ABSTRACT

Title of Document:	A PORTRAIT OF PRACTITIONERS' UNDERSTANDING AND THE USE OF FREIREAN PEDAGOGY IN A SUMMER CAMP FOR GIRLS IN IRAN
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In the summer of 2008, I went to Tehran to conduct a one-week Freirean summer camp in collaboration with a team of Iranian and Iranian-American practitioners in order to create a liberatory space for adolescent girls to practice expression skills. Bartlett (2005) identifies that "understanding the meaning of dialog" and "transforming traditional teacher-student relations" (p. 345) are among the most challenging aspects of Freirean pedagogy for practitioners around the world. Examining Freirean approach in theory and practice, I use Bartlett's (2005) study as a heuristic framework for my research to portray how the practitioners in the summer camp understood the key concepts of Freirean pedagogy. In this study, I used portraiture methodology to draw a

picture of the practitioners' understanding and the use of Freirean pedagogy. Portraiture is a qualitative narrative inquiry methodology that paints individuals and their detailed and complex socio-historical contexts with words. Painting with participants' words, I portray how sociopolitical complexities of the society influence practitioners' understanding and employing of Freirean approach in theory and practice.

A PORTRAIT OF PRACTITIONERS'
UNDERSTANDING AND THE USE OF FREIREAN PEDAGOGY
IN A SUMMER CAMP FOR GIRLS IN IRAN

By

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Dedication

To my parents,

Zahra and Mahmoud Abdi Dezfooli

for their heart-warming support in all stages of my life.

Acknowledgements

The saying that "it takes a whole village to raise a child", is certainly an appropriate metaphor for my graduate experience and completing my doctoral program; and in my case it took a global village! Without the many people that will be acknowledged herein, as well as many other friends, colleagues, and family members I could not complete my doctoral program.

First and foremost, I would like to thank all friends, colleagues, and family members in Tehran, Iran, who made it possible to conduct a summer camp, which was the focus of my dissertation, during very politically challenging times in the summer of 2008 in Iran. Particularly, I would like to thank the camp participants and their families, the practitioners of the summer camp, and my family members who contributed their time, energy, and financial resources to hold the summer camp. I would not have been able to conduct the camp without the support of my many friends and family members and particularly my father, Mahmoud, and my mother, Zahra. My thanks to them for all their endless support and kindness.

I specially want to express my eternal appreciation to my husband and the best partner of my life, Ali Alavizadeh, who stayed up with me over the long nights of the dissertation writing, read and edited my work, and believed in me when I didn't believe in myself. This work was not possible without his support and love during some of the most challenging times of my life.

During the past five years, as graduate student in the International Education Policy (IEP) program at the University of Maryland, I have been always blessed with a

Though only my name appears on the cover of this dissertation, all these people and a great many others have contributed to its production. I owe my gratitude to all of the people I named, and forgot to name, who have made this journey possible.

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Chapter One: Introduction

My past experiences growing up as a young woman motivated me to focus my doctoral dissertation project on self-expression skills. After researching the topic and learning about liberatory programs to promote expression skills I decided to conduct the project for young girls in my home country: Iran. I arrived in Tehran during the first week of May 2008 to conduct a Freirean summer camp to in order to promote self-expression skills among young girls. However, the process was not as smooth as I imagined. The third day of my arrival I was arrested by morality police[1] while I was walking freely with my husband in the street and dreaming about future projects that I would love to initiate at home in Iran. Despite my assumption that I followed the dress code of my country[2] properly, I was stopped by morality police due to my "short uniform." They said I broke the Islamic dress code rules. I wore my blue jeans with a uniform down to my knees with a scarf that covered my hair. They told me that my uniform was about one inch shorter than the new regulations that had been released a month earlier by the administration to "secure the society from social corruption." I was arrested by morality police and sat in a van that drove around the streets to arrest women and girls who threaten the safety of the society through wearing "immodest dresses." In addition to myself, a group of seven other girls and women were driven in the van to an

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[1] The morality police is comprised of volunteer citizens, both women and men alike, who uphold strict policies and arrests against "un-Islamic dress". It is also important to note here that the state's (Iranian government) interpretation of Islam is differs from many other Islamic nations and does not necessarily represent Islamic views of many citizens even inside the country.

[2] The public dress code for women in Iran mandates to cover the hair and body; it is permitted for the face, hands and feet to remain uncovered.

office in the northern side of the city to pledge that "we never wear such immodest dress again and we understand that such dress is erotic and may expand contagion and corruption in the society." We also had to stay in that office until a family member or friend brought us an appropriate clothing to change our "immodest dress" and walk out with a new appearance. The reactions of the girls were different to such claims. Some laughed and said they are used to this situation and calmly called their parents/husbands to come with an extra uniform and to take them home so they could continue their routine life. Others were nervous or cried to get freed without calling any family members. In fact, they either did not have access to anyone who can come and pick them up at that moment or were concerned about being blamed by their parents for making trouble for such disobedience. I was extremely offended by the reactions of the morality police and the manner in which they had treated us. However, my anger and sadness about such an ugly and disgusting situation could not be expressed since it could make my situation even worsen. I stayed silence until my husband, who although offended and angry, remained silent, came to pick me up with a longer uniform that he gave to me in front of the morality police officer. I was finally released from there after about two hours of the sickening experience. In such a moment of oppression and helplessness, I found no voice or way of expression that I felt could personally liberate me from the disrespectful and oppressive situation I faced. I felt totally powerless and had no choice but to remain silenced. While I was waiting in the morality police station, I questioned myself about the goals that brought me back home. Can I talk about self-expression with young girls when I myself as an adult cannot decide about the way that I like to dress? Is it possible

to empower adolescent girls and promote self-expression skills in such an oppressive environment?

However, other experiences in the city convinced me that a Freirean summer camp, like many other liberatory projects that take place in Iran, could help improve the situation. Right after I was released from the office of morality police I contacted Goli to tell her about my unpleasant experience and share my concerns about the summer camp with her. She answered her cell phone in a very crowded and loud conference room at the University of Tehran (UT), where speeches on women's rights issues were being held. In the very same day that I was arrested, Shahala Lahigi, one of the famous women's rights activists had a public speech in a seminar at UT and a large crowd of interested men and women attended her speech. After I shared my unpleasant story with Goli and told her about my doubts and the disappointment that I felt about holding a summer camp in such an oppressive situation, she shared uplifting, interesting stories from the pleasant session and powerful speech that she attended. Hearing about such liberatory programs in the city I decide to move forward and conduct the summer camp, although I knew that under the political restrictions in the country I could not expect to freely practice all aspects of a Freirean program. From adjusting to political pressures in conducting the project I arrived at addressing deeper sociocultural issues on implementing the liberatory program. It was more than the political environment that challenged me in the process. I noticed how the challenging sociopolitical environment results in issues in understanding and using liberal ideas in an educational program. The purpose of this qualitative portraiture study is to explore the challenges in understanding and applying Freirean liberal practices in a summer camp program that was conducted in the summer of 2008 in Tehran, Iran.

Background

There are many success stories about Iranian women's struggles for their rights,

which according to Sanasarian (1982) started slowly about a century ago. However,

recent decades faced them with new challenges and relentless struggles. Although the

results of the 2008 *kunkur* (the national entrance examination for public universities in

Iran) show that 64 percent of those passing the entrance examination were women and 36

percent were men, Iranian women still struggle to achieve their deserved sociopolitical

and economic status in society (Shavarini, 2009). Such struggles appear in everyday

conversations regarding the situation of women and debates over women's rights in

Iranian society. For example, Shavarini's (2009) study quotes worries and

disappointments of a mother of a young college educated woman that says:

> I'm beginning to realize that a university degree, which essentially should
> empower us women intellectually, socially . . . even economically, does nothing
> for our girls. It only gives them the realization of the intensity of their captivity.
> (p. 135)

Such frustration was not unknown to me as a woman, who grew up in Iran,

finished her graduate school there, and put lots of effort to pursue an active and desirable

professional life in Iran. Shavarini's (2009) study reminds me of the day I went to my

professor's office at the University of Tehran (UT) to give him the great news that I

passed the entrance exam for the graduate program at UT. His first reaction was "Why do

you want to go to graduate school?" I replied, "I have many important goals in my life

and I think I can pursue them in graduate school." I was shocked when he responded to

me with such ridicule in his tone saying, "Yeah! Like with your higher degree you wanna

earn a higher dowry in your marriage! Right?" I still remember my sweaty hands, racing

heartbeat, and the flash of blood running to my head. I also never forget that I had the

loudest scream within me that internally yelled: "Shut up!," but I remained silent and said

goodbye to him. I observed our struggles (i.e. women's struggles) and always asked

myself why our higher education degrees, which enhanced us with professional and

technical knowledge rarely empower us to confront the oppression we faced as women in

the greater society. The mother in Shavarini's (2009) study explains

> …when a young woman is given a job, she typically finds herself in a
> predominately male work environment. There, she's made to feel uncomfortable.
> She tries to be professional but her male colleagues think of her as
> 'loose'…cheap…unfeminine. ..(p. 136)

However, to me it was something more than the male colleagues' words that

made me feel uncomfortable in public (i.e. work environment, university classrooms,

etc). Professional knowledge of a topic was not enough to give me the courage to stand

up in the classroom or work place, or even in front of a chauvinist university professor to

express my opinion. In Iran, I had limited opportunities to practice such expressions in

school or other smaller public places. There was always an unknown sense within me that

has made me feel less intelligent and/or professional compared to my male

colleagues/classmates, which holds me back from expressing my opinion in public. I

have spent a lot of time interrogating my feelings and developing strategies that would

make me feel more comfortable to communicate and express my opinions in public. I

was not alone in such struggles and, therefore, attempting to discover the reasons of such

disempowered emotions, it became a professional goal in my life.

After I started my graduate degree in international education with a concentration

in women's studies at the University of Maryland in the United States, I continued my

exploration on the issue and shared my new learning with a friend of mine, who is a social sciences teacher for girls in a middle school in Tehran. I was personally very interested to explore the issue in her classrooms. We had semimonthly phone calls, in which we were committed to talk about our new readings and recent thoughts on the issue. At the time, she also conducted a study on Iranian women's identity making in contemporary Iran. She conducted comprehensive in-depth interviews and surveys for four groups of educated women as the participants of her study (i.e. dentists/physicians, engineers, lawyers, and artists). In her study, which was published in 2007, she examined trends of critical thinking and reflectivity of the Iranian professional urban women and focused on the "identity making process" that she describes as "achieving a clear portrait of self through gaining self-consciousness" (Azizzadeh, 2007, p.23). Her work on women's self-consciousness and their expressions on such consciousness produced interesting knowledge on the Iranian urban women's identification process. The study provides an understanding of the enculturation of chauvinist social norms and trends of reconstruction of sexist values even among groups of educated and professional Iranian women. Upon reviewing Azizzadeh's (2007) study, as one of the few pieces of research on contemporary Iranian women's identities, I was provoked to start thinking of the strategies or spaces that may provide opportunities to interrupt such sexist enculturation.

In the summer of 2007, I observed a leadership camp in Virginia that was held by Iranian Alliances Across Borders (IAAB)[3], a small grassroots organization for the

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[3] Iranian Alliances Across Boarders is a 501(c)3 non-profit non-governmental organization (NGO) in the US to strengthen the Iranian diaspora community and empower its youth.

Iranian-American community, empowering immigrant adolescents as future leaders in the United States. The summer camp employed Freirean pedagogy and theater techniques by Augusta Boal's *Theater of the Oppressed* (1979) to practice dialog, build connections, and encourage the young participants to overcome the oppression they feel as immigrants. Observing such practices introduced me to Freirean practices and pedagogy. After reviewing Freire's work I learned about his liberatory pedagogy of education, concept of dialog, and how this pedagogy tackles oppression by suggesting problem-posing and bottom-up strategies of knowledge making instead of authoritarian banking education.

Learning about Freirean pedagogy and the positive impacts of projects using such an approach in different parts of the world encouraged me to discuss the pedagogy and the opportunity of using it at home. In my conversations with my author friend, who also worked as a social sciences teacher at a girls' middle school for more than 17 years, I shared my interest in using Freirean pedagogy to work with young girls on fighting oppression and promoting self-consciousness. We discussed how to create a space for young girls, where they could exercise reflective expression and dialogical practices based on Freirean pedagogy.

After a few months of planning and consulting with a group of practitioners in Iran, I traveled to Tehran in the summer of 2008 and in collaboration with local social workers and facilitators I conducted a one-week "expression camp" for young girls using Freirean pedagogy. Collaborating with a team of practitioners, the summer camp's mission was to promote expression skills among adolescent girls. Using emancipatory Freirean pedagogy, we designed Camp Bayan [Expression Camp] to create a space for

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young women to learn about constructive dialog and practice proactive communication skills. We used activities based on games and techniques from *Theater of the Oppressed* (1979) and *Games for Actors and Non-actors* (2002), books by Augusto Boal, a Brazilian director who was influenced by Paulo Freire's philosophy and *Theater for Conflict Resolution* (1998) by Patricia Sternberg. Combining practices from different resources and receiving consultation from practitioners affiliated with the Theater of the Oppressed Laboratory (TOPLAB) in New York City, we designed and implemented over 20 games including role-playing, conflict resolution activities, and Boalian theater games (i.e. Forum Theater, Image Theater) over the course of one week.

The coordinating team consisted of 11women—including myself—from different backgrounds; three Iranian-Americans traveled with me from the US, where we joined and seven Iranians living inside Iran. One Iranian-American on our team was the co-founder of IAAB and had several experiences conducting Freirean camps/programs in Latin American countries. The rest of the team initially learned about the Freirean approach together during the summer camp preparations.

As a team, we agreed to follow the progressive approach of liberatory education and implemented the guidelines of such an approach to conduct the summer camp activities. Doing so, we consistently held staff meetings before and during the period of the one-week camp; every day we had at least three meetings: one in the morning before the camp started, one at noon during the lunchtime, and one at the end of the camp day. In the staff meetings, we reviewed Freirean based guidelines on how to facilitate the activities and then discussed the goals of each game, we also discussed the structure and coordination of the games, as well as the implementation plans for each activity. In more

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than 15 hours of staff meetings, all the team members actively participated and contributed to the discussions about the plans for each day, reviewing and reflecting on the team's performance on implementation of each game. We followed the Freirean praxis, which is a cycle of action and reflection (Freire, 1970), critically reflecting on our performance at the end of each day.

<div align="center">Freirean Pedagogy and Iran</div>

Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970) by Paulo Freire has become a classic reference point for scholars, educators and practitioners who are concerned about oppression over the last decades. In his book, Freire (1970) defines oppression stating, "Any situation in which 'A' objectively exploits 'B' or hinders his and her pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression." (p. 55). Focusing on the power of education, he seeks the cure of oppression in a new approach to education and introduces "problem-posing" education instead of traditional "banking" education. In his approach, the "banking" concept of education is an instrument of oppression, whereas "problem-posing" education is a cure to oppression, and "dialogics" is the practice of freedom. According to Bartlett (2005), in the banking model of education, on the other hand, teachers "own" knowledge and "deposit" it in students' minds. In Freire's problem-posing model of education teachers and students learn together through posing problems and developing new knowledge through dialog. The problem-posing approach to education is mainly focused on a revised teacher-student relationship and dialogical theory of praxis. In this approach, students take an active role by being engaged in the process of knowledge production, proposing their issues and challenges as the core

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content of the curriculum, and through dialog on their challenges, they not only engage in an educational experience, but they also raise their consciousness on a social level that eventually may lead them to take action.

Freirean pedagogy is a completely new and dramatically different approach from what exists in the context of education system in Iran. Shorish's (1988) study on the K-12 textbooks in the Iranian school system after the 1979 revolution presents evidence of rather long sections on the importance and place of teachers in the education system of Iran and how students must respect and obey teachers as their superiors. The top-down and hierarchical approach on the teacher-student relationship in the education system of Iran is fundamentally different from Freirean values of the dialogical and problem-posing education. Therefore, employing the Freirean practices and understanding the core values of the pedagogy was a challenging task for us (i.e. practitioners) to pursue in a period of one week.

Moreover, the internalized oppression that we carry as inheritors of hundreds of years of historical dictatorship in Iran creates both internal and external cultural and sociopolitical challenges in using Freirean pedagogy. Tappan's (2006) study employs Freirean theory to discuss internalized oppression as sociocultural phenomena and explains how oppression can become entrenched by internalizing the image of the oppressor and adopting his/her guidelines. Freire (1970) calls such situation as "identification with the oppressor" (p. 46). Freire explains the main challenge of liberation in the initial stages of struggle is the situation during which the oppressed tend to become oppressors, or as he puts it "sub-oppressors" (p. 45). He argues that only "educational projects, which should be carried out *with* the oppressed in the process of

organizing them" (p. 54) can break through the cycle of oppression and start a fresh approach.

My initial intention before I conduct the summer camp was to study how young girls would respond to Freirean pedagogy and how the practices during the one-week summer camp would or would not influence their understanding on effective expression. However, reviewing the staff conversations in conducting the summer camp over the course of one week, I observed practitioners' challenges (i.e. becoming sub-oppressors) in implementing/understanding the pedagogy. I decided that before I focus on participant's performance I need to understand how we delivered the practices. Although all of us (i.e. including the staff, the students and their parents) refer to the camp as a memorable and satisfactory project, by the end of the camp I returned with important questions to reflect upon: how well we understood Freirean pedagogy, and how much that understanding and how we employed the pedagogy was influenced by our own historical and sociopolitical experiences in Iran.

Statement of the Problem

The current study is unique in two ways: it focuses on *practitioners*' understanding of Freirean pedagogy and, for the first time, it studies the application of Freirean pedagogy in the context of *Iran*.

Bartlett (2005) argues that there are "key precepts in Freire's work that have proven to be very difficult for educators to interpret and implement" (p. 345). Such challenges motivated her to conduct a study on how practitioners perceived key Freirean concepts in Brazil, Freire's home country. Despite Bartlett (2005) emphasizes the crucial

role of practitioners' in the use of Freirean pedagogy to create progressive social change, there are fewer studies on practitioners' understanding and the use of of the theory.

Moreover, most of the studies on Freirean pedagogy have been conducted in Western or European societies. Kincheloe (2007) addressed this issue and presented serious concern on the diversity gap in Freirean literature; a gap that as he asserted may destruct critical pedagogy into what he referred to as "too much of a North American (and often European) 'thing'" (p. 11). He further called for

> …intense efforts in the coming years to bring more diversity into… [the critical pedagogy] for two purposes: 1) Critical pedagogy has profound insights to pass along to all peoples; and 2) Critical pedagogy has much to learn from the often subjugated knowledges of African, African American, Asian, and indigenous peoples. (p. 11)

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

As described in the last section, the purpose of this qualitative portraiture study is to address the gap in the Freirean literature by exploring how Iranian practitioners understood and applied Freirean tenets in the context of a summer camp in Tehran, Iran.

In this study, I used data from the Freirean summer camp in 2008 to answer the following research question and sub-question:

- How did Iranian practitioners understand and use Freirean pedagogical theory in the context of a summer camp for young girls in Tehran, Iran?

  o What were the challenges in understanding and the use of Freirean pedagogy in the sociopolitical context of Iran?

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I used multiple sources of data including recordings from staff meeting conversations, self-recorded memos, videos, and photos of the camp activities to answer my research questions. Having more than 15 hours of staff meeting discussions on the methods of coordination and implementation of camp activities provided a comprehensive source of participants' voices for this study. Data from the staff meetings include evidence of camp practitioners' collective decision-making on how to implement games and activities in the summer camp. I used transcripts from these staff meetings as the main source of data to portray the answers to the research questions. I employed the other sources (i.e. self-recorded memos, videos, and photos) as supplemental data to draw detailed and in-depth vignettes on how we (practitioners) understood and employed the key concepts of the Freirean pedagogy in the summer camp in Tehran.

Theoretical Framework

I use Bartlett's (2005; 2010) study as a heuristic framework to answer my research questions. As described earlier, Bartlett's experiences and challenges as a practitioner in the United States motivated Bartlett to conduct a study on how practitioners and educators in Brazil—the home country of the Freire—understand and employ the key concepts of Freirean pedagogy. In her study on adult education programs in Brazil, Bartlett examines three complicated issues that she believes to be problematic to Freirean practitioners everywhere. These issues include: "understanding the meaning of dialog," "transforming traditional teacher-student relations," and "incorporating local knowledge into the classroom" (p. 345).

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I use Bartlett's study as a scaffold for my research and examined the case of the summer camp to portray how the six practitioners in Camp Bayan understand and apply the key concepts of Freirean pedagogy in practice. However, in my research I focus on only two concepts of Bartlett's study that are repeatedly discussed in Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) and appear to be the focal points of critical pedagogy. These are "the meaning of dialog" and "teacher-student relationship."

Also, in order to draw a detailed and comprehensive image of the practitioners' understandings of the Freirean pedagogy I answer my sub-question by providing detailed descriptions of the geographical location of the summer camp, the socio-cultural norms of the neighborhood, the governmental and political challenges we faced during the camp, and the overall external and internal socio-cultural complexities in understanding and the use of Freirean pedagogy.

Overview of the Portraiture Study and Findings

Portraiture is a qualitative narrative inquiry methodology that paints individuals and their detailed and complex socio-historical context with words. The words are collected from the participant and are not merely in the researcher's words. The methodology is an interpretive inquiry that describes the constructed and complex narrative "from the point of view of those who live in it" (Schram, 2003, p. 33). In this study, I used portraiture methodology to answer my research questions. "Painting with words" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 4), I apply portraiture to draw a picture of Iranian practitioners' understanding and use of Freirean pedagogy.

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The main benefit of portraiture methodology for my study, compared to other qualitative methodologies, is its emphasis on the relationship between the researcher and the participants' relationship. In portraiture the portrait piece expresses the perspective of the artist and is shaped by the evolving relationship between the artist and the subject (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). In fact, the portrait is shaped through the negotiations, conversations, and the encounters between researcher and participants. The final product conveys the participants' "authority, wisdom, and perspectives," but it also differs from the picture that the participants may imagine for themselves (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 4). Since I was a co-founder of the summer camp and was involved in all the debates and discussions throughout the duration of the camp, I had the opportunity to be fully engaged in staff meetings and participated in all staff conversations. I heard about each member's viewpoints on different stages of the summer camp and talked with them about their perspectives on how to overcome the challenges along the way. In this portraiture study, through my reviews of the staff meeting conversations, I focus on our discussions and debates over coordination of the summer camp to draw a picture of our understanding and employment of the two main concepts of Freirean pedagogy including teacher-student horizontal relationship and dialog. Doing so, the narrative and analysis chapter of the study is composed of three types of passages: vignettes, discussions, and reflections. Vignettes illustrate specific points of the practitioners' experiences during the summer camp. Followed by each vignette, there are discussion and reflection sections. Discussion sections highlight key points in each vignette including the importance of each vignette in terms of how the evidence presented in the vignette shaped the overall Freirean practices and accomplishments that

were achieved through that interaction. The reflection passage after each vignette will include my personal interpretations on challenges in the process. Using such analytical structure the study presents nine vignettes on our understandings of horizontal relationship and dialog and how we employ Freirean pedagogy in the summer program. As presented in the findings section of the study, two types of challenges emerged in our understanding and the use of Freirean pedagogy: internal and external challenges. Internal challenges mainly reflect the internalized oppression of the practitioners and external challenges relates to the sociopolitical constraints in the process of understanding and the use of the pedagogy.

Significance of the Study and Limitations

Considering the gap in the literature on diversity of Freirean studies and the limited number of studies on practitioners' understanding of Freirean pedagogy, the current study sheds light on challenges of using Freirean theory in practice. Also, the research is unique in terms of studying Freirean pedagogy in the context of Iran. Therefore, the study's findings add to the body of knowledge on using Freirean pedagogy in different socio-cultural contexts. The study also helps practitioners learn about the challenges they might face in understanding and implementing Freirean pedagogy in the field.

Time is a limitation of this study as it took place during a one-week-long summer camp in Tehran, Iran. The restricted and short time in which Freirean practices were developed limited the findings. Also, the study is limited to the specific historical and

sociopolitical situation of Iran and may not be transferable to other sociopolitical

contexts.

Finally, translation of the transcript from Persian to English is another challenge

of the current study. I have recorded and transcribed the staff meeting conversations as

the main source of data for the study. As the conversations and communications were all

in Persian, I had to translate them to English in order to quote directly from the

participants. I consulted with bilingual speakers (i.e. Persian-English speakers) to select

the best possible judgment when translating critical terms in the quotes. However,

sometimes finding exact phrases that communicate the same meaning from Persian into

English was not possible and explaining the context was inevitable task in order to make

the quotes comprehensible for a native English-speaking audience. In such cases, I used

the exact Persian phrase or term and explained them in the footnote at the end of each

respective page.

Organization of the Study

This study consists of seven chapters. The current introduction chapter reviews

the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, research

question, briefly discusses the research methods and the finding of the study. In chapter

two, I review the literature, sketching out my research problem and the purpose of the

study based on the relevant literature. In chapter three, I describe the methodology and

the data I gathered and used for the current study. In chapter four, I described the

sociopolitical context of the summer camp including the background of the practitioners,

the recruitment of students, the process of the camp's creation in order to contextualize

the study in broader sociopolitical terms. Chapter five is the data analysis section in which I follow the portraiture methodology guidelines and presented nine vignettes of camp experiences. Each vignette follows with a discussion section, which highlights the interactions among the practitioners through a Freirean lens. Subsequent reflections sections follow each discussion, including my personal interpretations on challenges in the process. Chapter six draws upon the findings of the study as well as the and portrait practitioners' understanding and use of Freirean pedagogy. The findings of the study are presented through a cross analysis of the vignettes and a contextualization of the analysis from the related literature. Lastly, chapter seven draws a conclusion on the study by discussing implications of the study in theory and practice, the possibilities for future research, and a final conclusion.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Overview

In the current chapter I contextualize my study through a review of the literature on Iranian women's sociocultural challenges in Iranian society, the role of the education system in reproducing oppression in Iran, and emancipatory critical pedagogy and its key concepts. I also review the debates within Freirean critical pedagogy and introduce feminist poststructuralist critiques on the pedagogy. Using Bartlett's study (2005/2010) as a theoretical scaffold for the current study, I examine Iranian practitioners' understanding on key concepts of Freirean pedagogy.

Iranian Women's Challenges and Education over the Last Century

1900-1979

Over the century of women's rights movements around the world to gain sociopolitical rights, Iranian women's challenges have extended beyond the sociopolitical sphere. They continue to be bombarded by a series of compulsory policies imposed by an overtly patriarchal societal system that intervenes in their private as well as public lives. As a result of such top-down policies[4], they have been ignored as "fully human" (Freire, 1970, p. 74) for the last 100 years.

In her book about the women's rights movement from 1900 to a few years after the 1979 revolution in Iran, Sanasarian (1982) reports that until 1925, approximately 97

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[4] By "top-down policies" I refer to policies that have been imposed to women without giving them opportunity to be part of the decision-making process.

percent of women were illiterate since many religious clerics believed that women's

literacy was against Quranic canon and that educated women were a threat to the society.

Also, there were other groups of religious clerics, who believed that women were not

capable of being educated. Therefore, during that time women were not allowed to

pursue education at any level and literate women hid their knowledge to not avoiding

facing potential problems.

However, guided by the modernization project and imposed by the Pahlavi

dynasty by shahs of Iran who ruled from 1925 to 1979, this situation changed to another

kind of top-down order. As modernization theory suggests (So, 1990), the Pahlavis

changed the Iranian school system and media to a Western model and imposed

urbanization to guide society toward modernity and economic development (Beck &

Nashat, 2004). Policies advertised as liberatory turned into oppressive policies imposed

in a top-down manner by patriarchal policy makers (Mehran, 2003). Beck and Nashat

(2004) provide a chronological series of events that took place during the rule of the

Pahlavis that constituted examples of such policies. These events include banning the veil

for women in 1937, replacing traditional forms of schooling (i.e., *maktabs* and

madrasehs) with a modern Westernized schooling system, giving women the franchise,

and the Family Protection Law (1967, but later revised in 1975) passed by parliament

(Beck & Nashat, 2004). The latter gave women the right to seek divorce and gain custody

of children. It also, required a husband to secure his wife's permission before taking a

second wife. These policies privileged the will of minority middle class Iranians and

ignored the traditional beliefs of the majority of Iranian families. While a very small

group of educated urban women in big cities were satisfied with the new policies, the

majority of the society felt suppressed and found governmental changes disrespectful to their religious faith and beliefs. As cited in Sanasarian (1982) a witness to the enforcement of outlawing of the veil explains that

> I was in time to see police tearing silken scarves from the women's heads and handing them back in ribbons to their owners; for anything even remotely resembling a veil was forbidden. Somewhat later, when scarves were known to be fashionable in Europe, a little laxity was permitted. (p. 62)

Following such drastic changes, long and aggressive demonstrations against the Shah were started by Iranians who believed in the traditional system (Beck & Nashat, 2004). Many traditional families reacted to the no-veil policy by imprisoning their daughters and wives by limiting their interactions with the outside world; many women were ashamed to go outside since they did not feel comfortable adhering to new dress code policies (i.e. European hats and dress) (Sanasarian, 1982). Moreover, many traditional families prevent their girls from going to school as they considered the Western dress codes of the new schools (i.e. short skirts and no head cover) as a threat to their faith and beliefs (Mehran, 2003). Thus, the low literacy among women on one hand, and the fast modernization process in all aspects of the society (i.e. urbanization, industrialization, and masculination) that required modern knowledge (i.e. literacy) for participation in social roles on the other hand, resulted in the exclusion of women from the modernized society. In fact, women lost their power and social roles in the traditional social system without having the opportunity to prepare for new roles in the modernized society. Therefore, women were oppressed even more in modernized Iran (Mehran, 2003).

Post 1979 Revolution

The revolution of 1979 was the watershed moment in the resistance of tradition against compulsory modernity. A few years after the revolution in 1979, which resulted in the establishment of an Islamic state in Iran, almost all of the compulsory changes during modernization, including those specific to women's rights, were rewritten based on traditional/Islamic versions. The revolutionary rules were completely rewritten by another group of patriarchal policy makers and as Bayat (2007) explains that such changes directed women's public and private lives in the opposite direction:

> The new regime overturned the less male-biased Family Protection Laws of 1967, and overnight, women lost their right to be judges, to initiate divorce, to assume child custody, and to travel abroad without permission from a male guardian. Polygamy was reintroduced, and all women, irrespective of faith, were forced to wear the veil in public.
> (p. 162)

In both drastic changes before and after revolution, no space was given to women to express their needs, opinions, and/or beliefs regarding such changes. In one reform they were forced to unveil, themselves and in the subsequent reform, they were again forced to wear a veil. However, as being discussed by many scholars (Shady Sadr, 2009; Fatemeh Sadeghi, 2008; Nayereh Tohidi, 2005; Golnar Merhan, 2003; Gerami & Lehnerer, 2001; Bayat, 2007) such imposed policies never stopped Iranian women from demanding their rights and equality within society. A review of studies on women's movements and resistance after the revolution of 1979 describes how women capitalize on unintended aspects of top-down policies to achieve their needs.

The post-revolutionary Iran, as Mehran (2003) describes it, is an Islamized and modernized society bound by the forces of tradition and modernity. She further explains

the term "Islamized" as compared to traditional Islamic society. In traditional Islamic society, people practice their beliefs in their private lives. However, an Islamized society is marked by "politicized Islam governing both the private and public lives of individuals" (Mehran, 2003, p. 272). One aspect of such an Islamized society is the enforcement of religious laws in all spheres of life (Mehran, 2003). The educational system of Iran experienced a drastic change after the 1979 revolution, and as Sorkhabi (1992) reports, the role of Islamic principles is expressed in the goals of the educational system. The major characteristics of Iran's educational system after the revolution of 1979 includes centralized administration, sex-segregated classrooms and schools, and an emphasis on religious activities including requiring a *hejab* (veil) for females (Mehran, 2003). Sex segregation in the schools dictates no mixed schooling across all levels of primary and secondary education. This also includes segregation among teachers, meaning that only women are to teach girls and only men are to teach boys (Mehran, 2003). Such religious policies that were part of the tenets of the revolution were a direct result of the traditional beliefs of the majority of Iranians who rejected Western values. For example, the law for mandatory *hejab* was established based on an argument against "corrupt Western values" that from the revolutionaries' perspective "looks at women [as merely sexual objects]"[5] (Moghadam, 2003, p. 99). As cited in Moghadam (2003), Murteza Mutahhari, a leading Iranian cleric, who is very famous among the revolutionaries, said that *hejab* was introduced to Iranian women as a way of emancipation from imposed Western values:

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[5] The direct quote is "looks at women merely through the windows of sexual"

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If a boy and a girl study in a separate environment or in an environment where the girl covers her body and wears no make-up, do they not study better? ...Will men work better in an environment where the streets, offices, factories, etc., are continuously filled with women who are wearing make-up and are not fully dressed, or in an environment where these scenes do not exist? …The truth is that the disgraceful lack of *hijab* in Iran before the Revolution…is a product of the corrupt western capitalist societies. It is one of the results of the worship of money and pursuance of sexual fulfillment that is prevalent amongst western capitalists (p. 100).

The modernized Iran on the other hand, is the one that recognizes the importance of technological advancement and industrialization that gradually leads development. However, revolutionary leaders were quick to separate a modernized society from a Westernized one. In the post-revolutionary Iran's perspective, a modernized society is the one that applies technology, science, and technical knowledge to provide a better quality of life to its people. The post-revolutionary system defines a westernized society as one that assimilates the negative aspects of western cultural values (i.e. materialism, looking at women as sexual objects) to people's lives without carrying the positive aspects of Western society (i.e. industrialization, modern technology). An ideal society from Iran's post-revolutionary perspective is a modernized society and not a Westernized culture (Mehran, 2003). Based on such a definition, an ideal female citizen from an "Islamized-modernizing-revolutionary" viewpoint (Mehran, 2003, p. 273) is a woman who can play a role both in traditional and modernized aspects of life. She has to be a good mother and protect the family bonds, while taking part in political and social activities. However, the post-1979 constitution and policies on social, economic, and cultural issues eliminate many previously secured women's rights (e.g., to initiate divorce, to assume child custody, to travel abroad without permission from a male guardian) from former state

laws and policies under the guise of purification from "Westoxication" (Shavarini, 2006, p. 45).

