Revisiting Education for Co-operatives: Exploring the Value of Signature Pedagogies

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Educational practices have always played an important role in developing approaches that reflect the plurality of forms of co-operative organisations. Arguably, education is fundamental to the endurance of the co-operative movement. While these practices are intended to reproduce the unique knowledge and social structures that inform co-operatives, they may not always reflect the intrinsic and distinctive values of the co-operative principles. In fact, inappropriate educational practices have had the effect of weakening the co-operative movement by perpetuating a mindset that fosters social and economic inequities. I explore key constructs from education theory and their relevance to pedagogical practices that are intended to support education for co-operatives. In this paper, I argue that education for co-operatives could benefit greatly from identifying and developing signature pedagogies.

Introduction

Education and training have been presented as a fundamental value of the co-operative movement and have been one of the enduring strengths of the co-operative model. I believe they are one of the key qualities that sets our work apart from other sectors of society. The enduring legacy of the co-operative movement proves that Principle 5, education, training, and information, is more than aspirational and is integral to our work (MacPherson, 1979). However, as the co-operative model continues to wax and wane in terms of new developments or the sustainability of existing co-operatives, much of the educational foci tend to be on content and not so much on technique. To adapt Shulman's (2005a) ideas on legal education, approaches to education for co-operatives tend to focus on thinking about co-operation, but not necessarily on the realities of operating or being a part of a co-operative while simultaneously maintaining an understanding of the nature of co-operation. I believe that any educational practice must account for the thinking and the practice of co-operatives as a tapestry rather than a set of disjointed elements. The purpose of this paper is to explore key constructs from education theory and examine their relevance to pedagogical practices intended to support, cultivate, and maintain co-operative organisations.

Supporters and practitioners of education for co-operatives have developed materials and programmes that are innovative and integral to sustaining and building the movement. Accordingly, the primary approach has been to develop materials and content aimed at supporting co-operatives in form and function. What is less clear has been how the value of co-operation, which is pivotal for the movement, is intentionally incorporated into the learning processes (MacPherson, 1987). Recognising that education for co-operatives requires a unique approach has been given a reduced prominence due to the challenge and confusion arising from the proliferation of co-operative programmes in educational contexts across disciplines; it is quite rare that any of those disciplines include the co-operative model as a significant contributor to modern society.

The ubiquity of co-operative programmes has created confusion and has weakened efforts to focus on education for co-operatives, which I feel has hastened the need to consider and reflect on how we, as co-operators, approach educational practices for co-operative development. For the purposes of this paper and to reduce the aforementioned confusion, I will be referring to education for co-operatives rather than co-operative education. I believe that while there is a need to demonstrate that co-operative education and education for co-operatives are different, they do not need to be seen as mutually exclusive.

Understanding what educational considerations are made when delivering knowledge content has not been clear or coherent; although much thought and research has gone into developing knowledge content that is relevant to co-operatives and co-operative development (Co-operative College, 2015). I assert that these considerations fall within the domain of pedagogy. There is certainly a tendency to seek a common definition of pedagogy, which can be helpful, but can result in complications. Leach and Moon (2008, p. 6) "view pedagogy as a dynamic process, informed by theories, beliefs and dialogue, but only realised in the daily interactions of learners and teachers in real settings". Pedagogy as a dynamic process can allow for broader reflexive attention by an educator as part of the learning environment, which can expose the same tensions found in modern democratic societies (Waring & Evans, 2014). Navigating this dynamic will involve an appreciation of the necessity of reproducing hegemonic social processes while countering them at the same time (Waring & Evans, 2014).

Typically, pedagogical practices are intended to reproduce the unique knowledge and social structures that inform co-operatives, but they may not always reflect the intrinsic and distinctive nature of the co-operative principles (MacPherson, 1987). Inappropriate educational practices, or pedagogies, have had the effect of weakening the co-operative movement by perpetuating a mindset that fosters social and economic inequities. For example, an overemphasis on economic knowledge and traditional management techniques can diminish the importance of the value of co-operation that is integral and embedded within the co-operative movement (Borzaga & Galera, 2012; Kinyuira, 2017; Sousa & Herman, 2012).

