

Policy and Practice

A Development Education Review

DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND DEMOCRACY

REPORT ON A DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION SEMINAR

13 June 2023

SEMINAR ORGANISED BY CENTRE FOR GLOBAL EDUCATION AND THE DICE PROJECT AND FUNDED BY IRISH AID



Acknowledgements

This is a report on a development education seminar organised by the Centre for Global Education in partnership with the Development and Intercultural (DICE) project held on 13 June 2023. The seminar was titled *Development Education and Democracy* and debated the content of Issue 36 of the Centre for Global Education's journal *Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review*. The Centre for Global Education would like to thank Helen Concannon, Co-ordinator of the DICE project, for promoting the event and co-hosting the session. We also thank the speakers: Audrey Bryan, Marta da Costa and Brighid Golden. The seminar was organised as part of a three-year development education project funded by Irish Aid.

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Citation: Centre for Global Education and DICE (2023) 'Seminar Report: Development Education and Democracy', Belfast: Centre for Global Education.

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This document has been published as part of a development education project funded by Irish Aid at the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA). Irish Aid is the Government's overseas development programme which supports partners working in some of the world's poorest countries. Irish Aid also supports global citizenship and development education in Ireland to encourage learning and public engagement with global issues. The ideas, opinions and comments herein are entirely the responsibility of the Centre for Global Education and do not necessarily represent or reflect DFA policy.

This report has been published as part of a project supported by:



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1 Centre for Global Education (CGE) and Development & Intercultural Education (DICE)

1.1 Centre for Global Education

The Centre for Global Education was established in 1986 to provide education services that enhance awareness of international development issues. Its central remit is to provide learning that enables individuals and organisations to address the root causes of poverty, inequality and injustice at local and global levels. The Centre's resources and training programmes enable learners to understand the cultural, economic, social and political influences on our lives that result from our growing interdependence with other countries and societies. They also provide the skills, values, knowledge and understanding necessary to facilitate action that will contribute to poverty eradication both locally and globally.

The Centre for Global Education's main aims are to:

- Act as a resource for research and education on global issues;
- Support the work of groups and organisations that foster social and economic equality at all levels;
- Facilitate networking and co-operation with relevant agencies and groups;
- Provide training and resources on development issues;
- Encourage the use of development education methodologies to bring about change at a local and global level;
- Network with partner organisations that share our values and commitment to social justice and equality;
- Enable action that addresses the root causes of poverty and injustice, locally and globally.

The Centre's Values are as follows:

- Partnerships with individuals and organisations working to create an equal and just world.
- Enablement of effective action to challenge global inequality and injustice.
- Ensuring our work is informed by the needs and ideas of the global South.
- Promoting active learning in all our work.

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1.2 Development and Intercultural Education (DICE)

The DICE Project is a national strategic educational initiative since 2003, implemented by four providers of initial teacher education at primary level: Dublin City University Institute of Education; Marino Institute of Education; Mary Immaculate College; and the Froebel Department in Maynooth University.

The DICE project aims to develop and extend staff capacity and expertise in the four partner institutions and embed development education and intercultural education as essential elements of initial teacher education at primary level in Ireland. The project works to build the capacity of lecturers and student teachers so that teachers graduating will have an understanding of development education and intercultural education and will be motivated and equipped with the pedagogic skills and values to teach these topics effectively. Through this ongoing work, student teachers are equipped with the knowledge, skills, ideas and capacities necessary to integrate development and intercultural education across the primary school curriculum.

We believe that developing global citizenship is achieved most effectively through engaging diversified perspectives; building evidence through research, sharing ideas, discussion and debate; and building an engaging and inspiring community of practice based on trust and collegiality. We also believe that it should be guided by the fundamental values of equality, social justice and sustainable development.

For further information on DICE please contact:

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2 Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review

Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review is a bi-annual, peer reviewed, open access journal which aims to enhance capacity in the development education (DE) sector locally and internationally by sharing good practice, supporting research and strengthening debate in DE. Over the past 18 years, 36 issues of the journal have been published on the journal's web platform: www.developmenteducationreview.com. Each issue of the journal is constructed around a theme chosen by an Editorial Group which also assists with the peer reviewing of articles. The strategic aims of the journal are to:

- Provide a space for practitioners to critically reflect on their practice;
- Discuss the main challenges faced by development education practitioners;
- Celebrate and promote good practice in development education;
- Debate the policy environment in which development education is delivered;
- Share new research in development education;
- Strengthen links between development education and related adjectival educations such as human rights and sustainable development.



