FREIRE'S CONSCIENTIZATION AND THE GLOBAL STUDENT: TOWARDS EMANCIPATORY TRANSFORMATION

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ABSTRACT: Globalization continues to influence the focus, method, and pace of education across different levels. This paper draws attention to the challenges globalization poses and its impact on the individual and learning. Also, highlighting a "new school structure" based on the logical relation between transformative emancipatory learning and critical pedagogy. The new structure uses problem-based classrooms to cultivate students as co-creators of useable knowledge. The paper draws extensively from Freire's liberating pedagogy and concludes that it is the task of educators to change the educational school structures and pedagogy. To set students free from the ontological bondage of the neoliberal, market-dominated societal construct accentuated by globalization.

Keywords: globalization, Freire, conscientization, transformation, critical pedagogy

Globalization Impact on Conscientization

The common historic mission of education was to illuminate the human conscience and shape the minds of the future thus influencing relationships, community, and society (Avoseh M. , 2009). Currently, globalization has changed the vocation and function of education consequently altering the mind and consciousness of society. To restore the ontological core of education, everything must come into the light of critical inspection to root out the tentacles of oppression from continuing to use societal structures and relationships to perpetuate its agenda (Butterwick & Egan, 2010). First, we must examine globalization and its impact on education, human conscience, and studenthood. Then highlight a way to ontological liberation by utilizing current theory to change the educational system towards restoration through emancipatory transformation education.

According to Merriam and Bierema (2014), globalization is "the movement of goods, services, people, and ideas across national borders" (p. 2) and that "education itself has become a commodity of the marketplace" (p. 3). Under globalization, economic competitiveness has shifted away from homogenized manufacturing in an industrial era based on natural resources to knowledge-based industries and services based on skill, education, innovation, and research and development (Friedman, 2006; Thurow, 2002).

The underpinnings of capitalism, the system of globalization, and the neoliberal mentality working together to create a knowledge economy has transformed education into a commodity within the marketplace (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015). The knowledge economy is "economies directly based on the production, distribution, and use of knowledge and information" (Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development, 1996, p. 7). Within this economy, knowledge

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is vitally connected to industrial operations which impact information access, knowledge distribution, innovation, technology, population migration, socioeconomic chasms, job skill demands, and formal educational output (Faure, et al., 1972).

The neoliberal marketplace worldview continues to indoctrinate society and shape individual mindsets (Gouthro, 2009). Within the current neo-liberalistic marketplace worldview, the individual is highlighted in terms of its singular profit or loss economic impact upon the market by controlling one's life and proselytizing personal talent while being self-interest focused (Gouthro, 2009). Neoliberal subjects within the free market model are characterized by autonomous hyper-individualistic consumers with a privatized responsibility for educational and economic success, therefore, promoting the mechanization of education (McLean, 2015). Neoliberal market-oriented policies and political construct have added to the commodification of people. Connell (2007) use the example of Chile under General Pinochet where neoliberalism was preceded by internal violence and external debt burden. He used the example to give the definition of neoliberalism that fits our idea of the commodification of people. According to Connell (2007):

> Neoliberalism not only meant selling off the public enterprises that had been built up by the labor of previous generations, dismantling the welfare state and redistributing income towards the rich…(p. 153).

We are all experiencing hyper-technological advancement, globalization, knowledge economies, neoliberalism, and capitalism every day. It is the new normal that fits the Chilean example of Pinochet's days.

The one area of interest most impacted by globalized agenda is education (Jarvis & Griffin, Adult and continuing education:Teaching, learning and research, 2003). Education in this globalized knowledge-based economic society is something obtained and dispensed by the wealthy societal oppressors to the oppressed which maintains a capitalistic social order (Sancar & Sancar, 2012). Educational institutions were designed to cultivate habits and personality traits of which mirror what is needed for work to produce a useable workforce. According to Bowles and Gintis (1976), the nature and function of education is an integral part of economic life and had an obligation to instruct business values and privileged social authoritarian relationships. The school system under the supply and demand principles served the market system by sorting people based on ability and achievement which served the liberal capital economy (Sancar & Sancar, 2012). The foundational challenge within the globalized context has to do with the core mission, role, and purpose of learning and education. Along this line, Avoseh 2008 asserted that "the direction that participation and learning in adult education is heading within the context of globalization is encompassed by economic logic and individual survival" (as cited in Avoseh, 2009, p. 126).