It is understandable that one's pedagogical practices may not be foremost on the mind of an educator supporting co-operative development, but they can have a profound influence of enhancing or diminishing a learner's experience. As an adult educator in both Higher Education and in community-based settings, I have come to appreciate that developing one's pedagogy can initially be seen as analogous to developing one's research methodology, where one's personal values are embedded in one's practice. Further, one's pedagogy will involve the purposeful selection of techniques (e.g. group activities, films, etc.) that can foster meaningful learning as long as they are approached in a way that is consistent with values and ideals congruent with the context. This can lead to what Rogers (1959) refers to as significant learning.

As with all methodologies, it is important to consider how the relationship between knowledge content and ideology can inform the development and application of educational techniques that are consistent with the purpose. In the next section, I will use a well-known case of co-operative development as a response to the alienating nature of economic practices that oppress and disenfranchise communities. While not wanting to dwell too much on the history of

the co-operative movement in Canada, the case of the Antigonish Movement demonstrates the efficacy of integrating community development into a co-operative development project.

Why Educational Approaches Matter — Exploring the Antigonish Movement

Although it is a truism for many associated with the co-operative movement, adult education has played a pivotal role in supporting and developing co-operatives (Shaw, 2006). The hope for adult educators is that the application of adult education principles and practices can contribute to the transformation of society (Agirre et al., 2009). A case in point is the Antigonish Movement from Cape Breton, Canada (Coady, 1939; Dodaro & Pluta, 2012). While there is much to learn about the Antigonish Movement, ultimately it can help us to better appreciate the importance of understanding how unique approaches to developing education for co-operatives can have an impact on changing communities.

Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, is located in Eastern Canada. Coal-mining and fisheries have traditionally been the dominant industries (Muise, 2015). In the early 1900s, economic growth was largely linked to investment from large corporations focused on resource extraction and not strengthening the local economy; a reality that exists across Canada. The communities throughout Cape Breton became dependent on meeting quotas and accepting prices established by foreign entities, which largely reflected volatile market conditions (Dodaro & Pluta, 2012). Consequently, the workers of the mines and the fishers were left to acquiesce to the conditions and demands made by those entities. The result was a level of precarity that left communities in limbo, weakened, and later depleted. While many were aware that options were available, there was no concerted effort to help those communities understand and explore options that could result in strengthening communities (Lotz & Welton, 1987). One of those options explored was the co-operative model.

Two priests, Tommy Tompkins and Moses Coady, recognised that communities were being systemically weakened due to the reliance on foreign entities as being the primary intermediary for purchasing the resources extracted, and for providing employment that was often below a living wage (Lotz & Welton, 1997). Tompkins had decided to work with fishers to not only raise awareness of the inherent inequities of the capitalist system, but also to demonstrate that local control of the resources could lead to greater economic stability (Dodaro & Pluta, 2012). According to Tompkins, the primary means to improvement was through education, specifically adult education (Lotz & Welton, 1997).

For many co-operators in Canada, co-operative development as a movement really started with education and access to what Thompkins referred to as scientific knowledge (Lotz & Welton, 1997), which was made possible through the extension department of St. Francis Xavier University. I do want to note that the credit union (or *caisses populaires*) movement had been established in Quebec by Alfonse DesJardins (MacPherson, 1979), so a co-operative was not an unknown entity in Canada. As will be described below, the focus on education made by Tompkins and Coady focused on integrating a community development mindset that used the business model as a vehicle for social change.

In the 1930s, Moses Coady (1939) described the work that went into developing the co-operative movement in *Masters of their own destiny: The story of the Antigonish Movement of adult education through economic cooperation*. Coady describes in great detail the role of St. Francis Xavier University's (SFXU) extension department (located in Antigonish, Nova Scotia) to inform and educate ordinary citizens of their co-operative rights and obligations as members of society. Coady highlighted how community organising was the means by which individuals could improve their lives. Coady used what we now refer to as popular education approaches to bring knowledge to the people and for the people (Welton, 1987). The purpose of the emerging education programme was to engage community members actively in the learning process, fostering a sense of empowerment and enabling them to address economic and social challenges arising from the dominant capitalist economic system (Lotz & Welton, 1987).