Mehran (2003; 2000; 1997; 1991) examines the educational experiences of Iranian women and girls in several of her studies after such complex changes ensued in pursuit of an Islamized society after the revolution unintentionally influenced girls' and women's level of education. As explained earlier, sex-segregated schooling system, compulsory *hijab*, Islamic textbook content, and creating gender categories and feminine fields of study are among the characteristics of the revolutionary education system. Such a system was welcomed and accepted by traditional families as well as culturally conservative layers of the society and opened the door of schools to *all* Iranian girls and made education accessible to different segments of the society. In this context, education has been a tool for empowerment for girls to "[make] the best use of the opportunities created by the interplay of tradition and modernity to become active participants in educational endeavors" (Mehran, 2003, p. 286). Taking advantage of their educational opportunities to progress (i.e. opening the school doors to the girls who belong to pious families), girls occupy more than 60 percent of the seats in universities at the present time.

Under such complex changes, the women's movement that according to Sanasarian (1982) started very gradually in decades before the revolution, was organized during the revolution, and it started gaining power and structure with the rise in the number of educated women over the last few decades since 1979. Sadr (2009) reviews women's resistance and struggles after revolution by discussing a long list of victories they achieved through pursuing progressive changes in the legal and political system of

Iran over the course of last three decades. She discusses how women's rights activists

employ strategies of resistance within different discourses in society including reformist,

conservative, and secular to pursue equal rights. Unlike the imported policies on

women's rights before the revolution, Sadr (2008) explains how Iranian women have

advanced the movement toward equal rights in the legal system based on their needs and

through activism and raising awareness in the society.

In a study on women's everyday resistance, Bayat (2007) called women's

presence and resistance in pursuing their daily demands after the 1979 revolution as

"non-movement" activism and discussed what it means to be a woman activist in a non-

democratic society. He emphasizes that

> What underlined Iran's women's activism was not collective protest but collective
> presence. The women's movement drew its power not from the threat of
> disruption and uncertainty, as in the case of contentious politics; rather, it
> subsisted on the power of presence—the ability to assert collective will in spite of
> all odds, by circumventing constraints, utilizing what exists, and discovering new
> spaces of freedom to make oneself heard, seen, and felt. (p. 172)

However, as Shavrini's (2006) study on the paradox of higher education in the

lives of Iranian women explains, women's presence in the public sphere is not an easy

task and it requires their relentless resistance in different layers. The findings of her study

reveal that there are several values in society that impact the public and private life of

women including: *mazhab* (religion), specifically "religious tenets of the holy Qur'an";

sunnat (tradition), "locally specific customs that have developed throughout history"; and

farhang (culture) being "patriarchal traditions that can be traced back to pre-Islamic Iran

but ones that have been instilled through religious teachings" (p. 208). She further

explains that

[religion and tradition] interconnected and distinct forces…impact the lives of Iranian women and are convoluted by a clerical polity that interprets Qur'anic laws and sets societal rules. The combination of these forces, *farhang e Islami*[Islamic culture], is a complex web of social mores: mores that are based on conflated religious, legal, political, and economic factors. (p. 209)

Surrounded by such complex and interwoven factors, Iranian women become creative in their mode of resistance. Gerami and Lehnerer (2001) study individual women's agency in resisting oppressive situations. Using a series of narratives, they identify four strategies used by Iranian women to negotiate and overcome the undesirable restraint in their lives including co-optation, collaboration, acquiescence, and subversion. They describe what Iranian women face with oppressive state policies and fluctuating family pressures and, therefore, have "to negotiate a sense of self at two levels of interaction: social and familial" (p. 570).Fliberation

However, such negotiation strategies that happen under oppressive pressures to free one from momentous economic, social or cultural forces might not necessarily lead to critical consciousness and the liberation of individuals. Freire (1974) makes a clear distinction between strategies he calls "naïve transitivity" and "critical transitivity." According to Freire (1974), "naïve transitivity" is the state of consciousness that is characterized by "over-simplification of problems," "strong tendency to gregariousness," "fragility of argument," and most importantly by the "practice of polemics," which defines as practice of disputation or controversy instead of dialog (p. 14). He identifies critical transitive consciousness in three phases: through an in-depth interpretation of problems, attempts to avoid distortion, and finally by soundness of argument and practice of dialog rather than polemics. He argues that such consciousness and transition

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From naïve transitivity to critical transitivity would *not* occur automatically. Achieving this step would thus require an active, dialogical educational program concerned with social and political responsibility... (p. 15)

Freire (1974) then calls for the need of education of "I wonder" instead of "I do" (p. 32), education for liberation from oppression and argues that such education pedagogy challenges the status quo and poses problems instead of repeating irrelevant principles. However, such education system does not exist in Iran. "Banking education" (Freire, 1970, p. 71) is structured within an authoritarian system, in which teachers "own" knowledge and "deposit" it in students (Bartlett, 2005), is evident in the Iranian context. As I reviewed critical ethnographic studies on Arab education system in *Cultures of Arab Schooling* edited by Torres and Herrera (2006), I found many descriptions of schooling in the context of Egypt to be similar to my personal experiences in Iran almost as if they were describing the Iranian schooling system:

> … School breeds the personality of the oppressed '…bearing all the elements of the culture of oppression, sensing helplessness and insecurity in the face of the violence imposed by the masters, policeman and landlord who use force, and by the bureaucrat who can get papers moving or stop them.' The culture of the oppressed reflected in the ways schools are complicit in the reproduction of the deposit personality. (p. 12)

Although the number of educated women in Iran is higher than many other countries in the region, the education system of Iran, like other countries in the Middle East, reproduces systemic oppression in the society through "unsuited instruction and curricula," as opposed to social justice (Christina, Mehran & Mir, 2003, p. 362). Therefore, the education system in the region symbolized as what Freirean pedagogy identifies as "banking education" (Freire, 1970, p. 72) and reproduces the oppression

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through norms such as "rote learning and lecturing," "authoritarian structure of the system as a whole" as well as in "student-teacher interaction." In such a system, "democratic interaction and critical inquiry are not fostered by instructional methods or by school culture" (Christina, Mehran & Mir, 2003, p.362).

However, Freire is also quick to remind us that we cannot expect the "systemic education" (Freire, 1970, p. 54), which is the reproducing source of systemic oppression, to change automatically from "I do" to "I wonder." He argues that such a change requires a revolution in the political power that happens by empowered individuals; until we have empowered people we cannot expect such a revolutionary change. The empowerment, he argues, only occurs through "educational projects" (Freire, 1970, p. 54), which are carried out by the oppressed as they gain consciousness in such liberatory projects. In the next sections, I review the principles of Freirean liberatory pedagogy in educational projects and discuss its key principles in fostering consciousness in individuals. Figure 2.1 visually describes the context of the current study, in which Camp Bayan, as a liberatory educational project, was conducted to resist systematic oppression in the Iranian society through Freirean revolutionary pedagogy. It is clear that the education system in Iran partially reproduces oppression by discouraging dialog and imposing hierarchical teacher-student relationship. Camp Bayan's practitioners applied aFreirean problem-posing approach to challenge the status quo and promote critical pedagogy to resist oppression.
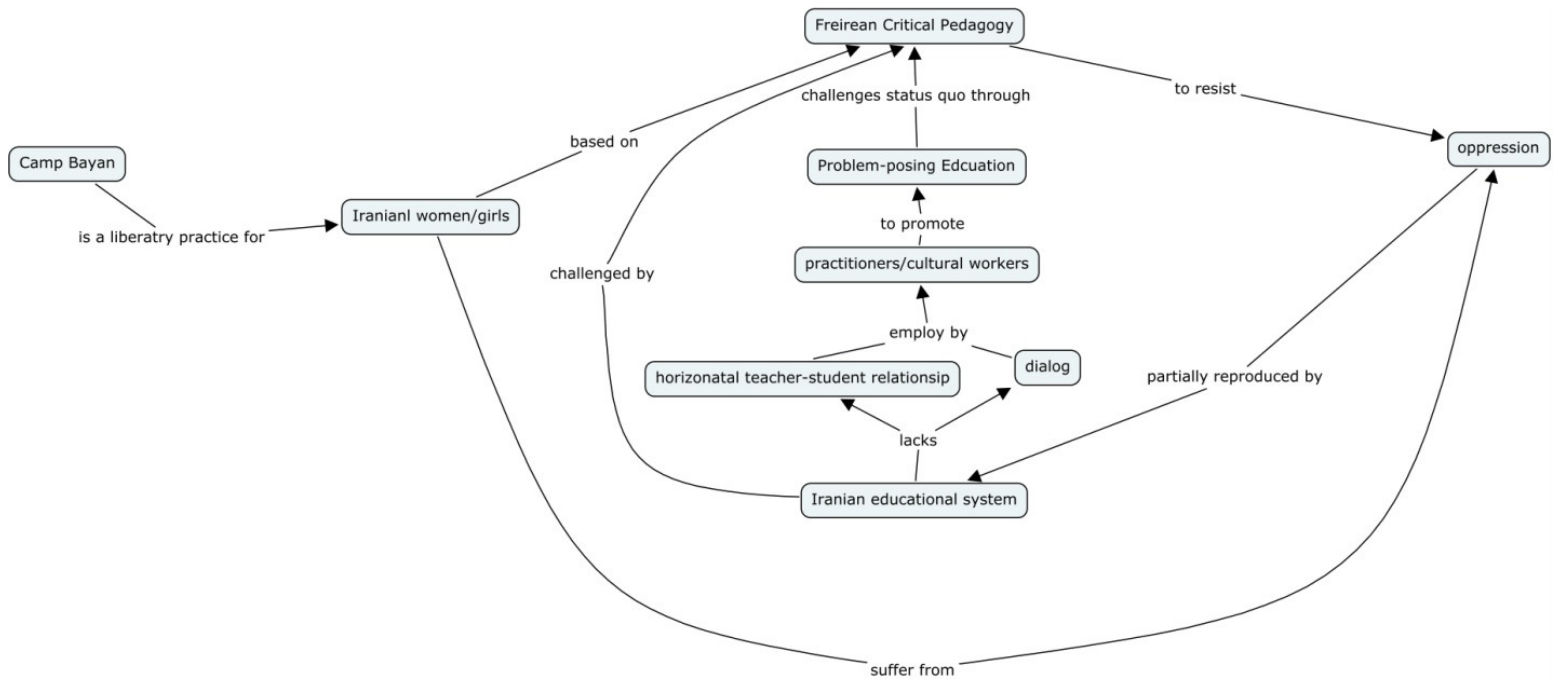
Figure 2.1. Concept map of the study: Freirean Critical Pedagogy and its role in resisting systemic oppression.

Freirean Philosophy

Origins of Freirean Philosophy

Freirean revolutionary pedagogy that was originally published as *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in 1967 in Brazil is a synthesis of diverse theoretical sources including Christian Personalism, phenomenology, existentialism, historical materialism, and Hegelian dialectics (Torres, 1993). Kincheloe (2007) calls his theory an amalgamation of "liberation theological ethics" and "the critical theory of the Frankfurt School in Germany" (p. 12). Freire followed the liberation theology as the "option for the poor" (as cited in Bartlett, 2010, p. 33) based on his Catholic trainings—his mother was Catholic—and adopted "dialectics," which refers to juxtaposition or interaction of ideas and is the foundational principal of his theory, from Marx and Hegel (Bartlett, 2010). His efforts on promoting reflection on the world in order to consciously transform it into a better place were directly informed by his humanist perspective. Dialog, which is the core of his pedagogy rooted in Hegelian dialect. He believed that social change is shaped by the synthesis of dichotomies. With that, he drew on the oppressor-oppressed relationship as contradictory opposites and explained how oppression transforms the oppressed into objects rather than subjects and renders them unable to participate in praxis and engage in shaping the world. (Bartlett, 2010)

In Freire's philosophy, "Any situation in which 'A' objectively exploits 'B' or hinders his and her pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression" (Freire, 1970, p. 55). Committed to the resistance of structural oppression through a critical educational pedagogy, Freire's revolutionary approach is an initiative

that continues to inspire many educators, cultural workers, and activists around the world to persistently challenge the status quo and stand up for social justice.

Freire's work emerged from his practical experiences fighting poverty in northeastern Brazil and as Holst's (2006) historical study describes it is crucially influenced by his sociopolitical experiences in Chile where he lived in exile for five years. Constructing the study based on primary data, including interviews with Freire's colleagues and scholars in Chile, Holst (2006) explores how the sociohistorical and economical context of Chile affected Freire's work and his ideological evolution. The author examines the sociopolitical changes in Chile during Freire's work on *Education as the Practice of Freedom* in 1965 and *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in 1967. Through such comprehensive examination of the historical events in Chile and Freire's work and life experiences during this period, Holst (2006) argues that the evolution of Freire's "liberal developmentalist" view in 1965 to a "Marxist humanist ideology" in 1968 was a direct result of the sociopolitical and historical situation in Chile.

Freire's work has been the inspiration for many non-formal educational projects in different parts of the world. Although they may fall under different names, including "popular education" in Latin American or "critical pedagogy" in the United States, the common goal is to follow the key concepts of Freirean pedagogy in order to promote social change and more egalitarian human relationships within societies. (Bartlett, 2005)

Key Concepts of Freirean Pedagogy

Freire's pedagogy introduces education as a political act and argues that education is not neutral; particularly since it can be used as a tool for oppression, as well as for

liberation (Bartlett, 2010). In his groundbreaking book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, he

discusses the oppression that reproduces the banking concept of education and how

"problem-posing" pedagogy breaks the cycle of oppression through the power of

"dialog" into a "horizontal" teacher-student relationship and produces knowledge based

on students' experiences and through interactions.

Banking education serves oppressive societies by treating students as objects that

need assistance, ignoring their knowledge and creativity, and buries them in a culture of

silence. As Freire (1970) explains, in banking education

> Narration (with the teacher as narrator) leads the students to memorize
> mechanically the narrated content. Worse yet, it turns them into "containers," into
> "receptacles" to be "filled" by the teacher…the scope of action allowed to the
> students extends only as far as receiving, filling, and storing the deposits…the
> more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop
> the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world
> as transformers of that world. The more completely they accept the passive role
> imposed on them, the more they tend simply to adapt to the world as it is and to
> the fragmented view of reality deposited in them. (p. 71-73)

Freire introduces problem-posing education as a cure to such an oppressive

approach. Consisting of an act of cognition and refusing "transferrals of information" (p.

79), the problem-posing education strategy encourages students to become critical

thinkers and to act upon their world. Such an approach promotes praxis and is based on a

horizontal and democratic teacher-student relationship, in which knowledge is created

through interaction and dialog. Freire argues that "education must begin with the solution

of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that

both are simultaneously teachers *and* students" (Freire, 1970, p. 72). In problem-posing

education students take an active role by being engaged in the process of knowledge

production, proposing their issues and challenges as the core content of the curriculum, and achieve educational experience around their real world experiences. As he describes where A is teacher and B is student,

> Authentic education is not carried on by "A" *for* "B" or by "A" *about* "B," but rather by "A" *with* "B," mediated by the world—a world which impresses and challenges both parties, giving rise to views or opinions about it. (p. 93)

Such a relationship cannot occur until the traditional and vertical patterns of teacher-student relationship in banking education transition into a horizontal and egalitarian relationship. Freire's secret to make such change is *dialog*:

> Through dialog, the teacher-of-the –students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-students with student-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialog with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow. (p. 80)

Freire's notion of democratic and horizontal teacher-student relationship raised many debates over the teacher's role. In his later work, he responds to such debates by distinguishing between "authoritative" and "authoritarian" teachers and clarifying that "dialog between teachers and students does not place them on the same footing professionally; but it does mark the democratic position between them" (Freire, 1994; p. 116). As Bartlett (2010) explains, Freire calls for "democratic but nonetheless directive, authoritative teachers" (p.37) and asks for an egalitarian relationship between student and teacher without claiming them to be equal. As cited in Bartlett (2010, p. 36), in Freire's "talking books," he explains explicitly his idea about such debate and closes the debate by explaining that "I have never said that the educator is the same as the pupil. Quite the

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contrary, I have always said that whoever says that they are equal is being demagogic and false. The educator is different from the pupil."

Also, cited from another publication he says,

I cannot fall into a type of naiveté that will lead me to think that I am equal to my students. I cannot fail to know the specificity of my work as a teacher and reject my fundamental role in positively contributing so that my students become actors in their own learning" (as cited in Bartlett, 2010, p. 37)

Explaining that learning begins from students' real experiences and interests, Freire emphasizes the importance of respectful dialog between teacher and student. Thus, based on his philosophy, dialog, through a respectful and democratic student-teacher relationship, is the foundation of authentic education. He argues, "only dialog, which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking" (p. 92). Dialog enables students to think critically about the social, cultural, and political issues they confront, and it creates consciousness about their position in the world. He argues that the essence of dialog is "word." However, he further explains that the word is "more than an instrument which makes dialog possible…within the word we find two dimensions, reflection and action" (p. 87). He defines these two dimensions in *praxis* and says "there is no true word that is not at the same time a praxis. Thus, to speak a true word is to transform the world" (p. 87). Recognizing politics of speech, Freire also suggests that teachers are responsible to teach the dominant language and continually remind student about the politics of language through dialog they learn how to interrupt the culture of silence that is a form of linguistic oppression (Bartlett, 2010). Relying on such key concepts, Freire (1970) concludes that

The important thing, from the point of view of libertarian education, is for the people to come to feel like masters of their thinking by discussing the thinking and views of the world explicitly or implicitly manifest in their own suggestions and those of their comrades. Because this view of education starts with the conviction that it cannot present its own program but must search for this program dialogically with the people, it serves to introduce the pedagogy of the oppressed, in the elaboration of which the oppressed must participate. (p. 124)

Figure 2.2 visually exemplifies how Freirean theory resists oppression by

challenging the status quo through its key concepts of dialog and horizontal student-

teacher relationships.
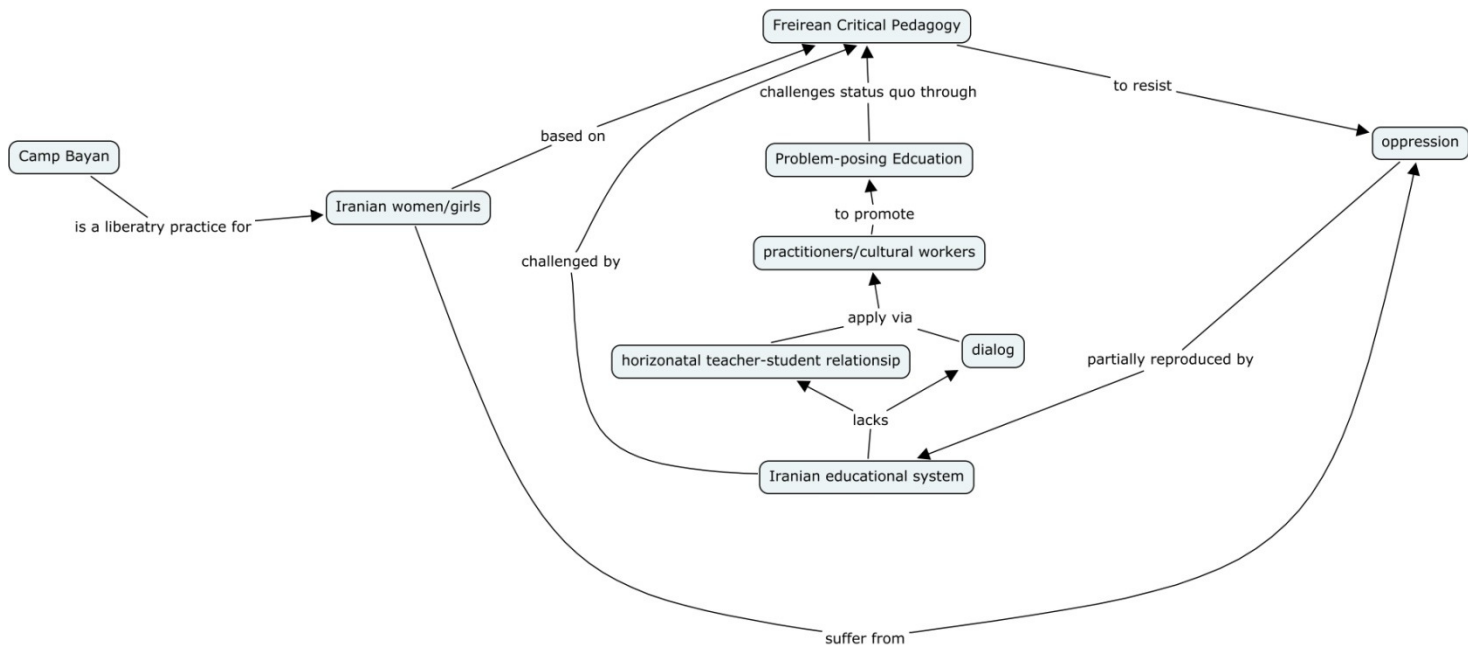
Figure 2.2. Freirean theory and its key concepts

Debates on the Freirean Approach

Like many other groundbreaking theories, Freirean pedagogy has been the center of debates among educational scholars over the last two decades. In this section, I examine two major critiques on critical pedagogy in the literature. First, I review feminist post-structural critiques of Freirean theory, particularly on the concept of dialog and consciousness with regards to the power structure. After reviewing different interpretations of the critical pedagogy, I discuss the debates on neutral/reformist and revolutionary readings of Freire's pedagogy.

Feminist Poststructuralist Critique

Freire presents *dialog* as the key strategy to overcome oppression through developing critical thinking. However, as feminist poststructuralist theory suggests, viewing power structure through a Foucaultian lens criticizes the liberation view of Freirean pedagogy. According to Foucault, power exists as a circulating structure not owned by individuals (Bartlett, 2010). In the Foucaultian approach

> Power must be analyzed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localized here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is exercised through a net-like organization. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target. They are always also the elements of its articulation. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application. (as cited in Bartlett, 2010, p. 117)

Such an approach views individuals being always immersed in different layers of power discourses that surround them and impose regimes of truth on them. Such

situations make it impossible for individuals to stand outside the power structure, and therefore, all their understandings, consciousness, and insights are formed by the dominant regimes of truth and discourses that are imposed on them. Under such conditions, the Freirean concept of dialog and critical thinking is problematic; individuals cannot develop independent consciousness under such imposed regimes of truths. Thus, feminist poststructuralists' recommendations regarding Freirean pedagogy is to move beyond the humility that is suggested by Freire in teacher-student dialog by encouraging "teacher uncertainty" (Bartlett, 2010, p. 142). This approach doubts the "one right story" of critical pedagogy and remains open to contradiction and nonmastery" (Bartlett, 2010). Looking from a poststructuralist lens of critical literacy practices, Bartlett (2010) suggests a reconceptualization of power in what she introduces as "New Critical Literacy Studies" (p. 169). She argues that the Freirean view, which assumes teachers to lead students toward "correct" directions and therefore gives autonomous power to teachers, may be reconceptualized from feminist poststructuralist lens by envisioning "power as circulating, or rather as simultaneously exercised and experienced by all" (p. 170). By that, she recommends that instead of assuming practitioners/teachers to know all aspects of power including how power works, where power is, and how to use pedagogical instruments to fight against injustice, they "would make the analysis of power relations represented in and conducted through literacy their central task" (p. 171). She believes the new approach promotes practitioners to "endlessly investigate the intimate relations between power, discourse, and ways of knowing" (p. 170) and dismantles the false dichotomies that are assumed in critical theory such as oppressed

versus oppressor. She further suggests strategies for a teacher-student relationship that assists with such a reconceptualization.

Moreover, feminist poststructuralists pose serious critiques on the notion of *dialog* in Freirean philosophy. They challenge Freire's confidence in student's experience and voice as a pure source of knowledge for dialogical engagement. Looking from Foucaultian perspective again, they question the possibility of obtaining critical knowledge and consciousness through dialog, which has not been filtered by dominant regimes of truths and discursive structures in the society. However, responding to these critiques in her New Critical Literacy Studies, Bartlett (2010) suggests avoiding "the search for 'right-thinking', certitude, and conclusiveness" and calls for continuous examination of "the rules for participation and the non-neutrality of language as part of the overall cultural politics of dialog" (p. 175). In sum, viewing from feminist poststructuralist perspective, Bartlett (2010) suggests that

> Freire's philosophical pedagogy suffers from several limitations. Freire's notion of power as possession overgeneralizes and universalizes oppression in a way that dehistoricizes his critique. His notion of power constructs unhelpful dualisms that curtail deeper social analysis and lend themselves to a voluntaristic, psychologistic interpretation. Freire's dichotomous conceptualization of knowledge suggests that students' knowledge is solely or primarily experiential, ignores the ways that personal experiences shape what and how teachers know, and fails to explain the politics entailed in the production of new knowledge. Freire's pedagogy maintains a teleology of "correct" thinking and a belief that thinking and knowledge lead to human emancipation. (p. 142)

Considering all limitations, however, one still cannot refuse to acknowledge attempts for emancipation and activism that Freirean philosophical approach initiates in educational acts through popular/critical pedagogy. Employing education in service of progressive social transformation, critical pedagogy remains an act of rebellion against

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destructive social forces and dehumanizing pedagogy in oppressive societies (Bartlett, 2010).

While the poststructuralist's view is valuable in complementing critical pedagogy, such as in the case of Bartlett, where she adds new understanding and redefines the theory in various aspects, in his later works Freire articulates his criticisms about the poststructuralist perspective. He declares his concerns and rejects some elements of poststructural theory. In one of his books, *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, democracy, and civic courage* (1998), he repeatedly warns about the poststructuralist view, which he refers to as "an immobilizing ideology of fatalism, with its flighty postmodern pragmatism" (As cited in Bartlett, 2010, p. 180) and expresses concern that such a philosophy discourages action by emphasizing too much uncertainty. Torres and Raymond's (2002) response to post-modernists' attacks on critical pedagogy, which questioned the "modernist rationalist predispositions, normative universalism … and lack of attention to question of difference" (pp. 163-164) argue that

> …Extending critical theory to educational issues in peripheral and dependent societies in the context of globalization provides important insights into the limitations of postmodernist critiques of universalism…[and argue] that in important respects critical theory and post-modernism are complementary. (p. 164)

Reform Method versus Revolutionary Act

While some perceive Freirean pedagogy to be a method of reform of existing systems, many other scholars in the field of contemporary critical pedagogy emphasize the political aspects of the Freirean approach and its revolutionary mission to change the

status quo. Viewing the pedagogy as a political act or a neutral educational method makes a distinctive difference in the impacts and implications of the pedagogy.

In 1990, Gottlieb and La Belle conducted a discourse analysis study on Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) and applied the results of their analysis into actual practices of Freirean pedagogy in Latin America. Their study has two parts. In the first section of their article they use a discursive interpretation to describe how Freire uses the word dialog interchangeably with revolution. They argue that "[by] the logic of his synecdoche, dialog is not just a necessary *part* of revolution, it is the part that may substitute for the whole: revolution *is* dialog." (p. 10). As Gottlieb and La Belle (1990) claim Freire's approach highlights the critical qualities of dialog, which include communication between equal participants, content derived from the reality of the participants, and conscientization, which are also the essential qualities of a true revolution. Therefore, they suggest that Freire's intention of using the word "revolution" in his text was limited to pursue social reform and not structural change (i.e. revolution). In the second part of their study, they review various case studies on the implementation of Freirean pedagogy in pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary settings in countries located in Latin America and the Caribbean. Their review suggests that different Freirean educational programs under different titles ranging from popular education, liberation education, or non-formal education used the pedagogy with very different expectations ranging from reformist to revolutionary acts. Using discourse analysis of the Freirean text to understand the discursive meaning behind Paulo Freire's words, Gottlieb and La Belle (1990) compare Freire's text to the interpretations of various programs of his text and conclude that "the social and institutional context in which a text is used has important

consequences for the interpretation of the text." (p. 15). They believe that the context in

which a discourse is used can override the initial intentions of the theoretical discourse.

They argue,

> For the radical humanist (including Freire), reality is socially constructed and
> sustained, so that change in consciousness constitutes change in reality…For the
> radical structuralist, by contrast, reality exists in the social structure and is
> independent of the way in which it is perceived by people in everyday life. (p. 12)

In their view, Freire constructed a discourse of rehumanization by offering the

concept of *dialog,* and such rehumanization for Freire is both a means and an end.

Therefore, Gottlieb and La Belle (1990) conclude that "rehumanization *is* Freire's

revolution" (p. 12). By emphasizing that "revolution *is* dialog" (p. 10) they see Freirean

pedagogy as a method of reform in the system instead of a revolutionary act that pursues

radical political or economic changes. They argue that

> Consciousness-raising should not be judged for its economic and political effects,
> but should be viewed as a means for understanding the mechanism of oppression
> and for exploring alternatives to make society more just (p. 12)
> However, many other Freirean scholars (Torres, 1997; McLaren & Leonardo,

1993; McLaren & Lankshear, 1994; Mayo, 1997; McLaren & Kincheloe, 2007; Bartlett,

2010) criticize the tendency to reduce Freire's work to a "method" and not looking at the

political aspect of his work—that which is the core of Freire's argument and emphasizes

on resisting all forms of structural oppression. In his introductory remarks in a recently

republished Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Macedo (2000) devoted long section of

his essay on criticizing the reducing of Freire's emancipatory philosophy to a method or

tool. He discusses the issue by explaining how "pseudocritical educators" abuse Freire's

word in a manner that he calls as "sloganize[ing]" and "[straitjacketing] his revolutionary

politics to an empty cliché of dialogical methods" (p. 17). He further quotes Freire's

words from an article that they co-authored in 1995 as a part of an ongoing dialog they

have had, which best explains Freire's view on such a reduction:

> In order to begin to understand the meaning of dialogical practice, we have to put aside the simplistic understanding of dialog as a mere technique. Dialog does not represent a somewhat false path that I attempt to elaborate on and realize in the sense of involving the ingenuity of the other. On the contrary, dialog characterizes an epistemological relationship. Thus, in this sense dialog is a way of knowing and should never be viewed as a mere tactic to involve students in a particular task. We have to make this point very clear. I engage in dialog not necessarily because I like the other person. I engage in dialog because I recognize the social and not merely the individualistic character of the process of knowing. In this sense, dialog presents itself as an indispensable component of the process of both learning and knowing. (Freire & Macedo, 1995, p. 379)

Moreover, Peter Mayo (1997), in a review on two major books on Freirean

approach by McLaren and two scholars, Peter Leonard (1993) and Colin Lankshear

(1994), states

> Given the political dimension and dynamic nature of Freire's approach, which ought to be 'reinvented' in different contexts, one would be adulterating his work were one to reduce it to a Method. Alas, many educators reduce Freire's work to a mere set of techniques or Method, therefore missing out on the core of his pedagogical philosophy and approach. It is for this reason that regimes, diametrically opposed to the politics that informs Freire's approach, sponsored programs whose organizers claimed to have used 'Freire's method'. This was the case with the same regime in Brazil which banished him from his homeland for sixteen years! (p. 4 of 6)

Lesley Bartlett (2010) describes Freire's major contribution to the field of

education as approaching education as "a form of politics" (p. 35). In the preface of

Critical Pedagogy: Where Are We Now? Shirley Steinberg, the cofounder of The Paulo

and Nita Freire International Project for Critical Pedagogy, responds to the question

posed in the title of the book and says "we are being insubordinate" (p. ix), and she

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argues that such insubordination is the main purpose of critical theory. She further explains:

> Critical pedagogy isn't formulaic, it isn't stagnant, and it isn't an *is*. I believe it is what isn't. Critical pedagogy is not guided by do-gooders, not guided by liberal groupies, or rayon-clad teachers who want to save needing students from pedagogies of prescription, administration, state standards or even the latest flashdance pedagogical method. Critical pedagogy can be theoretically-based scholarship, grounded in the understanding of the origins and underpinnings of power within society and in the fabric of schooling. (p. ix)

She views critical theory as an untamable, transgressive practice and discourse that sees the world in a fluid way and continuously defines and redefines itself based on its context. She argues that those engaged in critical pedagogy should enjoy the ride of this critical approach and feel comfortable to be uncomfortable. In her perspective, it is the power of anger they feel from the unjust world that empowers them to take action and pursue radical practices of critical pedagogy. She believes that once those engaged in critical pedagogy stop this fluidity and slow down the criticality is disappeared and they find themselves in "quicksand of compromised liberalism" (p. x).

Freirean Practitioners

Bartlett (2005) defines the commonality of all Freirean projects as their efforts on planning and implementing "educational initiatives that aim—though with varying degrees of success—to create progressive social change and more egalitarian social relations" (p. 345). She conducted a study on three Brazilian nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to understand "what Freirean pedagogy looked like in his home country" (Bartlett, 2005, p. 350). Using ethnographic data, she conducted a study on how

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educators in Brazilian NGOs understood and employed Freirean pedagogical theory. In her article, she focuses on three complicated aspects of Freirean pedagogy that, as she says, "continue to trouble popular or critical educators everywhere" (p. 345) including: understanding the meaning of dialog, transforming traditional teacher-student relationship, and incorporating local knowledge into the classroom. Focusing on "teachers' *understanding* and *enactment*" (p. 351), she addresses, "how popular educators interpreted and acted based on Freirean pedagogical theory in ways that appeared to reduce its potential for social change" (p. 345). Her study shows how the *understanding* and *enactment* of Freirean principles are crucial to the success of projects. It also demonstrates how understanding the key concepts of his theory are challenging to practitioners even at the birthplace of his pedagogy. In her recent book, which is based on her two-year study of Brazilian NGOs, she names several ambiguities and contradictions that challenge Freirean practitioners everywhere:

> How can teachers be directive and authoritative in the classroom without becoming authoritarian? How do critical educators cultivate students' critical consciousness without imposing their own worldview? What are the critical distinctions between student and teacher knowledge? How do educators respect students' knowledge while moving beyond it? How and when should critical educators assert their knowledge in the classroom? How can teachers resolve the paradox of having predetermined "horizon," knowledge, or critiques they want to achieve and sharing with the students the power to produce knowledge and influence the direction of class discourse? What are the limits of dialog as a liberatory pedagogy? (Bartlett, 2010, p. 48)

From a feminist post-structuralist perspective, Bartlett's study offers well-established critiques on Freirean philosophical theory and also creates a reliable theoretical structure to study practitioners' understanding of Freirean pedagogy. Therefore, in the current study I use her study as a heuristic scaffold for my research to

explore how Iranian practitioner apply and understand the key concepts of Freirean

pedagogy.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Overview

In this chapter I describe portraiture methodology and why I selected this method for my study. I discuss the purposes and limits of the method and how it enables the development of a comprehensive image of how practitioners understood and employed Freirean practices in a summer camp. Also, I discuss the data that I examined for the study and my analytical plan in the study.

