense that deconstruction makes a cogent effort to interrogate.

### **Deconstructing Pedagogy**

Seeing every academic institution as a text to be read is a deconstructive activity. The art of displacement or deconstruction is always inherently constitutive of the whole process of education. Education as deconstruction entails the creative process of learning and unlearning. Deconstruction is the link between vision and action, between theory and practice, between thinking and being, or between words and works. It brings the relevance of what was learned in the classroom to the lifeworld. It is argued that the relation between education and deconstruction is an invitation to thoughtfully reformulate pedagogical programs. In fact, Jacques Derrida suggests the need "to invent new pedagogical situations, redefine the texts, the themes, the programs, and the relations among the disciplines."<sup>1</sup>

The pedagogical meaning of deconstruction precisely reconstitutes the concept of teaching to which every academic institution is untiringly devoted. Teaching as deconstruction

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<sup>1</sup>Jacques Derrida, *Monolingualism of the Other or the Prosthesis of Origin*, translated by Patrick Mensah, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 78.

essentially bears a transformative mode in that it seeks to create a dent in the enabling process of change. At stake in every deconstructive moment of teaching is the unfolding of the dignity of the human person since both the teacher and the student are able to redefine and assert their intrinsic worth not just because they are human beings but because they are humanizing subjects who are becoming and becoming more.

Etymologically, deconstruction<sup>2</sup> is Jacques Derrida's re-appropriation of Martin Heidegger's *destruktion* that attends to the problem of ontological difference – Being and beings. It is basically an eschatological process that moves the foundations, the art of questioning towards freedom's innovative condition. It is a critical affirmation of the contingency of views, theories, and traditions which are basically 'constructs'. It is a way of reading and not a way of destroying. It does not destroy structures by attacking their walls outside; instead, it works from within the structures it chose to work on, inhabiting those structures and inhabiting them in a certain way. Deconstructive inhabitation is an inhabitation in a certain way; it is a suspicious inhabitation. Derrida is unflinching in his contention that:

The movements of deconstruction do not destroy structures from the outside. They are not possible and effective, nor can they take accurate aim, except by inhabiting those structures. Inhabiting them in a certain way, because one always inhabits and all the more when one does not suspect it. Operating necessarily from the inside, borrowing all the strategies and economic resources of subversion from the old structures, borrowing them structurally, that is to say without being able to isolate their elements and atoms, the enterprise of

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<sup>2</sup>Deconstruction is an analytic process through which the deep, unconscious meaning of text is examined. Within a critical pedagogical framework, deconstruction often refers to the analytic process of taking apart (dissecting, critically inquiring, problematizing) a phenomenon in order to understand its construction.

deconstruction always in a certain way falls prey to its own work.<sup>3</sup>

Pedagogy as a process of educational deconstruction does not totally remove traditional education from the equation but it attempts to present possibilities of the salient perspectives which could be better and inductively more effective. Recently, the migration from the traditional classroom to the newly created virtual classrooms is a moment of deconstructive experience on the part of both the teachers and the students.

### **Phenomenology of the Classroom: A Philosophy of Space**

“Space is nothing but the inscription of time in the world. It is the realizations of simultaneity of the external world of a series of time.”<sup>4</sup> As such, it is the condition that makes reality perceivable and sensible. It frames experiences so that they are deemed meaningful. It serves not only as a region of mobility but also a sphere where people can exist and humanize, and where they can give meaning to their lives as well.

Like any other space, the classroom is a space in a social context. It is a space not just because it is where the teacher-student encounter takes place, but also because such encounter creates, at least, a context, or different contexts. This space, in turn, is able to mold the consciousness of both educators and students. However, the classroom is a limited space of opportunities and information. Since it is just a microcosm of the society that simply discusses theories, it does not significantly represent realities of life. Its four walls and four corners arrest and restrict possibilities to its limited bounds and parameters. Instead of empowering subjects/persons, more often, it turns out to be an inert receptacle that contains objects/functions. What has been set aside is the very nature of space as an ‘active

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<sup>3</sup>Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, (Baltimore: Stanford University Press, 1976), p. 74.

<sup>4</sup>Eleonore Kofman (trans.), *Henri Lefebvre, Writings on Cities*, (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 1966), p. 16.

moment' that invites, directs, and advertises interplay among subjects.

