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When the Oppressed Rise: Education as a Tool for Decolonization 2021 Special Issue

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Editorial Introduction
When the Oppressed Rise:
Education as a Tool for Decolonization

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"apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis, individuals cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other."
—Paulo Freire

Paulo Reglus Neves Freire was born in Recife, Brazil, on September 19, 1921. He was the son of a middle-class family that, for some time, faced financial uncertainties, experienced poverty and hunger. Despite those material hardships, Paulo Freire thrived as a student, becoming a bachelor's in law. His passion, however, was teaching. After getting his undergraduate degree, the young Freire decided to follow a different path and became a Portuguese primary school teacher. Soon, he also became interested in policy planning and started working within public institutions to develop new strategies to educate those historically marginalized in educational policies. He probably did not know that this change in his life would bring him at the same time more professional satisfaction and lead him through a dangerous road since his home country would face a nondemocratic future. As history shows us, nondemocratic leaders despise critical thinking, divergent ideas, and, consequently, teachers and education. When a coup d'état established a civil-military dictatorship in Brazil in 1964, Freire was about to spearhead one of the most ambitious national literacy programs for adults. The project would revolutionize learning and teaching since Freire had developed a method to teach illiterate adults how to read, write, and critically assess their social context in only forty days. When the dictators ousted president João Goulart, the new regime also started persecuting his allies and the intellectuals connected to his government and ideals. Freire was one of them. Shortly after Goulart left power, he was imprisoned for seventy days and exiled for his "subversive" activities. Freire and his family had to leave Brazil. Again, a detour would have unintended effects on his life. While exiled, Freire started a peregrination and had the chance to teach his innovative pedagogy in Latin America, the United States, and Europe and formulate educational policies in African nations. In a recent documentary about his life and work, one of his daughters ponders that her father would not have become "the" Paulo Freire if not for the dictatorship. The dictatorial regime wanted to impose a gag on Freire; however, inadvertently, they helped him spread his ideas and transformative pedagogy to the four corners of the world and become one of the most relevant educators of all time.

In the year that marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Paulo Freire, this Special Issue of Current Issues in Comparative Education pays homage to his legacy. Freire is one of the most quoted scholars across all fields of knowledge; his work is translated into more than 40 languages. Freire's seminal book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, continues to shape policy and practice in education worldwide more than five decades after its publication. Based on the lessons learned through his life and work, this issue also recognizes the

efforts of many oppressed individuals and communities around the globe that are using education to overcome different forms of oppression and promote the decolonization of knowledge and educational practices. Accepting that all individuals are entitled to be treated with dignity, have the same opportunities, and be more fully human contradicts many current conservative and authoritarian ideas gaining popularity worldwide. Yet, the articles in this issue reinforce the notion that both Freire's ideas and alternative ways of seeing education can change the world for the better.

This Special Issue is organized into three major sections. In the first one, we present the articles related to Paulo Freire's pedagogy and ideas, highlighting how his theory and practice influence discussions in Comparative and International Education, power issues within the classroom, movements of liberation based on education, citizenship education, and policy implementation.

Offering a theoretical contribution to decolonial thinking, **Regina Cortina** and **Marcella Winter** highlight the significance of Freire's pedagogy, connecting it to Enrique Dussel's philosophy of education. The discussion proposed by the authors emphasizes how two concepts found in Freire's work, *conscientização* and *praxis*, are crucial to understanding that the collaboration between teachers and learners can empower them in transforming an unjust world.

Rosaria Indah centers her autoethnography on another essential concept in the Freirean perspective: dialogue. Drawing on experiences of providing feedback for medical students using Freire's ideas, the author explores how offering dialogical feedback in the context of disaster-affected people can improve the quality of the interaction between teachers and students.

Tara Bartlett and **Daniel Schugurensky** analyze the connections between Freire's conceptualization on citizenship education and school democracy and the current discussions on school participatory budgeting. They trace a line relating Freire's work at the Social Service of Industry (SESI), his work as Secretary of Education of Sao Paulo, and the contemporary school participatory budgeting (School PB) efforts in two cases from schools in Arizona.

In their article, **Krystal Strong** and **Rhoda Nanre Nafziger** show how Freire's ideas have influenced Pan-Africanist social movements since the period following African nations' independence. The discussion also explores the continued importance of Freirean educational praxis in contemporary Pan-Africanist initiatives, focusing on the Pan-African Activist Sunday School and Solidarity Collective.

Inspired by her experiences as an educator in a Freirean, Spanish-language, high school equivalency (HSE) program in New Jersey, **Elena J. Peeples** offers a narrative for relevant policy environments and actions through the assemblage of primary sources. Her discussion suggests that while ambiguity in policy implementation guidance can result in discrimination and disenfranchisement, adult education programs grounded in Freirean pedagogy can respond to these situations through an open dialectic that provides for exchange between internal program relationships and external organizational relationships.

Through an argumentative literature review, **Renata Penalva** and **Adriana Marcondes Machado** explore the connections between health and education in Brazil. Their piece

evinces that Paulo Freire's idea that an ethical posture in public policy consists of bringing people to participate in policy formulation was present in constructing the Brazilian Public Health System. The process brought together health and education professionals inspired by the idea that the people's involvement would advance democratic ideals and change towards equity.

This Special Issues' second section sheds light on how historically marginalized groups and individuals are using education as a tool to overcome oppression, promote more inclusive ways of teaching and learning, and the decolonization of educational practices.

Yvonne Thevenot contradicts the notion that Black people have not used innovation intentionally as a construct to alter unjust social realities. In her article, she reveals that their efforts to change, modify, and disrupt the systemic and societal processes that historically denied them educational opportunities happen as a visible effort to decolonize learning spaces while creating meaningful academic impulses for students of color.

In a conceptual article, **Jessica D. Murray** and **Monica C. Desrochers** offer a guide for educators to use Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Their discussion's main objective is to help educators critically examine their teaching and behavioral support practices, have better interactions with students and families and empower pupils through critical thinking.

Katia Diaz explores the Dominican Republic's educational system response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. She highlights that, although the government has attempted to promote the digital inclusion of teachers and students through existing initiatives, its provision of education to low-income and special needs students. Through in-depth policy analysis and interviews, her study addresses the impact of digital learning on vulnerable communities.

Ana Luísa Melo Ferreira emphasizes that Brazilian higher education and scientific production were, historically, spaces destined to a privileged white elite. However, a new decolonial indigenous intellectual current emerges to reveal other valid ways of knowing. She analyses the role of indigenous participation in academic scientific production and how recent initiatives - such as the Bibliography of Indigenous Publications of Brazil - contribute to rescuing their self-esteem and culture valorization.

Essays and an article response compose the last section of this Special Issue. In a compelling piece, **Kevin Cataldo** reflects on how identifying the oppressor within helped him create new forms to decolonize his pedagogy, using his experiences as a historically marginalized individual of color. **Minoli Wijetunga** explores the hegemonic nature of Comparative and International Education knowledge production, offering a critical analysis of definitions within the field and the speeches of former CIE Society presidents delivered over a decade apart. Two Freirean concepts-critical consciousness and critical thinking-become central in the discussion presented by **Elizabeth Robinson** and **Curt Rhodes** on the non-formal education program designed for youth in Jordan. Considering personal experiences as an Iraqi at Oxford University, **Mariam Hassoum** draws on her identity and what it represents for her educational trajectory in a place where, not long ago, students like her did not belong. **Anisa Bora, Grace Choi, Thomonique Moore, Rongwei Tang,** and **Claire Yiming Zheng** discuss digital technology as a channel of art activism to address issues pertinent to students and their communities. They propose the ARt of Inequality, a curriculum that combines social justice and art activism. Lastly, **Peter**

Simpson offers a response to Will Foley's article published in CICE's 2021 Winter Issue, suggesting that more can be achieved if decolonial critiques and critical pedagogy are applied to the field of human rights education.

This Special Issue calls attention to the diversity in the field of Comparative and International Education and the multiple ways in which education and knowledge production comprise realities produced within power dynamics and various social, political, cultural, and economic contexts. The collection of articles contributes to our understanding of distinct layers of complexity in education matters. At the same time, it opens a window of opportunities for us to identify possibilities in educational theory and practice. We on the editorial team hope that these debates represent one of the precious lessons Freire taught us: liberating knowledge emerges from the hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other.