Methodology of Portraiture

Portraiture is defined by the two essential characteristics of "voice" and "context" (Hill, 2005). Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot (1997), the founder of the methodology, explains how she learned about the power of portraiture and its important methodological elements by being "portrayed" two specific moments in her life. She explains that portraiture is characterized by two important elements: *evolving relationship* and *perspective*. The first element concerns how the relationship between the artist/researcher and the subject/participant is crucial in the creation of the portrait. The artist should be attentive to the feelings and emotions of the subject in order to provide a deeper understanding of her image. The other lesson is about the "perspective of the person whose image and essence is being captured" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 4). In fact, she assumes two different narratives that interweave and produce the portraiture: one is the researcher's understanding of what happens to participants and another one is the participants' voice on what she sees/feels/views. These narratives interact through

negotiations, conversations and evolving relationship between researcher and participant, and leads to the image that is created together. It expresses the perspective of both researcher and participant and involves detailed descriptions of complex socio-historical contexts using as much of the direct language of the participants as possible; the method paints detailed socio-historical incidents by drawing on participants' words. Thus, the product of the portraiture is an image that both the portraitist (i.e. researcher) and the research participants create together. The final product conveys the participants' "authority, wisdom, and perspectives," but it also differs from the picture that the participants imagine for themselves (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 4).

My in-depth participation in the project as a practitioner and co-director of the summer camp created a particular position for me as both researcher and participant in the study. During the staff meetings and dialogs about the activities and efforts in understanding and employing the pedagogical framework of the summer camp, I attempted alongside with other participants to move the camp forward and achieve the most successful duplication possible of Freirean pedagogy. Not only was I involved in an intimate relationship with my participants, but I was also one of the participants. In such a setting, it is crucial to employ a research method that highlights the role of the researcher in the project and directly addresses her relationship with the research participants. Lawrence-Lightfoot (2005) speaks to the relationship of the researcher and research participants:

> With portraiture, the person of the researcher—even when vigorously controlled—is more evident and more visible than in any other research form. The researcher is seen not only in defining the focus and field of the inquiry but also in navigating the relationships with her or his subjects, in witnessing and interpreting the action, in tracing the emergent themes, and in creating the narrative. At each

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one of these stages, the self of the portraitist emerges as an instrument of inquiry, an eye on perspective taking, an ear that discerns nuances, and a voice that speaks and offers insights. As a matter of fact, the voice of the portraitist often helps us identify her or his place in the inquiry. (p. 11)

As Hackmann (2002) puts it, portraiture is a methodology that provides "a level of understanding and empathy that would be exceedingly difficult to achieve if one were writing as a dispassionate, detached observer" (p. 53). My involvement and attachment to the topic and my relationship with other practitioners created an opportunity for me to closely observe and fully engage in discussions and other activities.

Understanding and the use of the Freirean pedagogy, which was the focus of my study, required a comprehensive and in-depth description of the sociopolitical structure that shaped the summer camp. In fact, the practitioners' understanding of the Freirean concepts is grounded in a larger context, which is comprised of the sociopolitical situations that bounded the summer camp. Hill (2005) considers "context" as one of the two essential features of portraiture methodology and clarifies:

As a research strategy, portraits are designed to capture the richness, complexity, and dimensionality of human experience in social and cultural contexts, conveying the perspectives of the people who are negotiating those experiences. (p. 96)

Therefore, using portraiture methodology for the current study highlights the richness and complexity that sociopolitical context brings into the study.

"Voice" is the second essential feature of portraiture according to Hill (2005). The methodology focuses on the "woven voices" of participants and researcher in creating the narrative for the research. Therefore, the voices of the participants count as the main resource of knowledge (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Moreover, Ngunjiri (2007)

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talks about the representation of participants in portraiture and argues that the methodology is privileged as "a qualitative approach that encourages critical self-awareness as well as authentic engagement with the participants as co-creators of knowledge" (Ngunjiri, 2007, p. 3 of 16). This feature of the methodology also is aligned with the Freirean theoretical framework of the study that focuses on the process of dialogical education and collective learning (Freire, 1970). According to Freire, knowledge is produced through interactions and dialog of experiences shared by the participants.

However, the methodology also stresses the importance of the researcher's perspective as the final filter that shapes the portrait and the "touching up" of the final images. According to Lawrence-Lightfoot (2005), likewise a final product of a portrait, the participants of portraiture research may find their portrait to be both familiar and exotic; it is not the portrait they may imagine of themselves. Familiar, because they would see their own words, but exotic because they are faced with a picture that put the words together from the researcher's perspective and it might be different from their view (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997).

Portraiture is a "painting with words" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 4). In painting, the aesthetic aspects of production that can contribute to the expressive content include the use of line, shadow, color, texture, delineation, and placement of forms on the canvas, as well as the relationship that persists among these aspects, color to color, line to line, shadow to shadow, and form to form. Expressive content is achieved through thoughtful attention to each aesthetic aspect as well as to the relationships among them. (p. 29) Similar to painting, as the authors argue, there are aesthetic aspects in a

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portraiture methodology that can contribute to the expressive content of the portraiture: "keen descriptors" can "delineate" such as lines in a painting; "dissonant refrains" create the same reflections that a "shadow" forms in a painting; and "complex details" bring in the same impact that texture and color add to the portrait (p. 29).

As "art" and "science" are both highlighted in Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis's (1997) work, the methodology combines the empirical aspects of science with the ascetic views of art. As the empirical aspects, the methodology looks for the development of the emergent themes in the collected data. The researcher should identify points of convergence through "triangulation" and "revealed patterns" that can be used for coding and classifying data (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 193-224). Repetitive refrains, resonant metaphors, and institutional and cultural rituals are some of the methods that have been introduced by Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) to fulfill the purpose of the portraiture, which is "to produce one coherent, compelling, credible story" (Bloom & Erlandson, 2003, p. 876).

Due to the design of the portraiture and the emphasis on the value of different voices in the methodology, the methodology may put under the interpretive inquiry definition by Schram (2003). He uses LeCompte and Schensul's (1999) words to explain the shared belief of interpretivists as "what people know and believe to be true about the world is constructed-or made up-as people interact with one another over time in specific social settings." Pointing to a frequently cited phrase of "social construction of reality," Schram (2003) describes interpretive research as an inquiry that tries to understand the constructed and complex reality "from the point of view of those who live in it" (p. 33). He argues that the interpretivists concentrates on "particular people, in particular places,

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at particular times—situating people's meanings and constructs within and amid specific social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and other contextual factors" (p. 33).

Ngunjiri, (2007) argues that portraiture is a qualitative narrative inquiry that blends ideas from various qualitative traditions. Originated in phenomenological tradition, portraiture centers on the participants' experiences as the source of knowledge. It also borrows the framework of phenomenological research as it gives a crucial role to the *context* of a phenomenon (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). It creates a complex and subtle description in context. However, sharing many techniques, standards, and goals of ethnography, the methodology also gives special attention to search for "the central story, developing a convincing and authentic narrative" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p.12). Furthermore, it follows the life history method and involves listening to stories as the primary source of portraying participants' life. Finally, it has the main aspects of autobiography since the researcher's background and life experiences are central in the narrative of the portraiture (Ngunjiri, 2007).

I have always been interested in action research as a methodology that gives the researcher the opportunity to observe the changes that occur through her research. Therefore, I was also attracted by the "action" aspects of portraiture methodology. Rather than merely focus on failures, portraiture creates inspiring portraits of the participants. It captures the successes and beauty of its subjects as well as their weaknesses and thus, creates encouraging and powerful models for the audience. The methodology sheds light on the dark pictures and reveals the beauty and strengths that are hidden beneath the darkness (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997).

Additionally, portraiture involves collaborative work between researchers and participants that creates a familiar yet exotic image to the participants. The familiarity of the image comes from the active role of the participants in the research. The participants become sources of knowledge and an inspiration for the final image the portrait. However, the perspective of the researcher may introduce new dimensions to the portrait that the participants may not be familiar with. Conversations between the researcher and the participants may take participants through a process of change and shed light on their tacit perspectives and introduce new viewpoints to them.

Lawrence-Lightfoot (1997) suggests that the exotic and unfamiliarity of the portraiture that introduces "a perspective that [participants] had not considered before" is one of the important values of the portraiture methodology (p. 4). She argues that the product of portraiture gives the actors a feeling of being "*seen*" (emphasis by the author) in the research. It also inspires participants and the audience alike presenting the unique characteristics of the actors in a rich context. In the final chapter of *The Good High School* (1983), where she introduces portraiture for the first time, Lawrence-Lightfoot also "shares several stories documenting how portraiture research had a significant emotional impact on the professional lives of individuals in her research settings" (Hackmann, 2002, p. 57). Hackmann (2002) argues, therefore, that such a frame "can be used to stimulate change within individuals and organizations" (p. 57). While contributing as an academic researcher to the theoretical knowledge building in the field, as an Iranian practitioner and activist, I would also like to take advantage of this characteristic of the methodology to develop a study that impacts the professional lives of the practitioners in my study.

The Challenges of the Methodology

As any research methodology, portraiture comes with its strengths and challenges. In this section I discuss the critiques of the methodology. Acknowledging such issues helped me move consciously, while taking advantage of the benefits of the methodology.

One of the critiques that English (2000) addresses in his extensive review of the methodology is the use of terms like "essence" or "truth." Having reservations, he claims that the methodology brings back "the classical, modernistic scientific agenda" in educational research. (p. 23) However, the pioneer of the methodology, Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, uses the term "essence" to describe her efforts on capturing "the insiders' view of what is important' (Lawrence-Lightfoot 1983, p.14). In her view, the "essence" is not registered to the positivist perspective that looks for a "truth"; which in positivist research is supposed to be produced by researcher. Rather, it is a means of capturing the participants' views of what they value to be the most important within the context in which they live. However, according to Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis (1997), the inappropriate use of the positivist language could be problematic and terms like "essence" should be used with more caution.

Reviewing the literature, I found another critique that targets the heart of the qualitative research versus quantitative research. In portraiture, the researcher is the instrument of research and the voice of investigator is purposefully woven into the written document (Hackman, 2002). Thus writing in first person is one of the most important principles of the method. English (2000) critiques the methodology for the heavy reliance on the author as the main instrument and claims that such power of the

author may be inappropriately used by the researcher, therefore potentially encouraging

biased information. In response to this critique, Hackman (2002) defends the

methodology by calling the critique a "misguided argument" (p. 53). As he cautiously

explains, such a critique is applicable to all other qualitative inquiries since the researcher

has the main role as the instrument of the research. He even argues that portraiture has

some advantages to other forms of qualitative inquiry because it not only recognizes but

also exploits the fact that the investigator's physical presence unalterably changes the

cultural dynamics of the research environment. The researcher's prior experiences,

biases, and assumptions affect her/his interactions and the forming of intimate

relationships with the individual actors in the setting.

<center>Research Site and Context of the Study</center>

The current study shaped in the context of Camp Bayan, a one week Freirean

summer camp for 15 young girls focusing on expression and dialog skills that I co-

founded in the summer of 2008 in Tehran, Iran. The summer camp was held for six days,

from July 5 to 10, 2008, with as structured daily schedule starting at 8:30 a.m. and ending

at 5:30 p.m. Using Freirean guidelines, the summer camp consisted of more than 20

games and activities that were designed and implemented by the team of practitioners.

The majority of the games consisted of theater techniques and role-playing inspired by

Augusto Boal's[6] (1979; 2002) *Theater of the Oppressed* and *Games for Actors and Non-*

actors and Patricia Sternberg's (1998) *Theater for Conflict Resolution*. (For a complete

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[6] Augusto Boal is a Brazilian director who was influenced by the work of Paulo Freire.

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list of the games please see Appendix A) The summer camp was conducted more

collaboratively with a team of 11 local and international women practitioners (five

facilitators, two planners, two logistic assistants, and two consultants). I recruited the

team of practitioners based on their interest in joining me as volunteers for the summer

camp project as well as their experiences and expertise on the topic. Table 3.1 provides a

complete list of research participants, a summary of their role in the summer project, and

some highlights of their backgrounds.

Analytic Plan of the Study

Following the guidelines of portraiture methodology on providing rich and

detailed description, I used *participants' interactions* as my unit of analysis. Structuring

the analysis through narrative vignettes provided me the opportunity to describe the

practitioner's interactions in a rich and complex narrative that also portraits the context of

camp environment. The narrative in each vignette follows with a discussion and

reflection passage. Discussion sections highlight key points in each vignette including the

importance of each vignette in terms of how the evidence presented in the vignette

shaped the overall practice and accomplishment that were achieved through the

practitioner's interactions. The reflection passage after each vignette includes my

personal interpretations of challenges throughout the process. Such structure in the

analysis reflects portraiture methodology guidelines that emphasizes on interweaving

voices of researcher and research participants.

Research Participants and Data Collection

The portraiture is designed to answer my research question of how Iranian practitioners understood and employed Freirean pedagogical theory in the context of a summer camp for young girls in Tehran, Iran. In particular, I focused on practitioners' challenges in understanding and the use of the pedagogy of horizontal relationship and dialog in the sociopolitical context of Iran. To answer the research question I reviewed debates and conversations of practitioners, including myself, on how to implement the camp activities. Following the IRB guidelines, I used pseudonyms for all practitioners (Please see Appendix B for the details). The team of staff included 11 members, who helped with various aspects of the summer camp including the logistics, coordination of the overall camp, and facilitation of the games and activities. The nine vignettes captured collaborative interactions of the staff members on applying Freirean pedagogy. However, among the nine, only seven were practitioners who participated actively in all staff meetings and shared their viewpoints on the discussions (See Table 3.1).

Trustworthiness, Credibility, and Reflexivity

Triangulation

I used the triangulation method in my data analysis to assure the trustworthiness of the study. As the primary data for the study, I used voice recordings of staff meetings (15 hours total), in which we discussed camp principles, activities, methods, and coordination of the summer camp in detail. I focus on vignettes from practitioners' interactions on how they perceived the Freirean concepts and employed them in their everyday practices during the summer camp. As supplemental data, I use video

recordings and photos of the summer camp activities and my descriptive self-recorded memos about everyday programs of the summer camp. Using the supplemental data helped me enrich the descriptions and provide a deeper and richer context for the vignettes.

Member Checks

Checks and balances in qualitative researches build into the credibility of the study (Sandelowski, 1986). In order to improve the credibility of the current study, I applied an informal member-check process at the very beginning of the data collection phase and continued until I finished the writing of the findings. While in the field, I had several conversations with the facilitators regarding their performance and practice in the summer camp. After the camp ended, and as I continued with the data analysis process, I made phone calls and had long conversations with the practitioners about the structure of the vignettes. In most of the conversations the practitioners actively reflected on the points I discussed in each vignette and many times suggested new aspects or changed some aspects of the vignettes. The member check process provided me with the opportunity to review the data from the participants' standpoint and give them opportunities to revise and add new dimensions to my interpretations in the data analysis.

Reflexivity

As a participant researcher and the co-founder of the summer camp, I had several roles in the study. I was the cofounder of the program, practitioner in the summer camp, and participant researcher of the current study. These roles required me to address serious reflexivity considerations in order to assure the credibility of my study.

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As described in the analytical plan section, I used vignettes to draw the narrative with participants' voices. I used direct quotes from transcripts of the staff meetings, photos, and snapshots taken from video recordings of the camp to use participants' voices in portraying the vignettes. I also used the reflection section to include my interpretations in the analysis process. The final product in the narrative chapter is an interwoven portrait of the practitioner's experiences that were illustrated through my close participation and interactions with other practitioners in the study.

Table 3.1

Summary of the Research Participants

Participants	Role	Profession/Expertise	Country of Residency
Nassim	Co-founder and planner	Education expert	United States
Goli	Co-founder and planner	Middle school teacher	Iran
Kati	Facilitator	Artist and trainer for young students	United States
Negar	Facilitator and consultant	Facilitator and trainer for young students; experienced in Freirean projects around in the US and Latin American countries	United States
Negin	Logistics and planning	Social science researcher	Iran
Maryam	Consultant	Women's right activist	Iran
Sara	Facilitator and planner	Theater actress	Iran
Tara	Co-Facilitator and Consultant	Therapist	Iran
Ida	Co-facilitator and consultant	Teacher	United States
Haleh	Consultant	Youth education researcher	Iran
Sanaz	Logistics and planning	Teacher /Anthropologist	Iran

Chapter Four: Context and Background of the Study

Overview

In this chapter I review the chronological process of how I planned and conducted the summer camp. Through describing my planning and preparation steps, staff member's backgrounds, the student recruitment process, and parents' reactions to the summer camp, I portray the context of the study and describe different layers of the portraiture that will be discussed and analyzed in the future chapters.

Planning and Preparation Steps

After months of researching, consulting with the experts, and reading about best practices in improving self-expression skills for young girls and reviewing the discussions on girls' empowerment, I started the actual planning for the summer camp in early spring 2008. As my first step, I contacted Goli, my teacher friend, sharing my idea with her about a summer camp for young girls. She liked the idea and agreed to help me find a campground and prepare for the one-week program in Tehran. In the midst of the excitement planning this program, I was reminded several times by Goli and other friends both inside and outside of Iran that it would be challenging to conduct such a liberatory program in Iran during such a difficult time.

The Iranian government was extremely sensitive about any cultural project inside the country, which was somehow often perceived to endorse women's rights or ideals of Western society. A few months before the summer of 2008, Iranian officials claimed that the US was planning a velvet revolution (*Iran: 'Confessions'*, 2007) through supporting

vandalistic movements in the country (i.e. as it happened in Ukraine in 1991). Therefore, such movements along with securing foreign financial supports on any humanities-related project had been extremely restricted by Iran's government. Therefore, any development project including educational or cultural program (i.e. similar to Camp Bayan) that was designed or implemented by groups of activists or practitioners from outside the country was highly scrutinized by the government, as it was/is considered as an effort in promoting a velvet revolution to overthrow the government, and therefore, a threat to the national security of the state.

Such political pressures within Iran were fueled following a series of mixed messages relayed by the Bush administration. In a short period of time, two fundamentally different messages were announced by two sectors of the US government. While President George W. Bush referred to Iran as one of the three countries that are comprise the "axis of evil" in the world and announced that Iranians will receive the US government's support to overthrow their government (President Delivers State of the Union Address, 2001), Condoleezza Rice, the Secretary of State, announced the US government supports civil society inside Iran to bring reform to the government. A little after these announcements were made, the US Congress approved $66 million in funds to "support" Iranian activists.

The US government's announcement troubled many activists inside Iran as the Iranian intelligence service started to arrest numbers of women's rights activists, environmentalist, and other sociopolitical reformists on charges of disloyalty to their country and as threats to national security in the state. Several women's rights groups were arrested and many fled the country, taking took refuge in other countries. Due to

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such horrifying political pressures and challenging environment, I decided not to contact any of my activist friends/colleagues (i.e. members of women's movement) or invite them to collaborate in the summer program. Instead, I consulted with my teacher friends inside Iran. I also received tremendous support from family members, old friends, and colleagues, who were interested in collaborating in an educational program without getting involved in any political agenda.

Summer Camp's Activities and Goals

The agenda of the summer camp was to improve young girls' expression skills. After sharing the agenda with many educational and youth development experts, I learned about Theater of the Oppressed (TO) and theater for conflict resolution techniques. The majority of the games and activities for the summer camp were games and techniques that designed based on *Theater of the Oppressed* (1979) and *Games for Actors and Non-actors* (2002)*,* books by Augusto Boal, a Brazilian director who was influenced by Paulo Freire's philosophy and *Theater for Conflict Resolution* (1998) by Patricia Sternberg.

In my searches for the best advice on how to improve expression skills, I also met with one of the famous Augusto Boalian practitioners and activists, who also facilitated many workshops at the Theater of the Oppressed Laboratory (TOPLAB) in New York City. I talked to her about the summer camp and my plans inside Iran, and she accepted my invitation to come to Iran and help me with the program. However, the plan changed as soon as I arrived in Tehran and learned more about the political dangers of having an American member in the summer camp team. In Tehran, I emailed her and explained the

situation to her, requesting that she send me written guidelines and advice on how to facilitate Forum Theater and how to best coordinate the summer activities.

Combining practices from different resources, we designed over 20 games including role-playing, conflict resolution activities, and Boalian theater games (e.g., Forum Theater, Image Theater) over the course of one week. In the TO framework, Boal uses theater games (i.e. improvisation, self-interrogation, etc.) to define real life issues, then uses dramatic opportunities to open up these issues collectively, analyze them, and find alternative community-based solutions. In view of cultural adaptation concerns, I used views from a panel of experts to adopt culturally appropriate games and activities that were considered influential and acceptable according to Iranian contemporary societal norms and morals.

Overall, the summer camp consisted of three types of games: icebreaking activities; conflict resolution practices; and Forum Theater performances. The first two days of the summer camp focused intensively on getting to know each other, getting familiar with the camp's culture, and creating participatory regulations for the summer camp. The third and fourth days focused on conflict resolution activities including how to manage anger, how to resolve a conflict situation, for example. The final two days of the camp were completely devoted to Forum Theater, which created a unique experience for the campers to participate in role-plays, depicting a scene that shows a clear conflict between an oppressor and an oppressed. The scene was about a situation where the oppressed wanted something and the oppressor denied her. Alternatively, the oppressor wanted something that the oppressed did not want to do. The camp participants asked to write the scenarios in small groups and play the scenarios based on Forum Theater

guidelines. Such step-by-step practices designed to gradually prepare the participants to learn about the nature of conflict and possible reactions to conflict, awareness of oppression, and how to react to such oppression by expressing their opinions and taking action against oppression. For a complete list of the activities, activities descriptions, and the schedule of each day of the camp, please see Appendix A.

The Team

The next step to coordinate the summer camp was to invite a team of experts who would agree to volunteer their time to conduct the summer program. Among the 11 people that helped during the summer camp project, there were seven people, who actively participated in all of the discussion sessions about the camp and facilitated the activities. These six people included: Negar, Ida, Goli, Tara, Kati, Sara, and myself. Below, I will briefly describe the individual backgrounds and expertise of each practitioner.

Facilitators

Negar- The first person that I consulted with was my friend and colleague Negar, who was the co-founder of a non-profit organization in the United States that applies Freirean pedagogical approach and Boalian theater techniques to empower Iranian-American youths and prepare them as the next generation of community leaders in the United States. Negar grew up in a leftist family, which immigrated to the United States after the 1979 revolution in Iran. As an immigrant, she was well aware of the oppression that marginalized populations might face in a new society and focused on issues specific to experiences of Iranian-American youth, coordinating summer camps through her non-

profit organization. She also participated and facilitated many other Freirean/Boalian projects in Latin America, particularly in Nicaragua and Guatemala. In the summer of 2008, Negar was taking a year break before starting her master's degree in anthropology. She stayed a year in Iran to work and live with her family. Currently, she is a PhD student in socio-cultural anthropology. Using her previous experiences within a Latin American context and her familiarity with the sociocultural situation of Iran, Negar selected a list of the games and set of guidelines for the summer program. She also facilitated one of the four groups during the summer program. Her understanding of the leftist philosophy of Boal theater and her experiences of using the pedagogy in other societies was an important asset to our summer camp program.

Ida- She was a teacher in the US and worked with young children inside Iran. Ida was 31 years old and came to the US as a graduate student in 2006. She became very passionate about the summer program as she herself was a victim of oppression and violence as a woman in Iran. She grew up in a middle class family and suffered extensively from the oppression she endured by her authoritarian father. She was forced to get married at the age of 17 due to her father's disdain regarding her relationship with a young man. In her eight years of marriage, she extensively suffered and was subjected to domestic violence, and she never received any support from her father to file for a divorce. After her awareness of her own rights increased, she started fighting single-handedly to break free of the cycle of domestic violence that she had suffered for six years. After two years of relentless efforts, she finally succeeded in getting a divorce and could depart from the oppressive life she lived for eight long years. She went to graduate school in Iran and after completing her master's degree, she decided to continue her

studies in the US. I met Ida a year after she arrived in the US. I told her about my summer camp idea, and not to my surprise, she understood the concept immediately and was the most passionate person I have ince met who was committed to seen to promoting young girls' expression skills. Ida helped me develop my ideas for the summer camp and shared her experiences with me to understand the importance of expression. She started working with me voluntarily from the very first stages of the summer program through developing efficient practices, translating game descriptions, revising the games and activities, and providing consultant expertise on how appropriately we could adjust the games and activities to the cultural context of Iran.

Goli- She is a teacher in girls' middle school in Tehran and had more than 17 years of teaching experience with young girls. Goli comes from a traditional religious family background. Compare to other team members, she had comparatively conservative religious and cultural views, and she served as our gatekeeper as well as our savior for the duration of the summer camp. She was very careful to follow Iranian Islamic customs and traditions and respectful of social norms, which also helped us avoid the possibility of being shut down by local officials or the extremely conservative campground caretaker.

Goli's approach and view of life was extremely influenced by her personal liberatory life story. She found her liberation through higher education. She was my university classmate back in 1998 when I was in my second year of undergraduate study. We went to graduate school together in Tehran, and then I learned about her challenging life as a mother of two children. She shared her life story and how she married when she was 19 and had her first baby when she was only 20. She was an intelligent woman and

was never happy about becoming a housewife. She started working as a volunteer and later on as a substitute teacher at her children's elementary school. From there, she found her way through a teaching career. She later became a secretary at a prestigious high school for girls and started studying with 12th grade students, preparing for the entrance exam in order to get admitted into university. When I met her at the university, she was the most passionate student in all our classes. But, I did not know that her passion was driven by her 15-year anticipation to go back to school. She later shared with me how much she suffered for not being able to decide about her life and how much she became frustrated with her family life.

Her passion for the summer camp was not only because she worked with young girls and her experiences with young students, but also it was because of her personal life experiences. She told me once that if she had better expression skills in her life and if she were aware of how to face oppressive situations in her life, she could have experienced a better life. She wrote her graduate thesis on women's process of socialization and identification in the society and how women's lack of expression skills might result in the reproduction of oppressive situations for them. Her knowledge and experiences were really helpful in shaping the activities of the summer camp and to keep the activities focused on the major goal of the program. She also had many helpful connections in the school system and had a network of friends that helped us tremendously with organizing the logistics of the summer camp and recruiting students.

Tara- She worked as a counselor for more than 15 years. Her clinical experience, teaching, and research experience on Emotional Intelligence (EQ) was her main motivation in joining our team and work as facilitator in the summer camp. She found the

summer camp as an opportunity to implement training on life skills such as expression skills, which could promote EQ practices. Tara came from a religious traditional family background, but her brothers' political activism during the 1979 revolution changed her life path to that of a liberating goal. Her brothers had to flee the country after the 1979 revolution due to their involvement with leftist party movements. Their influence on her life was not only limited to them introducing her to new sociopolitical approaches, but her aspirations to pursue higher education were also delayed because the government rejected her from universities entrance exam due to her family's affiliation with the leftist party. Despite her exceptional academic record, she was continuously rejected for several years from the annual university entrance exam [*konkur*] due to *gozinesh*, a brutal state-run filtering system (ideological screening), which examined candidates political/ideological affiliations. After her consistent efforts, Tara finally passed the exam and studied in her favorite field, psychotherapy. She later married to one of her brothers' best friends and continued her studies in the field of psychology. At the time of the summer camp, she was a full-time university faculty member in Tehran and devoted her research to the field of EQ, which discusses the social life skills that liberates individuals from oppressive situations. Her experiences in running focus group discussions and teambuilding activities helped other facilitators to better facilitate small groups and conduct participatory discussions.

Kati-She was born in the US, but lived and grew up in Tehran until she finished her undergraduate degree in art. She moved to the US in 2004, and I met her for the first time after my talk at a women's rights conference. She worked as a volunteer Persian teacher for heritage students and as a freelance artist for many years. Tara's parents are

religious reformist in Iran and her father was a government official for many years and traveled overseas. Tara grew up in a religious activist family and adopted activism values in her personal and professional life. She learned about the summer camp plan and volunteered to go to Iran and help us with both logistics and content development for the summer camp. Her art background was an asset in designing the theater games and facilitating small groups. She easily established bonds with the girls, and they trusted her as early as the first day of the program.

Sara- She was the only official theater expert on our team. I found Sara through one the most renowned female theater directors in Iran, who worked extensively in the field of theater therapy. When I shared the summer camp idea with her, she suggested I connect with Sara, one of her best students in the theater therapy field, who worked with children for many years. We met the first week that I arrived in Iran, and we had several meetings to talk about the camp goals. She worked for six years as a theater trainer for young children at one of the well-known cultural centers in Tehran. She was 26 and the youngest facilitator in our team. She came from a liberal family background and introduced many new icebreaking activities to our program. She spent the most time with the girls as she started the camp with dance and morning exercises every morning.

<center>Finding the Campground</center>

The first and most important logistic step to prepare for the summer program was to find a cozy and appropriate campground for 15-20 participants. By mid April and prior to my arrival in Tehran, Goli started looking for campgrounds around the city. In the meantime, Tara suggested that her father had a beautiful garden that would conveniently

serve as a campground for the summer program. The garden was located in Kerman, a city in the central provinces of Iran. At first, I really liked the idea and started preparing to move the camp to Kerman. However, after a few meetings with members of active and experienced non-profit organizations in Tehran, Goli and I learned that it might not be safe to hold the summer program in Kerman. They suggested that we keep the program as small and low-key as possible. They believed that the project might grab the attention of government officials simply because of the fact that a few of us live in the US and want to conduct a liberatory project in Iran. They suggested that it was easier to keep the program low-profile in the capital city Tehran. Otherwise, we might have easily been involved in a serious and unnecessary security issue if we go to a small town. We followed their suggestions and started again to look for places in Tehran. We also learned that instead of asking the Department of Education or other official organizations to issue permission to rent a public campground, it would be much easier if we use our network of friends and keep the program as small and local as possible. Therefore, we narrowed down our search for the campground to the neighborhoods that we were familiar with. Finally, Goli found a *Husseinieh*, a religious orthodox building for religious rituals and charity purposes, in her neighborhood. We decided to use the *Husseinieh* so we could hide the program in the midst of a religious environment, which would reduce the government's sensitivity to our program, and thus decreasing our risk of being arrested or the program being shut down by the government. However, we still needed some kind of governmental permission or a validation letter from the Imam of the mosque in the neighborhood. We preferred to deal directly with the mosque rather than the government since Goli's father was a member of the mosque and his credibility could help us get the

letter from the Imam. The owner of the building was an orthodox religious man and the letter that we received from the Imam convinced him about the eligibility of us and the program. The *Husseinieh* was a cozy and politically safe place to hold the summer camp. However, as I will explain in the following chapters, from a cultural standpoint, it was not the best place for applying liberatory practice such as a Freirean program.

<center>Recruiting Process and Families' Concerns</center>

Our goal was to recruit 15 girls, aged 12 to 15 years old for the summer camp. Whether liked it or not, due to the sociopolitical environment in Iran, our program became a political project, and we had to be very conscious and concerned about the potential risks of participating in the program. Thus, we spent a lot of time making sure that the content of the activities were politically neutral. Regardless of our efforts, we knew that we would get different feedback from different parents and families. We started our recruitment by face-to-face invitations to our friends and friends of friends. We spread the word among our networks and communities in the city. As we expected, the recruiting process was not a smooth process as many families were looking for an official letter or Department of Education's permission for the program. One of the mothers, who rejected our invitation to the summer camp, said that she was afraid that we would pass on "Westernized values" to her daughter and that she did not like for her daughter to be introduced to such values. Despite my assurance that our team consisted of people with different backgrounds, where one of our members had been a middle school teacher for 17 years and another a therapist for 15 years and is a university faculty, she responded that she would prefer to send her daughter to a program that had been certified

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by the ministry of education. Such experiences forced us to continue in a more systematic recruitment process. We created a booklet for the summer program with a schedule for each day, list of the activities, values to be practiced during the program, and the specific goals of the program. We explained expression skills as an important life skill that all youth needed to learn about. After we passed the booklet to the family members and friends, we had 20 applications for the program. Among those, 15 girls aged 12 to 15 years old participated in the summer program.

Chapter Five: Narrative and Analysis

Overview

This chapter includes narratives and analyses that focus on the practitioners' understanding and employment of the Freirean pedagogy in a one-week summer camp that was held in July 2008 in Tehran, Iran. The chapter answers the research question and sub-question of the study: How did Iranian practitioners understand and apply Freirean pedagogical theory in the context of a summer camp for young girls in Tehran, Iran? What were the challenges in understanding and the use of Freirean pedagogy in the sociopolitical context of Iran? As discussed in chapter two, I will use the two key concepts of Freirean pedagogy, dialog and horizontal teacher-student relationship, as my analytical themes to explore the practitioners' experiences during the summer camp in Tehran, Iran.

Concentrating on the two analytical themes, this chapter is composed of three types of passages: vignettes, discussions, and reflections. Vignettes illustrate specific points of the practitioners' experiences during the summer camp. Followed by each vignette, there are discussion and reflection sections. Discussion sections highlight key points in each vignette including the importance of each vignette in terms of how the evidence presented in the vignette shaped the overall practice and accomplishment that were achieved through that interaction. The reflection passage after each vignette will include my personal interpretations on challenges in the process.

Vignette 1: Addressing by First Name

The first topic that opened the discussion in our preparation meeting for the summer camp was the teacher-student relationship. I introduced the concept of horizontal relationship and how it is crucial to understand it in theory and practice in order to give students space for dialog. We all agreed in that meeting that we were not going to follow the traditional teacher-student relationship and decided to adopt the horizontal approach, and part of making this decision had to do with comparing a hierarchical relationship to a dictatorship:

> Nassim: One of the things that is very important in my opinion, and I am sure you are also slightly concerned about, is the fact that this camp is meant to provide practice of expression skills, and so it is important that we don't become dictators! I mean, we should be careful that the kids understand as much as we do and we should value their understanding. Such reactions would not only arise in our conversations with them but also in our behavior toward them. For example, we must give them time to speak out, we must not interrupt their sentences, and if they have any comments, we must listen and think about their ideas…
>
> Tara: Yeah! That's actually the main goal of the camp!
>
> Nassim: Yeah, exactly!...and because we have had a long history of dictatorship in our country
>
> Goli: we ARE dictators!
>
> Nassim: …yeah…we deeply internalized it somehow…I know that I have it sometimes in my reactions…I know that I impose my ideas sometimes…we must be totally self-conscious about it specifically during this one week and we must make sure to do it well!