Unfortunately, the kind of programming or conditioning where the Philippine education system and most of its educators have been rooted into are dependent upon traditional classroom spaces where a teacher is reckoned in terms of the usual lecture sessions in front of passive students. Apparently, the method of lecturing has been abused and overused by uncreative educational institutions and its metathesiophobic faculty in Ricoeur's 'grand narrative' of the classroom. Although in its original sense, following its etymological definitions - *lectito*, *lectitare*, *lectitavi*, *lectitatus*, *legere* - it has been effectively used in the medieval period to make the limited copies of the Bible accessible to people. The lecturer would stand on the lectern and read the Bible aloud while the audience would simply listen; discussions among the audience are curtailed. This, I believe, is just a singular way that may not be effective at all times in this pluralistic and information age.

Because of the unwelcome visit of COVID-19, paralysis awakened traditional teachers and classical institutions of learning to their secured dependence on the classroom space, elevated platform or classroom stage where some teachers can put themselves on a pedestal to deliver their lecture theatrically or in an orchestrated manner with the presupposition that they know more and their students know less. This is exactly the type of education that Paulo Freire rejects – a deposit-making education. With a phenomenological mind, teachers should never assume that the students are Locke's '*tabula rasa*'. The latter are not passive recipients of interpretations but rather active learners who are supposed to be participative agents in any discursive space basined by a symmetrical floor and nourished by humility and not by arrogant preconceptions of the students' ignorance. In this instance, Husserl's *epoche* or the bracketing of the natural attitude should set in.

## Revolutionary Pedagogy

Great educators are those who are capable of bringing about changes in both school and society through revolutionary pedagogy. Revolutionary pedagogy reveals what Paulo Freire meant by liberation that negates the whole system of a deposit-making education and rather advocates a problem-posing one.

‘Revolution’ has its etymological origin in the word *re-volvere*, which means ‘to will again’. Both educators and students are invoked to will again because things have changed; the situation is now different and the new landscape calls for new ways of living. In order to live, man must be integrated to the signs of times.<sup>5</sup>

Revolution is a critical process, unrealizable without science and reflection.<sup>6</sup> Because men are historical beings, incomplete and conscious of being incomplete, revolution is as natural and permanent human dimension as education.<sup>7</sup> To be authentic, revolution must be a continuous event. Otherwise it

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<sup>5</sup>In the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche, the terms ‘to live’ and ‘to will’ are intertwined. ‘To live’ is ‘to will’ and ‘to will’ is ‘to will to power.’ Nietzsche’s oft-quoted phrase ‘life is will to power’ drives home this point. Nietzsche, though coming from a different tradition marks a significant point in this discussion in terms of his notion that the will to power in essence is a transformative principle which implies growth and development. In fact, in an attempt to push the implication further, it continues to the idea of ‘overcoming.’ The term is quite prominent in relation to the key concept *ubermensch*. Nathan Oaklander (ed.), *Existentialist Philosophy: An Introduction*, (New York: Prentice Hall press, 1994), p. 115 – 116.

<sup>6</sup>Paulo Freire, *The Politics of Education, Culture, Power and Liberation*, Donald Macedo (trans.), (Massachusetts: Bergin and Garvey Publishers, 1985), p. 84 [Similar reference hereafter will be abbreviated as POE].

<sup>7</sup>“I am aware and more convinced that the true revolutionaries must perceive the revolution, because of its creative and liberating nature, as act of love. For me, the revolution, which is not possible without a theory of revolution – and therefore science – is not irreconcilable with love. On the contrary: the revolution is made by people to achieve their humanization. It is impossible to think of an authentic revolution without quality.” Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, M.B. Ramos (trans.), (New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 1970), p. 70 [Similar reference hereafter will be abbreviated as PTO].

will cease to be revolution and will just become sclerotic bureaucracy.<sup>8</sup>

Revolution is always cultural, whether it is in the phase of denouncing an oppressive society and proclaiming the advent of a just society, or in the phase of the new society inaugurated by the revolution. In the new society, the revolutionary process becomes a cultural revolution because the new society is the fruit of critical dialogue.<sup>9</sup> Cultural revolution always presupposes dialogue. There is no dichotomy between dialogue and revolutionary action. There is not one stage for dialogue and another for revolution. On the contrary, dialogue is the essence of revolutionary action.<sup>10</sup>