Globalization necessitates material and intellectual poverty that lacks socio-economic and political security (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015). The globalization-imposed poverty creates a lack of knowledge and skills necessary to empower liberation by using "banking education" to train and control the

oppressed masses to foster individual helplessness and social apathy. Freire (1996) expounds on the oppressive mechanically flawed "banking" conceptual analogy of the disordered learning process in which the passive student is a bank, (receptor/collector) and the teacher is the depositor. This naturalistic concept, according to Freire (1996), is what leads to human beings becoming oppressed because students are persuaded to conform to the world as the teacher interprets it or as the world is unquestioned and submissive to the authoritative role as represented by the teacher. Therefore, the function of the educator in the distorted banking system is to regulate reality for the students and the role of the student is only to receive and memorize the pushed down regurgitated dominate culture information, and this system of learning has a global student impact.

Globalization continues to influence the focus, method, and pace of education across different levels and the residual malconformational effect of globalization on society due to exponential scientific and technological growth continues to warp global studentship (Jarvis & Griffin, 2003; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015).

The Effects of Globalization on Studentship

Studentship is merely a state of being a student, and it connects to and provides a framework for studenthood. Field and Morgan-Klein (2010) defined as "the variety of different ways in which registering for an education program is implicated in people's sense of who they are" (p. 1). Under the rapid evolution of the ever-expanding internationalization of studenthood and the transformational impact on global studentship is a byproduct of the transnationalization of education through the globalization phenomena. Developing transnational education is a strategy of educational institutions to position themselves in new ways within a complex, globalized environment. Internationalization is a disruptive force in education, and the globalization agenda is dynamically altering internationalization and these two intertwined, indistinguishable, coercive powers are reconstructing studenthood (Wit, 2011; Knight 2008)

All of the practical products of globalization through technological advancements have opened the world to the individual and provided an opportunity for a mental westernized paradigm to be infusion with non-Western perspectives regarding learning, citizenship, community, and human dignity. Jarvis (2000) traces the connection to technology to the 1970s when "the information technology revolution took off, with one development leading to another" (p. 344). He cites Castells (1996) to establish the point that "the availability of new technologies constituted as a system in the 1970s was a fundamental basis for the process of socio-economic restructuring… (and) the world-wide infrastructural driving force of social change is information technology empowered by those who control capital" (p. 344).

The challenge with western-based internationalization is the use of an all-purpose student learner mold with specific universal characteristics and traits based on mainstream

cultural biases. Education must embrace its original mission to challenge mainstream oppressive thinking, living, and empower the global student body conscientization.

Conscientization- Theoretical Foundations

In order to achieve the mission of learning that leads to emancipatory transformation and conscientization, there is reliance on crucial theoretical underpinnings. We briefly explored two frameworks - constructive-development and critical ethnography.

Constructive-developmental theory

Constructive-developmental theory studies the ability to view reality from increasingly complex perspectives over time (Drago-Severson, 2004) (Kegan, 2000). New ways of fostering transformative learning develop out of changes in knowledge, comprehension and a broader understanding that affect interpersonal and intrapersonal complexity capabilities (Kegan, 2000). Knowledge and the meaning of education are constructed in diverse ways but consistent with internal systems of making meaning. Constructive-developmental theory should be used to help craft learning environments that better support transformative learning by moving learners towards greater epistemological complexity. The more complex systems for making meaning skills are then, the better prepared to challenge dominant ideologies (Bridwell, 2012).