One strategy that we initiated in the preparation workshop to break the power relation that traditionally exists between teachers and students was to call everyone including facilitators by their "first name" during the camp. While going on a first names

basis in a work environment (e.g. in a group of colleagues/partners) is a sign of closeness and friendship in Iranian culture, using professional titles (i.e. Dr., Engineer, etc.) or last names with prefixes is a sign of respect that offers power relationship in the socioeconomic context (i.e. socioeconomic class). For example, a landlord calls his custodian, who cleans his house by his/her first name. The custodian, on the other hand, must address the landlord as "Sir", "Mister", "Dr", or other titles he likes to hear. Age is another parameter that is very crucial in defining the format of relationships in Iran. A younger person must always respect an older person and be modest in responding to her requests. It is very important then to call an older person with prefixes such as madam or mister to show them that their higher status is respected. However, when one wants to show friendship, she might use first name for another person, regardless if she is an older person or her status is higher than the other's. Formal education, like in other countries, follows the same tradition in the way that teachers address students by their last names without any prefix (e.g. A teacher might say to a student, "Abdi, read this paragraph"!); However, students must address their teachers using appropriate tones and prefixes with the last name (e.g. "Mrs. Abdi, may I ask a question?").

Moving away from such power relations and striving for a horizontal relationship in our communications with the camp participants, during our preparation meeting for the camp, we agreed to address one another by first name only and we decided to ask students to address everyone (i.e., teachers and classmates) by their first names as well.

> Nassim:..let's call each other by "first name" [instead of giving names like Miss or Madam] and ask the girls to feel comfortable and address us in like manner…it helps to reduce the hierarchical power between us and them...

> Sara: It's a good idea…

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Tara: I agree…it helps a lot

There were four of us in the meeting and the fourth member, Goli, who was a teacher in the formal education system for 17 years, did not respond directly to this conversation. Sitting quietly with a slight smile and avoiding any eye contact from other members, she changed the topic quickly to discuss time management in the games. We continued discussing time management, knowing that she would have to further reflect and think about the idea of addressing one another by first names only. We continued the meeting talking about the logistics issues such as the air conditioning of the building in the campground, planning daily schedules to order lunch for the girls and so on. Although Goli participated in the conversation about dictatorship, and she agreed that we should be careful about the underlying traditional practices in teacher-student relationship, considering her reaction to new practices (i.e. using first name), we expected there to be some discomfort on her part since she was used to specific norms regarding relationships with students in her work as a teacher in formal schools.

In the following meeting, we discussed the activities we wanted to include for an orientation session that was designed for parents and students a week before the camp. In that session, we intended to introduce some fundamental values that shaped the design and foundation of the summer camp (i.e. promoting dialog and encouraging horizontal relationship in teaching and learning). We discussed how an icebreaking game using "first names" for all participants regardless of age and position would change the environment of the session to a more comfortable and casual space. The icebreaking activity included participants (parents and students) breaking into groups of four or five

to learn about each other's interests. This was followed by the entire group coming

together again and each person introducing one member of their group by first name and

presenting three characteristics of the person to the audience (Figure 5.1). On the day of

orientation, we started the session by introducing ourselves by our first names to the

audience. I went first and said "I am Nassim, and I am a graduate student at …" and

continued with my informal tone, describing about who we were and what we do. After

my introduction, Tara, Sara, and Kati continued with the introduction and using the same

tone and introduced themselves by first name. Goli, however, started with her first name

and add her last name quickly to her sentence and said "I am Goli…[pause] Alavi, I am a

teacher and worked for 17 years in public schools…"

Figure 5.1.   Icebreaking activity in the orientation session for parents and
students; one of the parents introduces one of the participants by presenting her
first name and three characters about her.

As the videos of the orientation session captured, by the end of the icebreaking activity everybody including Goli looked relaxed and comfortable in a non-formal environment based on the format of the introductions and icebreaking activities.

Discussion 1

Refusing to follow an established social norm such as using prefixes to address each other initiated a way that integrated an important Freirean concept in the summer camp: horizontal relationship for facilitators and students. The practice was established as a rule for all of us, including facilitators and students, throughout the camp. Although it was challenging to avoid a culturally preferred norm in the larger Iranian society (i.e. respecting status by using prefixes), and there was some hesitation among some facilitators, the initiative translated into an important strategy for us to transform the vertical relationship to a horizontal one. Many students expressed their opinion about the positive influences of such a strategy. One student in her reflection named her first day at the summer camp as "a day with partners." One student started her reflection note on the third day of the camp with "Greetings *partners*!" and another one wrote in her reflection on the same day that she was very impressed with the close relationship we maintained in the camp and mentioned "I've never seen a group of people be so close and friendly at work." Such reflections were confirmations to us, as the facilitators of the program, that our attempts in translating the valuable Freirean theory into practice were promising.

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Reflections 1

In reviewing the videos of the orientation session, I observed the tension in Goli's and some other participants' faces when they used first name to introduce themselves. In fact, Goli's reaction of silence and avoidance in continuing the conversation during our staff meeting, where we discussed to initiate such an approach in relationships for the first time, was a sign of resistance to an uncomfortable, unfamiliar situation. Her uneasiness about such a change was neither unknown nor unexpected to me. Her identity and social status as a 45-year-old public school teacher—the status that she used to introduce herself in the orientation session— associates her with a series of societally acceptable and expected norms. Departing from such expected norms made her uncomfortable in front of the audience of parents, students, and other facilitators. On the other hand, she, like all of the other facilitators, agreed that expression and dialog, which were the main focus of the summer camp, could not be practiced through a traditional teacher-student relationship. In one of the staff meetings, she mentioned that the success of the camp is "because it is non-hierarchical!...they [the girls] compare it with their schools, and most of the schools are not like this…"

We resolved the challenge in our practices by engaging all the participants, including parents, in an activity that practiced the new initiative in the relationships. As we continued further with the activity and by the end of the orientation session, the visible tension of departing from a social norm reduced almost disappeared from Goli's face, and most of the other participants as observed in the video recordings of the orientation session. The introductory initiative worked as a mediator among the participants, who had never met each other before, and changed the environment of the

session toward a more engaging one for the group. In fact, we used the activity in the orientation session to "break the ice" among all of us (i.e. facilitators, parents, and students) and introduce a fundamental Freirean value that we would try to apply during the course of the summer camp.

Vignette 2: From Permissions for Bathroom Breaks to the Camp's Constitution

Sometimes, a simple issue aroused serious discussions among the team members, which established an important aspect of Freirean framework in the camp. For example, one of the topics that triggered an important conversation in our pre-camp workshop was on whether or not we should grant permission to the girls to chew gum or take bathroom breaks during the games. The conversation began with such issues, and it continued for half an hour. We discussed the issue of discipline and how we should address it while maintaining the horizontal teacher-student relationship, as well as promote engaging dialog, while maintaining discipline.

> Sara: Guys, we're not gonna let them ask for stuff in the middle of the games …like they keep asking for stuff like "I wanna go to the bathroom" or "I wanna get some water to drink" and so on and so forth, right?…are we gonna listen to such sort of tricks that the kids usually do [to take advantage of the class time]?
>
> Nassim: See, we try to limit such requests to as little as possible, but…I think we shouldn't make this place like a military camp! If they wanna chew gum let them chew gum!
>
> Sara: But there are some activities during which they can't really chew gum…because they're gonna lose their concentration if they chew…
>
> Nassim: Regarding Sara's comment, we should give them reasons on why they can't
>
> Sara: Then, 90 percent of the time they can't…the rest…10 percent of time they can chew!

[Everybody laughs]

Nassim: Yeah! But, we should give them reasons!

Goli: But, I don't see this as dictatorial! I see this as creating discipline and any *serious* activity needs discipline!

Nassim: I agree that we need some sort of discipline…but, see, we have enough of these sort of [mandatory] rules in our society…like, you must wear[7] such and such, you must behave so and so…I think we should give them some open space here…

Ida: I think it would be great if we give them reason for everything

Tara: Yeah! It's very important how we explain it to them…like we say "It's because of so and so"
[Everyone starts talking; overlapping voices]

Goli: We do have reasons!...but, here we don't have the time/space to give them reasons for everything! A kid should have gotten some learning somewhere else and come here prepared to follow the camp rules with no need to explain everything!

Nassim: I get it, but as Tara said…the important thing is what your approach is…the first point that we mentioned, which I think is important in all other aspects of the summer camp, is that we don't want to become dictators in this summer camp!

Tara: If you see someone who doesn't obey [a rule] don't simply blame them for not following the rule. We should ask her, for example, what the purpose of the rule is, from her perspective, and how it is meant to help the group here… just as a question to the class…ok, for example, what do you think about this and why do you think we said you should not do such and such [when we are performing an activity or a game]?…what is the reason for it? That is a good way of [showing them] a way of expression. Encouraging them to reply to these sort of questions promotes their expression skills.

Nassim: Somehow they are participating in rule making [of the camp]…we present these as our suggestions and then they can decide themselves about the rules…

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[7] Here I refer to mandatory heijab for women in Iran.

Tara: In fact, they can also participate in the process of creating rules and comment on them.

Ida: So let's add it to our plan that we want to have participatory rules for the camp!

As we decided in the preparation workshop, the first day of the camp the girls sat for three hours and discussed the rules for the camp days, created a list of rules/disciplines, which they called mandatory, and together created a so called "constitution" for Camp Bayan [Expression Camp] (see Figure 5.2). In that session, participants discussed many issues, ranging from attitudes and time management to cleaning and organizing the campground. The first item on the list was "No prejudgment of each other." Then, they wrote rules about how they should collaboratively clean the camp ground, have turns in talking in the group discussions, respect each other, and have a self-service lunch to help with kitchen duties.

Figure 5.2   Developing Camp Bayan's "constitution" on the first day of the camp.

Discussion 2

As the above vignette illustrates, in our conversations we started discussing the

issue of discipline, and as we focused on the details of the implementation, we were able

to translate a very important Freirean principle into practice: in order to make space for

dialog we need to establish horizontal relationships that engage all participants. In fact,

Sara and Goli's concerns on discipline and time management were valid concerns that

most practitioners deal with in any educational program. However, our conversations on

the issue were mainly informed by Freirean pedagogical principles on creating space for

dialog and participation through establishing horizontal teacher-student relationships.

Looking at the discipline issue through a Freirean lens, we could not *impose* rules on the

girls even if they were needed for the program. We started brainstorming on how we could have discipline without becoming dictators. While some talked about the constructive role of discipline in any educational program, others debated the top down approach to considering issues of discipline. The discussion became intense and each person tried to convince others on why her point was valid. Tense reactions and passive aggressive tones in responding to each other's statement continued until each of us started *listening* to each other's concerns and finally Tara's point become *the* resolution when she mentioned that "they [the girls] can also participate in the process of creating rules." She suggested that by explaining the discipline problematic to the girls and asking for their feedback and insights on the issues we can engage them in the process of creating rules and bringing discipline to the program without dictating our opinions. Ida completed the conversation by calling the process "participatory rule-making." We include participatory rule making as a session in the plans for the first day. In that session, the girls spent three hours together writing the "constitution" of the camp. Perhaps, their collaborative efforts in all aspects of the program (e.g., valuing time, help with cleaning, etc.) during the camp were inspired by their attachments to the rules they developed together and through the participatory process of the first day.

Reflections 2

It was challenging for us to find a common ground between discipline and the popular strategies of the program. My existing understanding of discipline was a controlling system that directs or determines and, therefore, needed a controller. Such definition of discipline contrasted with my understanding of popular education. On the

other hand, Sarah and Goli were concerned about the lack of discipline in the program, and Goli saw it as a vital part that "any *serious* business needs" it. They also considered our roles as the controllers, who enforced the discipline in all aspects of the camp. Sarah hinted to our roles when she mentioned that "*we*'re not gonna let them [the girls] ask for stuff in the middle of the games." We talked about the meaning of discipline, and they explained that it established a structure and not a controlling system. I agreed with them on the importance of such structure and we all accepted that such structure needs regulations and resolutions in place. From there, Tara and Ida directed the discussion and offered a resolution to the issue that was Freirean in nature: engaging the girls in developing participatory regulations. At first, Goli was not convinced that the solution was appropriate for the program since she did not consider it as a priority among other practices we listed for the program. A long conversation on the overall goals of the camp elevated our understanding of both discipline and key concepts of popular approach, in which horizontal relationship is the base for a dialogical space. Together we reviewed the meaning of dialog and the requirements that make the dialog possible. Such conversation convinced all of us that a participatory process of rule making is a solution that covers our concerns both on discipline and creating space for a liberatory approach.

Vignette 3: Teachable Moment for Whom?

The day after the girls created the camp's constitution and wrote a list of rules on a whiteboard, including a rule for keeping the campground clean and organized, we started observing some disorganized behavior here and there in the playground. For example, the foyer was filled with the participants' shoes (Figure 5.3). Goli was the first

person who shared her concerns about this. She was not happy with the girls' lack of

commitment to the rules they had developed.

Figure 5.3. A picture of the shoes in the foyer.

Goli: Ok guys! One thing that I told Nassim today is that…I told her that…see it's crucially important when the group made some rules…I mean, … we spent time to make those rules…we're like…wrote them down…saved them as our camp documents!...we got to the details of the rules and so on and so forth…then only after two days we see that they broke their own rules…and, we don't care at all!...we're like yeah… it happens!…one girl dumped her dress in that corner and left…or I don't know…another one left her board game in the playground and we again say nothing?...just look at the foyer…how messy it gets when they come inside! [8]

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[8] Goli's point was the pile of shoes that dumped in the foyer every time the girls walked inside the

building. In Iranian culture people do not walk inside a house or a place that people sit on ground (i.e.

mosque, *Husseinieh*, etc.) with their outdoor shoes. Therefore, the girls and all of us had to take off our

shoes every time we wanted to walk inside the building and most of the time the load of shoes outside the

door made the foyer look very disorganized and cluttered.

Goli's complaint started a round of discussion on whether it was the girls'

mistake, who broke their own rules, or whether our mistake of being disorganized and/or

not being a good role models for them.

Aida: Well, we don't follow the rules ourselves…how can we expect them to do so?

Goli: Like…I organized our shoes today…I did it so they see me and do the same thing…but Iranian kids are not like that!

Nassim: But, we didn't talk about the details with them…we should have asked them questions and discussed it in details…because we didn't discuss it in details they didn't get involved [where to put shoes, how to get organized in a limited space, etc.]

Goli: No! I'd say it's because when a rule breaks as first thing in the morning, all other rules would break after that…we need to be serious about our rules…like if the kids' shoes are not well organized in the foyer then we need to stop the game…tell them that the game is canceled for now…we can't continue the game!...our faces should stay totally neutral! No anger! No confrontation! Neutral face! But, [we'd tell them that] guys, we have to stop the games for 5 min!...they'd ask why? What happened? We'd tell them look outside the door and see how disorganized you've been! So they'd understand they have to pay for it! Like the first thing in the morning they'd learn that if they don't do it they'd pay its cost [in the way that they can't start the games].

Nassim: Well! Let's create a shelf for their shoes first and then expect it of them…we'll tell them that here is the space to organize your shoes…if they still are disorganized then we need to do something serious…

Sanaz, who was silent until then, because she was super busy most of the time

with the heavy loads of kitchen duties and did not have much time to participate in our

staff meeting discussions, looked at all of us around the table and paused as if she was

rehearsing her words before saying them out loud, and finally said:

Can I say something? Kids this age are very much visual learners…I mean they don't learn by hearing speeches about stuff…they need to see them to internalize them…and I mean when we ourselves are in a rush to get to the rooms and we're

not conscious or patient to take off our shoes and put them neatly in a corner…I mean I'm obsessed with putting things in order…so I'd do it…but in general I wanna say that they'd do much better if they see us doing it!

After Sanaz's comments we all came to the conclusion that we need to do better in taking care of the housekeeping duties ourselves. We started planning and created systems to organize shoes and to give more instructions to the girls on how they can make their campground a more organized place to play and work.

Discussion 3

Again discipline and horizontal relationship were the two sides of a conversation that was shaped in the staff meeting. The problem was clear: the campground had become disorganized. However, the approaches to the issue varied among the team members. Goli was really concerned about the messy foyer and saw it as our mistake in lacking *control* over the kids. She blamed the issue on the kids' lack of commitment to the rules they agreed upon. To her, it was the kids' irresponsibility on organizing the campground and our lack of control to make sure they maintain their self-proclaimed responsibilities. Goli's suggestion was to use the issue as a *teachable moment* for the girls because they should "learn that if they don't do it they'd pay the cost of it," that is the delay to start the games. However, other members' like Sanaz, Aida, and I had different approaches on the issue. Sanaz and Aida believed that it is lack of instruction/system and good guidance that caused the issue. Sanaz believed that they would not get organized unless they see us as organized members; they would follow us as their role models. Aida, who did not believe in blaming the girls, discussed how there is no appropriate

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space/shelf to organize the shoes in the foyer and mentioned that we need to talk to girls to come up with a solution together. The four other people around the table agreed with Goli's point and the solution she offered to better control the camp rules. The team also agreed that we need to create a shelf for shoes and be more organized as the role models. The next day we started the day with a *teachable moment*; we stopped the games in the morning and announced that we cannot continue. The girls were surprised and asked what is going on. We showed them the foyer and told them that we have a problem there. They saw the mess and first started searching for "guilty ones." Then they blamed the group who was in charge of the campground's cleaning for that day. Finally, all of us, including girls and the staff, started organizing the shoes and Aida introduced the new space we had for the shoes. It was not a happy start of the day, but our moods changed a little after we all engaged in the next game. The shoes were more organized with the new shelf we put in place.

Reflection 3

The discussion of discipline and control was not my favorite topic in the staff meetings. Goli's approach on the issue reminded me of my memories from school years, when teachers blamed us (i.e. students) for being disorganized and careless about the rules. I do not recall ever being asked about what we thought about issues and/or how we think they might be resolved. Nor do I remember being engaged in any decision-making process or being invited to discuss any issue in order to find a solution for it regarding class discipline. Instead, we (i.e. students) most of the time were blamed for not being careful about the rules and for not following the guidelines in the classroom. Although in

Camp Bayan we started with participatory rule making, when we faced issues about discipline during the camp days, we were not open to participatory problem solving. Trying to stay committed to Freirean pedagogy that encourages participation through horizontal teacher-student relationships, I suggested to resolve the shoes issue through participatory problem solving and mentioned that "we should ask them [the girls] questions [about the issue] and discuss it in detail" before putting blame on anyone. I was mostly worried about our relationship with the girls and did not want them to feel that they were treated hierarchically. However, most members of the team agreed with Goli's point and believed that we are being too open to the kids and we need to be stricter in controlling them. I did not want to enforce my opinion to the team. Aida also was not convinced that we should blame the girls, and she argued that we cannot blame them when we have not provided an appropriate infrastructure in place for them to be organized. Although we both attempted to offer alternative solutions to the issue, we were not successful in convincingly communicating our point to the rest of the team, and we could not provide participatory strategies to resolve the discipline issue. A few months after the camp ended, Aida and I talked about that day and agreed that it was not much of a teachable moment for the girls. They face this kind of scenarios of blame and control all the time in everyday life—as we did when we were their age—and rarely new learning opportunity happens in such situations. In fact, it was our (i.e. staff) Freirean teachable moment that it is easy to talk about a bottom-up approach in coordinating the program, but it is not as easy to deeply understand or implement it in practice.

Vignette 4: Discipline or Creativity

On the fourth day of the camp, we started the first meeting as usual in the early morning to plan for the day. The first thing on our list was to prepare for a game[9], named "Complete the Image", which was a visual metaphor for Freirean dialog. The game was designed to be played by a large group. The group sits in a circle/curve and each time two volunteers walk in front of the circle and face each other and shake hands and freeze. The group facilitator draws an imaginary frame around the image they have created and asks the group to imagine what this image can depict/portray (Figures 5.4 and 5.5). The group should talk about how the characters are standing and how that affects what they see in the image. Then, one out of the pair steps out of the image and the other is alone holding the same pose as before. Students should again analyze this image in the same way. The partner who stepped out can return into the image and "complete the image" in any way she wishes. She can arrange her body in front, behind, below, etc. in relation to her partner, but she cannot change her partner's image in any way. She must step out of the image completely, look at the frozen image that remains, and then come back in. This new image is analyzed again by others observing.

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[9] For more details about the games and the instructions please refer to appendix A.

Figure 5.4 Complete the Image game; girls are watching a role playing game and one of the participants raised her hand to comment on their role playing.

Figure 5.5 Complete the Image game; girls raised their hands to make comments and actively participated in the discussions after each role playing.

The process looked smooth and Aida was selected to coordinate the game. After we read through the instruction, Sarah suggested that in order to keep the kids focused on the game we need to change the instruction. She suggested that Aida ask all the girls to stay in pairs and do the role playing at the same time. Such a change would make the game very different and would not give the girls an opportunity to watch, think, and discuss the roles, which was the main goal of the game. Aida, reading out the goals section of the instruction for the team, disagreed with the suggestion and posed a question on how the new instruction could achieve the goal of dialog. Goli, following Sarah's suggestion, explained that the original instruction does not make sense because when the two girls are role playing in front of the circle other girls are "wasting their time." Aida said that they would not waste any time because they are engaged in the role playing game and would make comments, discuss their thoughts, and replace the players. The conversation continued, and each member shared her thoughts on the issue.

Sarah: These kids are not focused…

Goli: Exactly!

Sarah: For instance, everyone is supposed to be silent and watch the two participants do role play and you'll see one girl start talking to the others about last night's TV series …the other would say something to the one next to her…or she might start to search for something in her friends' hairs and wouldn't pay attention [they'd waste time].

Goli: Yeah! That's what I'm saying! I'm saying that in large group games, the game should be the focal point of the participants…or the number of trainers [facilitators] should be enough to control the girls!

At this point, Tara, who voluntarily picked up four of the girls and gave them rides to the campground every day during the camp period, arrived and joined the

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meeting. The ride was fun for the girls and also gave her an opportunity to spend some extra time with the girls, as well as receive their feedback, and comments about the games. That morning, she joined the meeting when Goli and Sarah were talking about how the girls should be engaged in the games and focus on the activities. Referring to the conversations the girls had in her car on the good fun time they had in the prior games, she reminded us that the Wheel game was a good activity that engaged them all. The Wheel game was a similar activity that was held on the prior day in preparation for the scene building and Forum Theater. In this game participants form two circles, one within another circle. The inner circle faces outward and the outer circle faces inward so that each girl will be facing another. The group in the outer circle sculpts the persons in front of them into an image. When all images are complete, the outer circle rotates around one by one person so everyone faces a new person and sculpting continues (The inner circle participants remain in their positions as the outer circle rotates). Once the circle completes one round, the inner circle will rotate against the outer one and similarly, each person in the inner circle sculpts the person in front of her (Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6   The Wheel game; a girl sculpts the person in front of her.

Girls played the game on the third day of the camp, and all were involved in making sculpture and also watched and discussed each other's sculptures. Although one circle at a time was "doing nothing," it did not cause any distraction, lack of focus, or participation among the players. When Tara mentioned the activity as a good example of involvement (see Figure 5.7), Goli disagreed with her.

Goli: I think the Wheel game was not good…it didn't meet the goals…

Sarah: The kids are not organized

Goli: They were supposed to stand in two circles and play…

Aida: They did!

Nassim: Yeah, they did!

Goli: No! There were not focused…it was crowded!

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Nassim: Well, everybody tried to see what each person had made!

Goli: That was not my feeling at all!

Sarah: I mean…everybody came to see! It'd be better…if everyone…

Goli: Like…if everyone stood organized.

Sarah: Yeah! If only they'd rotate in an organized manner…but they wouldn't!

Aida: But, the plan was that everybody could make comments, right?

Sarah: Well, they could do it like this…everybody could go around in a circle…then everybody would stop! Then the center would go away. Then they could stand in a line and make their comments one by one…or like stand in a half circle and talk in turn…not like,…everybody crowded around each person and made comments about her.

Tara: Well, that was the plan!

Sarah: You know! That was a mess! They scrambled forward pushing each other trying to see what was going on instead of getting in a line and watch.

Tara: Sarah,…yeah! The original plan might have been for them to stand in line, but it didn't work out that way.

Goli: But, I think we would have pulled it off in the big group…

Tara: Yeah maybe they didn't do it as we planned, but the goal of the game was delivered, and all the kids made comments on each sculpture.

Nassim: Yeah, we got that…

Sarah: You know…because we don't have enough discipline during the casual times at schools; that's why as soon as they have some play time they go crazy!

Goli: Yeah! I'm saying that should not happen.

Aida: But, I personally don't call it disorganized! The kids were in control in some way even within the scrambling.

Tara: It was somehow needed…that way they lead the way.

Aida: Yeah, it was sort of required

Nassim [looking at Goli]: See, what was wrong with the way they behaved? Why do you think it was not good?

Goli: Well, it's just that it blocks others out.

Nassim: Yeah, but even if they could see, it's natural for some people to be distracted.

Goli: It's less likely.

Aida: But, it was better for the girls!

Nassim: What I saw yesterday in the game…correct me if I'm wrong!... But I saw that actually there was sort of positive competition among them…like there was some sort of excitement about guessing about each other's sculpture…it might seem disorganized to us who watched it from outside, but when I went inside the crowd and saw the sculptures even I got excited to hear the comments…I mean…I didn't feel like they got nothing out of it!

Goli: No, no! I wouldn't say that they didn't get anything out of the game! I don't wanna debate that now! I'm just sharing my thought…you also can share yours…I think …I mean most of the time when things get organized…and I don't mean a very restricted or a well- defined organization…but, I mean an organized activity most of the time helps people to pay more attention and be more focused on what they are doing...

Figure 5.7   The Wheel game; participants gathered around someone's sculpture and talked about her work.

Tara replied to Goli's point by explaining that it is the facilitators' responsibility to take care of the participants and make sure they are engaged in the game and then stressed that "I think in this game less discipline helped it become more creative and fun." Finally, other members agreed that we cannot impose discipline on everything and sometimes it is better to be flexible and let girls define the order of the games. We also agreed that it is really important for the facilitators to read the instructions of the games carefully, understand the games and their goals well so they can lead the games

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appropriately and be flexible when needed. As it was scheduled, in the afternoon of that day we played the Complete the Image game according to the instructions we had in the facilitator's booklet. Despite Goli's and Sarah's concerns, the game was played successfully, and as it appears in the photos (Figures 5.4 and 5.5), the girls focused on the role playing acts, engaged very well in the discussions, and volunteered to walk to the front of the circle to play.

In the afternoon, Goli and I found a nice and cool, shady space under the beautiful walnut tree in a corner of the front yard of the campground, and we sat there and relaxed for an hour. While we were watching the girls playing in the yard, jumping and running happily from one side to the other, we started chatting about the games, the exciting moments of the camp that filled our hearts with happiness, and finally our concerns and worries about the moments when we made mistakes. I moved the conversation further and asked her why she was so much concerned with discipline and preferred restrictions for the games. Staring at the two girls playing badminton a few meters away from us, she responded with a lowered voice, tinged with disappointment, that "their brains are rusted! They need instruction to perform well." She continued, "they need to follow instructions; otherwise they are not creative enough to come up with their own solutions…I've been a teacher for 17 years in this part of the town [she referred to the neighborhood we held the summer camp in] …I've worked with kids this age and I know them well!." I asked her why she thinks that the girls' brains are "rusted" and even if her disposed assumptions about the girls were correct, which I disagreed with completely, why she thought more instruction and control would resolve the issue. I told her that I understood her concerns about making sure that the games were well-performed, but I did not agree with her

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strategies (i.e. enforcing discipline to resolve issues) in dealing with situations. We talked about Freirean pedagogy and how the pedagogy tries to promote critical thinking through dialog and participatory methodologies. She agreed that the pedagogy was helpful in encouraging critical thinking and promoting creativity in problem solving. However, she reminded me that I have been away from Iran for more than four years, and that I have forgotten the sociocultural environment in Iran. She told me that she does not believe Iranian kids easily understand such approaches since they do not learn or practice such values in other aspects of their lives (i.e. family, school, society). She was also concerned that one week is not enough to introduce a new approach. I agreed that we had really limited time in the camp to practice such a program, but I also mentioned that we must start from somewhere, and that the camp was an opportunity to start and learn about the details of Freirean pedagogy and participatory strategies of teaching and learning. The conversation was helpful to both of us, and we both wished we had more time prior to the summer camp to talk about the details of the program. However, we both agreed that we could only learn about such details by practicing them; it is an ongoing cycle of actions and reflections.

Discussion 4

The theme of *enforcing discipline* emerged several times in different occasions during our conversations in staff meetings throughout the summer program. As the fourth vignette illustrates, long conversations in a morning meeting on the fourth day of the camp and an informal chat between Goli and I in the afternoon of the same day revealed more details about facilitators' concerns on the issue of discipline. Reviewing some

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practitioners' quotes about the girls, such as "these kids are not focused!" or "their brains are rusted!" uncovers practitioners' biased assumptions about the girls. Such bias explains their tendency to enforce discipline rather than relying on horizontal relationships to engage girls in a participatory process of problem solving through dialog. At the end of the meeting we finally agreed to trust the instructions of the games and implement the games according to the handbook guidelines. Doing so, we all observed very engaging games and did not see any major distraction or lack of discipline—as it was concerned—in the games. However, even the participation of the girls in the activities was not enough reason to convince Goli about the girls' capabilities in directing the games and understanding the concepts behind each game.

Reflection 4

The chat that I had with Goli on the fourth day was one of the most challenging moments during the camp. Tara, who had worked as a therapist and counselor for more than 15 years and had always worked inside the country, was one of the leaders in our team who helped others to better understand and employ the Freirean concepts in the program. Although Goli's teaching experiences with young girls for more than 17 years was an asset to the program in many ways, her biased approach toward the girls and seeing them as "kids" with "rusted brains" created a challenge in implementing Freirean approach. In her comments, Goli mostly referred to her work experiences at the school system to support her opinions/ideas. In such challenges we usually ended up splitting into two groups with two different approaches: one supported the biased approach about the girls, and the other emphasized trusting the girls' understanding as "fully human"

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(Freire, 1970, p. 74). The final decisions on implementation plans were not all the same

and depending on the negotiations and discussions' directions of both sides we ended up

having different decisions at different points of the program.

The friendly chat that I had with Goli that afternoon was helpful for both of us,

and it allowed us to revisit our respective approaches. I was reminded about the distance I

have from my home country and how that might impact my work. She was reminded that

she needed to revisit her biased assumptions. The next morning after our chat, which was

the last day of the camp, prior to starting the meeting, I noticed that Goli looked really

tired and frustrated. I asked her why she looked frustrated, and she responded that she

was very tired and needed to take some time off to think through her experiences during

one-week program. She added that her frustration was because of digesting too many

aspects of the new approach (i.e. Freirean approach) in such a short time and perhaps that

she had to revisit many of her assumptions. I told her that I understood her frustrations

and it was a challenging week for all of us. I also added that I was frustrated because of

the sociocultural shocks I faced after returning home more than four years later (e.g., my

detention by morality police, parents' approach to me as a foreigner and their

disagreement with the summer camp, etc.), and I reminded her that my cultural

adjustment was not possible without her support.

Dialog

Vignette 5: Shall They Talk?

As we continued brainstorming about the implementation plans for the games,

questions emerged on how camp practitioners should guide the participants to understand

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the core goals of each game. After a lengthy discussion, it was decided to use the leading

questions of each game as a tool to help participants understand and discuss the goals of

the game after the game was played. However, Sarah believed that the post-game

discussions were not necessary and would be a waste of time. She was not convinced

why the girls should talk about their ideas or feeling after each game. She used her

contextual background as an actress in theater to support her argument.

> Sarah: when we practiced in theater galleries, the director, or administrator, or whoever was in charge of the group …would say do this or do that…we would never ask any questions until we could resolve it for ourselves…and she wouldn't respond at all!...unless someone was really clueless and needed help, then she'd ask what's up? Or what do you think? Because we have a rule in our theater practice that "It's not possible," "I can't," or "I don't know" are not acceptable at all. Of course such way of treating people would encourage them and increase their self-esteem that you can do it no matter what! You MUST do it! But, since we said here that no one can say "MUST" to the girls, I am a little [bit] confused now…well, we know that these practices that we're asking them to do are meaningful, right?…so, they must follow it and can't say no to it!

On the other hand, Tara said that we would ask the girls to share their

interpretations and feelings about the games and that way we facilitate a discussion that

provides learning opportunities to everyone. Sarah, not yet convinced spending about the

importance of time on such discussion sessions, mentioned that such discussions might

distract them from the practices. Goli, also doubting importance of such discussion

sessions, suggested that we can give them a piece of paper to write about their learning

points, feelings, and emotions and give their notes back to us by the end of each game.

Sarah agreed that writing might be a better solution because if they talk in a session they

may repeat each other and just follow the "right" answer, but in written format they will

write their own argument and ideas.

Aida disagreed and mentioned: "but, this is not a conversation anymore! They are not gonna talk about the questions…this is not dialog!" She added:

> They should just talk! There is no "right" answer! We should tell them in the very beginning that their participation in the discussion is important and we don't want any "answer." In fact, we don't know the answer either…so there is no right or wrong answer…we're learning together…

Describing the meaning of a *facilitator* as someone who just eases the process of discussing and leads the discussions, Aida repeated that we do not know more than them so we should not tell them that they are right or wrong. Kati questioned the process and asked "but, how can we sit silent and just look at them and not even nod our head?" Aida explained her experience as an observer in a Freirean summer camp[10] in Northern Virginia that was held for Iranian-American youth and mentioned how facilitators in that summer camp did not show agreement or disagreement while they were leading the discussions. She mentioned the reason for that was to just hear their voices and facilitate the participant discussion the topics, where they could share their concerns and learn from each other. Sarah, remaining doubtfully, shared her concerns about the attitude of the girls in such discussions and mentioned that "culturally we're not ready for such discussions!" She continued that one might get offended if in a discussion for example she hears her friend is saying something against her or confront her. Aida, surprised with Sarah's concern, replied:

> But, that's exactly the discussion question…here…see this question…the guiding question for this game for example is…about communication…we ask them

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[10] See page 4 in the introduction chapter to read more about the summer camp in Northern Virginia

about the importance of dialog and communication and whether it helps resolve our problems with each other!...