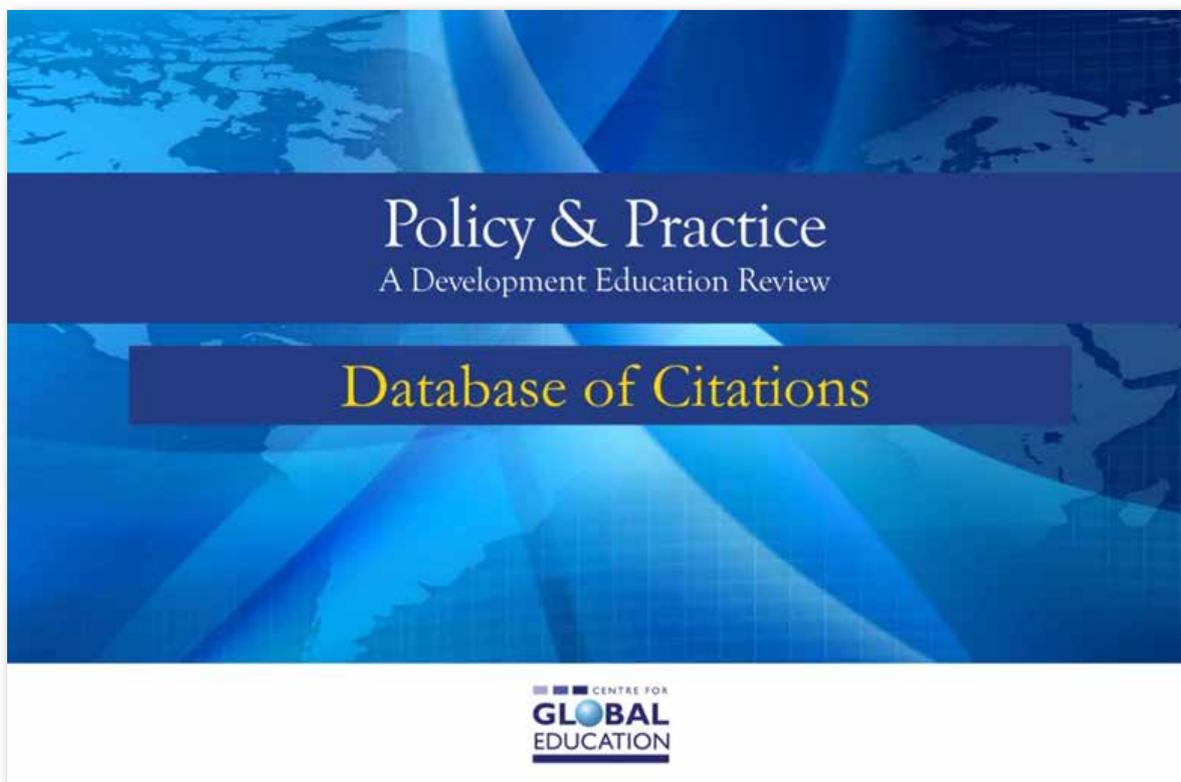
In 2022, the *Policy and Practice* web site received 220,000 unique visitors and 250,000 in total from the global North and South. The top 10 visitor countries to the web site on the basis of pages viewed from January to December 2022 were the following:

Countries	Number of Pages viewed
USA	149,769
Philippines	89,655
Great Britain	73,686
India	73,097
Canada	38,895
Ireland	26,276
South Africa	12,349
Malaysia	12,000
Germany	11,709
Norway	11,635

The journal content is disseminated by EBSCO which is a United States-based provider of research databases, e-journals, magazine subscriptions, e-books and discovery service to libraries of all kinds. This has supported the dissemination of journal content to academic institutions across the world. The journal has also been accepted by Scopus, an abstract and citation database launched in 2004 which covers nearly 36,377 titles from approximately 11,678 publishers. The journal is also a publisher member of the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) which is 'a community-curated online directory that indexes and provides access to high quality, open access, peer-reviewed journals'. All of these journal directories enhance the promotion and dissemination of the journal and ensure its content supports teaching, learning and research.

Journal Citations

One of the qualitative methods used to evaluate the impact of the journal on research and practice involves monitoring the number of citations generated by *Policy and Practice* articles in other books and journals, and in articles published by *Policy and Practice* itself. The citation database was updated in February 2023 and showed that a total of 4,225 citations had been generated by journal articles; 394 citations were created in *Policy and Practice* articles and 3,831 in other journals and books. This total represented an increase of 549 on 2021. The citations have appeared in 619 journals and 341 books covering a range of academic disciplines and subject areas reflecting the multi-disciplinary nature of the journal's content. The research on citations also showed that *Policy and Practice* articles have been cited in 415 theses, dissertations and academic papers which reflects the extent to which the journal is supporting new research in higher education. Citations were also found in 111 non-governmental organization publications which suggests that *Policy and Practice* has managed to sustain a strong level of readership in the NGO sector as well as academia.



3 Aims of the Seminar

The webinar was organised to present and debate the content of Issue 36 of the Centre for Global Education's bi-annual, open access, peer reviewed journal *Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review*. The theme of this issue was 'Development Education and Democracy' which focused on the threat to democratic spaces, institutions and freedoms that have attended five decades of neoliberal economics across most of the world. It considered the role of development education's critical thinking skills, participative methodologies and action outcomes in supporting grassroots, community-led democracy. The aim of this event was to enable three authors published in Issue 36 to present their papers and debate the content with development education and higher education practitioners. Each speaker presented their articles for fifteen minutes followed by discussion. The three articles presented at the seminar were:

- [Ugly Democracy: Towards Epistemic Disobedience in Development Education](#)
Marta da Costa
- [Crisis Transformationism and the De-Radicalisation of Development Education in a New Global Governance Landscape](#)
Audrey Bryan
- [Promoting Democratic Values in Initial Teacher Education: Findings from a Self-Study Action Research Project](#)
Brigid Golden

The Speakers were:



Marta da Costa is a lecturer at Manchester Metropolitan University, where she teaches in the BA (Hons) Education programme and is a member of the Education and Social Research Institute (ESRI). Marta's research focuses on decolonial approaches to Global Citizenship Education (GCE) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) research and practice.



Audrey Bryan is an Associate Professor of Sociology in the School of Human Development at Dublin City University's Institute of Education.



Brigid Golden is a lecturer in global education at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, and a member of the national Development and Intercultural Education (DICE) project network. Brigid is a trained primary school teacher with experience working in Ireland, England and India. Brigid has a Master's in International Approaches to Education with International Development from the University of Birmingham, and a PhD in Education from the University of Glasgow which focused on global education within initial teacher education. She also has experience designing and developing teaching resources for primary and post-primary settings in relation to human rights.



