

Popular education as a method for teaching and learning strategies in an Occupational Therapy Program at Catholic University of Temuco, Chile: legitimating the popular wisdom

Michelle Lapierre

Catholic University of Temuco, Temuco, Araucania, Chile

Introduction: In our Occupational Therapy (OT) Program has been included strategies based on Popular Education (PE), validating the popular wisdom as an important fount of professional knowledge and learning.

Objective: To include in an OT course some PE-based teaching and learning strategies in order to achieve a better, motivating and inclusive learning.

Methodology: A pilot course that has very difficult and scientific contents has been defined and several PE-based strategies are included during the semester.

Results: Strategies used were: 1) students' community problems were analyzed and linked with course contents, such as contamination; 2) students monitors teaching the same contents that teacher, but through another techniques related to their competences, such as comics, dancing, theatre plays, poetry, etc.; 3) learning communities of students that have life experiences related to contents, such as having a disabled family member; 4) popular communication media as a valid fount of knowledge, such as cartoons, popular songs, photography, fiction novels, etc., 5) videos of interviews with community and non-professional people linked with course contents as a legitimate knowledge for professional learning. Related to satisfaction and learning results, 97,6% say they could obtain technical and professional knowledge through PE-based strategies; 100% say they develop generals and specifics competences, and 97,6% say the course was highly motivating.

Conclusion: PE is a valid and important strategy for technique and professional learning in OT. In a world where scientific method is overvalued, the popular wisdom and methodologies that highlight it, enable a collaborative, motivating and situated learning.