She explained her point with different examples and added that "such discussions and dialogs are the main point of our camp." I agreed with Aida's point and added

Yeah…one of the main reasons of such discussion sessions is that we can review the constructive points in the dialog we have in such sessions…my problem with "writing" is that it's not participatory anymore…when people write for themselves they don't share their ideas with each other…such participation is constructive I think…

Sarah: Ok! So, let's try such discussion sessions and see how they respond…if they started repeating each other and for example four people out of five just copied each other's points and don't bother to think or comment independently because of fear or maybe they want to be just followers, or any other reasons…then we know that we should switch to reflection writing…
Aida: but, that's exactly what we want to learn about…who talks and who doesn't…who initiates a discussion and who sits in the corner and follows others…but, we can't learn these points by giving them writing assignments…

Tara: That's exactly the important part to us!

Discussing for more than an hour about the issue of "discussing" or "writing," Finally all of us, some more and some less, agreed to have discussion sessions after each game and also asked the girls to write reflections about each day at the end of the day.

Discussion 5

The long debate over the discussion sessions established the most crucial aspect of Freirean pedagogy in the summer camp: dialog. Starting with strong disagreements on the role of such sessions facilitated an in depth debate on all aspects of dialog and how or why it is important in our practices in the summer camp. Through such debate at the very beginning of the program, we all came to the conclusion that in spite of planning and

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implementing the most professional practices on expression, such as Boalian theater games, expression practices would not happen unless there are real discussion and dialog opportunities; girls would not practice expression skills if they did not have dialogical sessions after the games.

Another important achievement that the illustrated conversation brought for us was our agreement on the fact that there is no right or wrong answer in the discussions. Such a point was crucially important in shaping our approaches on overall camp practices and response to the feminist post-structuralists' critique on Freirean theory, which requests a reconceptualization of the Freirean pedagogy on the role of teacher/practitioners[11]. Following the Foucaultian definition of power as a fluid force that "is never localized here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth" (as cited in Bartlett, 2010, p. 117), feminist post-structuralists question the position of the Freirean teacher in deciding who is the oppressed and who is the oppressor. Bartlett (2010) responds to this critique by acknowledging that one should not consider teachers as the ultimate source of knowledge who have "the one right story" (p. 142). Instead, she promotes the concept of "teacher uncertainty" and believes that Freirean teachers should discuss any controversial topics, including the position of oppressor and oppressed. Aida redefined the role for the practitioners in the camp as *facilitators* and not *teachers* by emphasizing that "we don't know the answer either…so there is no right or wrong answer…we're learning together."

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[11] Refer to chapter II to read more about Feminist post-structuralists' critiques on Freirean pedagogy.

She used her translation skills and explained to the team how the word "*Tashil-gar*"

renders the meaning of *facilitator* and defines the role of a practitioner as someone who

only eases the process and facilitates. Her words shaped and established a crucial

approach in the overall practices of the summer camp. Ida argued:

> Well! It's *facilitator*! It means you do nothing, but making the process [of
> discussion and dialog] easier! *Tashil-gar*[12] is the closest translation to this word!

Reflections 5

The presented vignette was one of the most challenging discussions we had in our

preparation workshop for the camp. The decision to have or not to have dialog after the

games was crucial for the program and defined one of the most fundamental aspects of

popular education: promoting dialog. At the end of the camp, we all agreed that the

discussions after the games were the most rewarding part of the program and we all

learned a lot from the discussions. Later in the summer, Kati and Aida contacted me to

tell me how much they use the lessons learned from the group discussions in their life and

how happy they were to be involved in the project. The facilitators all agreed that the

program became alive, engaging, and critical through the dialogical process we had each

day. However, it was surprising to see how such an important aspect of the pedagogy

could have been lost in practice. When I started reviewing the transcripts of the pre-camp

meeting, I was surprised to see how we started the conversations by ignoring the

importance of dialog. More than an hour of our conversations was about whether or not

discussion was necessary. At the beginning, almost all of us were convinced that written

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[12] *Tashil-gar*= *Tashil*: to ease; *gar*: the subjective suffix

reflections could replace discussions and may have saved us a lot of time each day. However, it was Aida's complaint and disagreement that reminded us that the main goal of Camp Bayan [Expression Camp] was to express ideas and feelings, and to learn about and from dialog. We started having a chat about all pros and cons of having discussion sessions and finally we came to the conclusion that such sessions are not only good, but also required according to the objectives of the program. In fact, the *organic* process of our debates over dialog was a winning point that internalized dialogical practices as the focal point in the summer program and established such approach in all aspects of the program.

Vignette 6: How to Inspire to Talk?

Following after the debate we had over the discussion sessions and the meaning of *facilitator* (see Vignette 5), a new conversation developed about the girls' engagement in the discussion sessions. Although we decided that having debriefing sessions after the games were required practices in the summer program, we were not sure whether the girls would actively participate in such discussions or not. In the preparation workshop a conversation started on why girls might not talk and participate in a discussion session.

> Goli: A kid who doesn't want to talk or want to follow others and repeat them…she again doesn't wanna think … and it's so common…they like to copy each other…they don't like to make any comments…because they are lazy and it's easier not to talk…they're like saying that I don't wanna put any pressure on myself [laugh]!...that's how kids are!

> Nassim: Or fear, or fear!

> Goli: Yeah, fear of not being approved by others…like I've seen it several times before…a situation in which students said we don't want to talk because other

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kids may laugh at us! They don't want to face the reaction if someone is laughing at them or so…

Sarah: Someone treating you as not normal…

Nassim: Or you have this experience of saying something that was laughed at…and you don't want to risk that treatment again…now what should we do to face such a system?

Goli: Especially these girls that…my guess…my presumption is that…I don't know I feel like kids from the middle and upper middle class are used to seeing themselves as the center of attention… because their parents just have a few kids and always followed their desires and spoiled them…so such kids also expect everyone else to understand them…

Sarah: That is so true!

The topic changed after this conversation and although some of us disagreed with Goli's interpretation and approach on the issue, we did not comment or talk about what we should or should not do to inspire girls' participation in discussions. Later in day, we came back to the topic with new questions. This time the question was on how facilitators should manage the discussions in a way that we get the highest rate of participation in the group discussions. Kati brought up the question: "So, how exactly should a facilitator facilitate?" Sarah was not yet pleased with the team decision of having discussions after the games and saw the discussions as problematic, let alone leaving them as open ended debates with no right or wrong answers. She laid back, crossed her arms, and gazed at the papers in front of her on the table and responded to Kati's question in a passive aggressive tone that was filled with disappointment:

Hmm, at the end…it's gonna be like they [kids] talk after everything [every game] and we don't show any reaction to anything…[but] are the kids going to respond and talk if we don't show any reaction to their answers?

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Nassim: Yeah, we should encourage them to talk…for example we'd say…ok Sarah, what do you think?

Sarah: So, then we should have a reaction.

Nassim: Yeah, we can't stay silent…at least until they start talking.

Aida: But, they'd talk…

Goli: Yeah, by reaction we mean nothing like agreeing or disagreeing with them…
[Everyone starts talking; overlapping voices]

Tara: Like, we should be ready that if the third person in the group doesn't talk and just watches other people…we invite her to talk and tell her that others shared their ideas don't you wanna share yours…

Aida: Or even if she doesn't have any comment on others…just talk…I mean we should give her time to talk…

Goli: Well…there are some who just wanna pass the time and stay silent…and it's tricky to make them talk…but in all these we should be careful about our limited time for each game…

As the discussion continued, Aida tried again to emphasize the importance of providing girls with a space to feel comfortable to talk and jumped in the conversation with another suggestion about how we should be careful about our reactions even when we want to control time and ensure equal time for everyone to speak:

Now, one thing that is really important is that sometimes when the kids are talking, one kid may talk more than others or like to jump in other kids' saying…

Goli: Yeah some kids just like to give speech to others!

Aida: I think we should not give them verbal notice…like, [we should not say] no it's not your turn! It's someone else's turn!...we should make sure that we stop them with a very light and proper reaction like…for example like this [she moves her hand smoothly in a horizontal direction]… we can tell them before the discussion that we don't wanna interrupt you and that's why we use this sign to tell you that you should wait for your friend…we shouldn't move our hands like… harsh [push her hand forward] like, stop! or don't talk! We just wanna tell

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them to let their friends finish…so we should tell them in a nice way and we should be aware about our facial expressions…

Goli showed her disagreement with a surprised look on her face and said that she doesn't think the kids get the rule until half way through the camp. But, Aida continued:

> If we have this in mind…like…I'm saying it for myself…I'm like thinking out loud… that I don't know more than her…I don't know more than this kid at all…then I don't want to interrupt her…or showing a reaction that tells her she's wrong or right….I don't have the right to say so…I can only tell her that her time is over and let others to participate…

> Nassim: Yeah, actually I wanna say the same thing that we should remind ourselves that we should listen carefully to them and only when the discussion gets slow we can play devil's advocate and give them some other options to talk about…and continue the dialog.

After that, Aida and I talked about our experiences in the Iranian-American summer camp and how the facilitators' responses, through the application of well-developed facilitation skill, provided a peaceful and appropriate space for the campers to talk and engage in the discussions. Sarah nodded to us and mentioned that in her theater workshops for little kids in Tehran she found that if they find her "friendly" they "become friend" with her and want to follow her as their mentees. She continued that when they become friends with her, they do exactly as she does, saying "if I stay calm they would stay calm."

Discussion 6

The discussion about facilitation and how to be good facilitators came up several times in our conversations on different topics and in particular when we talked about the details of games and how we can successfully implement them. As vignette 6 describes,

in our conversation about how to inspire girls to start dialog and be active in the post-game discussions, we had different ideas about why they might prefer to stay inactive and disengaged from conversations. We all agreed that good facilitation might encourage the girls to get involved in the discussions and talks. However, our definitions of *good* facilitation were not the same. Goli, referring to her teaching experiences in girls' middle school classrooms, believed that girls, who are not active in discussions or do not like to talk, are "lazy." She saw facilitation as a "trick" to make them active in discussions. Sara, using her experiences in theater classes for young kids, believed that facilitation means having friendly relationships with the participants and suggested to 'become friends' with the girls so they perceive us as their role models and follow our instructions in the discussions. Aida, having observed Freirean camp in the US and worked as a language teacher for many years, believed that if we consider ourselves equal to the girls and do not think we know more than them we would be patient enough to give them time and space to participate. Later on during the week, she repeated her request and suggested other facilitators not to rush the discussions and give the girls time to think and participate. She believed that when we give them a comfortable empty space they would be happy to fill that space with their thoughtful comments and ideas. On the fourth day of the camp when we asked Aida to facilitate a discussion session after one of the activities she replied:

> Guys let me tell you this [before I agree to do the activity]…I usually don't talk much during the discussion sessions…so kids could talk…like I try to stay silent as much as I can and the moments of silence during the discussions [when nobody talks] doesn't bother me at all…I mean…I wait for them…I'll let them stay silent…like it's not gonna bother me if they stay silent…then I think other facilitators might not feel comfortable with the silence moments and jump in…or

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someone may think that we must talk all the time…then I don't feel like I'm facilitating anymore…

Throughout the camp, she stayed committed to the Freirean tenet that horizontal teacher-student relationship and believing in students' knowledge and intelligence would result in another crucial Freirean canon: dialog.

Reflection 6

The concept of dialog and facilitating a discussion to start and engaging dialog was a challenging one. Although I did not agree with Goli that silence was an indication of the girls being "lazy", was not convinced with Sarah's belief that "friendship" is all we need to start an engaging dialog, in practice, I myself was not able to truly implement Freirean pedagogy in creating a comfortable space for the girls to engage in a dialog session on the second day. After I reviewed the staff meeting discussions, I noticed that I was one of the facilitators, who Aida referred to when she said "…other facilitators might not feel comfortable with the silent moments and jump in…." Although I myself repeated Aida's words in our meetings and shared my observations from the Freirean camp in the US, in practice I found it very challenging to stay "Freirean" and create the comfortable space for dialog. The following vignettes will illustrate my role in an unsuccessful facilitation experience that occurred on the second day of the camp. It made us revisit our understanding of facilitating and note the crucial role it has in delivering the key tenets of Freirean pedagogy.

Vignette 7: Good Theory and Bad Practice of Facilitation

We talked a lot about the meaning of facilitation and how facilitators should alleviate the discussion process by merely listening to the group and rolling conversations from one person to another by posing questions to the group. *Facilitation* sounded like an understandable definition to all of us when we talked about it in the preparation workshop before the camp. In practice, however, acting as a facilitator was not as easy as I imagined it would be. On the second day of the summer camp we started a discussion among the camp participants. The topic of the discussion was on discrimination. The discussion was basically the debriefing after a game named Labeling, which was played in the morning of that day. In that game, each participant had to put a label on her forehead without knowing what it said. Each label reads an instruction for action like "Disagree with any word I say," "Don't look at me when I start speaking," "laugh at anything I say," and so on. Having labels on their foreheads, the participants would sit in a circle and start discussing on various topics. As soon as the activity began and each person begins to participate in the discussions, other participants should react to her based on the label instructions her forehead (see Figure 5.8).

Figure 5.8   Labeling game; wearing a label on their foreheads, girls sit in a circle and discuss an issue.

For example, as soon as a person with the label that reads: "Disagree with any word I say" starts to talk in the group, everyone responds to her with serious disagreement without even listening to her points (Figure 5.9). The game was designed to help participants feel and experience discrimination. After the game, we had a long discussion about what the girls experienced and what thoughts and ideas they had about discrimination in general. The discussion triggered very important issues in our society and the girls engaged in the conversation. In fact, the discussion was so interesting that all the facilitators, including myself, were involved and participated in the discussion.

Figure 5.9   A participant playing the Labeling game; the label on her forehead reads: "disagree with any word I say"

However, as soon as I engaged in the discussion I forgot about my role as facilitator and the most important rule of facilitation, that is, facilitators should not argue with a participant on an issue. Facilitators in Freirean pedagogy are supposed to encourage dialog by listening to participants and seeding the discussion by creating new questions from participants' points. They should pose new questions to the group to move the conversation further to discuss the topic from different angles. While balancing power relationships and maintaining horizontal teacher-student status, facilitators are not supposed to get into one-on-one conversations that put the student in an uncomfortable

corner. Although I knew about facilitation in theory, I did not perform well in practice and I started having a relatively long back and forth conversation with Haleh, a thirteen year-old girl, who spoke openly about her extreme ideas on discrimination. Kati and I continued a one-on-one debate with her and tried to convince her that she should rethink her perspective! After a few minutes of such a debate, Aida noticed that we went too far, asking Haleh questions that made her feel uncomfortable. She jumped into the conversation and redirected the discussion by posing a question to the group. Haleh, who finally was freed from questioning, sat back and took a deep breath. It was a hot afternoon in July and the room, which was filled with more than 25 people, became more and more intolerable after an intense session that went on for over an hour. The girls around the room looked bored and seemed impatient with the stuffy air in the room and the ongoing discussions. It was time to wrap up the discussion by listing everyone's points about the topic and debriefing. I looked around the room to make sure I had everyone's point on the list. Moving in place and shaking their scarves or fanning themselves with a piece of paper, the girls jumped out of the room as soon as we called the session to an end. In my last look around the room before the girls walked out, I noticed Haleh's blushed face among others. Her reddish face could not be only due to the hot weather, I thought. We had put her under extreme pressure by debating with her in front of others.

Later on that day, Aida and I talked about my mistake. I learned how my power position as a teacher, although I tried to pretend that I am a regular participant, put Haleh in the corner, impacted the discussion, and prevented other participants from getting involved in the dialog about discrimination. Although it was only a few minutes of the

whole session, Aida and I agreed that my approach changed the mood of the discussion

and put pressure on Haleh. In my self-recorded of that day, I shared how angry and

disappointed I was with my performance. I was shocked to find out how such an easy

theory (i.e. facilitating to have a smooth dialog) was challenging to implement in

practice. In a staff meeting that we had after the session I reviewed the situation with my

colleagues:

> Nassim: …one mistake that I made in the debriefing ,and I learned about it after I talked to other folks, was that I myself participated in the discussion with the kids and that was not a good thing! In fact, it prevented the discussion from moving forward…I didn't notice during the session… but, later on, after I talked to some folks I found out that I should have taken the response from Haleh and presented it as a question to others…I mean I just had to facilitate the discussion to roll on…I should've been more careful about it…Goli is right in that none of us are professional facilitators and we're learning together…and we should all talk about these mistakes and learn from them for the other games and days…

> Goli: You should not blame yourself! We're all making mistakes…we shouldn't be that harsh on ourselves…

> Nassim: Yeah! but, I couldn't believe I did that...we should make sure to learn from our mistakes…such wrong facilitations should not happen again…

In the last day of the camp, we all sat and talked about the strengths and

weaknesses of the camp and in particular, our performance as facilitators. There, we

started talking about our facilitation skills in details.

> Aida: We should've managed our sessions better…we shouldn't try to impose our conclusions to the group…we were not supposed to ask our questions with a bias to get specific answer…let me give you an example to make my point clearer…for example, one of the girls said I wanna be stubborn…then we tried to convince her that it's not good to be stubborn!… as the group facilitator, we supposedly should talk with all the participants,… then, I kept asking questions from that one girl… for example, how do you respond to this part? If so, then how do you apply that?...when we do so we're almost telling her that you should accept that you're wrong!...we sort of want her to respond like "yeah! I'm wrong! It's not good to be stubborn!"…I saw such approach a few times in our facilitation…I think we need to work on it for the next programs…

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Kati: So, how should it be in your opinion?

Aida: I think we should have given the group a new question!…not like asking the person back and forth questions and putting her in the corner! It can make her become defensive, you know?…she might think that she should defend herself !...we were like, "so what would you do if that happen to you?"…and when she responded we again asked "what if it happened this way?"…it was like I tell her okay I do not agree with your opinion!...you know, I'm not comfortable with that way of facilitating…I imagined myself in her shoes and I was like, I don't wanna be there…it didn't feel good…if I were her, I couldn't share my ideas comfortably!...we lose the trust if we go in that path…I'm sure that kid would never come to me again to share her opinions…

Negar: I agree 100 percent with Aida…I mean we should have discussed it before the camp…we should have talked more about how we can become good facilitators…for example, I didn't wanna stay in the room when you kept asking Haleh questions…I left the room and didn't wanna be part of that…I felt really bad to see us debating one to one with the kids.

Negin: Like we're taking them to court!

Negar: But, we got better in facilitating sessions toward the end of the week…I mean Haleh had great self-esteem! She could stand for herself and talk about her ideas…but, it might not be the same for others…

Tara: Why did you [Negar] leave the room? You should've told us about our mistake instead of leaving us…

Negar: No, I couldn't…because… if I said something from the other side of the room, it sounded like we had a conflict among facilitators …I think it's not good to give such impression to the kids…I'd rather talk with that facilitator after the session…or talk about it in our team meetings…I don't wanna say it was so and so issues or complain about anyone…I just wanna emphasize that in the next years, and next summer camps we should spend some time on planning…we must spend at least about a week or ten days to talk about such issues before the camp…like what we can and can't do as facilitators…like instead of asking Haleh why she thinks that way, we should use her words as a question for the group…like okay guys…Haleh thinks so and so…what do you think?...working with Boal or Freire means that we're working with a really rich philosophy… I think it could have been much more helpful, if we could have studied about such philosophy before we use it in practice…

Discussion 7

The illustrated vignette shows the ongoing challenge we faced during the camp in understanding the meaning of good facilitation in practice. Facilitating dialog was one of the first topics we discussed in our pre-camp workshop. We talked about the roles of facilitators several times and how they should stay neutral and "do nothing, but making the process [of discussion and dialog] easier" (as quoted in the discussion section of Vignette 5). However, in practice the issue of incorrect facilitation rose up in a discussion on the second day of the camp. Aida, who reviewed the meaning of facilitation in the pre-camp workshop, was the first person who noted the issue in the group discussion and tried to correct the practice. Negar practiced Freirean philosophy in many programs in Nicaragua and Costa Rica, and coordinated three Freirean summer camps for Iranian-Americans in the United States. She agreed with Aida and explained how we would implement facilitation techniques more efficiently to promote dialog, if we discussed and understood the key concepts of critical pedagogy and Freirean approach in our training of trainers before the summer camp. Our conversations in the pre-camp workshop were limited to a list of written principles. We discussed the meaning of facilitation and how it must promote participatory discussion. Although in our training sessions we discussed a long list of how-to items, we did not have a chance to review common challenges in implementation. Unlike Negar, other facilitators believed that such challenges would emerge in practice regardless of how well we understood the philosophy and theory behind it.

> Goli: …I would say for any innovative and pioneer work, specifically if it happens in an unexplored cultural context, it's an unknown experience…we can't understand theories and philosophies even though we read them thousands of

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times or read all the books in the world about them… we need to explore in practice…we need to apply them and study the practice…

Reflection 7

My reaction to Haleh in the group discussion on the second day of the camp was a shocking experience for me. I feel uncomfortable and ashamed whenever I review the memory of that day or watch the camp videos. After that experience, I focused on my reactions and explored the reasons to step away from the concept of participatory dialog in that session. In my reflections on the experience I found that although in theory I learned about the importance of learning from each other through a Freirean approach, in practice I reacted as a teacher, who knows more than Haleh and tried to correct her through asking her direct questions. In fact, I forgot my facilitator hat and I became a traditional teacher, who was upset with her student's approach. Such reaction misled the discussion to a non-participatory direction that contradicted with an important aspect of Freirean pedagogy, which emphasizes knowledge production through participatory dialog. I was fortunate that other facilitators in the room (i.e. Aida) noticed my mistake and reframed the discussion in a way that engaged other participants and changed the mood of the conversations.

The fact that we talked about the issue after the session informally and in our team meeting helped me and other facilitators pay more attention to such an important issue during the following days of the camp. As we reviewed during our final meeting at the end of the one week, our performance on facilitating group discussions notably improved. Although I remain uncomfortable with the memories of that day with Haleh,

our team discussions after the game provided an opportunity to review, criticize, and reform an important Freirean practice from the earlier days of the program.

Vignette 8: Transforming from Revolutionaries to Reformists

In one of the debriefing sessions on the third day of camp, the girls started a discussion on stereotyping and whether or not we can judge other people based on their appearances. The discussion became really intense when some girls argued that women with full hejab (black chador) are typically backward and mostly had disrespectful attitudes toward others who do not believe in wearing hejab. Other girls disagreed with such a statement and believed that we should not label people with our assumptions. The discussion became extremely heated and some girls, who perhaps were from religious families, were offended with the arguments of those who talked negatively about women with full chadors. We, as the facilitators, almost got lost in the debate and were not sure how to facilitate such a heated discussion. Finally, Tara tried to guide the discussion toward the concept of mutual respect. Kati and I supported her and argued that regardless of our previous experiences with people (i.e. women with full hejab) we should not react to them based on our presumptions. We discussed how dialog is the key to mutual understanding and encouraged them to respect other people's opinions. In order to avoid any conflict or misunderstanding in the group, we shortened the discussion before the girls reached a collaborative solution; we did not let them continue talking about their oppression and opinions.

After the debriefing was over, we had a staff meeting to talk about our performance in that session. In the meeting, Negar shared her concerns about the

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direction in which we guided the discussion. She challenged us to think about our

reactions and the approach we promoted in that discussion.

> Negar: I have a question here…if we want to continue the discussion with them and we are telling them that they should not judge people based on appearance…like the full hejab and so on and so forth…this is so difficult when in their entire life everybody else judged *them* based on their appearance and how they dress…I mean the morality police[with full hejab] is everywhere and in the streets and they keep judging them because of their headscarves and uniforms all the time…so if we want to start such discussions with mutual respect…we should think seriously about how we want to lead such discussions…because the whole system is set up in a way that doesn't respect them…so, how can we tell them to respect those people with full chador (i.e. morality police)[13]?… when a chadori woman (fully covered woman) has no respect for me and beats me and tells me that I am a corrupted person?…I might tolerate her for the first or second time and respect her, but then I would go mad and would say the heck with you!!! Should I respect you???

> Nassim: Yeah, that's an important issue…

> Negar: I mean we can tell them about respect…but, you know…it's going to be really superficial…I agree that we should talk about mutual respect…but how can we guide such a discussion when they live in a system that doesn't respect them?...

> Nassim: How about this, we tell them that to make your voice heard "You should learn how to express your view." I mean, we sort of tell them that you should have both…you should respect them and their beliefs and, at the same time, if she doesn't listen to you or doesn't respect your view then you should learn how to…oh well! That's again going to end up in a dead end!...no, it's not gonna fly!…if they attack you and beat you with their batons… then end of story…[no respect and no expression can help]…I can't think of any solution at this point…

We continued the conversation and ultimately arrived at some solutions on how

we could direct the discussion differently. We decided that we could have encouraged the

girls to talk about their future dreams and how the next generation could improve the

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[13] Please see page 1 of this document to learn more about the issue of "morality police" in Iran.

future of the society; where there would be less oppression and more respect. Although

there were some disagreement about this suggestion and how openly we could talk about

the issue, we agreed that we might be able to find other strategies to promote dialog and

address the oppression if we planned for such strategies beforehand. We moved on and

continued our conversation about other games that we planned for the day.

In our final meeting at the end of the week, we returned to the issue and talked

about the constraints we faced in conducting an open dialog on sensitive issues in various

situations during the week. While some staff criticized our facilitation of the discussions

and argued that we did not understand the overarching philosophy of the Freirean

approach and Theater of the Oppressed, others mentioned that they were conservative

and were not comfortable talking about "everything" with the participants.

> Negar: As much as I know [about the forum theater], the issues that participants
> share in the theater…are not just to be resolved on a personal level… we should
> work with them to raise their awareness one step above that [take it from a
> personal level to a social level]…that's why it's called Theater of the Oppressed!
> It means there is an oppression larger than a family and it's rooted in
> society…but, as a facilitator now I don't know how to do that [help the girls to
> see their oppressions in a larger context]…but in fact as a facilitator I want to
> have such tools/skills…to help them move to another level [raise their
> awareness]…

> Nassim: I think if we had the opportunity to talk more about the philosophy of the
> Theater of the Oppressed, [we could better address the issues]…it's a leftist Latin
> American philosophy…then, we could talk more about Freirean
> philosophy…although it wasn't and isn't easy to talk about such philosophy in
> this [critical and sensitive] situation we have here [in Iran]…

> Negar: In fact, it's a revolutionary philosophy…

> Maryam: I think we were also conservative to some extent because we had to
> open up topics that…I personally tried to censor myself from engaging in some
> discussions! Because I attended several peace and other workshops in which

people could talk about many topics openly…but if we take these kids to discussions that we can't control…for example if a Basiji[14] in the street stop them and tell them to fix their head covers…if we guide them to see such an incident at the societal level…I mean they looked at the issue in more personal and family level, but now we tell them to look at it in more social and broad view of oppression…they might show a reaction to the Basiji that cause serious trouble for them! So, I thought let us move on and skim over this topic quickly and move to the next topic…

Nassim: For example, we couldn't open the discussion on gender issues…

Maryam: Yeah, the gender issue…I felt if I want open a gender discussion…considering that they don't get other trainings and we have only a few days of the camp…then after the camp if they react to their dads or stand against their brothers…then they might end up feeling isolated and turn against trainings like the camp…because we can't support them after the camp…there are not many other support systems on these issues in our society…and I'll be gone when she needs support…

Negar: Yeah, I totally understand your point…but I mean if we were more familiar with the philosophy…because the Forum Theater started in societies that were really oppressed, like in Brazil, by the time they started having such theater…or in other parts of Latin America…they also had extremely oppressed societies…the reason they were successful was that they could somehow use these methods and managed to talk about their issues without making extreme conflicts…also, they were successful because those who attended their theater games gained awareness…but, it's really difficult to do so…that's why I think we needed more training on how to facilitate such topics…

After this conversation we then reviewed all the topics suggested by the girls to discuss during the introductory activity for the Forum Theater game on the third day of the camp. In that game, girls divided into small groups of three to four and discussed their favorite topics they wanted to write scenarios about for the Forum Theater game. They suggested different topics including "having relationship with boys," "love-relationship

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[14] A volunteer militia that serves as a morality police and has orthodox Islamic views. It is important to note that the state interpretation of Islam in Iran is different from many other Muslim nations and does not represent Islamic views of many people even inside the country.

with older girls in the school[15]," which was mentioned as a discussion topic in the list of two groups, and "mandatory marriage." We preferred not to encourage the discussion of such taboo topics and redirected the groups to select less controversial topics to discuss in their groups such as "being ignored by older family members," "having the right to choose future profession/academic field" and etc. The extreme sensitivity of such topics in the society and the sociocultural pressures we dealt with in order to hold the summer camp for young girls were our main reasons for reacting conservatively to their requests. We further discussed how we had to decide between holding a program with limited sociopolitical sensitivity or not having any program at all; we knew that discussing such topics would not only trigger parents, but also would have made it impossible to hold the program in a *Hussainia*[16], which was an orthodox religious charity building.

On the last day of the camp, Aida, Kati, and I took a ride in Negin's car to go home. The heavy evening traffic in the crowded highways of Tehran gave us a chance to chat about our experiences during the camp. In the car, as we listened to Mohsen Namjoo's pop music, an Iranian musician and singer-songwriter that the New York Times referred to as "Iran's Bob Dylan" where "his satirical music accurately reflects the frustrations and disillusionment of young Iranians" (Fathi, 2007), we talked about the pressures we faced in holding the camp program. The singer was shouting "Lady, what

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[15] It was not clear if they referred to homosexuality in particular or general emotional attachments. Unfortunately, we were not able to discuss it further.

[16] A *Hussainia* is a congregation hall for Shia ritual ceremonies, especially those associated with the Remembrance of Muharram. The name comes from Hussain Ibn Ali, the grandson of Muhammad and an Imam of the Shia. Hussain was killed by Yazid I in Karbala, Iraq, over 1,300 years ago. Shias still mourn the death of Hussain every year on the day of Ashura in *Hussainia*s all over the world. A *Hussainia* is different from a mosque in that it is made mainly for gatherings for Muharram in the mourning of Hussain ibn Ali, and may not necessarily hold prayer in jumaa'at or Friday Prayer unless there is a gathering at the same time, where they would make a jumaa'at the time of prayer. ("*Hussainia*," 2010)

are you loyal to?" while we were talking about how we wished to have the space to talk openly about many serious issues, which girls would like to talk about during the camp. After talking about the suggested issues and reviewing the topics the girls mentioned in the group discussions, we made jokes and laughed about how talking about such topics in *Hussainia* would be like holding a workshop in the Vatican to discuss Lesbians and Gays' rights to marriage or women's rights to abortion! We thought it was impossible to openly talk about forbidden/taboo topics, but we also agreed that promoting negotiation and expression skills was an indirect way to encourage one to share her opinions and negotiate her rights. We were thrilled and proud to be able to hold such a camp for young girls in an extremely sociopolitical challenging environment within the country.

Discussion 8

The vignette shows an evidence of a situation in which we were not able to have open dialog to address deep conversations about oppressive situations in the society due to the sociopolitical constraints. However, censorship was against the nature of Freirean philosophy. Negar, who had experiences in conducting Freirean programs in Latin America, argued that we could have found some ways to discuss the issues if we discussed the philosophy beforehand and talked about the opportunities and threats before we started the program. However, not everybody agreed with her points. Those of us, who lived or were living in Iran and faced such constraints and suffered from the overwhelming oppression in our everyday lives, were more conservative than those who spent limited time inside the country. Maryam, who was a women's rights activist and worked with many non-governmental organizations and social service organizations,

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mentioned that she would be more comfortable to talk about political and culturally sensitive topics with adult audiences than discuss it with adolescent girls. She believed that such social awareness could help adults to use all resources and create support systems around them in society to fight for their opinions and resolve their issues. However, it might not be the same for adolescents (i.e. 12-15 years old girl in our summer camp), she argued; they might not know how to build such support systems in the society and may get in trouble if they were not prepared on how to constructively confront the issue in their personal lives. She suggested that working with young adolescents requires being more conservative and not expanding and connecting personal challenges to broader level of sociopolitical issues. Thus, in many occasions, such as with the discussion about stereotyping, we had more of a tendency to encourage the girls toward conflict resolution and negotiation rather than expanding the discussion to a sociopolitical level that required discussions on the roots and details of such oppression.

In fact, in many occasions during the summer camp even we, as adults and the facilitators of the program, preferred not to face many situations and instead of confronting the issues we applied negotiation tactics and conflict resolution strategies to move further with our goals instead of miring in challenges. One example of a situation where we had to compromise our wills and accept an unwanted situation happened in our struggles with the owner of the campground. We decided to hold the summer camp in a *Hussainia* to prevent political restrictions that projects similar to our summer camp have usually faced in recent years in Iran. Although such a site selection decision saved us from many struggles we might have faced by government officials because of holding a liberatory project for young girls in Tehran, we faced different challenges in the

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Hussainia, as obeying specific cultural norms and Islamic rituals is particularly important in these spaces. In order to hold the program in the *Hussainia*, we first had to get some sort of governmental permission or instead a validation letter from the Imam of the mosque in the neighborhood. We preferred to deal directly with the mosque rather than the government since Goli's father was a member of the mosque and his credibility could help us get the letter from the Imam. The landlord of the building was an orthodox religious man and the letter that we received from the Imam convinced him of our credentials and eligibility to run the program. However, the letter alone was not sufficient to convince him about the quality of the program we held in his *Hussainia*. Thus, he checked on us every day to ensure that we met his requirements, including modest hejab for all the women in the building. On several occasions he entered the campground and complained about our hejab or the kinds of games we played with the girls. Goli was our savior in such situations since she knew how to negotiate with him and convince him that our program is not against any religious rituals. Although many of the participants asked us if they could remove their headscarf and not be forced to be covered during the games inside of the campground, we had to enforce hejab inside the campground to stay faithful to our promises to the landlord (Figure 5.10). To create a freer environment and lighter uniform for the participants, we designed the camp dress code with white clothing and bright and colorful scarves; such a dress code was extremely different from the formal education's dress code, where girls are asked to wear long uniforms in dark colors and tight headscarves (Figure 5.11). Yet, most girls were not happy with the enforcement of hejab inside the campground. One girl mentioned it in her written reflections:

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…I wish we could play all the games in the playground and not have to wear headscarf there…(Taraneh, July 5, 2008, end-of-the-day reflection)

Figure 5.10   The camp dress code was white dress and colorful headscarves

Figure 5.11   Formal education dress code in Iran is dark uniform and tight headscarves.

Although such compromises in leading the discussions (i.e. the stereotype discussion) or enforcing unwanted rules (i.e. enforcing hejab inside the campground) prevented us from fully implementing Freirean rituals on some occasions during the summer program, we learned that we had to use such tactics and strategies in order to survive and keep the summer camp program alive. Likewise, in the sensitive discussions during the summer program we were more willing to promote negotiation and conflict resolution skills at personal levels rather than emphasizing the "revolutionary" approach of the Freirean philosophy that promotes a broader sociopolitical consciousness and confrontation with oppression.