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Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of Liberation

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To highlight the significance of Freire's pedagogy, this article draws from the work of decolonial thinkers in Latin American and Enrique Dussel's philosophy to understand Freire's pedagogy of liberation. Two concepts in Freire's work, conscientização and praxis, are key to understanding how awakening the consciousness of teachers and learners can empower them in transforming an unjust world. For Freire, the collaboration between teachers and learners is essential to the self-transformation of learners for their own liberation. This innovative and transformative pedagogy inspired literacy campaigns and social justice movements around the globe and constitutes Freire's legacy.

Introduction

"(…) liberation is thus the 'place' and the 'purpose' of this pedagogy."
Dussel (2013)

The depth of Paulo Freire's thinking and practice led to advances in the theory of liberation and to the foundation of a pedagogy of liberation. Our aim in this article is to examine Freire's work towards a pedagogy of liberation. We write in honor of Paulo Freire at the 100th anniversary of his birth in 1921 in Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil.

The theory of liberation emerges from a collaboration among Latin American academics aiming to develop a philosophy of Latin America and to question the epistemologies behind Western social sciences. They pursue these aims to create an expansion of perspectives that reflects a Latin American reality autonomous from Eurocentric domination (Escobar, 2010). This article is based on our understanding of the writing of Latin American philosopher Enrique Dussel, who developed what he calls "a Latin American philosophy of education" (Dussel, 2019). In his book, *The Ethics of Liberation* (2013), Dussel presents an extensive analysis of Freire to highlight the significance of his theoretical contributions and his critical perspective. Dussel concludes that the essence of Freire's contribution is that "education is not possible without the self-education of the learner in the process of his or her own liberation" (p. 311).

As Dussel sees it, Freire's pedagogy goes beyond focusing on cognitive and social development. The emphasis is on the growth of an ethical-critical consciousness in the learner that emerges through a pedagogy that respects the other (Dussel, 2013). The ethical-critical consciousness proposed by Freire originates in learners, who are perceived as the privileged historical subjects of their own liberation. It is ethical because it grows

out of the learner's perspective; it is critical because it recognizes their aspirations and dignity (Dussel, 2013). The pedagogy proposed by Freire challenges traditional forms of teaching and learning, which try to domesticate the student, imposing the Other upon the Self, and neglecting their voice. Both Freire and Dussel understand teaching and learning as a process centered on the notion that liberation is the aim of pedagogy. What they mean is that "the ethics of liberation is an ethics of everyday life" (Dussel, 2013, p. 211). Based on dialogue and respect for the learner's perspective, the pedagogy of liberation becomes a powerful tool in raising critical consciousness and transforming the logics of domination in Latin American teaching and learning practices.

To establish Freire's legacy and influence in decolonial thinking and practice in Latin America, we build upon the work of Dussel, the most prominent Latin American decolonial philosopher who interpreted Freire's work. We build upon Dussel's interpretation to advance Freire's pedagogy of liberation. To accomplish this goal and to provide a contextualized and detailed analysis of Freire's pedagogical influence, this article starts by reviewing the Brazilian educator's unique contribution. We use the central tenets of Latin America's decolonial theory and explain how Freirean concepts align with current scholarship on decolonial thinking to illuminate the foundations of Freire's pedagogy of liberation. Freire and Dussel were contemporaries. In this article we review Dussel's analysis of Freire as a seminal thinker to show how he builds on the Freirean pedagogy to develop his thinking. We discuss Dussel's reasoning to understand his analysis of Freire, and we demonstrate why Dussel is central to understanding Freire's contributions. We build on these two thinkers and their arguments to show the importance of teachers in Latin American pedagogy and Freire's overall legacy.

Freire's pedagogy: *conscientização* and *praxis*

One of the most influential education thinkers of the twentieth century, Paulo Reglus Neves Freire (1921-1997) was born in Recife, Pernambuco, in the Northeast of Brazil. Although he was raised in an underserved and impoverished region and experienced a family background marked by financial hardships, the young Freire discovered education as a central element in his life. The lessons learned in his childhood helped him develop ideas about schooling that would shape the educator and the philosopher he would later become. Freire had strong support from his parents to learn how to read and write and became interested in learning from a young age. Reminiscing about memories from Paulo Freire's childhood, his wife Ana Maria describes in a book dedicated to his life and work how Freire's mother and father used words and phrases that were relevant to his experience as a child in Brazil to spark his learning (Araújo Freire, 1996). His parents instilled in him an awareness that would become central in his work as an educator and philosopher: knowledge must be linked to one's daily reality. While in elementary school, his first Portuguese teacher, Eunice, guided the young Freire in developing his writing. She commonly asked him to write all the words he knew, and then both of them discussed their different meanings. She did not aim to make the student memorize grammar rules, but rather to develop a love for the mother tongue and its beauty (Araújo Freire, 1996). Years later, when Freire became a teacher of Portuguese, he put into practice what he discovered with his first mentor; the process of teaching and learning is a collective endeavor in which teachers and students are partners in creating knowledge.

After earning a Law degree, Freire decided to change careers and work as a schoolteacher. As his career developed, he concentrated his efforts on education by targeting a particular group: illiterate workers (Araújo Freire, 1996). Freire initiated a critical approach to literacy, focusing on adult education and promoting the notion that "reading the world

precedes reading the word" (Freire & Slover, 1983, p. 5). In the book *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World*, written with his long-time collaborator Donaldo Macedo, Freire explains that the organization of literacy programs should be based on what he calls the "word universe" of learners (Freire & Macedo, 1987, p. 35). By reading the students' world and identifying the most meaningful words in their existential experiences, educators come to recognize how they express their actual language, anxieties, fears, demands, and dreams (Freire & Macedo, 1987). The learning process happens through "codifications," i.e., pictures representing situations related to learners' daily lives (Freire, 1976; Freire & Macedo, 1987). Reading, or "decoding," the images of concrete situations enables learners to reflect on their former interpretation of the world before going on to read words (Freire & Macedo, 1987). More than becoming literate, they learn to read situations of injustice to become agents of change; they insert themselves in the world as capable of subverting a reality that is not favorable to them. According to these notions, Freire developed a method based on critical literacy. The first large-scale implementation of this method took place with 380 sugarcane workers between February and March of 1963 in Angicos,[1] a small town in Rio Grande do Norte, another impoverished state in Northeast Brazil. By helping those marginalized Brazilians to learn how to read and write, Freire was not only educating them but making them aware of their transformative power in their own lives, their communities, and societies.

The Brazilian Constitution of 1946 stated that the non-educated were not citizens and could not participate in elections. Freire's efforts went beyond educating for people to become literate citizens. He aimed at empowering those individuals to become voters and influential actors in local and national politics. During the government of President João Goulart (1961-1964), public officials invited Freire to participate in different initiatives related to public education because of his expertise. He played various roles at the local and state levels and was appointed to spearhead the National Adult Literacy Plan (1964) and reproduce the successful Angicos experience on a much larger scale (Araújo Freire, 1996; Kohan, 2021). However, in 1964, a civil-military coup overthrew Goulart. The new government identified Freire as subversive and forced him into sixteen years of exile.

The civil-military dictatorship (1964-1985) frustrated the plans for making Brazil a more literate and equal country. Still, this chapter in the country's history was central in the emergence of Freire as prominent educator. While in exile, he wrote the book recognized as his masterpiece, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* and had the opportunity to promote a pedagogy that aimed to encourage the liberation of individuals not only in his home country but around the world.

Among the many concepts developed within his pedagogy, Freire firmly based his philosophy and practice on two main ideas: *conscientização* and *praxis*. In the book *Conscientização*, Freire (1979) clarifies that he was not the one who invented the term. It was coined by scholars at the Advanced Institute of Brazilian Studies (*Instituto Superior de Estudos Brasileiro*s, ISEB), a center devoted to the study of Brazil's development problems. Upon hearing the word for the first time and realizing the depth of its meaning, Freire understood that it should be central to his ideas about education. *Conscientização*, usually translated into English as conscientization, is an act of knowledge, a critical approach to reality that favors education as a practice of freedom (Freire, 1979). He differentiates "consciousness" from "conscientização." Becoming conscious about an issue or apprehending the reality is not enough to develop a critical stance in which individuals

[1] The documentary *Paulo Freire, um homem do mundo* (Paulo Freire, A Man of the World), directed by Cristiano Burlan (2020), narrates Freire's experiences in Angicos, recounting the stories told by the main characters in the endeavor, teachers and students who participated in the experiment.

see themselves as capable of transforming their reality. Freire also suggests that, because *conscientização* happens in a specific space and time, it must be a reiterative process. The process of *conscientização* brings together human consciousness and the world, perceived as an object for critical reflection and change. It is, above all, the recognition that individuals can take possession of their reality and become engaged in the task of transforming it permanently (Freire, 1979).