Cultural revolution proposes freedom as its goal.<sup>11</sup> Originating in objective conditions, revolution seeks to supersede the situation of oppression by inaugurating a society of men in the process of continuing liberation. The educationally dialogical quality of revolution, which makes it a cultural revolution as well, must be present in all its stages.<sup>12</sup>

Teaching is the process of organizing and integrating knowledge for the purpose of communicating this knowledge or awareness to students through an exchange of understanding in prespecified contexts and the teacher-student environment. Pedagogy is distinct from teaching in that it situates the teacher-student encounter in a wider context of historical and sociopolitical forces in which the 'act of knowing' recognizes and

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<sup>8</sup>'Sclerotic Bureaucracy' is non-flexible or static and therefore, non-transformative. POE, 89.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>PTO, 116.

<sup>11</sup>POE, 90.

<sup>12</sup>A Revolutionary is not a reactionary. The former treats men as persons or co-subjects while the latter treats men as functions or objects. Ibid., p. 159 – 164. In likewise manner, revolution is not synonymous with rebellion. Revolution has always a critical orientation while rebellion is devoid of critical reflection. Paulo Freire, *A Pedagogy for Liberation: Dialogues on Transforming Education with Ira Shor*, (Massachusetts: Bergin and Garvey Publishers, 1987), p. 139 [Henceforth, references to this text will be abbreviated as APL].

takes into account the differentiated politics of ‘reception’ surrounding the object of knowledge by the students. Critical pedagogy constitutes a dialectical and dialogical process that instantiates a reciprocal exchange between teacher and students – an exchange that engages in the task of reframing, refunctioning, and reposing the question of understanding itself, bringing into dialectical relief the structural and relational dimensions of knowledge and power.<sup>13</sup>

Revolutionary pedagogy goes further still. It puts power-knowledge relations on a collision course with their own internal contradictions; such a power and often unbearable collision gives birth not to an epistemological resolution at a higher level but rather to a provisional glimpse of a new society freed from the bondage of the past, a vision in which the past reverberates in the present, standing at once outside the world and beside the world, in a place of insight where the subject recognizes he is in the world and subject to it, yet moving through it with the power to name it ectopically so that hidden meanings can be revealed in the accidental contingencies of the everyday.<sup>14</sup>

Revolutionary pedagogy creates a narrative space set against the naturalized flow of the everyday, against the daily poetics of agency, encounter, and conflict, in which subjectivity is constantly dissolved and reconstructed – *id est*, in which subjectivity turns-back-on-itself, giving rise both to the affirmation of the world through naming it, and an opposition to the world through unmasking and undoing the practices of concealment that are latent in the process of naming itself.<sup>15</sup>

Revolutionary pedagogy is a pedagogy that seeks not only to liberate the students from a dehumanizing educational system

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<sup>13</sup>Peter McLaren, *Che Guevara, Paulo Freire, and the Pedagogy of Revolution*, (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000), p. 185.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

but the teachers as well.<sup>16</sup> It is an empowerment struggle led by a vision of humanity that supports localism and diversity, an increase in power through genuine dialogue and community participation. This means that the only pedagogy that is liberating is one that enables people to educate themselves through their revolutionary practice.

### **Migration from a Classroom-Based Pedagogy towards a Search for the 'New Normal'**

New spaces should be produced. A fast and growing space created, because of the absence of systematic fallback, and in response to the challenges posed by COVID-19, is distance education. The value of the internet and its affinity to pedagogy is eventually realized. This new educational space between the teacher and students implies new context, new rules, and new norms. Learning now is made possible even without literal walls.

This pedagogical revolution is the emerging new normal. The traditional classroom is deconstructed. Its physical structure is subjected to mere simulation. Its enclosures are transcended so that ideas' mobility is not restricted. Whitehead's 'adventures of ideas' are endorsed and e-classrooms are virtually built and utilized to sustain connection, communication, collaboration, and engagement among learners and their facilitator.