The recording of the seminar is available at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rwCq7J3IQgrVik1i_dDNF7FdPtVaul8I/view?usp=sharing

4 Presentation by Marta da Costa



Ugly democracy: towards epistemic disobedience in development education

Development Education and Democracy webinar
Centre for Global Education
Tuesday, 13th June 2023
Marta da Costa

4 Presentation by Marta da Costa

Overview

- Background to the paper
- Elizabeth R. Anker's *Ugly Freedoms*
- Implications for thinking about democracy and development education (DE)



Western modernity

'modernity' is a complex narrative whose point of origination was Europe; a narrative that builds Western civilization by celebrating its achievements while hiding at the same time its darker side, 'coloniality'. Coloniality is constitutive of modernity – there is no modernity without coloniality

(Mignolo, 2011, p. 3)

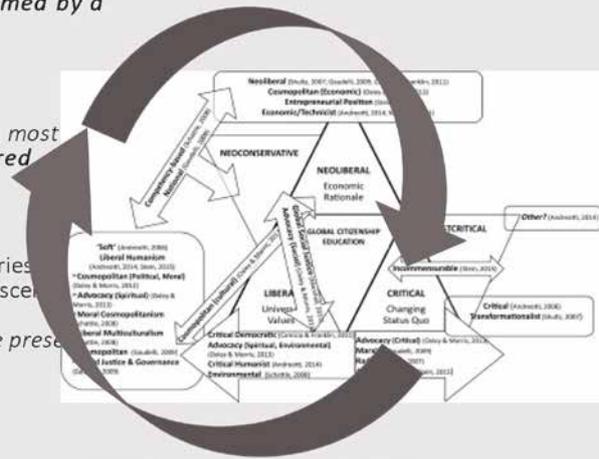
4 Presentation by Marta da Costa

Pashby et al. (2020, p. 158) Tendency for circular conversations in the field

➤ despite the considerable diversity of GCE orientations, as a field our interventions nonetheless remain largely framed by a limited range of possibilities, thus, closed off from imagining viable alternatives

➤ despite the diversity that characterises the GCE field, most approaches are ultimately rooted within the same shared modern ontology

➤ identifying and grappling with these boundaries, the modern/colonial imaginary and the difficulty to transcend it is necessary, if we are to address the complexities, paradoxes, and intense conflicts that characterise the present



Pashby et al. (2020, p. 159-160) Targeting the modern/colonial imaginary

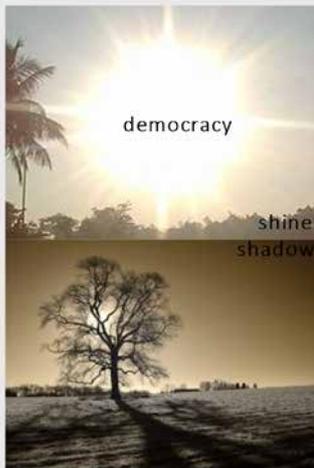
➤ How has the **modern/colonial ontology** restricted our **horizons** that we consider to be possible, desirable, intelligible and imaginable?

➤ What kinds of **denials and entitlements** keep us not only intellectually but also affectively **invested** in this ontology?

➤ What kinds of experiences can enable students to see and sense how they can be simultaneously **part of global problems, and part of global solutions**?

➤ If citizenship – or democracy – is not a universalizable concept, then how might we nonetheless **use it in strategic ways, while remaining conscious of its significant limitations, potential harms, and the partiality of** particular approach?

4 Presentation by Marta da Costa



Western modernity

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(Mignolo, 2011, p. 3)

The problem of democracy for DE

- Democracy clearly separate from the violence, oppression, and marginalisation enacted by governments and other global institutions
 - Education response based on critical literacy, countering ignorance, misinformation and historical amnesia (Giroux, 2022a; 2022b) & uncovering the truth and save democracy, since 'democracy cannot exist or be defended without critically literate and engaged individuals' (Giroux, 2022b: 115)
 - clear journey through a critical pedagogy education that leads to the acquisition of the knowledge needed to develop a sense of agency and empowerment, which will then lead to freedom = through critical pedagogy, education can 'win the war' with fascism (Giroux, 2022b)
- Dreamson (2018) = critical thinking is already framed by the dominant onto-epistemology – 'Eurocentric critiques of Eurocentrism' (Mignolo, 2018)
 - Stein (2018) = engage from a range of critical perspectives with the concepts we have inherited from modernity and consider the ways in which they constrain/enable our thinking about, and responding to, our present problems in development education

4 Presentation by Marta da Costa

Elizabeth R. Anker (2022) *Ugly Freedoms*

*Ugliness as a political assessment targets how principles and actions of freedom are granted preeminence even when they support widespread subjugation. The ascription "ugly" draws attention to this **disregard and disavowal, gnawing away at the ceaseless affirmation of freedom's virtue, challenging the veneration of actions practiced under its mantle*** (p. 6-7)

*Ugliness names disruptive experience, and I deploy it to **disrupt the exclusively positive way freedom is typically understood** to highlight the domination practiced in its name* (p. 9)



Ugly Freedoms (1) Democracy

*It is too reassuring to claim that these systems are falsely justified as freedom that they only fabricate or dissimulate their connection to freedom as a fig leaf to cover true motives. This claim preserves freedom as a righteous, hallowed ideal. (...) **ideals of freedom can be produced out of and (...) be practiced as subjugation** Freedom can entail both nondomination and domination (...) Rather than disavowing this dynamic to discard subjugating freedoms as either insincerity or false consciousness, I take the ambivalence and violence of freedom's expressions seriously* (p. 5)



4 Presentation by Marta da Costa



Ugly Freedoms (1) Democracy

Democracy has, since its origins, been practiced through an intimate relationship with violence, through slavery, colonialism and imperialism (Wynter, 2000, Bonilla, 2015; Mbembe, 2019, 2021)

➤ go beyond a dichotomy between democracy/violence or freedom/domination, which tend to lead to a negation of democracy or freedom when in the presence of violence or domination.

➤ What kind of development education can find not only a 'new language for equating freedom (and... 2022a: 103) but also interrogate the evidence of freedom and democracy, and engage with alternative his perspectives, so that we can think and experience them differently?

➤ What possibilities are opened in development education when we position democracy not only as t also as part/enabling the problems we are currently facing (Marta da Costa 2022)?