Freire proposes that critical education promotes *conscientização*, through which learners become aware of the objective reality that produces oppression. Still, teaching and learning must be closely linked to a liberating *praxis* based on action and reflection. In his most recognized work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire proposes that only through individuals' reflection and action upon the world to transform it, that is, the authentic *praxis*, will the oppressor-oppressed contradiction be resolved (Freire, 2000). Through a humanist and liberationist perspective, the pedagogy of the oppressed happens in two stages. In the first, individuals unveil the world of oppression to which they have been historically subjected, and they commit, through *praxis*, to its transformation (Freire, 2000). After the reality of the oppression has already been transformed, in the second stage, this pedagogy is no longer exclusively related to the oppressed: it becomes a tool for all people towards their permanent liberation (Freire, 2000). Through *conscientização* and *praxis*, individuals dismantle the conditions that lead to oppression and construct a more just and equal reality for all people. As suggested by Freire in *Education, as a Practice of Freedom*, a pedagogy based on *conscientização* and *praxis* favors learning and teaching that translate into forces of change and liberation (Freire, 1976). A critical education leads to more *conscientização* and, through *praxis*, individuals insert themselves into history not as viewers but as actors and authors of their destinies (Freire, 1976). This search for liberation and fostering individuals' capacity to dismantle situations of oppression reflects Freire's intellectual kinship with the thinking of Latin American authors who confront conditions of injustice present in the region.

In the book *Education, the Practice of Freedom,* Freire (1976) reflects on his experience as a teacher in Brazil to propose a pedagogy of liberation capable of awakening the consciousness of teachers and learners to activate empowered human beings who can identify their role in transforming an unjust world. Context is central in his work since "there is no education outside human society and there is no man in a void" (Freire, 1967, p. 35). When considering that traditional forms of education have contributed to colonization, reinforcing practices that encourage students to become passive and acritical, Freire's pedagogy is applicable in other contexts beyond Brazil and primarily allied with the Global South. For all of these countries, he believes, transforming education emerges as an urgent matter. The traditional forms of education brought by the colonizer need to be transformed in order to create practices that favor change and liberation. Adopting new approaches connected to the reality of each society will undergird the replacement of education for domestication and alienation with education practices for freedom. The only option for a society that aspires to decolonization is to transform its people into subjects in their own history, to promote education for the person-subject rather than the person-object (Freire, 1976). In the following section, we discuss the place of liberation in decolonial thought.

Decolonial theories in search of liberation

Decolonial theory questions the narrow conceptions of knowledge produced by academics and research institutions concerned with education. Decolonial theorists have diverse disciplinary backgrounds. They come from and they study different regions in the

world. All of them, though, are united in critiquing an exclusive reliance on Eurocentric epistemologies. The term decolonial is useful to distinguish those whose practices and studies encourage thinking and knowledge production not only *with* but *from* the Global South: worldviews, cultural ways of knowing of historically colonized, racialized or subaltern communities.

Decolonial thinking, in our view, is deeply informed by the concept of "coloniality of power" coined by Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano (2000). By this he means continuing subjugation in various ways to the racial and gender hierarchies established during colonial times. Those hierarchies started with the arrival of the Spaniards to the Americas in 1492 and continued with the enduring presence of those hierarchies in contemporary societies. The writings of Quijano help to recognize "coloniality" as the darker side of modernity, ever-present in social and political structures today, and to uncover how it operates. This is what Walter Mignolo refers as *modernity/coloniality.* He offers this blend of two key words to identify the "colonial matrix of power" that supports present-day modernity (Mignolo, 2012).

For education scholars, decolonial theories open up new perspectives for considering all kinds of knowledge and world views, not only those produced from Eurocentric and colonial perspectives. From the perspective of Latin America, the focus shifts to many students and educators across the world whose knowledge, languages, and cultures have been left out of schools and universities (Cortina & Earl, 2019).

Enrique Dussel's emphasis in his philosophical work is to understand decoloniality, a term that emerged in Latin America, and to focus on understanding the power structures that support *modernity/coloniality* to build a decolonial society for local and regional communities based on alternative epistemologies. Dussel (2019) indicates that education in Latin America needs to move away from conceptions that are not supported by the region's cultural and historical heritage. This proposition is at the heart of Dussel's thinking on how critical thinking and practices of liberation can promote alternative ways of teaching and learning. Dussel's philosophy emerges from understanding the influence that colonization had on the consolidation of national education systems in Latin America and the subjugation of Indigenous peoples and enslaved Africans. Dussel argues that the colonizers employed diverse processes to modernize and civilize, and pedagogical practice is a crucial tool for understanding how colonized peoples lived and reproduced their lives. Concepts such as modernization, rationality, and emancipation inspired Europeans in their overseas endeavors. While traditional notions of modernity promoted emancipation within European civilizations, the modern project became an obstacle to Latin America's liberation. Since the first European conquerors set foot in the so-called "new world," the social, economic, and political structures of Latin America were changed, and still reflect colonization by remaining in many ways dependent and peripheral.

To subvert the colonial logic of domination, Dussel (1995a) proposes to transcend modern reason, which translates into not negating rationality itself but rejecting a "violent, Eurocentric, developmentalist, hegemonic reason" (p. 138). Dussel, then, suggests, through this process the alterity, the Other, receives recognition as an equal. Dismantling the hierarchies formerly established by colonization is at the center of the project to transcend Eurocentrism on behalf of the historically erased alterity. Emancipation and the pedagogy of liberation arises as a central element in this long-term process toward the liberation of those oppressed by racial, culture, gender, ethnicity, or language practices, all of which are hierarchies that support coloniality in the advance of modernity.

Towards a pedagogy of liberation

A new Latin American philosophy of education is based on a pedagogics of liberation. Dussel introduces the word "pedagogics," a term that emerges from his philosophy of liberation as distinctive from European philosophy and a limited negation of that tradition (Marquínez Argote, 1995). In "A Brief Note on Pedagogics," the author suggests that the concept concerns how education needs to move away from conventional pedagogical systems that favor domination in Latin America since colonial times (Dussel, 2018). Similarly, as he has argued some decades before in *Método para una Filosofía de la Liberación*, Dussel (1974) affirms that to acknowledge the illiterate as subjects in the process of teaching and learning is essential to create an original and respectful pedagogy in Latin America.

Pedagogics is based, above all, on comprehension and justice (Dussel, 2018). Contrary to a pedagogy of domination, it is a world of culture and teaching that admits the possibility of different forms of interpreting reality (Dussel, 2018). Because pedagogy is a cultural, social, and familial problem (Dussel, 1995b), the pedagogy of liberation nurtures communities to support the new generation and manage the conflicts that may emerge from the relationship between tradition and innovation. Through the praxis of liberation, it aims to prevent the pedagogical death of the Other, or what Dussel calls "filicide." Every family or any political system that, in the name of tradition or the status quo, prevents the emergence of the new commits filicide (Dussel, 1995b). Pedagogics gives the Other more than a chance to exist, but also the space to speak and to question the culture and ideology of the current system (Dussel, 2018).

Within the pedagogics of liberation, in Dussel's view, the new generation joins the pedagogical process as a critical agent rather than a passive participant. Frequently conceived as empty vessels, students are, on the contrary, subjects in a world of meanings, memory, and resistance (Dussel, 2013). Following an approach to education centered on pupils, teachers become the disciple of the disciples (Dussel, 2018). Professional educators must listen to the perspectives of young people and learn how to be critical of dominant and dehumanizing practices.