According to Coady (1939), individuals become involved in co-operative development once they are educated and informed. He stated that adult education is the means to inform and can lead the charge for personal and social change. Thus, he enthusiastically adhered to the commitment of the extension department of SFXU to initiate a community development programme geared to educating the people. For Coady, newly developed skills, acquired knowledge, and commitment to community should become the primary frame for putting ideas into action.

Moreover, Coady (1939) argues that beginning the development process means involving the people who will benefit from knowledge and information. One of the strategies he applied was to hold meetings of both larger and smaller groups in order to expose individuals to ideas of personal responsibility and to create opportunities for participation. These sessions occurred at kitchen tables, in community halls, or study groups, which were viewed as the safest and most relevant for the learners. At these meetings, the issues discussed were directly relevant to the people present and the outcome of developing co-operatives. Coady would listen to the nature of the hesitancy and urged people to get involved, but the meetings were meant to change the attitudes and understanding of those present.

The strategies developed and applied by Tompkins and Coady worked well for the Antigonish Movement because they were developed within and for the community. While the issues at the present time are far more complex, and a lot more is at stake, an important lesson from the Antigonish Movement is that meaningful and powerful change emerges from understanding the needs and circumstances of the grassroots community. It is my view that Coady was able to develop, among other things, a methodology to educate, engage, and change individuals towards embracing the co-operative model of economic co-operation as a means to build community and enhance agency. The methodology included a mindset intended to bring dignity to the people. It motivated people because what was learned would have immediate value and was not seen as uncertain in terms of the utility.

Based on the Antigonish Movement case, it is clear that education for co-operatives needs to be seen as requiring more than knowledge, or science, as Tompkins focused on (Lotz & Welton, 1987). It is common for individuals to say that education is the answer, and the leaders of the Antigonish Movement felt the same way. However, the Antigonish Movement demonstrated that social change (i.e. for groups and/or individuals) can result when educational practices are approached in a unique and less performative way. There were several key learnings that emerged from adapting the educational practices to the community, some of which include: the recognition that people's lives could be improved upon by accessing relevant learning opportunities; understanding that keeping or limiting access to knowledge in different forms results in perpetuating inequality and oppression; knowledge and information had to be brought to the people in ways that are relevant and practical; and finally, that communities possess their own ways of understanding their circumstances and adult educators need to ensure that their efforts respect those ways.

Tompkins and Coady approached education for co-operatives as the basis for social change, which arose from an appreciation of the community and economic circumstances in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. The educational approaches in the Antigonish Movement identified knowledge development as crucial, but the means was as important as the content itself. Tompkins and Coady encouraged the value of adult education as the main way to develop co-operative enterprises. It is now better understood that in fact they were advocating that learning by adults needed to be approached differently by making the practical meaningful.

In summary, the Antigonish Movement demonstrates two things. First, supporting community-based learning and second, applying fundamentals of adult learning. Interestingly, although Eduard Lindeman (1926) published his book on the meaning of adult education, there is no evidence that any member of the Antigonish Movement had applied Lindeman's assertion that the role of the adult educator is to facilitate learning rather than serve as a traditional teacher. By being in the community, Tompkins and Coady were made aware immediately that there were particular barriers (e.g. low levels of literacy) that prevented people from attending a formal

institution that would have allowed them to learn what they needed in order to have greater control over the challenges they were facing (e.g. unemployment and exploitation).

A barrier that could have prevented community involvement from supporting the learning about the co-operative model was the low level of reading ability within the community. Normally, this reality would have reduced the potential for a positive outcome. However, in this case, the need for improved literacy among the community members was built into the pedagogy by bringing knowledge to the people and being immersed in dialogic interactions and meaning-making, rather than relying on text alone, which is very much akin to the popular education approaches espoused by Paulo Friere (1970) nearly 50 years later.