Ugly Freedoms (2) Development Education

what unexpected freedoms can be found in those exclusions (...) What freedoms are cultivated by and within these putatively ugly conditions, practices that might otherwise seem too disturbing, minor, or compromised to qualify for the grand descriptor of "freedom"? Can these practices, rejected by conventional perspectives on modern freedom, actually offer less brutal and more life upholding visions of what freedom can entail? (p. 11)

These ugly freedoms are not righteous, celebrated actions, but instead emerge from ambivalent or tri situations, and tend to take the 'low road'



4 Presentation by Marta da Costa

Ugly Freedoms (2) Development Education

Bonilla (2015) 'disappointing' social movements in Guadeloupe

- actions have sought a restructuring of the social, without calling for freedom from the French government
- *non-sovereign*, these movements are a direct challenge to the normative Eurocentric idea that sovereignty defines a society's level of development.

Challenge to the idea that freedom [and democracy] is accomplished through a masculine ideal of the just, pure heroic action (Anker, 2022; Banerjee, 2020)

- What might DE look like when we pause (not dismiss) the equation of action with doing?
- How can we account for other forms of action that we might not notice because of where we are situated?
- What other forms of engagement are possible when we acknowledge our position as compromised, in harm, morally ambiguous, and partially informed?

Interrogating the *DEMOS*

Destabilising democracy	➤ What are the assumptions informing mainstream understandings of democracy? How does our position within/outside the modern imaginary frame our assumptions about democracy? What are the implications of these assumptions to our understanding of development education?
Eurocentric Critiques of Eurocentrism	➤ What are some of the limitations of mainstream understandings of democracy? What critiques are available to challenge these conceptualisations within European contexts? What are the possibilities offered and foreclosed by these critiques for development education?
Multiple Perspectives	➤ To what extent have we engaged with perspectives from where democracy was imposed, rather than assumed? How do other perspectives help us challenge our assumptions about democracy and freedom? To what extent/how do concepts such as degrowth and postdevelopment support alternative engagements with global issues in development education?
Ongoing reflection	➤ What possibilities are opened by our engagement with other perspectives? Are there new concepts that might supplement our understanding and offer alternative ways of thinking about democracy and development education? How can we learn from these concepts, whilst resisting their assimilation, within a Eurocentric framework?
Supporting Development Education	➤ How can we read development education differently through non-modern perspectives on democracy? What might development education practice look like when modern concepts such as democracy and development are challenged and reframed?

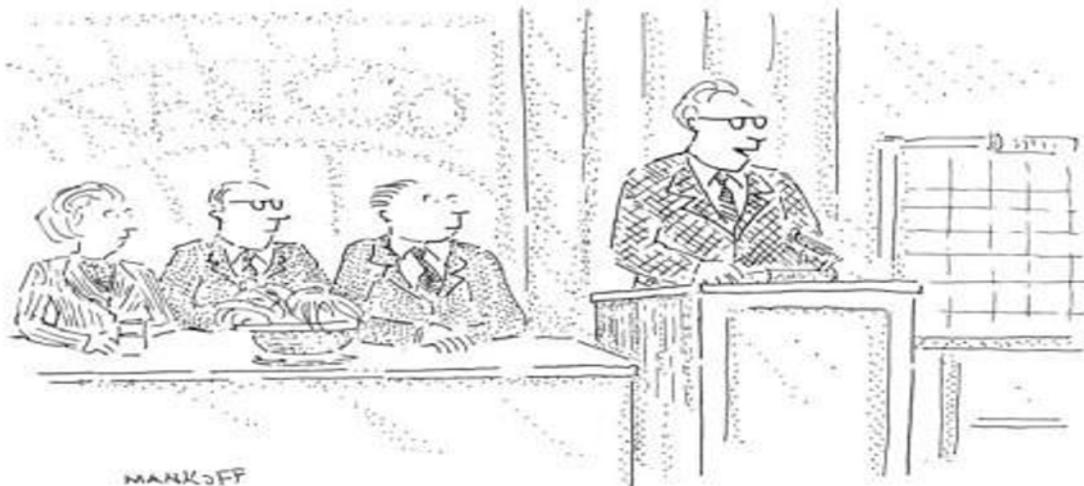
5 Presentation by Audrey Bryan



Crisis Transformation and the de-radicalism of
development education in a new global
governance landscape

Audrey Bryan (Dublin City University)
& Yoko Mochizuki (Independent Scholar, Paris)

5 Presentation by Audrey Bryan



"And so, while the end-of-the-world scenario will be rife with unimaginable horrors, we believe that the pre-end period will be filled with unprecedented opportunities for profit."

What do we mean by "crisis transformationism"?

"Crisis transformationism" is a mobilising ideological framework which deploys crisis rhetoric in order to consolidate the corporate takeover of education from a democratically controlled system to one designed and run by private actors in service of the global economy (Bryan & Mochizuki, 2023: 49).

- Actual or perceived crises provide an opportunity to usher in radical processes of educational and political-economic reform, often with "questionable motives and variable consequences" (Morris, Park and Auld, 2022: 692)
- Overarching narrative is that education is "in crisis" and is failing to prepare learners for the unprecedented challenges of the 21st century.
- Language of crisis is deployed to legitimise the expansion of the private sector in the delivery of education and to accelerate depoliticised notions of "the global".

5 Presentation by Audrey Bryan



The hijacking of transformative education

Discursive shift away from a Freirean conception of **transformative education as an enabler of social and ecological justice** towards an understanding of transformation as a lynchpin for (green) economic growth in a digitised economy.

“Transforming education means empowering learners with the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes to be resilient, adaptable, and prepared for an uncertain and complex future while actively and creatively contributing to human and planetary well-being and sustainable societies” (UN, 2022c: 4).