The concept of pedagogics refers to how education aims to nurture communities to support the new generation. A critical component is that teachers must listen to the perspectives of young people, the new generation, and to learn with them how to be critical of dominant and dehumanizing perspectives. To recognize pupils both as the historical continuity of their community and the risk of that tradition's alteration is to put the system of domination in question so that a new system can be organized (Dussel, 2018). Within the pedagogics of liberation, children are understood according to their temporality and locality—their voices must be heard and the novelty they bring must be considered (Dussel, 2019). Following this approach to education, students and teachers construct knowledge through a partnership; teachers speak, but above all, they listen–if dialogue is not present, liberatory learning is impossible (Dussel, 2019). Thus, educational practices must be linked to an ethics of liberation, which emerges from "the victims," the excluded Other, the oppressed (Dussel, 2013, pp. 294-295). To recognize pupils both as the historical continuity of their community and the risk of that tradition's alteration is to put the system of domination in question so that a nonhierarchical system can be organized (Dussel, 2018). In doing so, we must give strength to the new generation, for them to dismantle a fetishized system based on oppression and to pass to a new one, in which they can liberate themselves and discover how to build the new order through education (Dussel, 2019).

After Dussel's detailed inquiry into the sources of Latin American pedagogical systems conducive to domination, one question remains: how would pedagogics materialize? Instead of proposing an alternative method, the philosopher highlights Paulo Freire as an example of an educator who aims to make ethical-critical consciousness emerge through his pedagogy (Dussel, 2013). Drawing on Freire's seminal work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and the concept of "critical consciousness" or "*conscientização*," Dussel (1974, 2019) asserts that the problem-based pedagogy proposed by the Brazilian educator meets the requirements for a respectful pedagogy for Latin America and offers what is essential for "education as the practice of freedom." Discussing how a pedagogy of liberation should look in the age of globalization, Dussel (2013) emphasizes Freire's definition of education as a transforming and critical activity by which the emergence of ethical-critical reason becomes an integral part of the education process. He describes Freire not only an educator, in the strict sense of the term: "he is something more–an educator of the "ethical-critical consciousness" (Dussel, 2013, p. 304).

In Freire's pedagogy, the aim of education is not to foster theoretical or moral intelligence, but to educate in a historical, communitarian process connected to learners' daily lives. Through a pedagogy of liberation and its teaching and learning practices, individuals can identify themselves as oppressed, acknowledging the possibility of transforming social reality and becoming empowered, "through which they abandon their condition as victims" (Dussel, 2013, p. 312). To analyze the causes of oppression means to increase awareness of the objective reality that produces oppression and how it connects to individual's experiences. Freire is not interested in creating hypothetical examples to help learners identify what a context of oppression would signify. On the contrary, he highlights the situations of subjugation experienced by students as the foundation of the pedagogical practice (Dussel, 2013).

The education process creates an awareness of the objective reality that produces oppression; however, it must be closely linked to a liberating *praxis* that connects subjects in a community that dismantles the conditions for oppression (Dussel, 2013). By articulating the process of teaching and learning through the concrete reality lived by the oppressed, education emerges as the place where students see themselves as the origin of the transformation of reality. The critical consciousness proposed by Freire originates in the students, conceived as the privileged historical subjects of their own liberation. Upon understanding their reality, students through their *praxis* and actions gain critical consciousness, and this is an illuminating moment for their life and the practice of freedom in their community (Dussel, 2019). Dussel describes Freire as an original thinker who situates the learner in a community engaged in the process of *conscientização*. From this perspective, the Brazilian educator opposes mainstream traditional and acritical education. Since Freire is concerned with social transformation, his pedagogy translates into a radically original position compared to other educators who neglect that education is not possible without the self-education of the learner in the process of their own liberation. In this sense, liberation is thus "the place" and the "purpose" of Freirean pedagogy (Dussel, 2013, p. 320).

Freire's Legacy

Freire's work has had lasting influence in Brazil and many other countries of the world. His pedagogy and philosophy have inspired social movements and literacy campaigns to construct more just societies. Paulo Freire participated both directly and indirectly in many of these endeavors.

After being imprisoned in Brazil for seventy days under the charge of being "subversive" and "a traitor," Freire began a peregrination. Following a brief stay in Bolivia, he lived in Chile for five years, where he worked with the Christian Democratic Agrarian Reform Movement and found a conducive environment to develop his ideas. In the book *Pedagogy of Hope* (2014), Freire recalls that the intensity of the Chilean social atmosphere made him rethink his Brazilian experience and inspired him to write *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* between 1967 and 1968. Later, he spent some time working as a Professor at Harvard and moved to Geneva to serve at the Office of Education in the World Council of Churches (WCG). During his time in WCG, Freire worked as an advisor for recently independent nations in Africa. In the 1970s, he collaborated with the establishment of postcolonial education systems in countries such as Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau (Gadotti, 2019). Freire recalls some of his experiences in Africa in the book *Pedagogy in Process: The Letters to Guinea-Bissau* (2016). He argues that the education systems established by European colonizers contributed to colonized peoples' dehumanization and low self-esteem. The objective in restructuring or "rehabilitating" those nations' schools would then be closely linked to the decolonization of peoples' minds. According to Moacir Gadotti (2019), Freire's work in Africa was decisive for his trajectory and made him undertake new perspectives in the field of adult literacy.

Even when in exile, Freirean pedagogy significantly influenced how social movements progressed in Brazil under the dictatorship. Discussing how the Landless Workers' Movement (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem-Terra, MST) developed its pedagogical approach, Rebecca Tarlau (2019) clarifies that the MST defined education as one of its main concerns based on the ideas offered by Freire in *Pedagogy of The Oppressed*. Local landless leaders came to know the popular and liberatory education he proposed through Catholic Church's study groups (CEBs) in the 1970s. Religious leaders drew on Freire's writings on literacy to teach rural workers to read the world and the word, starting with their daily experiences and then progressing to discussions on inequality, economy, and politics (Tarlau, 2019). The strategies used by educators, included drawing on the language of the community, creating pedagogical activities based on students' realities, and promoting learning through dialogue (Tarlau, 2019). Confirming the notion that education is simultaneously an act of knowing and a political act (Freire, 1985), those ideas also influenced MST's struggle for rural workers' rights and political agenda recognition. Sharing her fieldwork notes, Tarlau (2019) quotes one of MST's national leaders, who explained how Freire influenced their quest for social justice: "Paulo Freire taught us that we are the subjects of the process of social change, not objects. He believes in peasant workers. (...). Paulo Freire taught us that (...) everyone has to be an agent in their own liberation" (p. 51). Freire continues to be a source of inspiration for MST and the movement's pedagogical practices (Vieira & Côco, 2018; Tarlau, 2019).

Freire contributed to reconstructing democracy in his home country upon returning to Brazil in 1980, after sixteen years of exile. When the civil-military dictatorship started to show signs of weakness, leading the way to a gradual return to democracy, the educator became a crucial voice in building a new country. Given his experience with grassroots initiatives and his worldwide fame, Freire was invited by members of the Constituent Assembly to participate in the discussions that would lead to Brazil's new democratic constitution. Addressing the Education and Literacy Subcommission, Freire (1987) focused on adult literacy and the need to extend public education, qualitatively and quantitatively, to all Brazilians. He added that literacy alone would not create social change; however, a major transformation in society would not be feasible without it (Freire, 1987, p. 488). The subcommission's president, Hermes Zaneti (1987), emphasized that although this was Freire's first visit to the Constituent Assembly, "he had always been

present in the subcommission's work, through his thought and work" (p. 483). This quote might explain some of the innovations related to literacy brought by the new Constitution. Superseding the Constitution from 1946 that restricted voting to literate individuals, the 1988 Constitution from its inception gave voting rights to Brazilians without literacy skills (Aleixo & Kramer, 2010).

Upon his return to Brazil, Freire also participated in the founding of the Workers' Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores, PT) and served as the secretary of education for the city of São Paulo in Luiza Erundina's administration (1989-1992). During the years he assumed political leadership as the secretary of education, Freire confirmed the central imperative in his philosophy: public education must play a decisive role in the continuing reformation of a democratic society. In *Pedagogy of the City* (1993), Freire reflects on how he tried to translate his ideas into policy and to create a democratic school system "where one practices a pedagogy of the question, where one teaches and learns with seriousness, but where seriousness never becomes dullness. (...) where, in teaching necessarily the content, one also teaches how to think critically" (p. 19). He resigned from the position in 1991 and dedicated his life to teaching at universities based in São Paulo until his death on May 2, 1997 (Rohan, 2021).

From Freire's perspective, a pedagogy of liberation will not happen without the cooperation of the teacher, since the teacher needs to be respectful of the self-transformation of the learner that will take place through their own *conscientização* and educational *praxis*. Freire (2000) interprets teachers as the "revolution leaders," who translate into relevant actors for changing the status quo.