Though the concreteness of the Levinasian human face is brought back to abstractness, at this time, the internet is the most reasonable and most practical means to maintain physical distancing without sacrificing the continuity of the students' active learning routine. The treatment of the *Alterity* or the 'other'<sup>17</sup> is recreated and reappropriated in a just context of

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<sup>16</sup>Distinction between 'revolutionary pedagogue' and 'pedagogue of the revolution' was clearly presented by Paulo Freire in *Literacy, Reading the Word and the World*, (Massachusetts: Bergin and Garvey Publishers, Inc., 1987), p. 103.

<sup>17</sup>In a society in which the dominant referent for defining 'difference' is based on White, middle-class, heterosexual male characteristics, 'otherness' refers to anybody who is considered outside of or at odds with this prevailing paradigm. In literature, one

human relations despite the lack of physical propinquity. Even the very concept of intersubjectivity or the subject-subject relation is critically challenged and redefined.

Life is historical on one hand and metahistorical on the other. Its movement is directed precisely in both continuity and discontinuity. There are Foucauldian genealogies and ensuing ruptures along the way. *Genealogy* identifies the accidents, the minute deviations – or conversely, the complete reversal – the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that gave birth to those things that continue to exist and have value for us; it is to discover that the truth or being does not lie at the root of what we know and what we are, but the exteriority of accidents. Genealogy asserts that what we are and the things around us could have been and still be different.<sup>18</sup> It gives us a vision of new rootedness which someday might even be fit to recapture the old and now rapidly disappearing rootedness in a changed form. It gives a possibility and a promise of dwelling in the world in a totally different way.<sup>19</sup>

In the final analysis, survival in this ever-changing world of dialectics<sup>20</sup> requires constant openness and adaptability; otherwise, the Darwinian selection process will eliminate us because according to Charles Darwin, “it is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent of them, but the one who is most adaptable to change.”

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often finds the use of the term ‘decentering’. This refers to an attempt to rupture the undemocratic hierarchy of the dominant beliefs, values, and practices.

<sup>18</sup>Jeffrey M. Centeno, *Dialogical Ethics in Pluralistic Age* (Ateneo de Manila University: Unpublished Master’s Thesis, 2000), p. 150.

<sup>19</sup>Charles B. Guignon, (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Heidegger* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 309.

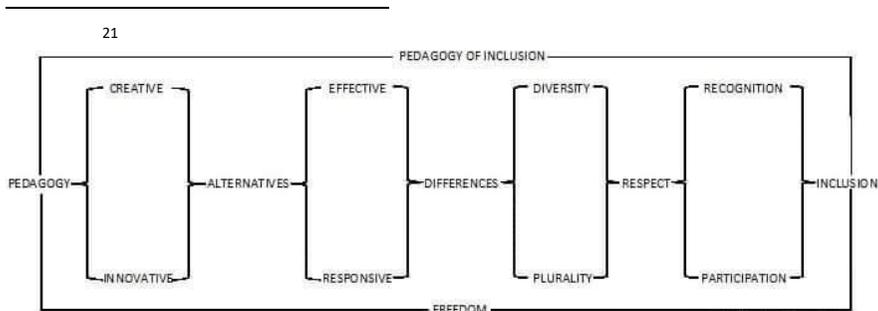
<sup>20</sup>Where there are a number of definitions and interpretations of dialectics, for the purposes of inclusive pedagogy, this concept refers to the interconnecting and contradicting relationships that constitute a particular phenomenon, for example, among the economic, political, social, and cultural dimensions of society. A dialectical analysis is also often used to show how every idea or force has its opposite or contradiction.

## Towards a Dancing and Inclusive Pedagogy

Here, ‘dancing’ is used in the context of educational *poesis* to refer to the flexibility of pedagogical approaches. A dancing pedagogy is the only clear hope that one should hold on to in order to gracefully attune one’s provisional responses and harmoniously submit oneself to the rhythm of the new situation. For sure, a dancing pedagogy is what is needed in these ever- changing grounds or foundations. Since pedagogy is temporal in character, there is no such thing as best pedagogy so to speak. In this world of constant flux, permanence will never be permanent, and change will not change. Only a deconstructing mind can make a dancing pedagogy possible.