Relationship Between Knowledge and Pedagogy

The case of the Antigonish Movement was certainly unique, but not necessarily uncommon from an international perspective. For instance, in the development of New Lanark, and what has become known as Owenism, education was also seen as the vehicle for social change, where the context (that is, supporting the community) of the learning was as important as the knowledge acquired. Yet, explicit theories of education guiding the efforts to educate for co-operative development continues to be sparse and loosely applied. The important role that learning theories have in developing educational approaches is often considered as a secondary part to designing educational practices for community settings and supporting different forms of co-operatives.

As educators, when we are developing or planning for the delivery of content that supports specific learning objectives, we often implicitly apply learning theories that fall under one or more theoretical frameworks, including: behaviourism, constructivism, pragmatism, and radicalism. Each framework also contains theories that can apply to understanding different social phenomena. For example, social and situated learning is generally understood to be within the realm of constructivism. An educator will support a person's learning in ways that incorporate elements of a particular theoretical framework, as well as her personal beliefs related to the topic, which will in turn inform one's theory of knowledge. In essence, we refer to how a particular epistemology, or aspects of different ones, can support a learner's process; that is, how one believes knowledge is acquired or developed will inform whether content is delivered as a non-interactive lecture or constructed collaboratively. However, understanding how one's epistemology is reflected in our pedagogy can be quite daunting, or perhaps not as thoroughly studied as it could be for community-based contexts.

As educators supporting co-operative development, we make choices to create and develop our content based on what we believe to be relevant and appropriate for the field, which again will reflect a particular stance regarding what is or is not relevant knowledge. What one finds is the immediate jump from learning theory to pedagogy, which can work in some instances, but may not reflect the idiosyncrasies or unique contexts where co-operative organisations are found. Figure 1 shows a common approach to teaching.

Figure 1: Common approach to teaching
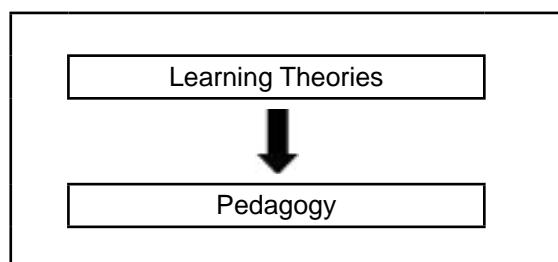
The direct association outlined in Figure 1 can be found in learning contexts where an educator may have a preference of one epistemology over another. For example, if a learning outcome

is to understand the nature of governance, an educator may convey to a learner what is expected from a governance process and she is then tested on that information. Alternatively, if an educator focuses on experiencing governance, the way a person can learn best reflects an appropriate pedagogy that focuses on experiencing governance. In both cases, the learning outcome is the same, but the person may not in fact understand that governance may look very different in co-operative organisations. For that reason, I feel that it has become increasingly vital to consider what goes into making decisions about how to deliver content, otherwise we are merely reinforcing what Freire (1970) referred to as 'banking' education. Figure 1 also shows that there could be a mediating influence that will inform the choices one makes when delivering content.

Now, why should we pay attention to our pedagogy in such a deep way? Understanding the nature of learning for co-operatives and co-operation includes understanding mental processes to learning that are grounded in particular experiences and values. But a fundamental reason is because our communities of learners require it. Our pedagogical approaches should emphasise the necessity of interactions that are pro-social. As educators, we can support new and innovative ways to learn and interact with the world because that is the reality of working in communities. Bringing prescribed approaches or techniques to co-operative development without integrating the underlying principles of co-operation can lead to questionable and unanticipated consequences for the co-operative movement. In my mind, approaching education for co-operatives requires the educator to prepare to implement a repertoire of pedagogical techniques. However, there must common purpose behind the application of a technique, which can in fact lead us to identify signature pedagogies that work best to support our community of learners, and can result in strengthening the co-operative movement.

According to Shulman (2005b, p. 52) signature pedagogies "are types of teaching that organize the fundamental ways in which future practitioners are educated for their new professions". Some pedagogies are similarly applied across areas of study such as problem-based learning and case-based learning, and thus may not be unique to a discipline. However, it is the practice and application of a pedagogical approach that will assist in determining whether it is a signature pedagogy or not. See Table 1 for examples of signature pedagogies for some areas of study.