Teachers as learners

Teachers play a decisive role in Dussel's and Freire's conception of the pedagogy of liberation. Although Freire recognizes that the students gain consciousness from "within," he acknowledges that the same "consciousness" is unfolded by the teacher through a dialogical process of teaching and learning (Dussel, 2013). In traditional European pedagogy, teachers are the educators par excellence, the ones who will promote not only children's instruction but also their civilization and Europeanization (Dussel, 2019). The pedagogy proposed by Freire opposes traditional forms of teaching and learning that aim at domesticating the student, subsuming the Other into the Self, and neglecting the voice of the oppressed. Through dialogue, educators abandon the "banking model of education" in which the student is seen as an empty recipient that must be filled with teachers' knowledge and worldviews (Freire, 2000, p. 72). Adopting a critical epistemology and a "problem-posing" method, the pedagogy of the oppressed helps the oppressed understand their place in the process of oppression and construct diverse forms of knowledge alongside teachers (Freire, 2000, p. 69). According to the Freirean framework, education becomes the tool through which teachers and students learn and teach simultaneously, without submission or knowledge hierarchies.

Dussel (2019) adds that popular culture can function as an alternative context for the processes of teaching and learning, and in its context the war against domination starts and decolonization might flourish. In the author's conception, critical teachers are central in the project for liberation, building a new system of schooling that privileges the local community cultures (Dussel, 2019). Being at the service of the people's culture, the pedagogical *praxis* allows the teacher-disciple relation to grow mutually and convert from a hierarchical relationship to a relation founded in a fraternal politics (Dussel, 2019). To disassemble the hierarchical forms of teaching might ease the cross-generational

encounter and clarify that teachers are not only the only educators in a community. Both Freire and Dussel understand teaching and learning as a process centered on the notion that the pedagogy of liberation becomes a powerful tool in raising the individuals' critical consciousness and, therefore, eliminating the logics of domination present in Latin American traditional teaching and learning practices.

Education emerges as the place where students become the origin of the transformation of reality. The critical consciousness proposed by Freire originates in the students, conceived as the privileged historical subjects of their own liberation. Upon comprehending their reality, students structure their *praxis* and act, understanding that gaining critical consciousness is an illuminating moment for their life and the practice of freedom of their communities.

In this essay on Paulo Freire's pedagogy of liberation, we have shown how Freire's pedagogical practice has led to the foundation of innovative, transformative pedagogy. The article also provides an opportunity to reaffirm that Freire's legacy is not limited to an education theory or method. Decades after his death, Freire continues to inspire education initiatives around the globe. In Brazil, his ideas have been under attack since the election of the country's right-wing president, who attributes the failures of public education to the Freirean pedagogy, even though it was never adopted as an education policy nationwide. All over the world there is a need for a critical education that makes individuals develop *conscientização* and, through *praxis*, subvert unjust social orders that maintain coloniality. Freire's teaching is alive, and his ideas exemplify hope for those interested in promoting social change through dialogue, critical thinking, and a pedagogy of liberation.

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Freire, Dialogic Feedback, and Power Issues: An Autoethnography

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The centrality of feedback is undeniable in education. However, not all feedback effectively encourages learning or improves performance due to predicaments in feedback delivery and receptivity. Several studies suggest other ways where feedback is offered in a dialogic fashion instead of a monologic one. Nevertheless, few papers do so in the context of medical education, especially when the learning processes involve marginalized people such as disaster-affected patients. This paper draws on autoethnographic experiences of providing dialogic feedback for medical students using Paulo Freire's dialogue concepts. This feedback was given during reflective sessions in community-based medical education at post-disaster areas in Aceh, Indonesia. The findings show that Freire's dialogue concepts help assess dialogic feedback quality and offer insights into power relations between teachers and students. To achieve the aim of providing dialogic feedback, to obtain new understandings, educators need to establish a more equal position in student-teacher relationships. In sum, the findings highlight the applicability of Freire's concept of dialogue in offering feedback for students especially when the training takes place in a context of disaster-affected people.

Keywords: Autoethnography; dialogue; disaster; feedback; medical education.

Introduction

Providing feedback is a practice that has been described as not only central in learning, but also as complicated, multi-layered, and disputable (Boud & Molloy, 2013; Steen-Utheim & Wittek, 2017; Winstone & Carless, 2019). Feedback may produce many positive effects, such as improving student performance and enhancing learning by offering students information on their tasks, processing the tasks, self-regulation, and progress as a person to advance their performances (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Other than cognitive or informational inputs, feedback may also offer motivational inputs (Brookhart, 2017). However, not all feedback could effectively encourage learning or improve performance. Some studies reported challenges in giving feedback including contextual constraints (Henderson et al., 2019), individual capacity in feedback provision and receptivity (Adcroft, 2011; Elnicki & Zalenski, 2013; Forsythe & Johnson, 2017), and ways of offering feedback (Kost & Chen, 2015).

In order to stimulate learning, scholars suggest various models to offer feedback. In undergraduate medical education, educators have been using models such as Pendleton rules (Chowdhury & Kalu, 2004; Pendleton, 1984), sandwich (Von Bergen et al., 2014), agenda-led outcome-based analysis (ALOBA) (Silverman, 1996), partnership-empathy-apology- respect-legitimation- supports (PEARLS) (Milan et al., 2006), and stop-keep-start

(SKS) models (DeLong & DeLong, 2011). In medical specialty education, models include continue-alter-stop-try (CAST) (Sefcik & Petsche, 2015) and one-minute preceptor (OMP) (Sabesan & Whaley, 2018). In general, these models highlight the importance of teachers' empathy when offering feedback. If carefully delivered, feedback may clarify tasks given to students or suggest how to do them more effectively (Hattie & Timperley, 2007), facilitate self-regulation and reflection (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Telio et al., 2015), encourage positive motivation (Brookhart, 2017), and offer opportunities for negotiation and dialogue (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Telio et al., 2015). The final aspect, dialogue, is the focus of this paper.

Dialogic feedback

Several studies suggest that providing dialogic feedback for students produces better learning than monologic feedback (Ajjawi & Boud, 2017; Merry et al., 2013; Telio et al., 2015). Dialogic feedback helps some students manage their emotional responses when receiving corrective information from their teachers (Merry et al., 2013). Compared to unidirectional feedback, dialogic feedback is more effective in encouraging students to utilize it in subsequent learning processes (Ajjawi & Boud, 2017; Merry et al., 2013). One possible explanation for this utilization is that dialogue and negotiation may construct an educational alliance between students and teachers (Telio et al., 2015).

Dialogic feedback, however, cannot always happen. Scholars have identified contexts that inhibit dialogic feedback from occurring, such as unsupportive institutional cultures (Ramani et al., 2017), discussing traumatic memories during dialogues, and silencing students through unintentional domination of teacher's ideology (Marjanovic-Shane et al., 2019). In the medical education world, especially in clinical teachings, dialogues during ward rounds and bedside teachings were inhibited by 'pimping'.

Medical educators and students are familiar with question-answer activities called 'pimping' (Chen & Priest, 2019). Historically, the word 'pimping' came from the German word 'pümpfrage', which means 'pump question' often used by medical educators to 'teach' their students (Brancati, 1989). In reality, pimping is a form of oppressive questioning of students, which usually begins with a medical teacher ignorantly posing a series of question to a group of students, inviting argumentations to produce a fuller understanding of the subjects being questioned (Kost & Chen, 2015). This so-called platonic dialogue may evoke negative emotions in medical students. They may feel ashamed and embarrassed due to their inability to provide 'smart' answers (van Schaik, 2014). This problem in stimulating learning in medical education calls for a new way of establishing dialogues with students, which may help them achieve the primary aim of dialogue: producing new understandings and shared meanings that may facilitate learning.

Dialogue

The word 'dialogue' originated from the Greek language: 'Logos' means 'meanings of words' and 'dia' means 'through' and in combination dialogue literally means a flow of meanings through the exchange of words between speakers (Bohm, 2013, p. 6). As individuals perceive meanings differently, their exchanges of meanings through dialogue may create a shared-meaning and produce new understandings (Eadie, 2009). The exchange of meanings is usually carried out through questions, and the question-answer dialogue may reflect role relationships among the speakers, for example, authority and

power (Mishler, 2005). Therefore, power relations in dialogues may influence the production of new understandings.