5 Presentation by Audrey Bryan

Interlocking policy trends in education



GROWING INFLUENCE OF PRIVATE
SECTOR AND PRIVATE FOUNDATION
INVOLVEMENT



TECHNO-SOLUTIONISM



PERSONALISED LEARNING

“Louder Together”. The “Heightened Ambition” of the Private Sector in Education

- **“Joined up thinking”** -- 60 major philanthropies issued a **joint statement** to the Transforming Education Summit, representing **‘the first moment..of joined-up education philanthropy to a UN summit’** (Missika and Savage, 2022: n.p.).
- Statements spoke of philanthropies **“power...and networks to strengthen collaboration with each other and with philanthropies in other sectors to align [their] strategic engagement’ via advocacy, ‘partnership building’, ‘knowledge brokering’, and ‘enabling a culture of evidence in policymaking’** (IEFG, 2022: 1).
- Welcomed as a **“strong signal that private foundations are eager to leverage their influence, resources, and tools for transforming education”** (UN, 2023: 11).

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Who is the learner at the heart of this new transformative agenda?

Goal: to ensure a productive (i.e., mentally healthy, resilient and skilled) workforce and a pliable, politically docile citizenry via skillification and social emotional learning (SELification)

(Economic) global citizen with benefits – a citizen subject imbued with a set of social emotional 'skills' that prepare them for politically detached forms of service and action rather than an understanding of power, politics, and their role in local and global transformation

Promotion of specific skills, values and mind-sets that cultivate 'entrepreneurial' citizen subjects modelled on billionaire, for-profit philanthropists (Williamson, 2017)

Big Philanthropy and the depoliticization of development education

“Decisions that should be made by publicly elected officials are relegated to a group of institutions and individuals who cannot conceive of changing in any profound way a system from which they derive their profits and power” (Arnove, 1980).

GCE is reduced to capacities for learned optimism, personal agility, adaptability, resilience, positive thinking, empathy, compassion etc. ***forestalling political dialogue and diverting energy away from the pursuit of global justice and equality.***

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Don't Worry, Be Happy: Neoliberal Selfways (Adams et. al., 2019)

"....instead of cultivating global citizens committed to addressing political issues of resource allocation, recognition, and redistribution, [global citizenship education] is preoccupied with subjective happiness, well-being, and affect regulation in order to inculcate self-reliant, self-responsible, self-managing, and resilient citizen subjects."
(Bryan and Mochizuki, 2023: 66).

"The resilient subject is a subject which must permanently struggle to accommodate itself to the world, and not a subject which can conceive of changing the world, its structure and conditions of possibility" (Evans and Reid, 2013: 83).

A de-politicised vision of development education

"Without an analysis of power, politics, and one's role in local and global political structures— and without showing students how they can work with others toward fundamental change— students will be unlikely to become effective citizens who can transform their communities and the world by addressing issues identified by the 2030 Agenda such as poverty, hunger, and inequality.... Programmes that privilege individual acts of compassion and kindness often neglect the importance of social action, political engagement, and the pursuit of just and equitable policies. The vision promoted is one of citizenship without politics or collective action— a commitment to individual service, but not to social justice"

Westheimer (2020: 289)

5 Presentation by Audrey Bryan

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6 Presentation by Brigid Golden



PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC VALUES IN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION: FINDINGS FROM A SELF-STUDY ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT

Dr Brigid Golden
Assistant Professor in Education (Global Citizenship Education)

Mary Immaculate College
The DICE Project

6 Presentation by Brigid Golden

Premise

A focus on critical thinking within education offers the opportunity to teach students the skills necessary to question the status quo, develop informed opinions and contribute to the preservation and promotion of democracy in society.

If we want critical thinking embedded into education, we must begin with teacher education.

Context: the threat to democracy and critical thinking development

- Rising support internationally for political parties and perspectives with narrow nationalist agendas (GENE, 2020)
- Increase in xenophobic populism and hate speech in societies (Council of Europe, 2018)
- Populism enables the erosion of democracy and democratic values (McCartney (2019))

6 Presentation by Brigid Golden

Theoretical context

Democracy +
critical
thinking

Global
citizenship
education

Initial teacher
education

Democracy and Critical Thinking

- “properly understood, democracy **should not even be ‘rule of the majority’**, if that means that minorities' interests are ignored completely. A democracy, at least in theory, is **government on behalf of all the people, according to their ‘will’**”. (Council of Europe)
- Democracy = valuing all voices and perspectives => affording genuine opportunities for opposing sides to be heard => enabling citizens to make informed choices and navigate compromise
- Starting point = nurturing critical thinking within education => critical, curious, creative, active democratic citizens.

6 Presentation by Brigid Golden



Global Citizenship Education (GCE)

“education that enables people to reflect critically on the world and their place in it to open their eyes, hearts and minds to the reality of the world at local and global level. It empowers people to understand, imagine, hope and act to bring about a world of social and climate justice, peace, solidarity, equity and equality, planetary sustainability, and international understanding. It involves respect for human rights and diversity, inclusion, and a decent life for all, now and into the future” GENE, 2022

- MacCallum (2014: 39) contends that global learning is a process of **realized critical thinking** which allows for consideration of social, cultural, economic, political and environmental issues from multiple perspectives.
- SDGs + 21st century skills– **future-proofing education**

Initial Teacher Education (ITE)

- While education has the potential to uphold and reignite democratic values within society, this will not happen without a focus on teacher preparation (Maphalala and Mpofu, 2017; Pithers and Soden, 2000; Taşkaya and Çavuşoğlu, 2017; Williams, 2005; Sezer, 2008).
- Limited exposure to criticality prior to entering higher education can mean that stereotypes and orthodoxies have become strongly engrained. ITE is an important space to challenge these pervasive, and often incorrect or dangerous, viewpoints prior to teachers entering classrooms through a focus on open discussion of competing viewpoints guided by a values-based lens (Williams, 2005).