Table 1. Examples of signature pedagogies

Teacher education	Lecture/practicums
Chemistry	Lab work
Medicine	Observation/practicum
Music	Composition/performance
Area of Study	Signature pedagogy
Management	Cases/projects/practicum

In the Table 1 examples, each area of study may include some form of lecture format or have required readings, however, with signature pedagogies the intention is to move from a teacher-centred focus towards fostering greater learner engagement and collaborative problem-solving.

In a signature pedagogy, the relationship between the educator and the learner is presented in way that is distinctive to the discipline. For example, in medical education, the educator will ensure the learning environment involves observation and opportunities to witness and practice the norms of the discipline. In order to understand the purpose of a co-operative, a person must learn the values of co-operatives and must then experience those values in some capacity. In essence, our pedagogy is a reflection of our association and the principles and values we share. In the Antigonish case explained earlier, the members of the community were successful because Coady and Tompkins not only explained the values of co-operation, but also demonstrated them in practice. The list provided in Table 1 may seem unsurprising, but those pedagogies can determine the scope and purpose of a technique,

and can support the exploration and integration of unique knowledge from different disciplines (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 2: Role for signature pedagogies
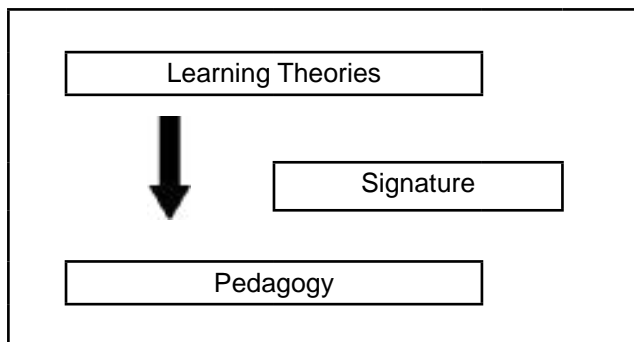
I have known housing co-operative managers who shared with me that their background in social work helped them to understand and support the needs of different members. In a co-operative management programme, the idea of incorporating social work principles may seem incongruent with the learning objectives, but are in fact very much aligned with the co-operative values of self-help, equality, equity, and social responsibility.

One of the challenges of exploring signature pedagogies within an educational context is that establishing one's pedagogy can be quite complex, as it requires considerations beyond technique, and often beyond the learning outcomes associated with a discipline. To that end, identifying a signature pedagogy for education for co-operatives can be quite complicated. The content knowledge and pedagogical practices can cross multiple disciplinary and epistemological boundaries, which can explain why education for co-operatives is expected to be transdisciplinary, but may discourage educators from reflecting on their choices for techniques. Yet, the complexity can also be presented as an opportunity to strengthen how we approach education for co-operatives in ways that may better mirror the reality faced by many co-operatives across society.

I believe that in the context of a co-operative movement, one way to reconcile the potential indeterminacy or build bridges across the disciplines is to focus on the values that distinguish co-operation from competition. In addition to the seven principles of co-operatives, values such as self-help, democracy, equity, and solidarity (to name but a few) help to distinguish the co-operative organisation or business from investor-owned firms or public sector services. Furthermore, these values and principles transcend epistemological boundaries, can usefully inform the signature pedagogy, and can be found in its structure.

Shulman (2005b) states that a signature pedagogy has three dimensions: surface structure, deep structure, implicit structure. Let's explore each of these dimensions using examples of known pedagogies.

Surface structure

According to Schulman, the surface structure involves "concrete, operational acts of teaching and learning, of showing and demonstrating, of questioning and answering, of interacting and withholding, of approaching and withdrawing" (Shulman, 2005b, pp. 54-55). Aspects of the surface structure dimension is where the educator initiates a learning activity or assessment strategy that can focus on a particular learning objective. The surface structure encompasses the instructional methods, learning activities, assessment strategies, use of technology, and considerations associated with the learning environment. An example of the surface structure would be the use of film to introduce an idea relevant to co-operatives. The educator would select a film about a co-operative business, organisation, or initiative that reveals not only the key idea, but how it occurs within the appropriate context.