The theory of critical ethnography investigates the relationship between knowledge, culture, society and political action (Harrison, 2008). Critical ethnography assumes the classism status-based society is structured to maintain the oppression of marginalized groups. The theory is compelled to address processes of unfairness, suffering, and injustice within areas of life on the principles of human freedom and well –being (Harrison, 2008). Therefore, the critical ethnographer resists subjugation to go beyond the obscuring surface of power and control to disrupt and unsettle both neutrality and assumptions to contribute toward change for greater equity. Empowering the ability to probe for other possibilities that will challenge restrictive social systems, constraining institutions, and coercive regimes of knowledge that denigrate lives individually and collectively. The critical ethnographer contributes to emancipatory knowledge, discourses of social justice, and makes it imperative for educators to approach learning as the production of cultural practices that offer students a sense of identity, place, and hope (Giroux, 1997). The theoretical understanding provides insight into how to build learning environments that are emancipatory and transformational.

Transformational Learning

Jack Mezirow suggested based on a constructivist assumption personal interpretation of experience is the foundation that creates meaning which alters beliefs and behaviors. The transformation happens when upon examination through learning and reflection a change in perspective as a result of modifying old views changes meaning that directly impacts future experiences (Taylor, 1998). Reflection provides an opportunity for critique of beliefs and assumptions gathered through the stages of life for current validity in the

context of new information. Merriam & Bierema (2014) extracted from (Mezirow, 1991) states:

> transformative learning involves an enhanced level of awareness of the context of one's belief and feelings, a critique of their assumptions and particularly premises, an assessment of alternative perspectives, a decision to negate an old perspective in favor of a new one or to make a synthesis of old and new, an ability to take action based upon the new perspective, and a desire to fit the new perspective into the broader context of one's life (p. 84).

Mezirow published research about the changes that adult women went through when they returned to college. The conclusion of the research was the women had transformed as a direct result of their experiences. Mezirow (1991) identified ten transformational phases disorienting dilemma, self-examination, critical assessment, discontent, explore options, build confidence, plan, implement, experience, and Reintegration (Taylor, 1998). The goal of the theory is to responsibly control our conscious lives as clear decision makers and not conform to or go along with current ideas and assumptions because others have chosen them. There are many variations of transformational learning; the four forms are emancipatory, cognitive, developmental, and spiritual-integrative (Merriam & Bierema, 2014). Other scholars have added the unconscious, emotions, relationships, culture, spirit, aesthetics and ecology to the transformational learning process.

Emancipatory Learning

Emancipatory learning under transformational learning targets social change rather than individual transformation. Social change is expressed in challenging social contextual power structures and their mental influence. The social emancipatory goal is to challenge and transform oppressive structures in society (Merriam & Bierema, 2014). Paulo Freire, a reformist who referred to his humanist and libertarian backdropped theory of transformative learning as Conscientization (meaning: achieving understanding, exposing contradictions, and taking action against the oppressive elements based on illuminated understanding), developed this theory while working with the poor in Brazil in literacy education (Taylor, 1998). Freire was more focused on social transformation through demythologizing reality and awakening critical consciousness among the poor whom he was teaching because according to Freire, our current reality is a product of all human action.

Freire (1998) wanted people to develop a theory of existence, which views themselves and others as subjects, not objects, who are continually reflecting and acting on the transformation, becoming a more equitable place for all to live. This transformation, or the unveiling of reality, is an ongoing, never-ending, and dynamic process. Freire (1998) desired an awaken conscience which embraced an understanding of existence that was beyond objectification and animalistic adaptation to critical perceptive subject beings acting to transform the world through humanizing it. The idea that all are along the spectrum of blindness to our ontological vocation warrants genuine dialogue, reflection leading to action, dialogue, and further action in a repetitive transformative cycle to move towards full humanity (Freire, 1996).

Freire understood critical reflection as central to transformation in context to problem-posing and dialogue with other learners. Freire used reflection to deepen the transformative awareness because he believed the more critically aware one becomes, the more one can transform society and subsequently one's reality. Awakening critical consciousness, while learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to act against the oppressive elements of reality both internally and externally (Taylor, 1998).