Reflection 8

Negar's point when she said "…the whole system is set up in a way that doesn't respect them…so, how can we tell them to respect those persons with full hejab (i.e.

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moral police)?..." was a flashback to me that reminded me all I went through with getting arrested by morality police on the third day that I arrived to Tehran to conduct the summer camp. My personal experiences prepared me during the camp to be ready to compromise in some aspects of the content of the program (i.e. self-censorship in some discussions) in order to move one step further in promoting a liberatory approach. I understood Negar's concern about the goals of Freirean pedagogy and wished to have the opportunity to promote dialog in a perfect Freirean extent. However, I was still contend and proud of us because by following moderate approach, we were successful in holding a relatively progressive educational program for girls' awareness inside Iran, while staying safe and active during one of the most challenging political periods in the country. The summer camp was my experiment on how an ideal revolutionary goal (i.e. implementing Freirean pedagogy) may be challenged by many real world restrictions (i.e. sociopolitical constrains) to the extent that we have to compromise and transform the idea into a mild reformist practice.

Vignette 9: Girls Voices on the Purpose of the Summer Camp

The last day of the summer camp was devoted to an activity to debrief on the entire week. The activity was designed to hear the girls' voices of how they understood the summer camp activities. We asked the girls to break into small groups and create a poster that showed series of their selected favorite games, which they played over the week. In their artifact, they were asked to present the goal of each game, and elaborate on how the games were related to the main focus of the summer camp. The artifact activity was another attempt to encourage dialog among the girls to discuss their understandings

and perceptions about the summer camp and share their achievements of the one week program. The participants divided into four groups and each group, with the help and support from the facilitators, created a poster. Figures 5.12, 5.13, 5.14, and 5.15 show how each group presented their perceived understanding of the summer camp's goal.

The first group used ants' gathering food for the winter as a metaphor for their presentation (Figure 5.12). They imagined each game as an ant that carried food with different nutritional values (i.e. goal) back to a safe nest (i.e. strong expression) in preparation for future winter weather conditions.

Figure 5.12   Poster created by group one on the last day of the summer camp about the purpose of the summer camp

The second group presented a sky with several traveling balloons. Each balloon was a game that had a container for one concept (i.e. goal). In their metaphor, they

imagined each game as a machine to transfer them and take them up into the sky, and the

goal of the games as the fuel of the machine (Figure 5.13).

Figure 5.13   Poster created by group two on the last day of the summer camp
about the purpose of the summer camp

Group three used a galaxy of stars as their metaphor. They imagined the concept

of "expression" as the sun of the galaxy and each game as a planet with different goals

and foci in the galaxy (Figure 5.14). The last group did not have any specific metaphor

and just drew and/or attached a series of objects that somehow represented the games in

their artifact. For instance, they put a piece of mirror on the poster symbolizing the "Who

am I?" game. They listed the goal of each game under each object (Figure 5.15).

Figure 5.14   Poster created by group three on the last day of the summer camp
about the purpose of the summer camp

Figure 5.15   Poster created by group four on the last day of the summer camp
about the purpose of the summer camp

Discussion 9

The goal of the activity was to create a space for dialog and discussion among the participants, where they could share their understandings and debrief their achievements of the summer camp. The facilitators used different techniques to help the participants develop their artifacts. Group one started with a question about the metaphor that best can describe the goals and activities of the camp. The second group selected their favorite games and then reflected on the goals of the games and put them in the artifact as the balloons that help them float up in the sky of expression. Group three started by asking questions about the games and facilitating a discussion on the goal of the camp and how it was reflected in different games they played. Then, based on their discussions, the girls decided upon the galaxy metaphor. The fourth group was less open to conversation about their favorite games or selecting a metaphor. The facilitator of the fourth group started with listing the games, asking the girls about the goal of each game, and adding them to the artifact. In fact, the fourth group was directed into a very structured question and answer session and not the dialog that was supposed to be encouraged among the girls. The final product of the fourth group was an artifact that more reflected the ideas and perspectives of the facilitator and not the girls. When the session ended and it was the time to present the artifacts, the fourth group members were not satisfied at all with what they produced and they wished they could have participated on other teams. One of the girls in the fourth group, who was upset with the final product of the poster, mentioned that the poster did not represent her perspective and wished they had a better discussion before they started listing the games and answering questions.

Reflection 9

      The final activity of the summer camp was a reflection of the many achievements and challenges we faced during the one week summer camp. While many of us (i.e. facilitators) were open to learning new skills on how to facilitate dialog and promote horizontal relationship, there were some of us who were seriously challenged with such new approaches to teaching and learning. The fourth group's facilitator instructed specific questions and dictated the goals of the games from her perspective instead of creating space for dialog among the team members. Meanwhile, the third group spent more than half of their time on brainstorming and discussing the games. The artifacts that were created on the final day of the camp were the only written products that reflected how facilitators implemented the Freirean approach and whether or not they understood the Freirean concepts of dialog and horizontal relationship as facilitators.

Chapter Six: Findings

Overview

The purpose of this qualitative portraiture study is to explore practitioners' perceptions of the Freirean tenets in practice. In this chapter, I present findings that emerged from the analysis on nine vignettes to answer the research question of how Iranian practitioners understood and employed two of the most critical Freirean concepts, horizontal relationship and dialog, in a summer camp for young girls in Tehran, Iran. The data analysis also responds to the research sub-question on challenges in understanding and the use of the Freirean pedagogy in the sociopolitical context of Iran.

In this chapter, I first review the nine vignettes briefly by presenting a table of the summaries. Then, I discuss the findings of the study by responding to the research question and sub-question in two subsections entitled "Understanding and the Use of Freirean Pedagogy" and "Challenges in the Process", by providing evidence from the related vignettes. In order to translate data and make a better sense of the findings, I also interweave the themes emerged from the vignettes to the related literature.

Understanding and the Use of Freirean Pedagogy

As described earlier, I used vignettes as my unit of analysis to portray interactions in the staff meetings and explore our understanding and use of Freirean pedagogy. Doing so, I used audio recordings from the staff meetings, my personal memos on observations and communications during the summer camp, as well as snapshots from pictures and

video recordings. *Table 6.1* provides a summary of the nine vignettes, which were

discussed extensively in chapter four.

Table 6.1　　　Summary of the Vignettes

Vignettes	Illustrated Interaction	Challenges in the process
1) Addressing by First Name	Calling by first name as a strategy to promote horizontal relationship	It was difficult for some practitioners to depart from accepted and expected norms of Iranian society
2) From Permissions for Bathroom Breaks to the Camp's Constitution	Participatory rule making as a solution to maintain horizontal relationship	It was challenging to find a common ground between discipline and the popular strategies of the program
3) Teachable Moment for Whom?	Blaming the girls for not being committed to the camp rules in keeping the campground organized; promoting discipline through hierarchical/non-participatory approach	There was a debate among practitioners on how to maintain the camp's discipline: implementing hierarchical approach or promoting participatory behavior?
4) Discipline or Creativity	Debating on whether to enforce discipline on games or to give the participants space for creativity; do girls show more creativity if we give them more space?	Some practitioners had biased approach toward the girls and believed that they are "not focused" or "their brains are rusted" so they could not get more creative if we do not enforce control/discipline.

Vignettes	Illustrated Interaction	Challenges in the process
5) Shall They Talk?	Debating on whether or not it is important to hold discussion sessions after each game.	Practitioners were not aware of the importance of dialog.
6) How to Inspire to Talk?	Debating on why girls may not participate in the discussion sessions and how we should inspire them to be engaged.	Some practitioners believed that we should force the kids to talk because they are "lazy." Others argued that they needed space and patience in order to trust us and share their views.
7) Good Theory and Bad Practice of Facilitation	Challenges in understanding the meaning of good facilitation in practice; misleading the discussions in a non-participatory direction.	Some practitioners reacted as traditional teachers, who believed they knew more than students and tried to correct them by debating with them in the group discussions.
8) Transforming from Revolutionaries to Reformists	Sociopolitical constraints on having open dialog to address serious oppressive situations in the society (i.e. gender issues, discrimination)	Practitioners had to censor the discussions and not let the dialog shape around such issues
9) Girls Voices on the Purpose of the Summer Camp	Group work on creating final artifacts on the goals of the camp	Some practitioners were not successful in creating spaces for dialog.

The table includes the main points of the illustrated interactions, challenges in the process of understanding or employing, and the final product of each interaction and its implications in the overall camp practices.

To answer the research question, which asks how Iranian practitioners understood and employed Freirean pedagogical theory in the summer camp, I created four subsections to demonstrate the findings in *Table 6.2*. The subsections are based on the research question components (i.e. understanding and the use of the pedagogy) and the two analytical components of the study (i.e. Freirean dialog and horizontal relationship). The four subsections that have been created to accurately address the research question are: (1) understanding horizontal relationships, (2) understanding dialog, (3) using horizontal relationship, and (4) using dialog. Across each subsection in the table, there are columns for related vignettes and the themes that emerged from my data analysis in chapter five.

Table 6.2   Summary of Findings: How did Iranian practitioners understand and employ the Freirean key concepts?

Research Question components	Related Vignettes	Themes
Understanding horizontal relationship	Vig. 1	NOT being authoritarian
	Vig. 2	Hierarchical disciplining
	Vig. 3	Hierarchical disciplining
	Vig. 4	Hierarchical disciplining
Understanding dialog	Vig. 6	Laziness is the reason for no dialog
	Vig. 6	Creating space to inspire dialog
	Vig. 5	No right or wrong answer
Using horizontal relationship	Vig. 3	Punishment instead of participation
	Vig. 2	Participatory problem solving
	Vig. 1	Addressing by first name to break power relationship
	Vig. 4	Creating space for discussion according to the game instruction
Using dialog	Vig. 7	Case of inappropriate facilitation

Table 6.2 enabled me to explore the two aspects of the research question, *understanding* and *the use of* Freirean concepts, and I discuss them further in the following sections.

Understanding Horizontal Relationship and Dialog

As discussed extensively in chapter two, a horizontal teacher-student relationship is one of the key concepts in Freirean pedagogy. Freire (1970) introduces "problem-posing" education as a new paradigm to replace the "banking" concept of education to challenge the oppressive approach that he identifies in the traditional education system. Consisting of an act of cognition and refusing "transferrals of information" (p. 79), the problem-posing education encourages students to become critical thinkers and to act upon their world. Such an approach promotes praxis and is based on a horizontal and democratic teacher-student relationship, in which knowledge is created through interaction and dialog. Freire argues that "education must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers *and* students" (Freire, 1970, p. 72).

As illustrated in Vignette 1, we discussed Freirean student-teacher relationships in the first staff meeting before the summer camp. We talked about the background of dictatorship in our society and how it might made us feel authoritarian and that we should be careful about our approach in the summer program so as not to impose our ideas on the girls. Also, we discussed as to how to make the program participatory and to establish horizontal relationship with the participants; we were aware that the background of dictatorship may impact our understanding of the horizontal relationship. Tappan (2006)

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notes the impacts of preexisting oppression among practitioners and how it impacts the understanding and employing the process of teaching and learning:

> [Freire] began by arguing that the goal of the oppressed is to liberate themselves and their oppressors. The difficulty of achieving this goal, said Freire, comes about because in the initial stage of their struggle against oppression, the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend to become oppressors themselves (or ''suboppressors''). This is because although their ideal is to be fully human, their model of ''full humanity'' has been the oppressor. This is what Freire called ''identification with the oppressor''; at a certain moment of their existential experience, the oppressed have adopted an attitude of ''adhesion'' to the oppressor, they ''find in the oppressor their model of 'manhood''' (pp. 30–31), and they may even ''feel an irresistible attraction towards the oppressor and his way of life'' (p. 49). They have ''internalized the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines'' (p. 31) for action and interaction in the world. (p. 2118)

What follows describes in details how emerged themes from the several vignettes, which shows the practitioners' presumptions about the girls, can be related to internalized oppression as explained by Tappan's (2006) study.

Vignette 2 describes a situation, in which we started our discussions on how we should discipline the participants by imposing instructions on them. The conversation started when one of the staff mentioned "*we*'re not gonna let them [the girls] ask for stuff in the middle of the games." After half an hour of debate on the issue, another staff member mentioned that "they [the girls] can also participate in the process of creating rules." That was a turning point for us in understanding the concept of teacher-student relationship in practice. The conversation on the process of participatory rule-making convinced all of us that such a process is a solution that brings discipline to the program without dictating our opinions. However, as Vignette 3 describes, it was not easy to understand and implement this solution in all occasions, and particularly, when we faced new challenges in the program. For instance, when the campground was disorganized and

cluttered on the second day, one of the staff suggested that we should bring up the discipline issue as a *teachable moment* for the girls because they should "learn that if they don't do it they'd pay the cost of it." Most staff agreed with the suggestion and although there was not agreement among all the team members, we acted upon the suggestion and stopped the girls in the middle of the game and told them that we could not continue the game until they cleaned the campground. That day, the concept of horizontal relationship was buried under our idea of *hierarchical disciplining*. Instead of posing the problem to the girls and asking them to come up with a solution, we decided to discipline them and blamed them for a such behavior, which resulted in them blaming each other as to why the camp was not organized. Our understanding of horizontal relationship was influenced by our presumptions about the girls; some of us believed that the girls do not understand such relationships. Our presumptions emerged in one of the conversations when a staff mentioned that "Iranian kids are not like that!," which in that context she meant Iranian kids do not understand the concept of horizontal relationships.

Such presumptions happened in other occasions during the summer camp as well. Vignette 4 explains a situation that we again discussed whether to enforce discipline on a game or to give the participants space to help harbor their creativity. In that debate there were some of us who doubted the capability of the girls and claimed that the girls were "not focused" or even in a more private discussion, one of the practitioners stated that she think that "their [the girls'] brains are rusted" . To be able to function in the summer program, she argued that the girls need instruction and control, which she referred to as *discipline*.

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On the concept of dialog, Vignette 5 explains how our understanding was limited at the beginning of the summer program. The vignette explains how we had an extensive conversation on whether or not girls should have discussion sessions after each game and why written reflections were not sufficient in achieving the goal of the program. The discussion was helpful to establish dialog sessions as the main part of the summer program. Moreover, Vignette 6 portrays a situation that presents our approach on why some girls might have preferred to remain inactive and disengage during post-game discussions. The vignette is a sketch on our understanding on dialog and the way we interpret girls' engagements in the dialog. While some of us believed that the girls needed space to talk, there were others who presumed that the girls were "lazy" and may never participate in the discussions if we do not force them. The following quote from Vignette 6 explains that perspective in sum:

> A kid who doesn't want to talk or want to follow others and repeat them…she again doesn't wanna think … and it's so common…they like to copy each other…they don't like to make any comments…because they are lazy and it's easier not to talk…they're like saying that I don't wanna put any pressure on myself [laugh]!...that's how these kids are! (Goli; preparation workshop; Friday, July 4, 2008)

Judging the girls as a group that does not understand the concepts of horizontal relationship, the presumption that "their brains are rusted" or they are "lazy," can be related to internalized oppression, as is explained by Tappan's (2006) study. His study also, explains the girls' reaction to the punishment for the discipline issue and their passive-aggressive reaction (i.e. blaming each other for not being responsible) as *horizontal violence*:

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Freire offers…insights about this ''duality'' under which the oppressed live. The first is to call attention to the phenomenon of self-deprecation, a sense of shame, humiliation, self-hatred, and low self-esteem that is characteristic of the oppressed ... This attitude derives, he said, from the oppressed's adoption of the opinion that the oppressors hold of them. ''So often do [the oppressed] hear that they are good for nothing, know nothing, and are incapable of learning anything—that they are sick, lazy, and unproductive—that in the end they become convinced of their own unfitness'' (p. 49)… Freire (1970) also introduced the notion of *horizontal violence*, in which members of the oppressed group engage in violence against their own comrades. ''Because the oppressor exists within their oppressed comrades,'' Freire said, when they attack, those comrades [the oppressed] are indirectly attacking the oppressor as well'' (p. 48). (Tappan, 2006, p. 2118)

Freire's insights on internalized oppression explain how our understanding on horizontal relationship and dialog influenced by our own internalized oppression. This concept was discussed in the first meeting (i.e. Vignette 1), but was not explored further until we faced it in practice during the program.

Using Horizontal Relationship and Dialog

Although there were several moments in the staff meetings where we started with non-Freirean approaches to our brainstorming discussions, there were many situations that our teamwork and collaboration on understanding the pedagogy and philosophy of the program resulted in implementing Freirean practices. As it is illustrated in Vignette 5, the debates on "whether or not to have discussion sessions after the games" resulted in using an important Freirean pedagogy in the summer program: dialog. Moreover, Vignette 2 portrays an example of a situation in which we started talking about the issue of discipline in a hierarchical manner, but after brainstorming we decided to hold a participatory rule-making session to engage girls in organizing the camp. Another successful example of using horizontal relationship was our initiative in addressing one

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another by our first names in order to challenge the power relationship. As illustrated in Vignette 1, there were evidences of girls' positive reactions to this initiative in their reflection letters. In fact, the friendly and non-hierarchical environment of the summer program created a safe space for them to refer to us as their "partners" in their reflection letters. Creating space for dialog also was presented in Vignette 4, where we again talked about whether it was better to impose discipline or to provide the girls with a space to come up with creative ideas on the Wheel game. The discussion on the instruction of the Wheel game led to create the needed space for the girls to think and reflect on the next game and refrain from limiting them with unnecessary discipline or control.

However, employing Freirean practices was not the topic of all the illustrated vignettes. As it appeared in Vignettes 3, 7, and 8, there were examples of practices that were not successful in using Freirean practices. We decided to charge participant of a penalty, instead of using Freirean problem-posing approach in resolving the issue that rose on the second day of the camp. As I explained in the reflection section of Vignette 3, our experiences in the school system of Iran was a model that we internalized as the most effective model of teaching. Although we had many critiques on the system, we adopted and employed the model in the summer program; this is the definition of internalized oppression as was discussed in the previous section. Vignette 7 explains the issue with my facilitation skill and how seeking the "right answer" put me in a power position as a teacher and interrupted the dialog among the girls. Such a wrong practice can also be categorized as an example of internalized oppression, whereby instead of creating a safe space for the girls to express their ideas, I imposed my ideas through engaged one of the girls in a debate.

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Last but not least were the sociopolitical constraints on using dialog that was explained in Vignette 8. As it was extensively discussed in the vignette, there were extreme sociopolitical constraints that prevented us from having open dialogs to address serious oppressive situations relevant to the greater society (i.e. gender issues, discrimination, etc.). There were two types of constraints that limited our freedom to have open dialog in the summer program: the challenging political environment of the country during the summer of 2008, choosing *Husseinieh*, an orthodox religious building, to save us from the possible political challenges over the summer.

A few months before the summer of 2008, Iranian officials claimed that the US was planning a velvet revolution (*Iran: 'Confessions'*, 2007) through supporting vandalistic movements in the country (i.e. as it happened in Ukraine in 1991). Therefore, such movements along with receiving of foreign financial supports on any humanities project had been extremely restricted by the Iran's government. Moreover, any development project including educational or cultural program (i.e. similar to Camp Bayan) that was designed or implemented by groups of activists or practitioners from outside the country was sensitive to the government, as it was/is considered as an effort toward velvet revolution to overthrow the government and therefore a threat to the national security of the country.

Such political pressure flamed after series of mixed messages announced by the Bush administration. In a short period of time two fundamentally different messages were announced by two sectors of the government. While President Bush called Iran as one of the three countries that are the "axis of evil" in the world and announced that Iranians will receive the US government supports to overthrow their government (President

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Delivers State of the Union Address, 2001), Condoleezza Rice, the Secretary of State, announced the US government supports civil society inside Iran to bring reform to the government. A little after these announcements the congress approved $66 million USD funds to "support" Iranian activists.

Due to the state of such current conditions in Iran, any kind of activism is subjected to horrifying political pressure by the government, and most of the affiliated activists have been arrested by the intelligence service on charged with disloyalty to their country and as causing a threat to national security. In October 2008, Esha Momeni, a graduate student at the School of Communications, Media and Arts at California State University, Northridge, who traveled to Iran to conduct a study on one of the famous grassroots women's rights campaigns that started in Iran, was arrested and charged with threatening national security (U.S. Student Arrested, 2008).

In such a politically sensitive and challenging environment, conducting a summer camp with a group of Iranian and Iranian-American practitioners was extremely risky and frightening to many of us who did not feel safe being in our home country.

As I explained in Vignette 8, such a challenging political atmosphere made me even more conservative after my detention by morality police during the first few days of my arrival to Tehran that summer. Such events made us exceedingly conservative with regards to selecting the type of activities and dialogs we allowed in the summer camp. On the other hand, as described earlier, we used our social capital in a traditional and conservative neighborhood and decided to hold the summer camp in a Husseinieh in that neighborhood. Such a decision hide the program from plain sight in the midst of a religious environment, which reduced the government's sensitivity to the program, thus

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decreasing our risk of being arrested or the program being shut down by the government. However, this same environment provided an appropriating to dilute Freirean mission to a "personal level" as one of the staff described it in our final meeting. In fact, we were not only had to sensor the discussions, unable to address serious oppressive situations such as gender issues, but we were also unable to connect the issues presented by the girls to a broader societal level. Therefore, we had to facilitate the discussions at a more personal level and promoted techniques such as negotiation skills and conflict resolution tactics to resolve their issues. Our approach was criticized by one of the Iranian-American practitioners whose experience of Freirean pedagogy was different in Latin American countries. She complained that such an approach distanced us from the deep and rich Freirean leftist philosophy that intends to elevate individuals' personal issues to a social level and encourage them to take collective action against their oppression. However, the summer camp was an example of a situation in which the revolutionary approach might not have been the suitable choice for many people as they may have faced serious life-threatening consequences due to extreme political oppression.

As discussed in chapter two, the same is true for women's responses to oppression in Iran. For example, Gerami and Lehnerer's (2001) study shows women's agency by utilizing different skills to resist oppressive situations. The study identifies four strategies used by Iranian women to negotiate and overcome the undesirable restrains in their lives including co-optation, collaboration, acquiescence, and subversion. They describe what Iranian women face with oppressive state policies and fluctuating family pressures and, therefore, have "to negotiate a sense of self at two levels of interaction: social and familial" (p. 570). In a study on women's everyday resistance, Bayat (2007) called

women's presence and resistance in pursuing their daily demands after the 1979 revolution as "non-movement" activism. Bayat (2007) discusses what it means to be a woman activist in a non-democratic society and emphasizes that:

> What underlined Iran's women's activism was not collective protest but collective presence. The women's movement drew its power not from the threat of disruption and uncertainty, as in the case of contentious politics; rather, it subsisted on the power of presence—the ability to assert collective will in spite of all odds, by circumventing constraints, utilizing what exists, and discovering new spaces of freedom to make oneself heard, seen, and felt. (p. 172)

The same is true with the summer camp experience, in which practitioners were not able to employ the revolutionary aspect of Freirean pedagogy in practice. In fact, we had to bind Freirean dialog to limited non-sensitive topics and reduce the revolutionary aspects of Freirean philosophy to a personal level. Instead of promoting collective solutions for society, we forced to promote expression and negotiation skills for young girls and encourage them to use such skills in their everyday lives.

Challenges in the Process

The research sub-question of the current study asks about the challenges in understanding and using Freirean pedagogy in the sociopolitical context of Iran. In fact, the discussion on "how" the Iranian practitioners understood and employed Freirean pedagogy is not complete without highlighting the challenges in the process. A review of the study's findings reveals two types of challenges in understanding and employing Freirean pedagogy in the summer camp in Tehran, Iran: internal and external challenges.

Internal challenges include the issue of internalized oppression of practitioners, which has been extensively noted by Freirean theory and is transferable to similar

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Freirean projects in other parts of the world. Many evidences from the vignettes describe situations that internalized oppression of the practitioners prevented them from understanding and applying Freirean practices in the summer program. In some cases, the practitioners overcame their biases and presumptions through dialog and team discussions and understood and employed the Freirean pedagogy. However, as described in the vignettes, there were several cases that our internalized oppression won over and prevented us from applying Freirean pedagogy. Such internal challenges played an important role in our understanding and use of Freirean pedagogy in the summer camp.

External challenges include sociopolitical constraints and extreme political sensitivity to the goal of the summer camp, as a liberatory program. Such constraints, which were specific to the context of Iran, reduced the revolutionary aspects of Freirean pedagogy to a personal level of reform and developing negotiation skills. In fact, the free space that was created through the camp environment (i.e. horizontal relationship) encouraged girls to gain self-esteem in speaking out about their needs. However, the summer camp practitioners were not able to address girls' specific issues, such as gender issues due to the external challenges on the program. Appendix C presents a visual concept map of the findings and how our understanding and application of the pedagogy in the summer camp related to various internal and external challenges.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

Overview

The current chapter concludes the study by providing a brief overview on the previous chapters and includes a final discussion on the interrelated findings of the study. Then, the implications for theory and practice are discussed followed by the recommendation for future research.

Review of Previous Chapters

The current study was a qualitative portraiture study that focused on Iranian practitioners' understanding and the use of Freirean pedagogy in the context of a summer camp that was held for young girls during the summer of 2008 in Tehran, Iran. In the introductory chapter, I presented the background of the study by presenting snapshots to explain how my personal experiences directed me to conduct a Freirean summer camp and what questions were raised after the summer experience. I also reviewed how the gap in the literature on Freirean practitioners' understanding and employing the pedagogy shaped my research question. In chapter two, I framed my research theoretical map by reviewing the related literature. I sketched the concept map of the study based on Freirean theory and showed how the Freirean philosophy of the summer camp relates to Iranian women's challenges and education in the twenty first century. I also reviewed the critiques of Freirean pedagogy and how different views exist on the implications of the approach. In addition, I reviewed feminist poststructuralists' critiques that complement the philosophy. Chapter three presented discussions on portraiture methodology and how

the very features of the methodology including researcher and participants' relationship are important features in the current study. I also reviewed my analytical plan in the study and the rational in selecting the practitioners' interactions as my unit of analysis. Chapter four provided a contextual description introducing the process of the creation of the summer camp, facilitators' backgrounds, and other important information that helps contextualize the study in a broader sociopolitical setting. In chapter five, I portrayed nine vignettes of practitioners' interactions during the camp and highlighted key moments that corresponded to my research question. Table 6.1 presents a summary of the nine vignettes. Chapter five presented the findings of the study through conducting an analysis across the nine vignettes. The chapter provides detailed descriptions on how the practitioners understood and employed Freirean pedagogy in the summer camp. Chapter six put the findings of the study in the related literature and discussed what internal and external challenges practitioners faced in the summer experience. The current chapter concludes the research by presenting a final discussion of the findings, implications of the study in theory and practice, and suggestions for future research.

Final Discussion

As the findings of the study showed in the previous chapter, the practitioners faced two types of challenges in understanding and applying Freirean pedagogy during the summer camp including internal and external challenges. However, the two types of challenges are interrelated: the internalized oppression perpetuates external sociopolitical pressures and vice versa. Internal and external challenges reproduce each other. Our

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internalized oppression was a result of sociopolitical pressures in Iranian society, which limited our understanding and application of Freirean pedagogy, and prevented us from taking action against sociopolitical oppressions. As explained in the background of the study in chapter one, we selected Freirean pedagogy as the philosophy of the summer camp to create a liberatory space for young women in Tehran, Iran (Figure 2.1). The findings of the study, however, present situations in which the challenges throughout the process of understanding and implementation of the pedagogy limited the camp practices to personal level of learning negotiation skills. While internalized oppression of the practitioners created challenges in understanding the pedagogy and occasionally resulted in pursuing non-Freirean practices in the summer program, the external political pressure pushed us towards a conservative approach of Freirean mission to personal level in the summer camp. One advantage, however, was our teamwork and discussions in the staff meetings, which helped us reflect on our internalized oppression. Having dialogs throughout the camp experience helped us take action on issues and employ the Freirean practices more accurately by improving our understanding of horizontal teacher-student relationships and dialog.

<div align="center">Implication for Practice</div>

The vignettes illustrate practitioners' interactions in the staff meetings and present elaborate descriptions on how practitioners understood and employed Freirean pedagogy throughout the summer program. The study is particularly helpful in portraying pragmatic challenges in implementing Freirean pedagogy in liberatory educational programs. Practitioners and cultural workers may benefit from the study as it highlights aspects of

Freirean pedagogy that might be challenging to understand or to be applied in practice. The study is beneficial in particular, to Iranian practitioners as it considers specific sociopolitical considerations in employing Freirean pedagogy in the context of Iran.

In particular, Vignette 8 explains the external sociopolitical challenges in employing Freirean pedagogy within an Iranian context. Furthermore, the seven other vignettes provide examples of how internalized oppression shaped by both the historical and sociocultural backgrounds of Iranian practitioners should be considered in employing liberatory practices. Moreover, the discussions illustrated how teamwork and dialog among the practitioners may resolve some challenges and play significant role in understanding and applying Freirean pedagogy. In sum, the current study provides in-depth descriptions on challenges Iranian practitioners may face in understanding and employing critical and liberatory pedagogy in the context of Iran.

Implications for Theory

The summer program was a political act that happened under extreme sociopolitical pressures to promote social change. However, it was not a revolutionary act; it was a project that promoted reform and gradual social change (i.e. women's expression skills) in Iranian society. As discussed in the literature review of the current study, there is a debate on the implications of Freirean pedagogy. While some see Freirean pedagogy as a method of reform, others strongly believe that Freirean pedagogy is a revolutionary approach. Scholars such as Gottlieb and La Belle (1990) argue that Freire constructed a discourse of rehumanization by offering the concept of *dialog,* and

such rehumanization for Freire is both a means and an end. They believe that "revolution *is* dialog" (p. 10). They see Freirean pedagogy as a method of reform in the system instead of a revolutionary act that pursues radical political or economic changes. In contrast, many other Freirean scholars (O'Cadiz, Wong & Torres, 1997; McLaren & Leonardo, 1993; McLaren & Lankshear, 1994; Mayo, 1997; McLaren& Kinchelo, 2007; Bartlett, 2010) criticize the tendency to reduce Freire's work to a "method" while over looking the political aspect of his work; the aspect that is the core of Freire's argument and emphasizes on resisting all forms of structural oppression.

The current study adds to the body of theoretical knowledge by presenting a detailed case that discusses practitioners' challenges on applying and understanding Freirean pedagogy in a unique sociopolitical context of Iran. The study portrays how the understanding and employment of Freirean pedagogy challenged by internal and external constraints in the country and reduced the program from a liberatory project that aimed to challenge the status quo, to a program that promoted personal solutions and tactics in facing everyday life issues. Figure 7.1 explains how the findings from the current study suggest a new model for the Freirean theory framework. As the figure shows, internalized oppression of Freirean facilitators that are caused by sociopolitical constrains in societies may lead the facilitators to fail in understanding and/or to applying the key concepts of Freirean pedagogy in the educational projects. Such constraint may result in a weakened liberatory influence of Freirean pedagogy in changing the status quo.
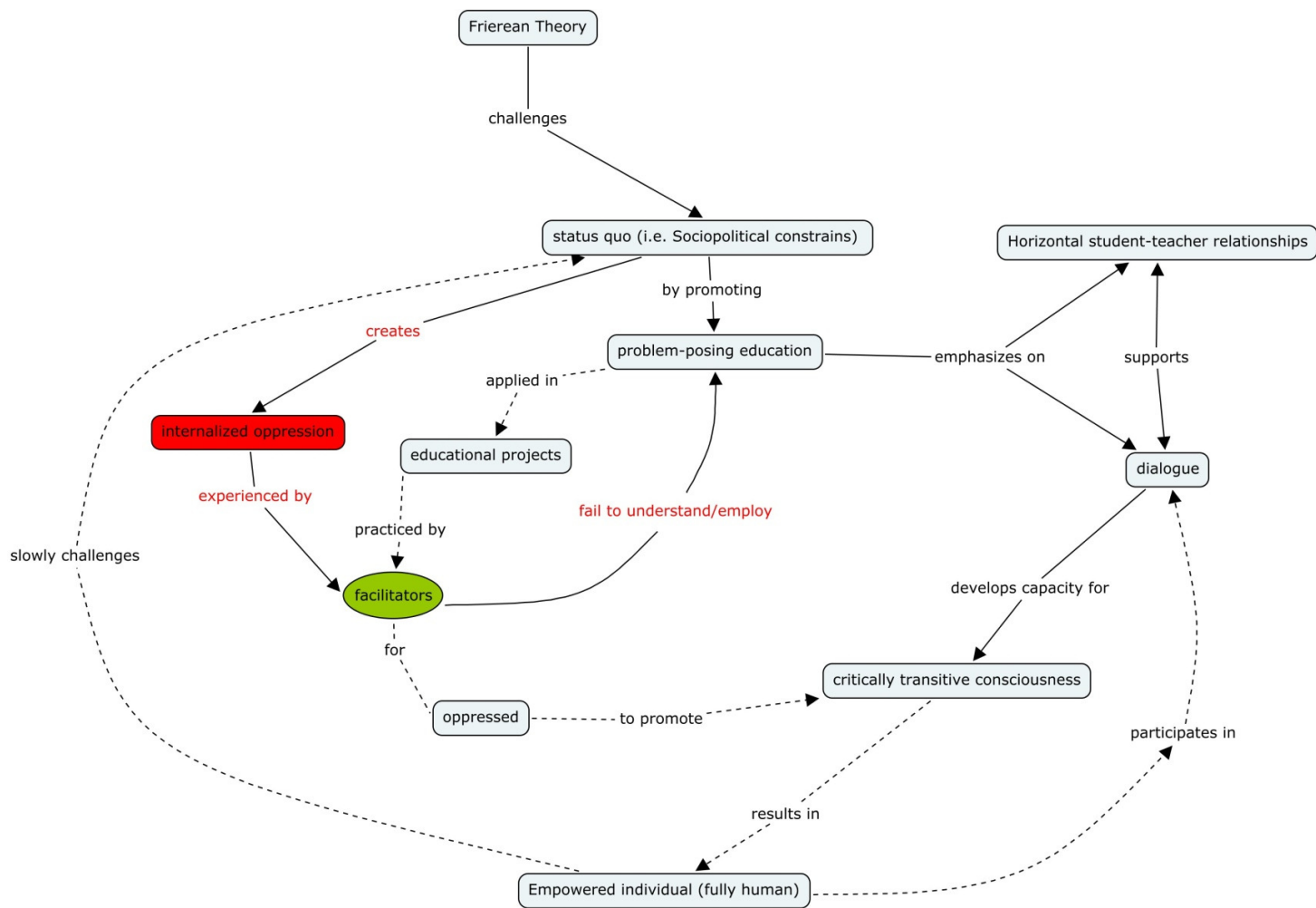
Figure 7.1   Suggested new theoretical model based on the findings from the current study

Recommendations for Future Studies

In the process of answering the research question, I faced new questions that could be considered as potential pathways for future study on understanding and usiing Freirean philosophy in practice.