Deep structure

Shulman (2005b) states that a pedagogy's deep structure is "a set of assumptions about how best to impart a certain body of knowledge and know-how" (p. 55). In this structure, the educator can consider the content and knowledge in ways that appreciate and recognise the diversity of learners, as well as aligning any instruction with the field. The assumptions may focus on epistemological considerations associated with a profession or discipline. They may also reflect the set of assumptions regarding the culture or identity of the profession or discipline. In the case of a co-operative business, there could be a greater tolerance to explore innovative accounting methods (see Mook, 2013) that reflect the values and principles of the co-operative movement. Whereas, in a typical investor-owned firm, innovations in accounting might not be as welcomed. Other aspects of this structure include determining learning outcomes, considering the social and cultural contexts, and learning theories relevant to the profession or discipline.

Implicit structure

The third dimension is the implicit structure, which is "a moral dimension that comprises a set of beliefs about professional attitudes, values, and dispositions" (Shulman, 2005b, p. 55). In this dimension, the educator will approach learning by considering how a set of values or beliefs — including those of the field, the learners, and of the instructor herself — can inform the learning process. The implicit structure shapes one's educational practices by accounting for and integrating the cultural norms and values of the profession, or discipline. The core values and beliefs that guide co-operative businesses and organisations are either explicitly acknowledged in some form or implicitly practiced.

It is important to acknowledge that there can be inherent power dynamics within the learning environment in terms of how an educator's political or ideological beliefs are embedded in their theory of learning. A tension can arise when the learners resist the educator's approach because of a misalignment with their own values. However, acceptance by the learners can occur if there is an effort to address any political or ideological differences by focusing on a learning process that acknowledges the differences and aims to reconcile them as part of the learning process, which can be reflected as part of the learning outcomes. An example could be as simple as voting as a group on some of the content or assessment strategies. This would show solidarity and democracy in practice.

The examples within each of the dimensions account for the learner's needs and the educator's abilities in different ways, and incorporate diversity as a strength in the learning process rather than as a liability. In learning settings where education of co-operatives is formal and more disciplinary focused, a plurality of pedagogical approaches could be applied. In learning settings that are more informal, the needs of the learners can take on a different significance, which invariably affects how the educator will plan a lesson or manages the learning environment. However, in both cases the signature pedagogy would be grounded in co-operative values and principles. How we approach and prepare educational strategies must support the fundamental characteristics of a co-operative organisation, as well as integrating the idiosyncratic differences of the organisation in terms of the economic or social sector where it is situated.

Identifying a Signature Pedagogy for Education for Co-operatives

In this paper, I am arguing that education for co-operatives should be guided by more than content and disciplinary knowledge that do not always account for the espoused and implicit values of the co-operative movement. I have explored how a signature pedagogy can provide focus and disciplinary alignment, all the while honouring the socio-historical foundations inherent in the values and principles of the co-operative movement. The challenge becomes whether a signature pedagogy can appropriately integrate the co-operative values into appropriate educational practices. I want to turn to some of the considerations that could be involved in this endeavour.

While exploring the three different dimensions named by Shulman (2005b) can help us to identify a signature pedagogy, I believe it is important to consider the specific skill set that should inform the signature pedagogy. In other words, can there be expected competencies associated with the outcomes of a pedagogical practice that supports education for co-operatives? Generally, pedagogical competencies are referred to as the skills and ability to instruct. Competencies will often start with a set of principles that include a set of values. The typical competencies of an educator can include: communication, adaptability, inclusivity, collaboration, and literacies (Child & Shaw, 2020). Embedded in these is content knowledge, so demonstrating these competencies may be unique to different contexts. A key question is whether there are appropriate competencies for education for co-operatives.

While it may be possible to develop competencies in the teaching profession, they may not always be appropriate to an adult education context, since the role of the educator is one of a facilitator rather than a teacher (Lindeman, 1926). The educator needs to recognise that not all learners are the same, thereby necessitating a deep reflection on their decisions about instructional approach (Brookfield, 2017) in order to ensure the content is delivered in a way that is suitable for the learners wanting to develop a co-operative. In most cases, this process can be fluid or organic, but not easily measured; can we develop a competency for understanding the important role that social capital and reciprocity has in co-operative developments?