Extensive research has theorized and explored power relations between doctors and patients by closely examining meanings exchanged between them (Ainsworth-Vaughn, 1998; Filc, 2006; Foucault, 1990). However, a dearth of research has explored balanced power relations concepts in dialogues between medical educators and their students when educators provide feedback (Angoff et al., 2016; Lapum et al., 2012; Ranz & Korin Langer, 2018). To further explore how dialogue can facilitate feedback, I next turn to Freire's dialogue concept in learning.

Freire's concept on dialogue

Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educationalist, argued that education's ultimate purpose is to encourage people to think critically about their ways of living and try to change for the better (Freire, 1970). Freire argued that thinking, as a part of learning processes, occurs when both students and teachers communicate dialogically. These dialogues help students reflect upon the context, stimulate awareness, encourage acts to change the situations, and then reflect upon these actions (Freire, 1970). Dialogue may facilitate collective liberation of minds, especially when the learners are part of an oppressed society (Freire, 2018). Freire argued that a liberating dialogue should meet five conditions: 1) equality, 2) humility, 3) intense faith in oneself, 4) hope, and 5) critical thinking (Freire, 2018), as shown in table 1 along with their definitions in teaching and learning practices.

Table 1

Five prerequisite conditions for the establishment of dialogues in teaching and learning practices (Freire, 1975)

	Prerequisite conditions for dialogue	Teaching and learning practices
1	Equality	Avoid domination and express profound love
2	Humility	Respect students' role and previous knowledge, care for their dignity, friendship strategy
3	Faith	Recognize and have intense faith in one's ability
4	Critical thinking	Avoid normalizing situations, sensitive to epistemic inadequacy
5	Hope	Maintain an optimistic mindset, expect something from the dialogue

The first condition to establish a good dialogue is equality. Freire defined equality not as an exactly equal position between teacher and student, but as a situation where teachers express their profound love to students by ensuring students exercise their right to speak (Freire, 2018). Freire contended that colonialism destructs equality as well as any other conditions where one subjugates others because subjugation denies other's right to speak (Freire, 2018). There is no dialogue without equality, and without dialogue there is no communication, therefore, there is no learning. A better teacher should 'demystify' their

expertise to avoid subjugation over their students (Labaree, 2000) without losing the ability to direct the learning process (Bartlett, 2005). However, there is a lingering question: is it possible for student and teacher to be exactly equal in their relationship?

Studies exploring student-teacher relationship (STR) discuss power and equality issues. It is evident that teachers always have a bigger power in STR due to three factors: teachers have more knowledge and expertise, they have higher social and professional status, and students' marks are in teachers' hands as part of teachers' obligation to assess their students (Aruta et al., 2019). However, students are not powerless. They can also claim power in the STR by resisting, dissenting teacher's instructions, and misbehaving (Taylor, 2019). Therefore, there are power claiming processes in STR, which make the relationship dynamic, communicable, and hopefully, closer to equality. A study described ideal power dynamics in medical student-teacher relationships where teachers locate themselves in a 'friendly but not friends' zone' in 'superior versus friend' continuum of power claim (Blakey & Chambers, 2020). The relationships within that zone may enable students to convey their opinions about sensitive issues in health (such as alcohol use and death) and teachers to administer appropriate discipline to respect others' viewpoints (Blakey & Chambers, 2020). From medical students' perspectives, teachers and students should be able to see that 'power need not always be equally divided' and the dynamics in power claiming may serve as means to improve partnership instead of roadblocks to establish equality in STR (Kapadia, 2020).

After equality, the second condition for dialogue is humility. Humility is a frame of mind that enables a person to respect others (Freire, 2018), far from arrogance and ignorance (Heidemann & Almeida, 2011). Freire posed a question: "if I am tormented and weakened by the possibility of being displaced, how can there be a dialogue?" (Freire, 2018). He also argues that practicing dominance inhibits dialogue and humility encourages it.

Having great faith in their power to transform the condition is the next prerequisite condition to create dialogue. Both teachers and students need to believe that the power to transform a condition is more likely to exist in the struggle for liberation (Freire, 2018). Freire also suggested teachers to invest in promoting critical thinking in learning processes, which is the opposite of naïve thinking that makes one see only 'normal' occurrence in daily life (Freire, 2018). Critical thinkers can locate swift generalization, a false argument, and epistemic inadequacy in vague concepts or illegitimate truth-claiming, that may be questioned in a dialogue within liberating educational environments with their teachers (Burbules & Berk, 1999).

The fourth prerequisite condition is hope. An optimistic attitude in students is a result of teachers' efforts of instilling expectations of positive outcomes in their lives. Although hope can't stand alone in achieving the outcomes, without hope the efforts are weak (Freire, 2021). The existence of hope encourages the act toward change instead of merely waiting. Hopelessness is the opposite of hope and consists of a denial of the world and an active escape from it.

In conclusion, dialogic pedagogy needs alterations of teaching methods as well as understood power relationships between students and teachers (Aronowitz, 2015). This alteration of power relationship may positively influence medical students' relationships with patients. Reports and studies have been calling for a change in hierarchical and asymmetrical power relationship toward a more balance one, like in the case of Indonesia (Claramita et al., 2013; Indah, 2021; Ministry of Health Republic of Indonesia, 2011). This paper seeks to obtain insights on dialogic feedback provided for medical students after

their interactions with marginalized and disaster-affected communities, who have lost family members, properties, and livelihood. The next subsection presents this study's method and how Freire's dialogic feedback was employed in medical education in a post-disaster area.

Methods

This study is a part of a larger ethnographic study exploring doctor-student-patient interactions in post-disaster areas in Indonesia (Indah, 2019). It draws on participant observations, interviews, and focus-group discussions involving medical students of the Faculty of Medicine X University (FoMX). The students were assigned to learn at several health centers in areas that were devastated by a giant tsunami in 2004. The tsunami killed 126,741 people in this area and 93,285 were declared missing (Arie et al., 2009). Ethics approval was obtained from FoMX Human Ethics Committee (number 01/KE/FK/2017). The observed participants were two groups of five medical students, ages 22 to 25, most of them are female (70%), representing the gender structure in their school. The participants had completed an undergraduate program in medicine from FoMX using a reformed curriculum prioritizing competence in disaster management (Indah, 2010). When the study was conducted, they pursued their clerkship in Family Medicine Clinical Stage in tsunami-affected areas in Banda Aceh, Aceh, Indonesia.

Auto-ethnographic techniques were employed to obtain insights into my subjective experiences as a researcher (Siddique, 2011) as I explored students' perspectives in their natural settings. Despite the fact that autoethnography is an uncommon methodology in the field of medical education, it provides powerful tools to obtain "more reflective, more meaningful, and more just" education practices (Adams et al., 2017, p. 1). In this study, I refused to simply document medical student-patient interactions in situ. Instead, I tried to involve the students in reflective practices encouraged in medical education (Aronson, 2011; Branch Jr & Paranjape, 2002; Ryan, 2010).

Autoethnography also offers opportunities to employ a strong local knowledge as an insider and exercise a commitment to give back to my homeland after gaining a privileged position in advanced education (Yakushko et al., 2011). The autoethnographic writing allows researchers to write in a highly personalized style (Wall, 2006) as I exercised my reflectivity and use my positionality (Plowman, 1995) in analyzing data from my interactions with students. This methodology has been utilized by health science (Ettorre, 2010; Foster, 2014; Siddique, 2011) as well as health professional education researchers (Acosta et al., 2015; Gallé & Lingard, 2010; Grant, 2019; Indah, 2018). In the application of auto-ethnographic techniques, however, researchers should be cautious of their potential downsides, which are neglect of research ethics, too much reliance on memory, and trapped in self-indulgence (Chang, 2016; O'Reilly, 2009). Therefore, I had been continuously being cautious of the influence of my positionality in this research. I reflected on the application of the dialogic feedback diligently to accurately interpret my encounters with medical students.

In addition to reflectivity, participant observation (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; O'Reilly, 2009) was another method utilized in this study to produce a more complete illustration of students' experiences during their learning processes. When I was conducting the observation, I could not avoid playing double roles: a medical teacher and a researcher, which was quite challenging sometimes. I asked for the students' oral and written consent before recording almost every interaction observed.

The data were documented in many ways: logbooks, audiotaped records, and field notes. The data analysis started concurrently with data collection (Patton, 1990; Richardson & St Pierre, 2008) and included an iterative process (De Laine, 1997). I also wrote analytical and methodological memos as I reread the data (Emerson et al., 2011).