- Vignette 8 discussed the sociopolitical constraints in employing dialog for young girls on challenging the status quo. The current study portraited how such external challenges prevented the practitioners in fully applying Freirean dialog. However, further study is necessary to address how Freirean pedagogy may or may not be implemented in authoritarian systems for young adults.

- In the final discussion of the current chapter, I discussed how internalized oppression challenged the practitioners to fully understand and apply Freirean pedagogy and how such internal challenge may be reproduced by external challenges such as socionpolitical constraints. Further studies on the relationship between internalized oppression and sociopolitical constraints may provide a better understanding on how internal and external challenges relate (i.e., causal effect). Furthermore, if such relationships are observed, then can Freirean pedagogy impact such relationships? The posed questions may be addressed through case studies on similar Freirean projects or in-depth theoretical studies through cross-case analyses of the existing literature.

- The current research is among the first study to address the application and understanding of Freirean pedagogy in the context of Iran. The study is limited by time and place in presenting the challenges and experiences of the practitioners:

Summer of 2008 in Tehran. Further long term studies in different geographical and cultural regions may be helpful in further exploring the challenges in understanding and applying Freirean pedagogy in the context of Iran.

Final Conclusion

As discussed in first chapter, the current study benefits from a unique research question that occurred in a unique context: Freirean approaches applied by Iranian practitioners in contemporary Iran. According to Bartlett (2005), there are very limited studies on Freirean practitioners' understanding and application of the key concepts of Freirean pedagogy (except for her study on Brazilian practitioners that was published as a book in 2005). Moreover, according to Kincheloe (2007), critical pedagogy has rarely been studied in the context of Middle Eastern countries, and the scholarly articles and studies on critical pedagogy have been merely dominated by experiences from Western societies. Such circumstances make the current study a unique study that suggests significant and novel findings to be considered in the field of critical pedagogy. The current study is just a start to an unknown and yet to be explored field of study.

APPENDIX A

The List and Description of Summer Camp Activities (July 5-10, 2008)

Group warm-ups:

1. "Spots in movement": with music: while the music is playing people walk around in the room - as soon as the music stops the joker tells them an expression to show like "fear," "anger," "boredom..." people freeze in the expression, the music plays on, people start walking again ...

You can do that without music, too, but with it it's nicer, because people can move to the music and loose tension a bit.

2. "Meetings": people walk around (is possible with or without music like in 1.) and get an order by the joker like "Shake as many hands as possible" or "Touch every wall as fast as You can" - that is a bit of physical exercise to warm up the body and brings people in contact..

3. "Hypnotizing": people come together in couples, one is the hypnotician, the other one follows - easiest way is to follow the hand, but ohter limbs or parts of the body are possible too (an elbos, the left knee, the forehead...). The movements should be slow and in a streaming kind of way, so that there's really an atmosphere of concentration and calmness. After some minutes they change roles.

4. "Statue building": couples again: one is the scultpor, the other is moved like a puppet on strings. The scultpor pulls the strings to build its "statue," then leaves it in its position. Afterwards short exchange on how that felt for the "statue." Role change.

One of the funniest and most meaningful warming-ups I took part (as audience) was led by Roberto Mazzini (hey, Giolli people, where are you?!) at the TO Festival in Toronto (1997). Let me see if I can explain...

First Roberto said numbers - from 1 to 4 - to each person in the audience (1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2...). Then, he explained:

"When I say 'number 1!', all people that is number 1 must try to get on the stage saying 'I want to get on the stage, I want to take part at the scene...'. The people who is sitting near the number 1s must not allow that, by holding the person, while saying ' No, stay passive, just look, you won't take part, etc'... And the same for numbers 2, 3 and 4. "

We did so, and it was so funny. First he said "Number 2!," then "Number 1!," then "Number 3!." Then he said: "Ok, it's enough..." And the audience crowded: "No, you should go on, what about number 4?"

So he "conceded" to do the same to number 4. And, instead of saying 'Number 4!', he said: "Number: 1, 2, 3, 4!!!" And all of us at the audience went on the stage, saying at the same time: "we want to take part," etc.

From: http://www.theateroftheoppressed.org/en/forum/viewtopic.php?t=19

Name games:

"Blank" in the middle:

Everyone stands in a large circle, and one volunteer is in the middle. S/he states her name: "My name is Sara." Everyone around the circle then pound their thighs twice, clap their hands twice, make a circular motions and say: "Sara is in the middle." Sara then says one thing about herself, for example: "I grew up playing soccer." At that point, everyone else in the circle who grew up playing soccer has to leave their spot, run

towards the middle of the circle, give a high five to someone else, and find a spot. There

is always one spot short, so whoever doesn't find a spot, is then left in the middle and the

game repeats itself. This is a great way to learn everyone's names, get people active, and

learn something about that person.

Circle Scramble

Purpose: Learning about others; name game

Time: 30 minutes

Process: The group stands in a circle. Each person says his/her first name so that

everyone can hear it. Then, without any communication (verbal or nonverbal) the group

must attempt to organize into alphabetical order. Once the group thinks that they are in

the correct order, each person says his/her name out-loud to see how close the group

came to being in the right order. Then in round two, the group must attempt to fix any

mistakes. The activity can proceed to further rounds, if necessary.

Debriefing Questions:

- What strategies did you use to figure out where you fit in the circle?
- What was the common goal for this activity? Did everyone know what it was?
- Did it help to know the goal, even though you were not allowed to communicate?
- How much easier would this task have been if you were allowed to communicate?

Roses and Thorns:

This is an excellent exercise that can be used at any time during the week (and

using it multiple times to check in with the team is better). Each person in the circle has

to go around stating a "rose" (something that they like/has been good for them) of the day and a "thorn" (something that is bothering them). This is a great way to check in with the team and see where they are emotionally.

Props

This exercise can be done in a few ways: either you have people verbally give "props" to one another, or you give everyone index cards for each person in the room. Each person is in charge of writing a "prop" for everyone else in the room. You collect those props and then pull them out of a bag, either all at once, or throughout the day. The idea is to have people evaluate one another in a positive light, and to have the students hear positive feedback about themselves. It's great for boasting confidence and trust within the group.

Secret Admirer

Each student is assigned a secret admirer at the beginning of the week, and their job is to observe that person (without letting her know who is observing her), and at the end of the week, the Secret Admirer tells the whole group 2-3 things that impressed her about the person she was observing.

Human Knot

This is an excellent, excellent game. It automatically makes the students break the ice and get to feel comfortable with one another.

Materials: None

Process:

Ask the group to stand in a circle. Then ask them to clasp the hands of two other people in the group—these must be different people and cannot be on either side of the participant. No one moves from their original place when clasping hands.

The object is to untangle any knots of hands without letting go. Participants are allowed to change an uncomfortable grip.

Debriefing Questions:

- Was it necessary to take turns when moving or could you have multiple moves going at once?
- How did you decide who would move and when?
- Were you ever frustrated or did you feel left out? Why?
- How did you work together to make this successful?

I Am

<u>Purpose</u>: To learn about what role you and others around you play in the world.

<u>Time:</u> 30-45 minutes

<u>Materials:</u> Paper and pencil for each participant

Process: Each participant needs paper and a pencil. Instruct each participant to complete the sentence, "I am" 10 times, listing all the "roles" they fill (such as I am a daughter, I am a good listener, I am a driver of a red car, I am a role model for my three cousins etc.). Encourage the listing of roles or positions/activities, not personal characteristics/adjectives. Once everyone is finished, have everyone gather in a circle and share his/her list with the group.

The Family Game

<u>Purpose</u>: Ice breaker. This is a fun energy boaster and I would recommend it whenever the students are low on energy as a way to get them back into the groove.

Time: 30-40 minutes

Materials: One index card for each person in the group (the cards need to be labeled Father, Mother, Brother, Sister, and Baby, followed by a surname), one chair for every five people.

Process: Each person receives an index card with one of the five names: Father, Mother, Brother, Sister, or Baby, followed by a surname. At the start of the game, the participants exchange cards with others in the group. They continue exchanging cards until the facilitator tells them, "Find your family." At this time, the five family members attempt to find each other and sit down. The family must sit in each others' laps in one chair in the following order: Father, Mother, Brother, Sister, Baby and raise their hands when all are seated. When all the families are seated, the game can begin again by re-drawing the cards, or using a different set.

Spider Web:

This usually works better at the end of the week (as one of the last exercises). The team sits in a circle and we start out w a ball of yarn in one persons hand. That person holds onto one end of the yarn and gives the ball to someone in the circle who has made a positive impact on her throughout the week/someone she's learned from/someone who inspired her/someone she appreciates. She explains why she's giving the ball of yarn to that person to the whole group. That person then gives the ball of yarn to someone else while holding onto a piece of it. The idea is that by the end of the exercise, when everyone stands up, we see that we're all connected now because of our emotional ties to one another—that although the week is over, we're in this web together now.

Trust Fall:

One person stands in the middle of a four/five person circle, closes her/his eyes, crosses her/his arms in front of herself and then throws herself back. She has to trust her teammates to catch her and guide her around the circle without letting her fall.

Who Am I?

Purpose: To create better group dynamics and enhance communication. This is a great exercise to teach communication.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Headband tags made from poster board and string, markers

Process: Headband tags are created and imprinted with messages regarding behavior. Samples are: "ignore me," "interrupt me," "don't look at me when I talk," "laugh at what I say," "listen to me," "agree with everything I say," "disagree with me."

Form circles in each group. Counselors place a tag on the forehead of each group member, (group members cannot see what the tag says). Each group is given a problem to solve. Before the problem solving discussions begin, instruct participants to treat fellow teammates according to the message on the tag. The exercise ends when the time is up, or when students guess the message on their tags.

After activity, gather everyone in a circle and discuss the following questions:

Debriefing Questions:

- How did you feel when you were treated according to a characteristic you had no control over?
- Do you see this behavior happening in your daily life? Explain.
- What have been the benefits of this exercise?
- What can we learn from this exercise in regards to the biases people have towards one another?

All Aboard

Material: 2-foot square platform

Process: The goal of this challenge is to get the whole team on the square platform without anyone touching the ground. Each person must have both feet off the ground. Everyone in the group must remain on the platform for at least 10 seconds. Participants cannot lay on top of each other, forming a dog pile, as a solution to this activity.

Colombian Hypnosis:

The group freely moves in pairs, each person playing a specific role—either leader or follower. The leader is responsible for the safety of her/his partner. After the game, partners discuss with one another what they experienced and observed.

Procedure:

Ask the girls find a partner about the same height as they are. Once they have a partner ask them to choose between them who will be yellow and who will be white. Yellow leads first. Facing each other, the leader puts their hand to the followers face about 3-4 inches away. The follower's chin should be level with the heel of the leader's hand.

The follower's eyes are fixated on the palm of the leader, as if there is a strong magnetic pull from the palm of the leader to the face of the follower. Leader leads her VERY SLOWLY through the space into different ways of moving that they wouldn't regularly do; bringing the follower on the floor, turning her around, even trying to get her

to sit down. Also remembering they aren't meant to confuse or compete with their partner but to take care of them and show them different ways of moving and being.

After a few minutes, leader and follower exchange roles. You can also then try this with three at a time, where one girl leads two others, one with each hand. Each girl gets a chance.

Objectives: coordinate movements with another person; build cooperation and trust; examine the leader/follower relationship and leadership modes. Explore moving the body in space.

Dialog following each activity (processing the activity): What skills did you use in order to be able to do this activity? What did you experience? What did you observe? Which did you like better, leading or following? Why? How does this relate to your daily life?

Walks

Procedure: Everyone walks around the room in any direction. On the instructions of the facilitator (teacher) they will change their walk. Teacher calls out - Fast, slow, on one leg, backwards, sideways, with large steps, very small steps, as if through water up to the waist.

Then, teacher says, when I say stop – stop walking, when I say walk – continue walking. Try this a few times then change the directions. When I say stop – continue walking, when I say walk – stop walking! See what happens.

This game helps to de-mechanize movement, gets participants aware of their bodies, of space of the bodies of others in the room. Also aids creativity and gets blood

flowing.

Complete the Image - Visual metaphor for Freire methodology as well as Forum Theater interventions.

Procedure: Two volunteers come to the front of the classroom. They face each other and shake hands and freeze. While they are frozen they must stay in the same position as long as they can.

Teacher draws an imaginary frame around the image they have created and asks the classroom to imagine what this image can be of. For instance, they are meeting for the first time and one is a boss interviewing a job candidate, etc. Be sure to get the students to talk about how the characters are standing and how that effects what they see in the image. EX: They look like they know each other because they are standing very close and smiling, etc.

Then, one of the pair steps out of the image and the other is alone holding the same pose as before. Students then analyze this image in the same way as above.

Then, the partner who stepped out can come back into the image and "complete the image" in any way she wishes. She can arrange her body in front, behind, below, etc. of their partner, but she **can't** change her partner's image in any way. But she must step out of the image completely, look at the frozen image that remains and then come back in.

This new image is analyzed again by those watching.

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Then the second partner (who remained frozen) can come out and "complete the image" in the same way that the first did. This new image is analyzed by the spectators. Then, ask the first girl to step out again, but this time a girl from the audience comes in to replace her and she can "complete the image" in her own way. Have a few girls try this out.

Break girls into pairs and have them go through this game on their own, over and over. Remind them that when stepping out of the image, they should take a few seconds to look at the image and think, before re-entering in a new position.

After 10 minutes, have them discuss in their pair what they thought about the exercise and then have a large group discussion.

Dialog following each activity (=processing the activity): What skills did you use in order to be able to do this activity? What did you experience? What did you observe? What was difficult, easy, etc.? How does this relate to your daily life?

Image of the Word - Dueling Images

Procedure: Have girls break into two groups. Groups stand facing each other, all the girls standing shoulder to shoulder. Facilitator reads out a word chosen from the themes and issues that are coming up in the workshop, or just simple pre-determined emotion, and directs it to a group. That group must make an image of that word and hold it. Ex: Group #1 show me happy. All the girls in that group must make the image of happy for the group watching. It is good to ask the group who watches to say whether the images really look happy or not.

Then ask group #2 to make a different image. Or, you can have them make the same image of the word. This goes back and forth for a few minutes.

Image of the Word – Wheel: preparation for scene building

Procedure: Participants form one circle within another circle. The inner circle faces outward and the outer circle faces inward so that each girl will be facing another.

The group in the outer circle will sculpt the person in front of them into an image. When all images are complete – the outer wheel rotates around the inner and everyone gets to look at the various images. They then switch places and sculpt another word. When both partners have sculpted each other – outer wheel rotates one person clockwise and repeats sculpting.

The word chosen can come from the discussions during the workshops about their oppression and should lead into forum scene building. For example, you can ask them to make an image of a time when they were treated unfairly. They have to remember everything about that time and remember themselves. How did they feel, what happened, who was involved, etc.?

When the girls walk around and see the images the other girls made, let them walk around the circle 2 or 3 times and they can call out how they feel looking at the other images, what are the similarities, what are the differences in the images? What stands out, what does it make them think of?

After both circles get a chance to make images, the girls will discuss in one group the stories behind their image. The girls volunteer to tell their story, not everyone has to go. Before the girl tells her story, ask the partner she sculpted to stand and show the image she was sculpted into. Then the girl can tell her story.

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From this exercise, you can choose 3-4 stories to turn into Forum scenes. Girls will go to the story that they feel most connected to, and then they will work on creating a scene about it.

NOTES FOR A FORUM SCENE:

You have to have a clear conflict between oppressor and oppressed. Oppressed wants something and oppressor denies her … or oppressor wants oppressed to do something that oppressed doesn't want to do.

Remember oppression isn't aggression so stories about being beaten or abused shouldn't play out the violence but should rewind a few steps backwards to see what lead up to the violence and is there a point in that time that can be re-played.

The characters have to be clear. There should be only one primary oppressed (protagonist). If there is a mother and a daughter who are both oppressed, in the scene only one should be shown, because the audience has to fight for one. We can show a mother who acts almost as an oppressor's ally by being silent or letting the oppression continue but there should be ONE clear protagonist.

Try to find potential allies to the oppressed and to the oppressor for each scene.

Try to show an escalation in oppression. Show 2-3 scenes within one skit so that people can make interventions at multiple points. We see the protagonist want something, she tries to get it and fails, she tries again and fails, and finally, she tries and is totally isolated and alone and dejected. There we see a person who is trying – not someone who is weak, who doesn't try, who has given up at the beginning, we see a fighter who can't break through her bad situation.

The oppressor must be complex, not simple and stupid and must be very good at getting the oppressor to do what she says. The character must be good at improvising and make good, quick arguments because they will have to face all the audience members who come into the scene to make interventions.

بازی‌های تئاتری رفع تنش**17**

صندلی رو برگردون

این هم یکی از آن حقه‌هاست که هنرپیشه‌ها عاشق آن هستند. یکی از آن موقعیت‌ها که آدم را سر غیرت درس مستقیمی برای حل می‌آورد که بگوید «وقتی بدونی چطوری انجامش بدی خیلی ساده است.» این بازی مشکلات به ما می‌دهد.

یکی از بازیگران را راهنمایی کنید که یک صندلی بردارد و آن را دور از بدنش، مستقیم، در راستای دستش نگاه دارد، به طوری که فاصله‌ی خوبی با کف زمین نیز داشته باشد. سپس از او بخواهید که بدون اینکه مچ دست یا آرنجش را خم کند و بی‌آنکه صندلی را بیندازد آن را روی زمین بگذارد. (البته او قادر به این کار نخواهد بود.) اما شما فقط همین دستورالعمل‌ها را به او بدهید. به هنرپیشه اجازه دهید برای انجام این کار تمام تلاش خود را به کار برد. جواب ساده‌ای که هنرپیشه به این سؤال می‌تواند بدهد این است که بگوید «بهم کمک کنید این صندلی رو پایین بذارم.» تمام آنچه که او باید برای انجام شدن این کار انجام دهد این است که از یک همبازی خود تقاضای کمک کند. او صندلی را به دیگری می‌دهد تا او را به سادگی بدون محدودیتی که ما برای خم شدن در نظر گرفته بودیم روی زمین بگذارد. این تمرین خوبی برای اشاره به این نکته است که گاهی بهترین و ساده‌ترین راه برای حل یک مشکل کمک خواستن است.

بازی کمک

این بازی یک پانتومیم (نمایش صامت) برای تمرین بدیهه‌گویی (و ابتکار) دو فرد است. یک بازیگر بازی را با پانتومیمی برای نیاز به کمک آغاز می‌کند، هرنیازی که خودش انتخاب کند. این پانتومیم باید فعالیت یا

حرکتی باشد که در آن بازیگر اول بازیگر دوم را مجبور کند آن فعالیت را تمام کند یا فعالیت دیگری را آغاز کند. شخص اول فعالیتش را به شکل پانتومیم به اجرا در می‌آورد. مثلاً این فعالیت می‌تواند حتی به سادگی تلاش برای بلند کردن جسمی سنگین باشد که خودش به تنهایی قادر نیست آن را انجام دهد، یا تلاش برای باز نگاه داشتن درِی به هنگام عبور دادن جسمی از میان در، یا راندن دوچرخه برای دو نفر، یا نشستن روی یک الاکلنگ، و غیره باشد. نفر اول پانتومیم خود را بدون هیچ کلامی آغاز می‌کند و نفر دوم با گفتن خطی که شناسایی مشکل است وارد بازی می‌شود. مثلاً می‌گوید «بذار کمکت کنم این تخته سنگ رو برداری.»

نفر اول با خط دیالوگ پیش می‌رود، حتی اگر آنچه توسط فرد دوم گفته شده چیزی نبوده که او قصد نشان دادن آن را داشته است. او می‌گوید «شما خیلی مهربونید. من فکر می‌کنم ممکنه زیر این سنگ یه گنج باشه.»

بعد از اینکه این دو نفر کار را به انجام رساندند، نفر اول از نفر دوم به دلیل مشارکتش تشکر کرده و آنجا را ترک می‌کند. حالا نوبت نفر دوم است که فعالیت پانتومیمی به همین شکل اجرا کند. او نیاز خود را برای جلب مشارکت شخص دیگری به شکل پانتومیم به اجرا در می‌آورد. می‌توانید این بازی را تا زمانی که بازیگرانتان فعالیت جدیدی برای عرضه دارند ادامه دهید. اگر محدودیت زمانی دارید، گروهتان را به جفت‌هایی تقسیم کنید تا همه‌ی آنها بتوانند همزمان کار کنند. از آنها بخواهید که نقش‌هایشان را عوض کنند تا هر دو شرکت کننده شانس این را داشته باشند که به دیگری پیشنهاد مشارکت بدهند.

مکالمه‌های تنش

مادر و دختر/پسر

دختر: می‌تونم یه دقیقه باهاتون حرف بزنم؟

مادر: حالا؟ چیه؟

دختر: می‌خوام ازتون اجازه بگیرم از چرخ خیاطی‌تون استفاده کنم. می‌خوام ببینم می‌تونم باهاش گلدوزی کنم.

مادر: مگه عقلتو از دست دادی؟ فکر کردی چرخ خیاطی‌مو می‌دم دست تو که داغونش کنی؟

دختر: نه، داغونش نمی‌کنم. اگه یاد بگیرم که چطوری باهاش کار کنم که داغونش نمی‌کنم.

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مادر: حتماً یکی از دوستات این کارو کرده، تو هم می‌خوای بزنی چرخ منو داغون کنی.

دختر: نه، من فکر کردم خیلی خوبه اگه یاد بگیرم.

مادر: لازم نیست یاد بگیری، همون چیزایی که بلدی رو انجام بده، لازم نیست گلدوزی با چرخ منو یاد

بگیری.

پدر و پسر/دختر

دختر: بابا، می‌تونم روز جمعه با چند تا از بچه‌ها برم باغ.

پدر: کدوم بچه‌ها؟

دختر: چند تا از همکلاسی‌هام. بابای مریم، همکلاسیم یه باغ داره، مریم چند تا از بچه‌ها رو دعوت کرده

باغ.

پدر: بابا و مامان مریم هستن اونجا؟

دختر: نه، اما خواهر بزرگه‌ی مریم هستش.

پدر: خواهر بزرگه‌ش چه گلی به سرتون می‌زنه؟ مریم با اون وضع لباس پوشیدنش، معلوم نیست

خواهرش چیه. یه مشت دخترجلفن می‌خوای بری باهاشون که چی؟

دختر: شما که همه‌ی دوستای منو نمی‌شناسین.

پدر: مریمو که می‌شناسم، همیشه جواب همه چیز تو آستینشه با پررویی جواب بزرگتر از خودشو می‌ده.

معلم و دانش‌آموز

دانش‌آموز: ببخشید، می‌خواستم چند دقیقه باهاتون صحبت کنم.

معلم: الان خیلی سرم شلوغه.

دانش‌آموز: آخه خیلی مهمه.

معلم: خیلی خوب، بگو، چیه؟ سریع بگو.

دانش‌آموز: من این مسئله‌ی ریاضی رو نمی‌فهمم.

معلم: ای بابا، این که خیلی ساده‌ست.

دانش‌آموز: برای من ساده نیست.

معلم: اگه دست از این همه بازیگوشی برداری، ساده می‌شه برات.

دانش‌آموز: من بازیگوشی نمی‌کنم. فقط این مسئله رو نمی‌فهمم.

معلم: نگرانش نباش.

مربی و بازیگر

بازیگر: خانم، ما می‌تونیم هفته‌ی دیگه تو مسابقه اولین نفر باشیم.

مربی: من از کجا بدونم؟ هنوز یه هفته مونده.

بازیگر: من تو همه‌ی تمرینا بودم، فکر می‌کنم حقمه که اولین نفر باشم.

مربی: تو کی هستی که اینو به من می‌گی؟ یهو مربی تیم شدی؟

بازیگر:نه، اما شما گفتید هر کی یه بار هم تمرین‌ها رو نیاد نمی‌تونه بازیو شروع کنه، ولی بعد اجازه

دادین.

مربی: تو کی هستی که به من می‌گی چطوری تیممو اداره کنم.

بازیگر: منظورم این نبود. من فقط می‌خوام که بازی کنم، همین.

مربی: نمی‌خوام کسی دور و بر من گریه زاری راه بندازه.

بازیگر: من چه کار کنم که اجازه بدین روز شنبه من بازیو شروع کنم؟

مربی: دست از پروفسوربازی بردار و اون دهن گندهتو ببند.

بعد از هر کدام از صحنه‌ها درباره‌ی آن بحث و تبادل نظر کنید. هر کدام از صحنه‌ها چطور به نتیجه

رسید. چه راه حل‌های دیگری برای آن پیشنهاد می‌کنید؟ تمام راه‌حل‌های دیگر، هر چند که عجیب باشد، را بپذیرید.

نکته‌ی این تئاترها این است که عادت کنیم که راه‌حل‌های متفاوتی برای یک مسئله پیدا کنیم. گروه را تشویق کنید

که تا آنجا که ممکن است راه‌حل‌های مختلفی برای پایان هر کدام از صحنه‌ها پیشنهاد کنند. سپس، از بازیگرانتان

بخواهید که خط خاصی را که باعث می‌شد تنش بالا بگیرد و خطی را که تنش را کمتر می‌کرد جدا کنند. از

مخاطبانتان بخواهید به همین سؤال جواب دهند و جواب‌های مختلف را بپذیرید. به نظر آنها کدام خطاها یا حرکت‌ها بود که باعث می‌شد تنش بالا بگیرد و یا تنش را کمتر می‌کرد؟ کسانی که خارج از صحنه هستند چیزهایی می‌بینند که شرکت کنندگان نمی‌بینند. آیا پیش آمد که هر کدام از شرکت‌کنندگان عصبانی به نظر برسند؟ اگر پیش آمد، اینجا شانس این را داریم که آن را کشف کنیم.

شرکت‌کنندگان می‌توانند یاد بگیرند که احساسات عصبانی را تشخیص دهند و آنها را به عنوان علامتی (هشدار دهنده) برای آرام شدن تجربه کنند. راحت‌تر است که زود، پیش از اینکه عصبانیت بیشتر از این احساسات را به آتش بکشد. اینجا همان جایی است که شما می‌خواهید بر روی پشت سر گذاشتن عادات قدیمی پافشاری کنید، و عادات جدید را از نو یاد بگیرید. راز آن در این است که همیشه آماده باشید. همه دوست دارند که کنترل کارها را خودشان در دست بگیرند. شما می‌توانید عصبانیت خود را کنترل کنید که از بالا گرفتن تنش جلوگیری بدهید. چند time outکنید. توصیه‌ی «شمردن تا ده» را به یاد داشته باشید. به عبارت دیگر به خودتان فرصت (نفس عمیق بکشید و بعد با خودتان حرف بزنید. می‌توانید مربی طرف خودتان باشید و خطهای زیر را به خود بگویید: «سخت نگیر»، «عصبانی نشو»، «خودتو عصبانی نکن»، «حواست به اون احساسات باشه.»

از خودتان بپرسید «واقعاً اینجا چه خبره؟» من چی می‌خوام؟ اون چی می‌خواد؟ آیا جز راه من و اون راه دیگه‌ای برای نگاه کردن به این مشکل وجود داره؟ آیا این مکالمه تبدیل به یه مسابقه‌ی صرف خواسته‌ها نشده که من باید اونو ببرم؟ آیا من حرف خودم رو پیش ببرم مهمتر از اینه که مشکل حل بشه؟ این جا همان جایی است (reassess or redefine) که ممکن است بخواهید که به ارزیابی یا تعریف دوباره‌ی مشکل بپردازید.

بعد از خودتان بپرسید که «یه کارمفید که می‌تونم درباره‌ی این مشکل انجام بدم چیه؟» به این مشکل از هر دو طرف نگاه کنید. من کدام بخش از این مشکل را می‌توانم عوض کنم؟ کدام بخش از آن را باید بپذیرم؟

حالا بازیگران خود را راهنمایی کنید که یکی از مکالمه‌ها را انتخاب کرده و آن را از نو بنویسند. خط‌ های خاصی را که باعث افزایش تنش می‌شود برای شخصیت‌ها بنویسید (بازنویسی کنید). همچنین خط‌های جدیدی

که تنش را کم می‌کند برای دیگر شخصیت‌ها به وجود آورید و زیر خط‌های کلیدی که موجب کاهش تنش می‌شود

) های شخصیتی که subtext خط بکشید. از دانش‌آموزان بخواهید که علاوه بر این، افکار درونی یا زیرمتن (

احساساتش را تحت کنترل دارد را در نظر گرفته، دخالت دهند ونام آن را «مونولوگ درونی» بگذارند. صحنه‌

های بازنویسی شده چیزی مانند نوشته‌های زیر خواهد شد:

معلم و دانش‌آموز

دانش‌آموز: ببخشید، می‌خواستم چند دقیقه باهاتون صحبت کنم.

معلم: الان خیلی سرم شلوغه.

دانش‌آموز: ممکنه یه وقتی به من بدین که بیام باهاتون صحبت کنم؟

معلم: خیلی خوب، بگو، چیه؟ سریع بگو.

دانش‌آموز: من این مسئله‌ی ریاضی رو نمی‌فهمم.

معلم: چرا اینقدر خنگی تو! (خط افزایش تنش)

دانش‌آموز: من هم بعضی وقتا فکر می‌کنم که خنگم. (خط کاهش دهنده‌ی تنش)

(مونولوگ درونی)

(من نمی‌ذارم عصبیانی‌ام کنه. آروم می‌مونم و کنترل این بحث رو دست می‌گیرم. اون احتمالاً از یه چیز

دیگه‌ای ناراحته، حالا اتفاقاً من هم اینجام. قبل از اینکه ادامه بدم یه نفس عمیق می‌کشم.

واسه همینه که احتیاج دارم دوباره برام توضیح بدین.

معلم: تو ازیگوشی. من کارای مهم‌تری دارم که انجام بدم.

دانش‌آموز: این برای من خیلی مهمه. یه وقتی هست که براتون مناسب باشه که کمکم کنید.

معلم: امروز نه. *(خارج می‌شود)*

دانش‌آموز: (مونولوگ درونی)

(تا ده می‌شمرم، و بعد از اینکه اون رفت جیغ می‌زنم. من که نمی‌تونم عوضش کنم، اما می‌تونم برای

مشکلم یه راه حل دیگه‌ای پیدا کنم که نخواد از اون کمک بگیرم.)

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بقیه‌ی صحنه‌ها رو مثل این صحنه دوباره‌نویسی کنید و در آنها نیز همین روند را دنبال کنید. ببینید که شرکت‌کنندگان خودشان چه تعداد گزینه‌های دیگربرای هر صحنه پیشنهاد می‌کنند. در هنگام بحث و گفتگو، بر روی کشف هسته‌ی توانایی‌های اجتماعی و عاطفی مثل کنترل ضربه‌ها، مدیریت خشم، و یافتن راه‌حل‌های خلاق برای بحران‌های اجتماعی تمرکز کنید.

انحراف از مسیر

وقتی ما از این آگاه شدیم که چه شروطی باعث می‌شود که پرچم‌های قرمز افراشته شود، نیاز داریم برخی علائم‌توقف مربوط به خودمان را کشف کنیم که بتوانیم از آنها برای خودمان استفاده کنیم. اولین قدم تحلیل عصبانیت‌مان است. تمرین‌های زیر به به گروهتان کمک خواهد کرد که درباره‌ی عصبانیت خود چیزهایی کشف کنند. از بازیگران خود بخواهید که حرف‌هایشان را به عمل درآورند. شرکت کنندگانتان را هدایت کنید که در دو صف روبروی هم قرار گیرند. هر شخص خط را تکرار می‌کند و همان‌طور که به صف روبرویی می‌پیوندد جواب خودش را به آن خط می‌افزاید. این کار به افراد شما این شانس را می‌دهد که جواب خود را به شکل فیزیکی نیز متحقق کند، و همان‌طور که حرف می‌زند، راه برود. می‌توانید دو یا سه جمله‌ی اول را خودتان بازی کنید تا به شرکت‌کنندگان نشان دهید که چگونه حرکت کمک می‌کند که کلمات و حرف‌ها جاری شوند، و درباره‌ی اینکه چه چیز شما را عصبانی می‌کند صادق باشید. تقسیم احساس شما، که رهبر گروه هستید، با شرکت‌کنندگان همان اندازه مهم است که تقسیم احساسات بازیگران. در طول این تمرین تمام بازیگران از یک صف به صف دیگری خواهند رفت.

من وقتی عصبانی می‌شم که . . . (بازیگر هنگامی که از صف خود به صف مقابل می‌رود گفته‌اش را تمام می‌کند.)

وقتی عصبانی هستم، معمولاً . . . (رد شو/ جواب بده)

من وقتی از مردم عصبانی می‌شم که اونا . . .

من وقتی از پدر و مادرم عصبانی می‌شم که اونا . . .

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من وقتی از معلمم عصبانی می‌شم که اون . . .

یه چیزی که منو واقعاً عصبانی می‌کنه اینه که . . .

وقتی عصبانی می‌شم، حس می‌کنم انگار. . .

من آخرین باری که عصبانی شدم (من). . .

من عصبانیتم رو کنترل می‌کنم با . . .

من با عصبانیت آدمای دیگه این‌جوری برخورد می‌کنم که . . .

درباره‌ی چیزهایی که دانش‌آموزان درباره‌ی خودشان و دیگران کشف کرده‌اند صحبت کنید. بحث را از قضاوت دور نگاه دارید. آیا کسی بود که برای یافتن چیزی که باعث عصبانیت می‌شد دچار مشکل شود؟ افراد درباره‌ی عصبانیت خود و دیگران چه حسی داشتند؟ البته مهم‌ترین سؤال این است که «من عصبانیتم رو با . . . کنترل می‌کنم.'' احتمالاً جواب‌هایی از قبیل «من کنترلش نمی‌کنم،» یا «من با یه مشت می‌کوبم بهشون» را هم خواهید شنید. این جا جایی است که تئاتر تکنیک‌هایی ارائه می‌دهد که از عهده‌ی این عصبانیت برآیید. هیچ‌کس دوست ندارد که خارج از کنترل باشد یا دوروبر کسانی باشد که خارج از کنترل باشند. شرکت‌کنندگان می‌توانند یاد بگیرند که نقش‌ها را متفاوت بازی کنند. اولین قدم برای رویارویی با عصبانیت استفاده از *علائم توقف* است، پیش از آن که به مرحله‌ی از دست دادن کنترل برسد.