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Locating critical thinking development within global education in ITE is a mitigation strategy

- Education must answer the call of John Dewey (1910) in ensuring that **democracy is born new and fostered in every generation** to counteract and challenge passivity in society. Where democratic values are under threat in society, so too can global education be pushed to the margins in favour of more passive approaches to education focused on compliance rather than debate and dialogue.
- Westheimer (2019) believes that centring education on democratic values and promoting critical thinking is crucial to counteract rising xenophobic populism .

The promotion of democratic values in society and the teaching of critical thinking in schools are inextricably linked.

6 Presentation by Brigid Golden

Self-study action research aimed at cultivating democracy within initial teacher education through a focus on critical thinking

Research question and aims

What can be learned from an action research project to contribute to the understanding and application of critical global learning for teacher educators?

Aims:

- To ascertain the **factors which contribute to student motivation, participation and achievement** within critical global learning.
- To identify the **opportunities and barriers which impact on the implementation** of critical global learning within the institutional and national contexts that I work.



6 Presentation by Brigid Golden

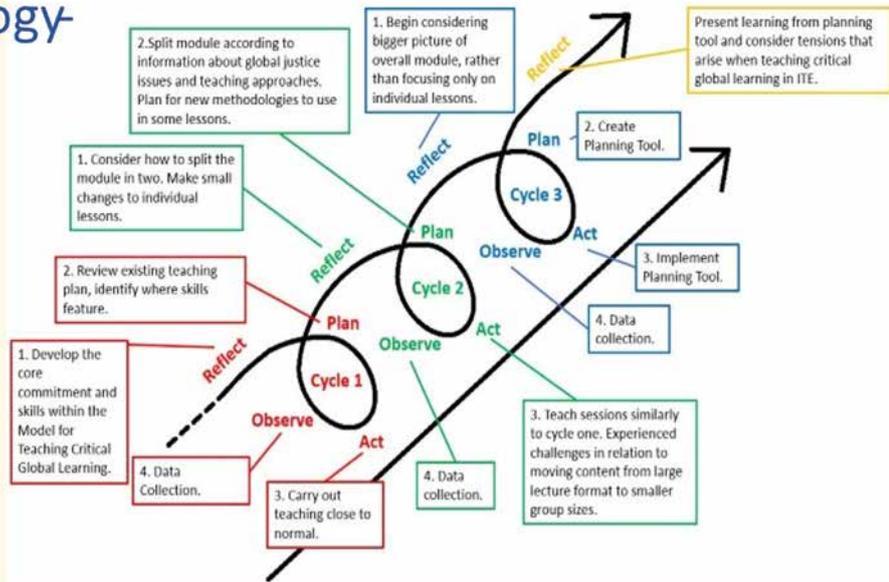
Methodology overall

Data from students:

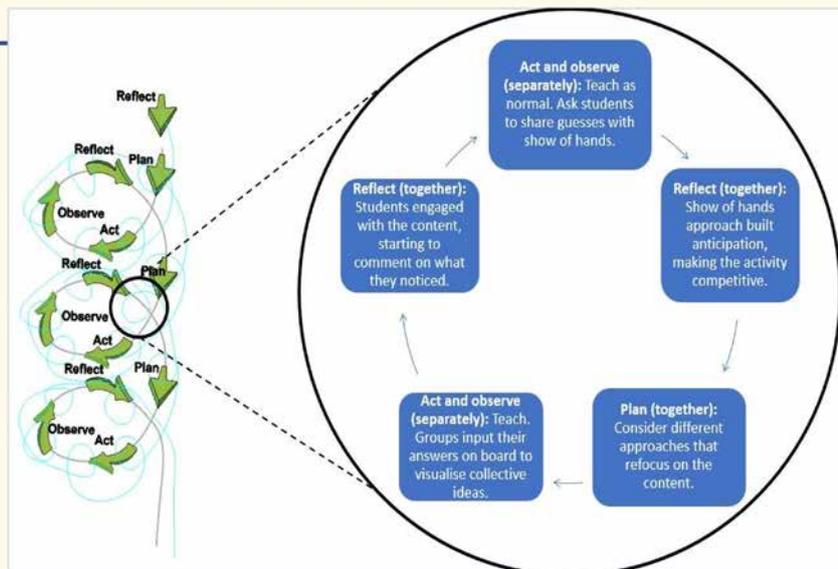
- Focus group interviews,
- Surveys,
- Most Significant Change Stories,
- Evidence from in class tasks,
- Assessments.

Additional data:

- Reflections,
- Engagement with critical friends.



Methodology daily/weekly



6 Presentation by Brigid Golden

Findings

1. It was **possible** for these students to develop critical thinking skills within the context of global education and that **focus on dialogical approaches** had a significant impact on their acquisition and demonstration of those skills.
2. Providing **opportunities** for students to practice their critical global learning skills guided by expert support and feedback to support student engagement, motivation, and building students' critical global learning skillset was of critical importance.
3. Engaging with the teaching of critical global learning **personally and professionally challenging** as it necessitates that teacher educators actively and continually evaluate personal perceptions and beliefs both about the world and education in light of their practice, often highlighting contradictions between both to be addressed.

Student starting point

"I know when I first went to university, when I left secondary school, I hadn't a clue about how to be able to think critically" (C3GDFG1).

"everyone was talking about critical thinking and it's so important but we never knew what it was or like ... we never came across it before, but it's kind of like we're developing it now, we're developing the skill" (C3GDFG2).

6 Presentation by Brigid Golden

What led to success?

Students identified 'being informed/educated in the module', 'the content from lectures', and 'my awareness on the topic' as catalysts for changes to their levels of criticality.

Student 3: 'To know that it's a safe environment where you can have your own opinion and not that you're going to be judged'.

Brigid: 'And how do you know it's a safe environment?'.

Student 3: 'Because the lecturers are willing to hear what you say' (C3GDFG2).

What led to success?