Emancipatory learning deals with three common distortions. Epistemic, socio-cultural and psychic are distortions which produce individual meaning and perspective (Freire, 1996). The nature and use of knowledge is the epistemic distortion which is seen in the concretely misinterpreting something as absolute or beyond individual control like government, the law, racism, or police brutality. The socio-cultural distortion involves power and social relationships belief systems that are legitimized and enforced by institutions. Based on some mistaken premise beliefs become distorted perspectives/social norm and reinforced through the economic, political, social, health, religious, educational, occupational, and family context. Then those beliefs are legitimized by mainstream television, media, social media, and the internet. The distortion can impact perceptions and treatment of groups, sub-groups based on race, ethnicity, economic status, geographical location, and other dehumanizing societal categories. Lastly, the psychic distortion addresses the presuppositions producing unfounded anxiety which hinders action. Reassessing once held presuppositions, ways of understanding, or foundational beliefs for the transformed perspectives and act based on new evaluations is the core of emancipatory education.

Learning Paradigm and Critical Pedagogy

With an understanding of transformational emancipatory learning, the macro/micro effects of globalization, and the actual mission of learning and education we now examine learning paradigms as a practical classroom strategy and its overall impact. The overarching theory of social change that should be used in classrooms with new paradigms is critical pedagogy. First coined by Henry Giroux, critical pedagogy is a practical alternative vision of education through critical social theory to deconstruct the oppressive nature of schooling and aimed at stimulating social critique and political engagement among oppressed groups for progressive social change (Giroux, 1997). Critical pedagogy underlying assumption is the inherently political nature of schooling as an institution, all education is political (Freire, 1998). The cumulative result of funding, regulation, institutional goals and objectives, evaluation and assessments, instructional materials, curriculum development, and overall operational power decisions serves to perpetuate oppressive social structures (Sancar & Sancar, 2012). Schools reproduce existing social inequalities and legitimize outcomes through myth propagation.

Exposure to the school system and its impact on the lives of the students and society was Freire's aim in the "banking model" concept. Freire (1996) criticized the banking model

of education because he believed its goal is to break down human beings and remove their dignity within the existing established entities by influencing them to accept the permanency of the dominant society and preventing the students from understanding or transforming reality. He continues by stating:

> The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world. The capability of banking education to minimize or annul the students' creative power and to stimulate their credulity serves the interests of the oppressors, who care neither to have the world revealed nor to see it transformed (Freire, 1996, p. 25).

According to Freire within the educational banking concept, knowledge is a gift given by the knowledgeable oppressor to those whom they consider ignorant (Freire, 1996). Freire goes on to say that the bank system in education is used to make participants malleable and controllable.

True authentic liberating education must involve the rejection of the banking system and the reconciliation of the student-teacher relationship through in-depth dialogue to a more horizontal relationship, so both are simultaneously teachers and students and are both in need to learn and be taught. To alleviate dehumanization and the objectification produced by the banking model, Freire (1996) suggests the "problem-posing" educational model.

According to Freire (1998), the problem-posing educational concept allows genuine participants to fully develop their human natures because it entirely depends on dialogue, relationships, encourages discovery, creativity, and leads to transformation of self and worldview. In this concept, students are not apathetically sitting idly by or catatonically waiting for the truth to be deposited but responsive to complex world problems which require critical thinking, commitment and facing new challenges. The facilitation of problem-posing classroom requires the teacher to overcome the former teacher-student dialogue contradiction, move away from being just a narrative to fostering a transformative environment using cognitive dialogue for educational freedom for the teacher and the students. The revolutionary component of problem-posing is when both the teacher-student can contemplate their realities, are empowered to imagine otherwise, each become self-governed in his or her convictions, foster an enlightened, open-minded and independent human being.

New School Structure

The current fundamental debate in public schools is a debate over emancipatory versus hegemonic scholarship and its maintenance or disruption (Swartz, 1992). According to Freire, (1996) the burden of change falls on the oppressed and the classroom, therefore, all lower socio-economic schools should use emancipatory transformative strategies for liberation, empowerment, change, and community citizen engagement. Bridwell suggests marginalized people groups experience epistemological growth within transformative learning environments (Bridwell, 2012) It is critical that efforts be taken to implement

emancipatory educational practices in mainstream public-school systems to change the life trajectory of many youths. (Lewis, Sullivan, & Bybee, 2006). This critical practice helps students to name and define their world and to experience school as a site of hope/possibility (Giroux, 1997). Within these sites, emancipated discourse can educate students into positions of empowerment and develop emancipatory interaction between students, teachers and transformational enlightenment which unchains knowledge to make it more accessible to analysis and expansion (Swartz, 1992).