A dancing learner-centered pedagogy must necessarily be inclusive. It is inclusive if it recognizes, accommodates, accepts, and responds to the diversity of students’ needs and abilities including their capacities and ways of living within the humanizing climate of critical hope and sensitive conscience.<sup>21</sup>

As a critical intervention to the manipulative and oppressive tendencies of some teaching strategies that denied and deprived students the opportunity to participate, inclusive pedagogy echoes the voices of the ‘culture of silence.’<sup>22</sup> It



<sup>22</sup>‘Culture of silence’ is a collective noun that refers to the class of the marginalized, oppressed, excluded, objectified, dominated, manipulated, and domesticated. “It speaks of the dependent course group of those who are simply living or adapted, but not existing or integrated.” CAF, 75; APL, 121 - 123. However, McLaren said that Paulo Freire pointed out clearly the “truth...that the oppressed are not ‘marginals,’ are not men living outside society. They have always been inside – inside

struggles to eliminate “sexual, racial, cultural, and class discrimination.”<sup>23</sup>

Re-confronting reality, inclusive pedagogy sees the world as the realm of complex relations, a world of plurality and not a singular world. It aspires to respond to multiplicity or differences not through limiting opportunities of participation for some but through equalizing of opportunities for all.<sup>24</sup> It aspires to integrate or incorporate the marginal students into the healthy learning experience that has been forsaken.<sup>25</sup> In other words, inclusive pedagogy is a creative pedagogy which seeks to include the students in the active pursuit for liberation from a teacher/instruction-centered pedagogy.<sup>26</sup>

### Reassessing Assumptions of Assessments

‘Paradigm’ refers to a system of values, procedures, and models to which a community of scientists and experts subscribes to. It designates a whole constellation of assumptions and theories according to which problems in science are systematically clarified and standardly approached to possible solutions. Changes or shifts in paradigms are occasioned by growing ‘anomalies’ that show the limitations or weaknesses of the current theories in dealing with the new challenges.

Due to the unexpected act of nature (or maybe act of man), we are now in the midst of an extraordinary circumstance that

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the structure that made them beings-for-others. The solution is not to integrate them into the structure of oppression but to transform the structure so they can become beings-for-themselves.” Peter McLaren *Paulo Freire: A Critical Encounter*, (London: Routledge Publication, 1993), 13; Paulo Freire also used ‘culture of sabotage’ [referring to the aggressive rejection of silence]. APL, 123 - 129.

<sup>23</sup>Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, (New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 1998), 120; “Racism and sexism are expressions of authoritarianism.” APL, 165.

<sup>24</sup>PTO, 11.

<sup>25</sup>*ibid.*, 55 and 150; APL, 4.

<sup>26</sup>In its acrostic sense, INCLUSION means: [I]nvolvement, [N]egotiation, [C]ollaboration, [L]earning, [U]nderstanding, [S]haring, [I]mprovement, [O]ptimism, [N]etworking.

history has never let us experience before. The COVID-19 phenomenon has rendered and left the entire human race defenseless and in a state of total suspense. Our situation now requires a type of education that absolutely departs from the traditional classroom set-up – a ‘de-schooled’ learning system that abandons the routinary teacher/instruction-centered education and truly embraces a child/learning-centered pedagogy.

Embarking on this life-defining journey into frontier horizons assumes the courage of education. Undeniably, there is really a need to remap the academic routine. In this time of uncertainty, when we have been stripped of control over things, we are challenged to redesign plans, make schedules flexible, and devise effective strategies. Rather than remain dependent on classroom encounters, it is naturally human to respond to the different conditions and contexts of our students that question our attachment to convenience and conventions to explore alternative modes of distance delivery of instructions.

Classroom-based quizzes, examinations, and activities are not the only or exclusive ways to determine how much the students have learned from the course. In fact, the gaps among the intended, implemented, and interpreted curricula are quite worrisome. The educational agencies develop and direct the intended curriculum, the school administrators and the teachers adopt and implement the intended curriculum based on how they understand the latter, while the students interpret the implemented curriculum and assume that such interpretation is the faithful reproduction of the intended curriculum.

Because of the call for a major adjustments of pedagogical practices, there is, perhaps, practicality in capitalizing on the internet and its benefits to, somehow, offer a provisional solution to the impossibility of immediate return to the usual classroom set-up due to maintenance of physical social distancing to prevent transmission of the virus. The use of internet for and by the teachers and students is designed to build connection, communication, collaboration, or engagement between and

among them. As to the syllabus, no overhaul is necessary since the objectives or learning outcomes are the same for the Outcome-Based Teaching & Learning (OBTL) whatever strategies or pedagogies are employed.