I utilized NVIVO10 qualitative software from Windows to conduct coding and interpreting the data. I created a coding scheme based on two sources. First, some of the codes were predetermined from theories I utilized and second, they came out from topics emerged from reading the data. Therefore, I drew the codes deductively (from theory-observation-confirmation) as well as inductively (from observation-pattern-conclusion). I then categorized the codes into several categories and subcategories (Saldaña, 2021). During the process, I wrote memos to connect codes and record emerging ideas and themes.

I interpreted data by developing theoretical, methodological, and emotional notes (Gobo, 2008), which were very helpful in creating a starting point to describe some concepts (Peshkin, 2000). Reflexive descriptions complemented the interpretation to maintain subjectivity and accountability (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Richardson & St Pierre, 2008). To do so, I incorporated 'critical' analysis when writing the findings. I tried to resist domestication (Thomas, 1993) to describe how my position as a medical teacher established elements of Freire's dialogic concept (Freire, 2018) and maintained criticism toward the interactions between the students, patients, and myself.

Findings

This section presents some of the cases where I, as a medical educator and researcher, provided feedback in the form of dialogues to the medical student participants. They were engaged in various medical encounters in health centers at some post-disaster areas in Banda Aceh.

Harun and biopsychosocial perspective

The following dialogue was a reflection session after a home visit to understand chronic disease management. We went to visit Maryam, a 68-year-old woman, which was in a disaster-affected area. She lived with her son and his family in a house that was heavily destroyed by the tsunami. Maryam survived a stroke a year ago and had uncontrolled high blood pressure and type-2 diabetes. She had not been able to visit health centers by herself due to her poor sight. I followed Harun, a medical student who was assigned to the home visit. After the activity was completed, we had a reflection session during lunch together, and I offered him a dialogue to provide short feedback.

> Rosa: How do you think the home visit went?
>
> Harun: I think it went well. But I feel sorry for that woman. Her house was still severely damaged by the tsunami, and it has not been renovated even after 12 years. She is diabetic and has severe hypertension. It seemed that her son and daughter-in-law were not very supportive as they sat with us only briefly and left us there.
>
> Rosa: Yes, I agree. I felt sorry for her too. I appreciate your attention on the psychosocial aspect of the disease. In your opinion, what do you think healthcare providers should do to overcome the challenge?

> Harun: I prescribed some anti-hypertensive drugs and oral anti-diabetic drugs as pharmacological therapy. However, I should have paid attention to the non-pharmacological approach, as well. I think I should have talked to her son and daughter-in-law. She needs family support on diet and stress management to control her blood pressure and sugar level. Yeah, I regret that I did not say anything when the son was with us briefly. I know I sometimes think that patients would not understand what I said, preferred to skip the explanation after examining them, and did not include their family members.
>
> Rosa: Yes, you are right. But don't worry. We can discuss your ideas with the chronic disease and geriatric management team.

In the above dialogue, I applied the five elements in Freire's dialogue. The first element, equality, was established well. Both Harun and I had equal understandings on the learning objective, and we take equal turns in the dialogue to avoid domination. The second element of dialogue, humility, was employed by respecting students' evaluation of the management of the patient. I then asked about the role of healthcare providers because I believe the student, based on his concerns on lack of time spent with family members of the patient, had acquired understanding beyond the individual aspect of biomedical paradigm. He embraced family aspects of health and the biopsychosocial perspective of it. Critical thinking was employed when we discussed problematic aspects of the patient's situation and what is not proper in his approach. To affirm the student's critical reflection on his previous action, I confirmed his evaluation. To cultivate hope, I expressed my expectation for Harun to actuate his idea through the work of chronic disease and geriatric management team. This expectation was an affirmation that his progress on creating new understandings is a great achievement and would be a foundation for a more comprehensive treatment.

The dialogue with Harun was an example of many other dialogues with medical students that successfully provide opportunities to give feedback in interactive ways and achieved learning objectives of those educational activities. However, some of the dialogic feedback encountered challenges due to various reasons. The subsequent dialogue provides an example of those challenging times of offering dialogic feedback.

'I have no idea how to improve'

The second case involves Iman, a 25-year-old male medical student participant. He and I participated in a junior school-based medical check-up. The school was in a tsunami-affected district and mostly attended by students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Some of the school's students lost their guardians in the disaster and therefore were forced to live in a nearby orphanage. Some of them appeared shy or a bit hesitant to be examined and afraid of getting some vaccination shots. Then one of the medical check-up team members clarified that there was no injection involved and the team would only perform physical examination and consultation.

The medical check-up team members performed physical examinations in several stations, including an anthropometry (height and weight), visual acuity measurement using Snellen chart, Ishihara color-blind test, dental check, chest examination, and a health promotion station where the high school students were asked to watch a documentary on the effects of smoking, followed by a Q&A session.

I could see the anxious as well as curious expression on the high school students' faces as they took turns to be examined. Iman was assigned at the chest examination post with a stethoscope in his hands. To be able to observe, I sat beside him. We both agreed that this particular session was aimed to apply excellent communication with patients.

Iman started the chest examination without greeting the students or asking for their consent. He ended the examination without offering any medical advice or suggestions. He only started with saying 'excuse me' to a student and then put the diaphragm of the stethoscope on the student's chest and ended by a short 'thanks'. Consequently, unenthusiastic students left Iman's station and moved to the next one. Their reaction stimulated me to pose some questions to Iman.

> Rosa: Iman, what do you think about the school students' responses toward your examinations?
>
> Iman: I think they are doing fine, Doc.
>
> Rosa: Do you think you can improve your interpersonal communications with them?
>
> Iman: Ah [thinking pause] I don't have any idea what to improve, Doc.

I encountered a challenge to stimulate Iman to think about encouraging ways to do the chest examination. I posed some other questions, but he appeared to have no idea which part of the examination that he may improve. Then I decided to provide feedback through the coaching method (Sabesan & Whaley, 2018). I did not want him to feel under pressure.

I decided to offer an example. Iman lent me his stethoscope and I started a chest examination by smiling at a male high school student in front of us who looked a bit terrified. After greeting him and introducing myself, I saw that he became more relaxed and interested. He told me his first name and some other personal information that I requested. I listened to his answers attentively and then asked for his consent before putting the stethoscope diaphragm on his bare chest.

After the examination had been completed, I reported my findings to the high school student and asked if he had any questions for me. With a curious expression he asked a question about ways to grow taller more quickly, which I answered accordingly. He seemed satisfied with my answer and then I ended the interaction with a smile and expressed his gratitude. The student left the station, and I gave the stethoscope back to Iman.

After observing my interaction with the student, Iman changed his ways of interacting with the students. He paid more attention to students' responses and modified his approach accordingly. He performed the examination in better ways than before, asked more questions to the students and was asked to answer many of the high school students' questions. As a result of his transformed ways of doing chest examination, Iman's station became the favorite station with a big crowd of students around where he sat. I observed as Iman listened to their questions and answered accordingly: on his personal experiences of smoking cigarettes and cannabis and their effects on health, how it feels to be a medical student, his favorite sports and so on. I enjoyed looking at the fascinated high school students and Iman. During a lunch break afterward, I asked Iman to reflect on the check-up session.

Rosa: What do you think about the medical check-up?

Iman: It was fun. I learned how to articulate the prevention of problems such as respiratory problems due to smoking and how smoking cessation works. I did not do this kind of patient education much when I was in hospital rotation. Most of the time, I just followed the residents, and they were the ones who did it.

Rosa: I saw that the ways you communicate with the high school students have improved. Do you think you have changed some approaches?

Iman: Yes. Definitely. I think I have changed the way I communicate. In the beginning, I did it without proper eye contact, did not greet them or introduce myself. But then I learned that I have to be less interrogative, I started to call them 'bro,' asked for their names. I introduced my name to decrease the gap. I also learned how to ask for their consent for the chest examination. The benefit came instantly: they were less hesitant, and we got along much more relaxed. Then I used my experience of smoking to understand why they smoked. Thank you for reminding me how to be empathic. I modified my words with the use of fewer medical jargon. I'm glad that I was able to recognize their reactions when I used the medical terms; they were quieter, less talkative, maybe because they did not understand what I said before. I regret what I did at the teaching hospital. I remember my patients' expression when I explained that we need to 'taper-down the metil-prednisolone use.' I think I made them confused. How silly I was.