As stated previously, education for co-operatives crosses multiple disciplinary boundaries, including: psychology, social theory, sociology, anthropology, social work, etc. This level of transdisciplinarity can make identifying single or multiple signature pedagogies arduous and perhaps impossible, but it could be seen as a defining quality that could inform education for co-operatives. I suggest that a place to start is to consider how the co-operative values and principles are seen to be part of the pedagogy rather than the outcome. By integrating the co-operative principles into educational practices, we can create learning environments that are not only academically rigorous, but also socially just, empowering, and supportive of the holistic development of students. The question now becomes, is there a candidate for a signature pedagogy for education for co-operatives? By extension, since there is a high level of transdisciplinarity, should there only be one? Furthermore, if there are more than one, can we find a common link or thread that would align any signature pedagogy. I will now explore three possible options: case-based learning, differentiated instruction, and universal design for learning. Note that while co-operative learning is one of the more likely candidates to be a signature pedagogy, it is not included in this paper as it is explored in detail elsewhere in the special issue.

Case-based learning (CBL) is part of an active learning approach to instruction, and can be an effective way to understand how co-operatives function. As a pedagogy, the learner can develop an initial understanding of a particular phenomenon through dialogue and can focus on specific features of that phenomenon before delving deeper (Boehrer & Linsky, 1990). CBL is based on real world situations or problems that might be encountered in the field. Learners are expected to actively participate in solving a problem or identifying alternative perspectives to an issue. For example, co-operatives of different forms will often demonstrate their success as resulting from good governance and effective management practices. However, investor-owned firms could make the same claim. What makes them different? In this instance, learners could be provided with two cases and explore what it means to be successful. They could question the nature of profit distribution and whether success is determined by levels of managers' pay or by member engagement. While this might be a common example, CBL can be applied to all forms of co-operatives. Using Shulman's (2005b) dimensions to analyse the case, the surface structure can be found in the presentation of the case as being related to co-operatives in general. The deep structure can be found in how the case relates to a particular type of co-operative. Finally, the implicit structure would be the use of the seven co-operative principles and values.

The realities facing many learners are complex and dynamic, and the needs or process of one learner may be quite different than another, which can make instruction quite challenging. In a differentiated pedagogy, instruction is tailored to meet individual needs (Subban, 2006).

Differentiation can be accomplished in a variety of ways: varied content, process, products, the learning environment, assessment, and flexible groupings. Moreover, differentiation can be more active and allow for greater learner agency (e.g. defining an inquiry, scope, focus, parameters of a problem, specifying context, etc.). In effect, differentiation can provide a deeper focus more on the strengths of the learner and aim towards accommodating any limitations arising from perceived, or even ascribed, barriers.

Adult educators apply this approach in a variety of ways (see Edouard, 2022) to support deeper learning. This pedagogical approach explicitly acknowledges the idea that how educators perceive and approach individual learners will have a significant impact on the individual achievement (Subban, 2006). This recognition can also have an effect on the overall learning environment, when the efforts to incorporate the individual differences that warranted differentiation can in fact benefit all learners. This is a characteristic of universal design for learning explored below. Using Shulman's (2005b) dimensions, the surface structure in differentiated instruction can be found in how the instructor makes an effort to understand the unique needs of individual learners. The deep structure can be found in how the learner demonstrates an understanding of the co-operative principles through exploration rather than explanation. The implicit structure would be found in how the instructor practices the different values of co-operatives in their instruction. An example is when an instructor shows flexibility in learning environments and instructional materials by recognising that learners benefit from having multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement.

According to Al-Azawei et al. (2016) "The Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework is increasingly drawing the attention of researchers and educators as an effective solution for filling the gap between learner ability and individual differences" (p. 39). A UDL approach is intended to be more equitable in practice and humanist in process. The intention is for the educator to prepare in a mindful way what is needed for the learners to learn, as well as ensure that both materials and instruction are accessible. While there is much value in differentiation, a real limitation is that it tends be more focused on the individual learner. However, UDL is intended to recognise that differences in the learning environment can be understood and addressed in unique ways. UDL is more proactive, whereas differentiated instruction tends to be more reactive to the circumstances. For instance, there could be differences grounded in educational backgrounds, income levels, personal histories, and so on that could impact on the learning environment.