*I think we get to do so much interactive and group work and it's not all just sit there and put up your hand with an answer or ... I feel like a lot of people are given **opportunities** if they didn't want to talk in front of the whole class, they still have an opportunity to get their opinion across. The different methodologies has already made it open to a lot of different learners and styles.(C3GDFG3)*

*"criticality **happens every week** because there are always debates at the tables and things to talk about and think differently about" (C3GDFG3).*

"If you keep doing it like, you get more comfortable with it"(C3GEFG1)

6 Presentation by Brigid Golden

Conclusions

1. It is possible and worthwhile to focus on critical thinking development in the name of promoting democratic values.
2. The most valuable teaching approach was providing opportunities for students to practice critical thinking in a supported environment. What one student termed a 'discussion culture'.
3. This work can be an uphill battle – against rising far right sentiments evident in society and across media platforms; tendency towards passivity and compliance on behalf of many students.

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7 Seminar Feedback

A total of 16 from 23 participants completed the survey below. The total of 23 excludes three presenters and two co-hosts.

1. To what extent did the seminar meet your expectations in enhancing your knowledge and understanding of democracy in a development education context?

(Please circle where 1= not at all 5= completely)

Average rating

1 2 3 **4.4** 5

Comments:

"There was a great deal that stood out. It made me question how much consultation goes on in non-formal education as conclusions were general and do not necessarily apply to non-formal education"

"A good range of papers"

"The presentations were very much on point, and complementary to each other, presenters were excellent, clearly experts from which I learned a lot in a short time."

"All - good discussion on democracy and the concept in terms of teaching development education"

"Very refreshing to hear commonality across all speakers on critical thinking root causes neo liberal agenda"

"Excellent presentations and engaging content"

2. How appropriate did you find the content of the seminar? For example, was the content accessible and jargon free or too dense and full of difficult terminology?

(Please circle where 1=not appropriate at all 5=very appropriate)

Average rating

1 2 3 **4.0** 5

Comments:

"The information was quite condensed so a bit more time for speakers would have been useful to better grasp their content"

"Presenters were clear. Some challenging or new terms could have been more clearly defined"

"Very appropriate indeed. It was more or less what I was expecting and hoping for. Clearly appropriate terminology must be used in this context, but I felt it was well explained and accessible"

"Perfectly appropriate and well-aimed"

7 Seminar Feedback

3. Please rate the impact of this event on your skills/approach to development education and democracy.

(Please circle where 1=no impact at all 5= significant impact)

Average rating

1 2 **3.9** 4 5

Comments:

"Further consultation within non-formal education/with practitioners. There is much that was relatable but not necessarily practical for those already taking similar approaches. A forum to discuss/breakout session would be beneficial".

"Yeah, it has made me really think about my approach. It has confirmed some of the things I have been thinking about the current climate in which we work, and opened my eyes to other aspects. It has made me think more about elements I need to include or enhance in my practice".

4. How likely are you to apply the learning from the seminar in your own practice?

(Please circle where 1= unlikely 5= very likely)

Average rating

1 2 3 **4.1** 5

5. What further support or interventions would you like to see provided by CGE/DICE on this topic and/or related topics?

Comments:

"I would like to see more work around how decision makers and key stakeholders like Irish Aid can be engaged in conversation around some of the issues brought up today. I would also like to see broader discussions held in the wider DE community, including ITE (Ubuntu etc.)".

"A look at the western lens that is applied in SPHE, CSPE and well being. A need to include Global citizenship education as part of this conversation. Addressing the need for intercultural awareness - both teachers and students - within this dialogue".

"Lesson plans to address in schools - or at least a mapping of where to find good ready to use resources".

"Other type of studies related to the DICE/CGE but in particular related to the Teacher Education systems".

7 Seminar Feedback

6. Please add any further comments or thoughts you have on this session here:

Comments:

"I most enjoyed the presentation of Brighid. Her presentation sounded most inspiring and promising to me as it is directly relevant to practice and policy for CCE".

"Really enjoyed this session, many thanks".

"Although the discussion on what we call it GCE or DE is important I think it distracts from the real issue sometimes of the fact that education is part of the neo liberal capitalist agenda and GCE/DE or whatever you want to call it is still quite surface level within the very system we should be trying to change".

8 Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review Call for Contributors Issue 37

About the Theme: *Frontlines of Activism*

Centre for Global Education is inviting contributions to Issue 37 of our bi-annual, peer reviewed, open access journal [Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review](#) on the theme: *Frontlines of Activism*. New [research](#) from Comhlamh and Maynooth University suggests that ‘acts of global citizenship’ should be ‘transgressive, questioning and/or disruptive of existing laws and responsibilities’. But active citizenship, particularly the right to protest, is under threat in England and Wales with the introduction of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts [Bill](#) and the Public Order [Bill](#); legislation which the journalist, George Monbiot, [argues](#) ‘is carefully criminalising every effective means of protest’. The human rights organization, Liberty, has described this as ‘a democratic crisis in the UK’ and a denial of Article 11 of the Human Rights [Act](#). Also, under attack is trade unions’ right to mount strikes to improve the pay and conditions of their members, another fundamental bedrock of democracy used over centuries to secure workplace rights for workers. The UK government is threatening to raise the bar even higher for trade unions to engage in industrial action which prompted eleven trade unions to take legal [action](#) against the Westminster government.

A worrying slide toward authoritarianism is seeing the erosion of civil liberties and human rights across the world, including: anti-government [protests](#) in Iran sparked by the murder of Kurdish-Iranian woman, Mahsa Amini, that have seen 14,000 arrested; the [killing](#) of 27 anti-austerity protesters in Sierra Leone by police in October 2022 in disputed circumstances; and 358 human rights defenders working on land, environmental and indigenous rights were [killed](#) in 35 countries in 2021. At a time of accelerating inequality and global heating, our activism has rarely been more urgently needed but this requires that we resist the erosion of democratic spaces, either online or on the streets, to secure the capacity for free speech and the advancement of human rights in all aspects of our lives. Activism is particularly central to the practice of development education which is premised on Freire’s idea of praxis which combines reflection and action to support transformative interventions in reality. We recall that Freire was a political activist who worked with illiterate peasants and workers in Brazil, was imprisoned and subsequently exiled from 1964 to 1980. His friend and colleague over a period of fifteen years, Henry Giroux, [described](#) Freire as ‘a revolutionary whose passion for justice and resistance was matched by his hatred of neoliberal capitalism and loathing for authoritarians of all political stripes’. In regard to activism, Giroux argued that ‘Culture and literacy for Freire offered people the space to develop new modes of agency, mass resistance, and emotional attachments that embraced empowering forms of solidarity’.