علائم ایست

با هم به آناتومی عصبانیت نگاه می‌کنیم. زیرا شما هر چقدر بیشتر در مورد آن بدانید، بیشتر می‌توانید موقعیت را کنترل کنید. همان‌طور که پیشتر اشاره شد، سرزنش کردن دیگران یکی از عناصر اولیه خشم است که به ما اجازه می‌دهد خود را توجیه کنیم. اگر بتوانیم دیگران را سرزنش کنیم، مجبور نیستیم رفتارهای خودمان را تغییر دهیم. در عوض می‌توانیم به خشممان بچسبیم. آن‌چه که واقعاً ما را عصبانی می‌کند فکر کردن در باره‌ی عصبانیت است که در واقع سوختی برای آتش افروخته شده‌مان است. افکارمان درباره‌ی یک موقعیت بیشتر از خود آن موقعیت ما را عصبانی می‌کند. این افکار از نیاز ما به کنترل نشأت می‌گیرد.

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«من می‌خوام روش خودم روداشته باشم!»

«من باید راه خودمو داشته باشم!»

«من حقمه که راهی رو که می‌خوام پیش بگیرم!»

هر کدام از این احساسات افزایش می‌یابد تا آنجا که دیگر دیر می‌شود. مسلماً برایتان راحت‌تر خواهد بود که پیش از آنکه خشمتان قدرت بگیرد- آنچنان که برای ترمز گرفتن دیر شده باشد- از شدت آن بکاهید. به آن احساسات خشمگین گوش فرا دهید. بگذارید علائم هشداردهنده‌اتان باشند. تصور کنید این‌ها تابلوهای ایست هستند که شما را متوقف کرده یا از سرعتتان می‌کاهند.

نگاهی به صحنه‌های نقش‌بازی زیر که نشان می‌دهد خشم چگونه رشد می‌کند بیندازید. بازیگر شماره یک قصد دارد بازیگر شماره دو را سرزنش کند و مصمم است در حالی که خشم بازیگر شماره یک افزایش می‌یابد کار خودش را بکند (راه خودش را برود/ چیزی را که خودش می‌خواهد به دست آورد) این صحنه را بازی کنید و ببینید که بازیگر شماره دو برای اینکه مراقب نیاز بازیگر شماره یک باشد تا کجا می‌رود.

#1: تقصیرِ توِ!

#2: تقصیر من نیست.

#1: چرا هست! تو شروع کردی.

#2: تقصیر من ننداز.

#1: آخه فقط تقصیر توِ.

#2: تقصیر تو نیست؟

#1: نه خیر، تقصیر توِ. قبول کن!

#2: ---------

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فکر می‌کنید بازیگر شماره 2 چه راه حل‌هایی دارد؟ معمولاً یک مشکل سه گزینه با خود به همراه دارد: حل کردن آن، سر کردن با آن، و دوری کردن از آن. اگر بازیگر شماره دو اجازه دهد خشم دیگر بازیگران در او رخنه کند، او به راحتی احساس خواهد کرد که به دیوار فشارش می‌دهند و او هم باید وحشیانه فریاد بزند. او با سر در حال کوبیدن خود به دیوار خواهد بود، مگر اینکه راهی پیدا کند که به منظور رفع خشم دیگری فیوز خشم خودش را قطع کند.

این صحنه را چندین بار بازی کنید و ببینید بازیگران مختلف چه گزینه‌های پیشنهاد می‌کنند. حتماً پس از هر صحنه درباره‌ی احساس شرکت‌کنندگان بحث کنید. به برخی متغیرها در هر صحنه توجه کنید. آیا بازیگران شما سعی کردند بفهمند مشکل واقعاً چه بود؟ آیا احساسات با توجه به آنچه که بازیگر می‌پنداشت مشکل است شدیدتر می‌شد؟ آیا شاهدی برای این وجود داشت که از سوی هر کدام از طرف‌های بازی ارائه شود؟ آیا جملاتی مثل «کی اینو گفته،» «آیا یه جور دیگه نمی‌شه به این مسئله نگاه کرد،» «شاهدش چیه،» «چرا این‌قدر واسه این مسئله عصبانی هستی؟» پرسیده شد؟ اگر بازیگری توانسته است فیوز عصبانیت خود را قطع کند، از چه تکنیک‌هایی استفاده کرده است؟ آهنگ صدا و بیان چهره‌ای چگونه درجه‌ی عصبانیت را تحت تأثیر قرار می‌دهد؟ آیا زبان بدنی (بادی لانگوج) باعث شد تنش افزایش یا کاهش پیدا کند؟

صحنه را دوباره تکرار کنید و یکی از جواب‌های جدید بازیگر شماره دو را به آن بیافزایید. هر کدام از این خط‌ها راهی پیشنهاد می‌کند که فیوز عصبانیت بازیگر شماره یک را قطع کرده و رفع تنش را آغاز کند. هر کدام از شش خط پایین یکی از علائمی را که ما می‌توانیم برای کنترل عصبانیت خود به‌کار بریم نشان می‌دهد.

#1: تقصیر توِ!

#2: تقصیر من نیست.

#1: چرا هست! تو شروع کردی.

#2: تقصیر من ننداز.

#1: آخه فقط تقصیر توِ.

#2: تقصیر تو نیست؟

#1: نه خیر، تقصیر توِ. قبول کن!

#2: ---------

#2: باشه، حرفت قبوله. حالا خوشحال شدی؟

****

#2: ببین، می‌دونم چه احساسی داری، و من واقعاً متأسفم.

****

#2: کاش می‌تونستم چیزی رو که اتفاق افتاده عوض کنم، اما نمی‌تونم. تو می‌گی چه کار کنیم؟ پیشنهادی

داری؟

****

#2: چرا هر دومون تا ده نشمریم و از سر نو شروع به حرف زدن نکنیم؟

****

#2: راستش فکر می‌کنم نمی‌دونم راجع به چی حرف می‌زنی.

****

#2: می‌خوام قبل از این که داغ کنم آهسته کنم.

البته چیزی به نام "تنها راه" که فیوز عصبانیت شما یا دیگری را قطع کند وجود ندارد. چیزی به نام

پاسخ‌های آسان وجود ندارد، اما هر چه بیشتر تلاش کنیم یا انواع شیوه‌ها و راه‌حل‌ها را امتحان یا تمرین کنیم،

برای استفاده از آنها در وقت نیاز قابل‌تر خواهیم بود.

بیایید به علائم توقفی که برای قطع فیوز خشم از آنها استفاده کردیم نگاهی بیندازیم.

موقعیت را همان‌گونه که هست و گویی که کسی قادر به تغییر آن نیست بپذیرید. (باشه، من قبول دارم.

حالا راضی هستی؟)

سعی کنید با شخص دیگر یکدلی کنید. («ببین، می‌دونم چه احساسی داری، و واقعاً متأسفم.»)

مسؤلیت را بپذیرید و از شخص دیگر پیشنهادش را بپرسید. («کاش می‌تونستم چیزی رو که اتفاق افتاده

عوض کنم، اما نمی‌تونم. تو می‌گی چه کار کنیم؟ پیشنهادی داری؟ »)

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الدی اما گودی- یک نفس عمیق بکشید و تا ده بشمرید. («چرا هر دومون تا ده نشمریم و از سر نو شروع به حرف زدن نکنیم؟»)

با افکار سر و کله بزنید. مدارک و شواهد کجاست؟ («راستش فکر می‌کنم نمی‌دونم راجع به چی حرف می‌زنی.»)

APPENDIX B

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

2100 Lee Building
College Park, Maryland 20742-5121
301.405.4212 TEL 301.314.1475 FAX
irb@deans.umd.edu
www.umresearch.umd.edu/IRB

June 23, 2008

MEMORANDUM
Application Approval Notification

To: Dr. Hanne Mawhinney
                   Nassim Abdi Dezfooli
                   EDHI

From: Roslyn Edson, M.S., CIP
                   IRB Manager
                   University of Maryland, College Park

Re: **IRB Application Number: # 08-0365**
                   Project Title: "Developing and Documenting Girls Visions to Self-
                   expression and Community-Based Solutions for Promoting Girls'
                   Communication Skills"

Approval Date: **June 23, 2008**

Expiration Date: **June 23, 2009**

Type of Application: Initial

Type of Research: Non-Exempt

**Type of Review
For Application:**   Expedited

The University of Maryland, College Park Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved your IRB application. The research was approved in accordance with 45 CFR 46, the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, and the University's IRB policies and procedures. Please reference the above-cited IRB application number in any future communications with our office regarding this research.

Recruitment/Consent: For research requiring written informed consent, the IRB-approved and stamped informed consent document is enclosed. The IRB approval expiration date has been stamped on the informed consent document. Please keep copies of the consent forms used for this research for three years after the completion of the research.

Continuing Review: If you intend to continue to collect data from human subjects or to analyze private, identifiable data collected from human subjects, after the expiration date for this approval (indicated above), you must submit a renewal application to the IRB Office at least 30 days before the approval expiration date.

Modifications: Any changes to the approved protocol must be approved by the IRB before the change is implemented, except when a change is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. If you would like to modify the approved protocol, please submit an addendum request to the IRB Office. The instructions for submitting a request are posted on the IRB web site at:
http://www.umresearch.umd.edu/IRB/irb_Addendum%20Protocol.htm.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK

Institutional Review Board
Initial Application for Research Involving Human Subjects
Please complete this cover page AND provide all information requested in the attached instructions.

| Name of Principal Investigator (PI) or Project (NOT a student or fellow; must be UMD employee) | Dr. Hanne Mawhinney | el. | 301-405-4546 |

| Name of Co-Investigator (Co-PI) | | el. | |

| Department or Unit Administering the Project | Educational Leadership, Higher Education and International Education (EDHI) |

| E-Mail | hmawhinn@umd.edu | E-Mail | |

| Where should the IRB send the approval letter? | 2201 Benjamin Building, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742 |

| Name of Student Investigator | Nassim Abdi Dezfooli | el. | 301-741-6630 |

| E-Mail Address of Student Investigator | nassim@umd.edu |

Check here if this is a student master's thesis ☐ or a dissertation research project ■

| Project Duration (mo/yr – mo/yr) | uly 15 | -- | ept. 200 |

| Proje ct Title | Developing and Documenting Girls Visions to Self-expression and Community-Based Solutions for Promoting Girls' Communication Skills |

| Spons ored Project Date | Fund ing Agency | | O RAA Proposal |

(PLEASE NOTE: Failure to include data above may result in delay of processing

Vulnerable Populations: The proposed research will involve the following (Check all that apply): pregnant women ☐ , human fetuses ☐ , neonates ☐ , minors/children ■ , prisoners ☐ , students ☐ , individuals with mental disabilities ☐ individuals with physical disabilities ☐

Exempt or Nonexempt (Optional): You may recommend your research for exemption or non-exemption by completing the appropriate box below. For exempt recommendation, list

☐ Exempt---Category 1   *Or*   ■ Non-
                                                               Exempt

	If exempt, briefly describe the reason(s) for exemption. Your notation is a suggestion to the IRB Manager and IRB Co-Chairs.

	D	Signature of Principal Investigator or Faculty Advisor (PLEASE NOTE:
ate		Person signing above accepts responsibility for the research even when data

	D	Signature of Co-Principal Investigator

	D	Signature of Student Investigator
	5	

	D	REQUIRED Departmental Signature
		Name _____,

Title_____

(Please also print name of person signing above)

(PLEASE NOTE: The Departmental signature block should not be signed by the investigator or the student investigator's advisor.)

University of Maryland
Human Subjects Review Committee

Departmental Application for Review of Research Using Human Subjects
Department of Education Policy and Leadership

Primary Investigator: Dr. Hanne Mawhinney
Student Investigator: Nassim Abdi Dezfooli

Project Title: Developing and Documenting Girls Visions to Self-expression and Community-Based Solutions for Promoting Girls' Communication Skills

1. Abstract

This research project asks young girls to share their visions on best ways of self-expression for young women in their society and their ideas for solutions to empower all young women in the community to enhance their communication skills through arts-based interactive workshops. The purpose of the project is to find out: 1) How do young women define self-expression and its relationship to empowerment? 2) What do adolescent girls envision when they think of a powerful, strong, and successful woman? And 3) What solutions, practices, and policies do they imagine will lead to their ideal role models? The rational for this study is to allow young girls to define issues of oppression, lack of expression, and destructive silence for themselves and create collective visions and solutions for better self-expression and communication that enable their voices to be heard. Iranian women have limited practices in expressing their needs and feelings. Such silence and absent of their voices causes unpleasant situations both in individual and social levels. This participatory arts-based study allows young women to define these issues for themselves, as well as create their own solutions.

The acceptance of the participants will be based on first-come-first-serve order. Written permission of parents or guardians is a must for their acceptance to the summer camp program. Identities of participants will be kept confidential at all times. No names or geographic areas will be used during the reporting of the study. Participants will not be named or any other identifying information provided unless they request to be named and/or publicly provide other identifying information (and have the permission of parents or guardians in the cases of minors).Videos, field notes, and all other primary data will be kept locked for the duration of the study and will be deleted after that.

2. Subject Selection

Young girls from Tehran, capital of Iran, will be co-researchers and participants in this project. Girls will have the option of volunteering to participate. There is no formal recruitment process for the project. I will use informal face-to-face communications to invite participants. There will be no repercussions for participating or not participating in the study.

(a) The participants:
12 adolescent girls (12-15 years old) that will participate in the summer camp program for one week.

(b) The selection criteria for participants:
Any adolescent girl in the age of 12-15 who lives in Tehran and is interested to participate in the summer camp is eligible to register for the camp. The acceptance of the participants will be based on first-come-first-serve order. Written permission of parents or guardians is a must for their acceptance to the program.

(c) The aforementioned selection criteria will be used because:
The theater games and activities are appropriate only for age 12-15.
Educational programs in Iran are sex-segregated and as a female I am only eligible to invite girls as my participants.

(d) The total number of participants that will be recruited is 12.

3. Procedures

Total investment of time of the subjects
The participants will spend 6 days in the summer camp. The participants will commute to the campground during the week. The program will start at 9:00 am and will end at 6:00 pm of each day. Overall, the participants will spend 54 hours in the summer camp program during the one week of the study.

Theater Games
Over the one week of the camp, the student researcher and the camp counselors will engage girls in theater games and drama activities to practice expression skills. The scheduled activities have been selected based on art education practices. The activities will be categorized under art education pedagogy of Muslim countries.
Observations
The student researcher will observe and take notes from all of the activities over the one week. She will use codes to refer to individuals in her notes. No real name of the participants will be used in her observational memos/notes.

Videotaping
As a part of the summer camp activities, participants will learn to use cameras to videotape the camp activities and their fellows' performances. The student researcher will use their video recordings as supplementary to her observations. A written consent regarding the videotaping is required from all of the camp participants and their parents.

III. Secondary data
Secondary data sources will include publicly available documents including:

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Educational documents of other summer programs in Iran.
Booklets and journals of art education in Muslim countries.

4. Risks and Benefits
There are no perceived risks since all observations will be held in commonly accepted summer program settings and involving standard art education practices. The student researcher and all of the camp staff are from Iran and they are completely familiar with the cultural and political restrictions in the society. All of the activities offered by the summer program will follow the common cultural and political practices inside Iran. Educational practices like the one hold by the summer camp are commonly accepted and are not considered politically sensitive in Iran. Participants of this summer camp project will advantage from the educational benefits and progressive instructions of the art-based practices. They will learn strategies to improve their self-expression skills.

5. Confidentiality
Identities of participants will be kept confidential at all times. No names or geographic areas will be used during the reporting of the study. Videos, field notes, and all other primary data will be kept locked for the duration of the study. Participants will not be named or any other identifying information provided unless they request to be named and/or publicly provide other identifying information (and have the permission of parents or guardians in the cases of minors). Only the student researcher and her advisor will have access to data, which will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the student researcher's room. Data will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the student researcher's house upon return from Iran. All electronic data will be password protected on the student researcher's personal computer. All data will be deleted or destroyed one year after the dissertation defense. Also, all participants can decline to participate in the study as well as opt-out at any time.

6. Information and Consent Form
All information concerning the study will be provided in the informed consent forms (See Appendices A and B). The written consent forms will be translated into Farsi (See Appendices Af and Bf). Some participants will favor giving oral consent in which case oral consents will be obtained and audio taped.

7. Conflict of Interest
There are no conflicts of interest.

8. HIPAA Compliance
No protected health information will be used in this study.

9. Research Outside the United States

(a)   The student researcher is from Iran and came to the US in 2003. She is completely familiar with the political, social, and cultural context of the contemporary Iranian society, in which the study will be conducted. The student researcher is also a native speaker in Farsi.

(b)   Since Iran does not appear on the International Compilation of Human Subject Research Protections, US Dept. of Health and Human Services, Office for Human Relations Protections, it is assumed that Iran does not have articulated human subject protection requirements.

(c)   There are no risks for participants since discourse about fostering self-esteem and empowerment through educational practices is not considered sensitive. Additionally, the counselor team is also from Iran and they are all familiar with the cultural and/or political restrictions of the country. Moreover, being female, who was raised in Iran, completely familiar with the culture, and being a native speaker of Farsi will enhance the trust between researcher and participants.

Initials ------ Date--------

Parental Permission Form

Project Title	Developing and Documenting Girls Visions to Self-expression and Community-Based Solutions for Promoting Girls' Communication Skills
Why is this research being done?	This is a research project being conducted by Nassim Abdi Dezfooli at the University of Maryland, College Park. We are inviting your child to participate in this project because you and/or your child are interested to participate in an art-based summer camp program to improve your child's self-expression skills. The purpose of this summer camp project is to document and develop visions to self-expression and community-based solutions for promoting girls' communication skills.
What will I be asked to do?	The camp will be held for one week in a camp ground in Darous, Tehran. The participants will stay in the camp during the whole week. Over the one week of the camp, the student researcher and the camp counselors will engage girls in various theater games and drama activities to practice expression skills. The scheduled activities have been selected based on art education practices. The activities will be categorized under art education pedagogy of Muslim countries. For more information about the activities please refer to the camp workbook attached to this form. As a part of the educational program of the summer camp, participants will learn to use camera to videotape the camp activities and their fellows' performances. The student researcher will use their video recordings as supplementary to her observations. A written consent regarding the videotaping is required from all of the camp participants and their parents. The video tapes will be used only by the student researcher and her academic advisor for the purpose of this study and will not be used for any other purpose without all of the parents/guardians permissions.

Initials ------ Date--------

Project Title	Developing and Documenting Girls Visions to Self-expression and Community-Based Solutions for Promoting Girls' Communication Skills.
What about confidentiality?	This research project involves learning about camera and videotaping practices. The recordings that your child and other camp participant will produce during the one week camp will be used for research purposes only. We will do our best to keep your child's personal information confidential. To help protect her confidentiality, no names or geographic areas will be used during in the reporting of the study. Videos, field notes, and all other primary data will be kept locked for the duration of the study. Participants will not be named or any other identifying information provided unless they request to be named and/or publicly provide other identifying information (and have the permission of parents or guardians). Only the student researcher and her advisor will have access to data, which will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the student researcher's room. Data will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the student researcher's house upon return from Iran. All electronic data will be password protected on the student researcher's personal computer. All data will be deleted or destroyed one year after the dissertation defense. Also, all participants can decline to participate in the study as well as opt-out at any time. If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law. ___ I agree that my child be videotaped, audiotaped, and photographed during her participation in this study. ___ I do not agree that my child be videotaped, audiotaped, and photographed during her participation in this study.
What are the	There are no known risks associated with participating in

risks of this research?	this research project.

Initials ------ Date--------

Project Title	Developing and Documenting Girls Visions to Self-expression and Community-Based Solutions for Promoting Girls' Communication Skills.
What are the benefits of this research?	Participants of this summer camp project will advantage from the educational benefits and progressive instructions of the art-based practices. They will learn strategies to improve their self-expression skills.
Do I have to be in this research? May I stop participating at any time?	Your child's participation in this research is completely voluntary. She may choose not to take part at all. If you and/or she decide that she participates in this program, you/she may stop participating at any time. If you/she decide that she will not participate in this study or if you/she stop participating at any time, you/she will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify.
What if I have questions?	This research is being conducted by Dr. Hanne Mawhinney, Associate Professor in Educational Leadership, Higher Education and International Education (EDHI) Department at the University of Maryland, College Park. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact Dr. Mawhinney at: 2201 Benjamin Building, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742, 301-405-4546 or hmawhinn@umd.edu . If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact: **Institutional Review Board Office, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, 20742;** (e-mail) **irb@deans.umd.edu**; (telephone) 301-405-0678 This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.

Initials ------ Date--------

Project Title	Developing and Documenting Girls Visions to Self-expression and Community-Based Solutions for Promoting Girls' Communication Skills.	

Statement of Age of Subject and Consent
        [Please note: Parental
        consent always needed
        for minors.]
	Your signature indicates that:
	     you are at least 18 years of age;,
	     the research has been explained to you;
	     your questions have been fully answered; and
	     you freely and voluntarily choose to let your child participate in this research project.	

Signature and Date
        [Please add name, signature, and date lines to the final page
        of your consent form]
	NAME OF PARENT	

	SIGNATURE OF PARENT	
	DATE	

Appendix b
 Assent Form for the Participant

          Bayan Camp is a one week program to help you develop your expression skills. During the one week of the summer camp you will find the opportunity to engage in performance games and theater activities. Through these games you will be able to discuss your issues with your friends and find collective solutions to your concerns. Also, you will learn how to use camera and recording to express your viewpoints.

          The program will start from 9:00 am and will end at 6:00 pm of each day. Your participation in the programs will be observed for an academic research about use of theater to improve self-expression skills. Your name and personal information will not be used in the report of this study and the data will be kept as confidential information. Your participation in this project will be based on your personal interest (i.e. volunteer) and you may resign to attend the program at any point of the study.

          By signing this form you will agree to participate in Bayan Summer Camp program.

Name of the participant:

Signature of the participant:

Date:

Appendix af

فرم اجازه والدین

امضاء ------------- تاریخ-----------

عنوان پژوهش	استفاده از نمایش به عنوان وسیله‌ای برای ابراز وجود: بالا بردن سطح آگاهی و جمع‌آوری نظرات دختران ایرانی درباره‌ی مسئله‌ی ابراز وجود و یافتن راه حل‌های مشترک برای یافتن فرصت.
چرا این پژوهش انجام می‌شود؟	این پژوهش توسط نسیم عبدی ذزفولی در دانشگاه مریلند (شهر کالج پارک) انجام می‌شود. ما از فرزندان شما دعوت می‌کنیم تا در این پژوهش شرکت کنند زیرا شما و فرزندانتان علاقه مند به شرکت در اردوی تابستانی بیان هستید. اردوی بیان دوره‌ی آموزشی-تفریحی تابستانی است که به ارتقاء مهارت‌های ابراز وجود کمک می‌کند. هدف این اردو بهبود و ارتقاء مهارت‌های ابراز وجود و ارتباط میان دختران می‌باشد.
من چه کارهایی باید بکنم؟	این اردو در خیابان دروس شهر تهران به مدت 6 روز از ساعت 9 صبح تا 6 عصر برگزار می‌شود. در طول این اردو محقق دانشجو، دختران شرکت کننده و مسئولان برگزار کننده اردو در فعالیت‌های تئاتری مختلفی شرکت می‌کنند. این فعالیت‌ها براساس موضوعات مندرج در برنامه آموزشی و هنر کشورهای اسلامی می‌باشد. لطفا برای اطلاعات بیشتر در مورد فعالیت‌های اردو به دفترچه پیوست این فرم مراجعه فرمایید.
درباره‌ی خصوصی نگه داشتن داده‌ها	دختران در این اردو همچنین نحوه استفاده از دوربین فیلمبرداری جهت ضبط نمایش‌های اردو را فرامی‌گیرند. محقق-دانشجو از فیلم تهیه شده جهت انجام تحقیق استفاده خواهد کرد. این فیلم‌ها فقط و فقط توسط محقق-دانشجو استفاده می‌شوند و بدون کسب اجازه از والدین و اردوزیان هیچگونه استفاده دیگری نخواهند داشت. استفاده تحقیقی از این فیلم‌ها تنها پس از کسب رضایت‌نامه کتبی از والدین صورت خواهد گرفت. یکی از فعالیت‌های مربوط به این پژوهش یادگیری فیلمبرداری است. فیلم‌های تهیه شده توسط فرزندان شما در این اردو تنها جهت امور تحقیق توسط محقق-دانشجو استفاده خواهد شد. ما در حد امکان تلاش می‌کنیم تا اطلاعات شخصی فرزند شما محفوظ بماند. برای این منظور، اسم و محل زندگی اردوزی به هیچ وجه در تحقیق استفاده نخواهد شد. فیلم و اطلاعات شخصی اردوزیان در یک صندوق امانت نگهداری می‌شود که فقط توسط محقق-دانشجو و استاد راهنمای وی قابل دسترسی خواهد بود. اطلاعات شخصی افراد فقط در صورت دریافت رضایت‌نامه کتبی از آنها و اولیائشان استفاده خواهد شد. سایر اطلاعات الکترونیکی مربوط به اردوزیان فقط در کامپیوتر شخصی محقق-دانشجو در یک محیط دارای رمزورود ذخیره خواهند شد که فقط توسط محقق-دانشجو یا استاد راهنمای وی قابل دسترسی هستند. این اطلاعات یک سال پس از فارغ التحصیلی محقق-دانشجو امحاء خواهند گردید. همچنین تمام شرکت‌کنندگان در این پژوهش می‌توانند در هر زمان از ادامه شرکت در پژوهش انصراف دهند. نکته: اطلاعات شخصی و اسم شما در طول این تحقیق و همینطور در تمام مقالاتی که براساس این تحقیق ارائه خواهند گردید محفوظ می مانند. -----من موافقت می‌کنم که صدا، تصویر و فیلم فرزندم ضبط شود. -----من موافقت نمی‌کنم که صدا، تصویر و فیلم فرزندم ضبط شود.
امضاء ------------- تاریخ-----------	

عنوان پژوهش	استفاده از نمایش به عنوان وسیله‌ای برای ابراز وجود: بالا بردن سطح آگاهی و جمع‌آوری نظرات دختران ایرانی درباره‌ی مسئله‌ی ابراز وجود و یافتن راه حل‌های مشترک برای یافتن فرصت.	
خطرات شرکت در این تحقیق چیست؟	هیچ خطری وجود ندارد	
مزایای شرکت در این تحقیق چیست؟	شرکت کنندگان در این اردو از مزایای آن بهره می‌برند. به عنوان مثال، آنان راه‌های مختلف ابراز وجود را فرامی‌گیرند.	
آیا من مجبور به شرکت در این پژوهش هستم؟ آیا هر زمان که بخواهم می‌توانم از ادامه انصراف دهم؟	شرکت فرزند شما در این اردو کاملا اختیاری است. او ممکن است که نخواهد در تمام فعالیت‌ها شرکت کند. چنانچه شما یا فرزندتان تصمیم به عدم شرکت در این اردو را گرفت، در هر لحظه می‌تواند انصراف دهد و این تصمیم هیچگونه جریمه‌ای برایش نخواهد داشت.	
سئوالات خود را از کجا بپرسم؟	این تحقیق توسط دکتر هانا ماهینی، استادیار دانشگاه مریلند، در دانشکده سیاستگذاری بین المللی آموزش انجام می‌شود. شما می‌توانید با دکتر ماهینی با شماره تلفن 3014054546 و یا آدرس آدرس ایمیل hmawhinn@umd.edu زیر تماس بگیرید: 2201 ساختمان بنجامین دانشگاه مریلند کالج پارک، مریلند، 20742 سئوالات خود در مورد حقوق قانونی خود در این تحقیق، و یا گزارش در مورد هرگونه آسیب مربوط به این تحقیق را می‌توانید به آدرس زیر ارسال نمایید: (IRBدفتر بررسی تحقیقات دانشگاهی) دانشگاه مریلند کالج پارک، مریلند،20742 یا تلفن irb@deans.umd.edu3014050678	
رضایت‌نامه سنی برای اردوزی (برای افراد زیر سن قانونی، رضایت‌نامه والدین الزامیست)	امضاء شما نشان می‌دهد که: شما حداقل 18 سال تمام دارید. این پژوهش برای شما کامل توضیح داده شده است. به همه سئوالات شما پاسخ داده شده است. شما آزادانه و داوطلبانه به فرزند خود اجازه شرکت در این پژوهش را داده‌اید.	
لطفا نام، تاریخ و امضاء خود را در صفحه آخر رضایت‌نامه درج نمایید.	نام ولی:-- امضاء :-- تاریخ:--	

Appendix bf

فرم اعلام موافقت برای اردوزی

اردوی بیان اردویی یک هفته‌ای است که برای کمک به شما جهت یادگیری مهارت‌های ابراز وجود و ارتباط موثر برگزار شده است. در طول این یک هفته، شما در برنامه‌ها و بازی‌های مختلفی شرکت خواهید نمود که شما را قادر می‌سازد تا در مورد موضوعات مختلف با دوستانتان به بحث و تبادل نظر بپردازید و راه حل‌های مشترکی را برای مسائل مطرح شده در مباحثات بیابید. همچنین شما نحوه استفاده و اصول صحیح فیلم‌برداری را فرا خواهید گرفت.

برنامه‌ها هر روز از ساعت 9 آغاز و در ساعت 6 عصر به پایان می‌رسند. مشارکت و کار شما در این اردو جهت یک تحقیق دانشگاهی در مورد استفاده از نمایش برای بهبود مهارت‌های ارتباطی و ابراز وجود مورد استفاده قرار خواهد گرفت.

اسم و سایر اطلاعات شخصی شما بطور کاملا محرمانه تلقی خواهند شد و به هیچ عنوان در گزارش نهایی تحقیق ذکر نخواهد گردید. شرکت شما در این تحقیق براساس علاقه شما-بعنوان داوطلب- می‌باشد. چنانچه مایل باشید می‌توانید در هر لحظه از ادامه شرکت در اردو انصراف دهید.

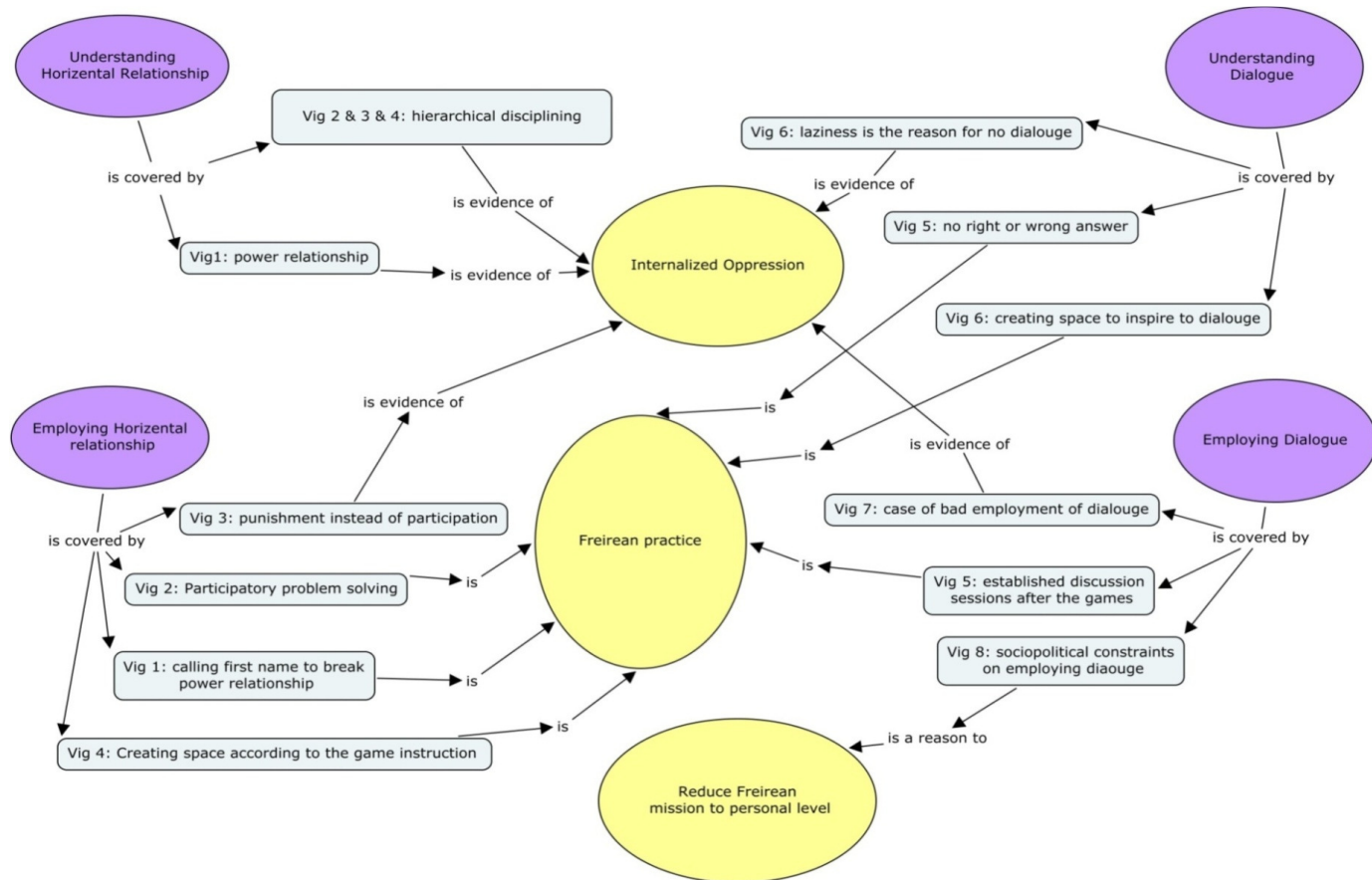با امضاء این فرم شما توافق خود مبنی بر شرکت در اردوی تابستانی بیان را اعلام می‌دارید.

اسم اردوزی: --
امضاء اردوزی: ------------------------------------
تاریخ:---

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APPENDIX C

Demonstration of findings: understanding and employing Freirean pedagogy and the challenges in the

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