UDL supports educational practices that are varied in presenting content, expression of understanding of content, and forms of learner engagement with the content. The application of UDL can bring to light the realisation that a resolution to the challenging circumstances facing one learner can in fact benefit all learners, and the instructor can demonstrate solidarity and equity in practice by the changes made to her instructional approach. An example would be using subtitles to a film about co-operatives because it might be difficult to know whether everyone could hear or understand the dialogue. UDL would be a likely candidate since the practices are intrinsically inclusive and equitable.

In the three examples of pedagogies, I tried to demonstrate that pedagogies and instructional methods are closely related. An instructor will need to base their decisions not only on the needs of the learners and their own skill set, but will need to consider how it fits into the broader profession, or discipline, in order to determine whether a pedagogy can in fact be considered a signature pedagogy for education for co-operatives. I believe the perspective that can determine whether an approach is a signature pedagogy or not is whether the co-operative principles and values can be, implicitly or explicitly, part of the instructional methods. As shown, each of those would be likely candidates for some forms of co-operatives but not all. Moreover, it might not be realistic to make all of the values and principles fit into a single signature pedagogy. However, in some cases it might be possible.

In the case of the Antigonish Movement, Tompkins and Coady applied a variety of instructional methods in their effort to demonstrate the power of the co-operative. Their primary focus was

on the necessity of education and learning. Their speeches were a form of lecture where each would talk about how each of the co-operative principles could be applied to address their dire circumstances. Their kitchen table meetings were a form of group work, and they used examples of other co-operatives, which were in fact cases that helped members understand and learn how co-operative could function through active participation.

An important lesson from the Antigonish Movement was that co-operative development was framed as a community development project. Interestingly, their emphasis on strengthening community was more implicit, as their focus was more on economic participation and democratic practices. Yet, the strength and endurance of the effort relied on a connection and concern for community, and building the capacity within the community to generate co-operative businesses that were sustainable. Tompkins and Coady were able to successfully animate members of the community because they integrated the reality of the significant challenges individuals were facing into the learning process, and the pathway to transform the communities was grounded in a community development mindset. The co-operative model was framed as a solution for individuals to change their circumstances by taking control, or owning, the very processes used to oppress them.

Tompkins and Coady stressed that building co-operatives required education and a sense of belonging. The essence of their work was grounded in a perspective that incorporated the intersection of economic and community characteristics, which ensured that the businesses being developed reflected the necessity of meeting a community's needs first and foremost. It is not my suggestion that we can replicate the Antigonish Movement's successes, but we can develop a signature pedagogy to education for co-operatives that should prioritise community building as a principle.

Conclusion

Traditional approaches to education have much value, but are not always best suited for developing co-operative organisations. Introducing and developing innovations to support communities is an important reason why co-operative organisations develop in the first place. Efforts to support education for co-operatives that is consistent with co-operative values can aid in helping learners understand the nature of co-operation within co-operatives.

There are significant tensions to what I am suggesting in this paper. First, I am not suggesting increased professionalisation of co-operatives as a field of study. MacPherson (1987) describes how this tension contributed to the unsuccessful effort to develop a co-operative college in Canada. I believe that all members and workers within co-operatives provide education in various ways. Thus, developing and seeking a credential should not be the ultimate outcome of this work. Second, the very idea that there exist signature pedagogies for specific areas of study can lead to what Kelly (2022) referred to as "a new set of disciplinary silos right at the moment when we need to be reaching across disciplinary boundaries" (p. 13).

These tensions demonstrate the need to ensure that the uniqueness of co-operative organisations, that exist across economic and social sectors and is a vital asset of the co-operative movement, is included in any educational strategy. There are common attributes that are found in all co-operative organisations, such as governance and member engagement, but how they work in practice can be quite different in a consumer co-operative than it is an agricultural co-operative. Nonetheless, it is my belief that exploring signature pedagogies can help bridge the gap between learning theories and pedagogy by accounting for the values and knowledge that inform our choices involved in creating learning environments that support co-operative organisations and practices.

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