Development educators, equipped with Freire’s critical pedagogy, analysis of social and economic relations, and use of culture and literacy have the capacity to create new modes of agency in communion with learners. Issue 37 of *Policy and Practice* invites contributions from the frontlines of activism that explore the extent to which the development education sector is supporting critical enquiry and informed action based on its analysis of global issues. We invite authors engaged in research and practice on activism and social change to contribute to the debate on how the sector can enable learners to transform society. We welcome articles that draw upon the activism of individuals and organisations that has offered a portal into a better world and can inspire others to follow their lead. We also invite articles exploring the extent to which formal and informal education systems are preparing learners to engage in effective action on poverty, sustainability and the environment. Are schools and educational institutions devoid of action, places of preparation for action, or indeed sites of action themselves?

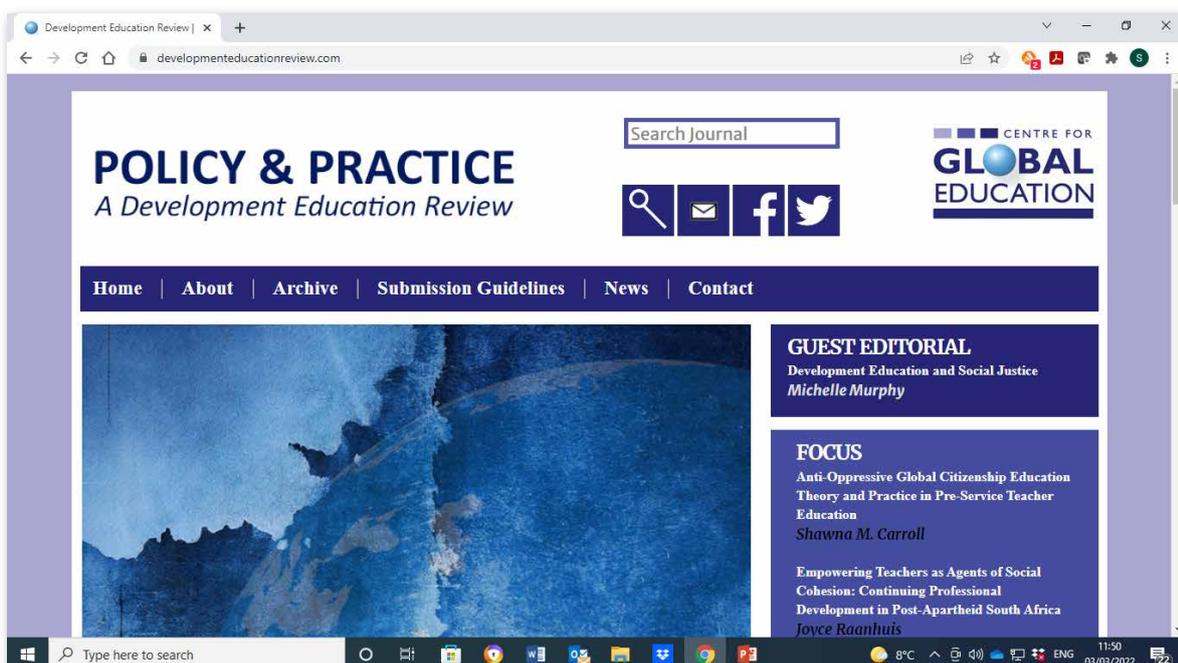
This issue of *Policy and Practice* will reflect on development education's distinctive and rounded view of action and social change that includes the following:

- Grassroots, bottom-up participation;
- Critical consciousness that unveils and challenges the passivity and compliance created by much of the media;
- Education as a means toward transformative dialogue between teacher and student;
- Dialogue and debate rather than didactic transferrals of information;
- Community participation rather than individualism;
- Transformative action rather than alienating 'blah';
- Liberation rather than domination.

Among the themes that contributors to Issue 37 could consider are the following:

- To what extent is DE supporting activism and citizenship? Authors currently researching activism and social change in the context of development education may be interested in sharing their work.
- Online activism and the need to democratise online spaces to support debate and active citizenship.
- The climate strikes as activism: what are the lessons that can be learned in development education?
- Activism as education: how does activism support learning on global issues?
- The intersection between activism and formal / informal education: what are the challenges and opportunities to supporting learners to engage in activism?
- Examples of activism: how can we draw upon the activism of leading activists past and present to support our practice?
- Activism as a form of resistance to inequality, injustice and poverty. Authors are invited to write case studies of activism, locally and globally.
- What are the lessons on activism and social change that can be learned from the global South, including Indigenous, land, environment, human rights and anti-austerity movements on the frontlines of resistance and change?

Authors interested in submitting an article to Issue 37 should send a 300-word abstract to journal editor, Stephen McCloskey. Please email: stephen@centreforglobaleducation.com.



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The Centre for Global Education (CGE) is a development non-governmental organisation that provides education services to increase awareness of international development issues. Its central remit is to promote education that challenges the underlying causes of poverty and inequality in the developing world and effect action toward social and economic justice.

The Centre equips individuals and organisations to understand the cultural, economic, social and political influences on our lives that result from our growing interdependence with other countries and societies. It also provides learners with the skills, values, knowledge and understanding necessary to facilitate action that will contribute to poverty eradication both locally and globally.

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