Transformative educators and educational structures teach content with a different objective in mind and using instructional strategies with an emphasis on actualization for liberation and freedom (Dirkx, 1998). Actualization infused throughout pedagogic structures aims at identifying coercive forces or factors within various contexts. Also, freeing the being from the interwoven deeply embedded powerful influence through reflection, dialogue, critique, discernment, imagination, and action (Dirkx, 1998). These forces left to their devices constrain or shape how we understand ourselves, personal abilities, and our relationship to the surrounding communities. Transformative learning frameworks function from the assumptions that everyone's transformation has neither a precise beginning nor a conclusive ending and the instructional journey educators experience with students is brief. The assumption transitions from the process of becoming a simple learning strategy used on participants to a way of being and acting within their individualized life contexts. It is an ontological positioning within the instructional relationship that requires everyone believing in the tenets, to live that core truth actively (Dirkx, 1998).

Transformative Educational Structure

The transformative educational structure expects and skillfully teaches critical questioning and dialogue to revise the way in which one thinks and live out life. Sometimes this process leads to complex dilemmas because new insights challenge existing frames of reference, from authority structures or patterns of behavior (Cox & John, 2016). Transformative school support help reorientation and new sense-making which moves beyond past barriers and help transition into a hopeful directional future based on discovering the power within themselves to make different choices and lead lives different from what they had known until enlightenment (Bridwell, 2012). Transformational emancipatory schools are a catalyst for change, confronting frameworks of victim mentality, hopelessness, and despair among many disenfranchised. Also, igniting possibilities to overpower obstacles, and to live better lives by using their inner power to make changes that will influence their futures and the life of their community positively (Cox & John, 2016).

Emancipatory School Structure

Emancipatory schools develop positive norms and values that differ from mainstream traditional school structures (Ratteray, 1992). Specifically, they emphasize communal work and responsibility, cooperative learning, and spirituality versus individuality, competitiveness, and materialism (Freire, 1998). Common emancipatory educational

goals are to increase communal orientation and connectedness, academic achievement, and positive involvement in social change (Lewis, 2004). Emancipatory schools set high expectations for students to become socially active in their communities by engaging in efforts to change the status quo to enhance the community's quality of life (Bridwell, 2012). Also advance academically in school because oppression and inequality are a normal part of the cultural ethos and often impede individual and community success, so the skills to challenge and question the systemic status quo is imperative (Brookins, 1996). Within this school ideology, students perform well above the norm on standardized college preparatory tests, have high graduation and collegiate enrollment rates along with making positive contributions to society (Ratteray, 1992).

Cultivating Conscientization

Educators cannot guarantee transformation; they should establish a goal to cultivate transformative learning by skillfully using the theories and strategies with this report. Education can no longer use the same approaches of the past; it has reached an inflection point. Although critical, education alone cannot solve all the global challenges, but a humanistic and holistic approach which seeks to identify a positive model for human development and enhance human potential infused within education can contribute to a new societal model (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015). Factors such as culture, ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status are significant in the teaching and learning process, and the inclusion of those factors determine whether education is liberating or oppressive. This approach emphasizes inclusion for sustainability and "lifelong and life-wide" learning to preserve the dignity of all humanity (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015). Some classrooms are a site for domination; it should also be one that empowers by fostering and creating opportunities for challenging the oppressive influences. It is therefore imperative that educators consciously foster transformative learning by using good strategies (Nygreen, 2010).

Emancipatory transformation is not an event or classroom project but a sustainable way of being supported by a community of people who are motivated and committed by their own need for conscientization enlightenment. That illumination spreads and affects the educational structure, governing pedagogy, instructional methodology, societal foundations, and reverse the deteriorating effects of globalization individually and collectively. We must infuse emancipatory transformational learning into every fiber of our current educational structure to liberate the masses from the numbing and blinding forces of globalized banking education. Ultimately moving beyond the rudimentary to target new humanist vision, learning environments, and learning methodologies towards justice, equity and global solidarity for the common good (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015). Education is the core effort to change and to transform the world, and quality education is a primary foundation for lifelong learning (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015).

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