In a remote/distance teaching/learning scheme using the internet, there are various educational activities that we can recreate and improve through the introduction of online orientation and planning, live lecture demonstration, flexible learning activities or standalone content delivery and strategies for students engagement using Facebook and YouTube, Learning Management Systems (LMS) for asynchronous viewing of live-lectures through Google Classroom, Schoology, live or collaborative Webinars (online seminar-workshops) and online platforms for meeting like Skype, Messenger, Viber, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet or Hangouts, and Zoom. With the LMS, we can upload files, pages, or paths; *exempli gratia*, Moodle as online textbooks, online discussion boards, group works, online quizzes or exams, and online grading.

Accordingly, online teaching/learning promises the users the following benefits: [1] flexibility in time approach (movable), [2] practicality in the form of outputs (paperless), [3] convenience as it can be done anywhere (home or park), [4] affordability (no travel costs), [5] accessibility of resources (open educational resources), and [6] safeness and lesser hazards (social distancing). However, certain challenges and needs must also be carefully considered. Some of which are: [1] organizational readiness, [2] infrastructural readiness, [3] faculty readiness, and [4] student readiness.

In determining organizational readiness, the following should be considered: the articulation of a purpose, organizational structure, human capital, policies and programs, funds, and large classes. To determine infrastructure readiness, there should be assessment of facilities, platform, internet, hardware, software, and security. Faculty readiness, on one hand, is weighed in terms of their motivation to deliver, readiness of

materials, familiarity with tools and features of platforms, knowledge, and familiarity on the use of singular or multiple devices, and skills on strategies. Student readiness, on the other hand, is accounted for in considerations of internet connectivity, availability of gadgets, software applications, technological skill, active participation, attitude and values (authenticity of students' outputs, proneness to plagiarism, intellectual dishonesty, and cheating), and schedule management.

Educators have a great role to play in society. Educators bequeath to their students the wisdom of the old and, at the same time, revitalize their learning capabilities with fresh orientations. Given the challenges and disadvantages of online-based education, instead of totally rejecting the very idea, its merits should also be given due course in the calculation. To make it possible and feasible for teachers to adopt online-based education, let me articulate my recommendations briefly. Because teacher is also a learner, he<sup>27</sup> should:

1. Explore, research, and attend training or seminar about online-based education;
2. Learn new approaches or discover hybrid methods of teaching by combining technological, pedagogical, and content-knowledge that educators need particularly in this time of disruptions, social distancing, and new norms emerging;
3. Know the learners, their access to technology, and their economic means;
4. Vary pedagogical roles, drive conversations, stimulate thinking, include humor and light moments, reward or incentivize active participation, etc.

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<sup>27</sup>Whenever I have conformed to contemporary English usage in this paper and used 'man' or 'men,' it should be understood to speak of all humans inclusively, male and female of every age. In other words, the term 'man' or 'men' are taken in its generic sense. Even the pronouns 'he' and 'him,' 'he' and 'she' just the same, never imply sexist biases. I see the relevance of clarifying the usage of the term in order not to offend feminist readers.

5. Schedule synchronous discussions and have 24/7 asynchronous connections;
6. Allow and encourage multiple devices, applications, or platform integration; and
7. Set house rules and provide safeguards against plagiarism, trademark, and copyright concerns.

### **Concluding Reflections**

Mobile teaching/learning, whether blended, flipped, e-learning, and the like, is not just about the device itself. Rightly understood, mobile teaching/learning is precisely about the mobility of the educators as well as the students to maximize and optimize whatever available and accessible resources they have on-hand independently anytime and anywhere. During the pre-pandemic, mobile phones are not allowed inside the traditional classrooms; now and in the post-pandemic, the modern classrooms are inside the mobile phones.

Central to our search for an education that truly works in a rapidly changing society is a return to the question of "which is better?" There are no easy and universal answers as to how online teaching/learning can or should be used. The question, however, challenges us to think about the most important things that we want our students to learn, and for us to see what flexibility we can have to achieve them. No perfect modality is possible in this time of academic paralysis and educational crisis except for deconstructive 'pedagogy of difference' that promises nothing except for justice to the students. As Marcel Proust reminds his readers, "the only real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes."

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