Iman's case highlights several aspects of Freire's dialogic feedback in the context of social interactions between medical students and educators. First, it seems that an exact equal position is very difficult to obtain in a student-teacher relationship, especially when the level of understanding of the task and its goal was incongruence. In this case, to achieve an equal understanding, I provided feedback by coaching (Launer, 2014). After Iman understood the goal of the task, he had better self-regulation in improving his performance.

Second, humility can be employed when the teacher respects the student's understanding, lack of understanding or misunderstanding as ways of learning. When I, as a teacher, reflect on the interaction, I know that I wanted Iman to progress and respected his reaction and learning process through making mistakes, fixing, and improving his communication skills by further practice.

Third, I let him practice first, then provide feedback, and then let him use the feedback to practice again with a new approach, because I had faith in Iman's power to change how he interacts with his patients. I did not criticize his modification, because I know every student has his/her own way to doing things better than their teachers.

Fourth, the dialogue offered a perspective in assessing and valuing critical thinking. Initially, it was hard to stimulate a critical stance of the situation. However, through a reflective conversation during the activity, Iman could compare the patients' reactions with his previous experiences communicating with patients using many medical jargons. Iman began to criticize his past practices and was able to identify challenges in them and express his intention to change his approach in communicating with patients

Fifth, hope. I believe that Iman was able to transform his understanding to better practice, beyond imitating my approach because he provided evidence that he could do so. The dialogic feedback amplified my expectation that Iman could self-regulate his progress by observing the effects of his new approaches when establishing the dialogues with high school students.

In sum, this case highlights that Freire's approach is useful to analyze how dialogic pedagogy in giving feedback may stimulate reflective learning in classrooms and beyond (Aronowitz, 2015). The challenge of establishing a more equal understanding of the goal of learning described in this case offers an insight that to establish a dialogue in providing feedback, both medical teacher and student need to probe whether they had congruence in understanding the goal of the learning session.

'I just need to change my habit'

The two previous cases represent many other cases where dialogic feedback was established relatively well and promoted changes in attitude. However, not all dialogic feedback turned out well. Several of them failed to help my medical students achieve their learning objectives. The following dialogue took place after a ward round and pimping questions led by a senior attending doctor. The round aimed to exercise communication skills in health institution settings. An incident happened when Sakdia, a female medical student, forgot to introduce herself to a female patient, and the patient refused to be examined by Sakdia. The patient said: "I do not want to be examined by this rude nurse." After the ward round was over, I had a reflection session with Sakdia.

> Rosa: What do you think about our problem in establishing communication with the female patient this morning?
>
> Sakdia: I forgot to introduce myself, but I did not realize it was a problem until the woman refused to be examined and addressed me as 'nurse'. But the nurses, nutritionist, nursing aid in this health center wear a different color uniform. Can't the patients distinguish me as a junior doctor, Doc?
>
> Rosa: Well, this morning's round answers that question. It seemed that patients couldn't differentiate 'who is what' if we do not introduce ourselves and roles. In your opinion, what does lack of self-introduction entail?
>
> Sakdia: I have no idea. But I think if I can develop a habit of self-introduction, they will know my position and behave accordingly. I will improve my approach to patients, Doc.

The dialogic feedback with Sakdia offered an example when most of the elements of dialogue were established, but it failed to produce a new understanding. I tried to approach her by showing humility, my faith in her power while stimulating critical thinking and hope. However, the first element of Freire's dialogue, which is equality, was difficult to obtain as the dialogic feedback took place after the pimping questioning led by my fellow medical educator. It seemed that what happened during the pimping session left many medical students in an uncomfortable mood, including Sakdia. It was hard for her to locate herself on a more equal level with me and feel free to speak up. As a result, instead of critically evaluating the problems in her interaction with patients, she was defensive to maintain her power in front of me, one of her teachers. Consequently, the

problem of asymmetrical power relation, with lack of self-introduction as evidence, was abandoned. The inequality in student-teacher relationship led to less-productive dialogue and ineffective feedback. As a result, my particular dialogue with Sakdia failed to produce new understandings (Eadie, 2009).

Discussion

This study explores my experiences as a medical educator in providing dialogic feedback for medical students using Paulo Freire's dialogue concepts. The study's findings offer examples of how dialogic feedback may promote better learning through producing new understandings for both students and educators. In many attempts, including my dialogues with Harun and Iman, it seems that dialogic feedback may facilitate self-regulation and reflection (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006), encourage positive motivation (Brookhart, 2017), and offer opportunities for negotiation and dialogue in feedback conversation (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Telio et al., 2015). The dialogic feedback established in the findings may promote better learning (Ajjawi & Boud, 2017; Merry et al., 2013; Telio et al., 2015). The humble and respective approach in the dialogic feedback appears to help some students to manage their emotional responses (Merry et al., 2013). It seems that collegiality and educational alliance (Merry et al., 2013) between students and teachers allowed most of the students to express their emotions more comfortably. In Iman's case, the dialogic feedback encouraged him to utilize feedback given in his subsequent learning processes (Ajjawi & Boud, 2017; Merry et al., 2013).

Nevertheless, educators should be mindful that student might not 'get it' in the first dialogue. Dialogue with Iman presents an example where dialogic feedback should comprise iterative activities that continuously promote the exchange of ideas, produce new understandings, and enhance learning. Therefore, the educators should still respect students' achievements, being humble and faithful toward any expressions of ideas hoping that students' abilities will improve over time (Merry et al., 2013), despite the reality that the students have not immediately arrived at the level of ability that the educators expected. Dialogue with Iman also suggests that educators may also direct the student by employing another way of providing feedback, such as role-modeling, to offer insights on how a task may be executed. According to Freire, being 'equal' with students does not deny teacher's responsibility to be directive (Bartlett, 2005).

The findings also show that asymmetrical power relations between educator and student may hinder the dialogic feedback to achieve new understandings. As shown in my dialogue with Sakdia after a 'pimping' session, the big gap in power relations created by the previous teacher hindered a more equal position between Sakdia and myself. During the pimping session, Sakdia was under pressure to produce a 'smart' answer instead of being authentic about what she understood. Consequently, the situation negatively affected the dialogic feedback that came afterward, damaged the student-teacher rapport, and impeded learning (Freire, 2018). It seems that this situation related to a highly hierarchical relationship between students and teachers, which is one of the characteristics of medical education culture (Angoff et al., 2016; Donetto, 2012).

It seems there is a discrepancy between medical education culture and the culture of patients, which are two out of three different cultures around medical education practices (the other one is health facility cultures). When analyzing the dialogical feedback practices, I considered approaches at micro and macro levels (Gabler, 2021). The micro-level approach considers a smaller circle of interaction, such as dynamics in student-teacher relationships. It looks at each student specific way of learning and interpreting

their teacher's responses within a cultural context in medical education. The macro-level approach scrutinizes medical doctor/student-patient interactions. In this study, I have used both approaches.

When the culture that regulate doctor-patient interactions is gradually transformed from highly hierarchical in the past toward a more equal relationship, it seems that cultures around student-teacher interaction are transforming in a relatively slower pace. Medical doctors are expected to treat patients as their equals when in medical education there is a rather big power distance between senior and junior medical doctors and between medical teachers and their students.

This situation creates a gap in the relationships between patients and medical students. The students are used to tension between them and their teachers and struggleto apply a more equal approach with their patients. For example, I have never seen a medical teacher introduced herself to her students although they have never met before. Medical teachers I observed also rarely share their power of knowledge by suggesting reference to read or theoretical framework to understand. What mostly shared were medical opinions. The asymmetrical power relationship due to medical education cultures were obvious and worsening with regular pimping sessions and one-way feedback provisions. In sum, it appears that there were strong influences of culture on the way student participants responded to dialogical feedback that I wanted to establish with them.

The dialogues in findings, however, provide evidence that medical students benefited from a more balanced power relation between teacher and students offered by dialogical feedback provision. Harun, Iman, and other students in this study have increased their ability to reflect on their actions, which potentially benefit their future patients, especially those who had been experiencing political, financial, and social oppressions. In addition, they were not the only beneficiaries of the new understandings. I, as a medical teacher, also obtained new insights from the established dialogues. As I employed critical thinking during dialogue with Harun, I obtained insights that medical education should pay more attention to change the biomedical paradigm into biopsychosocial one. From a pedagogical point of view, those dialogues taught me the teacher's responsibility to offer direction in learning, be aware of students' long journey of learning, and always be respectful along the way. From employing autoethnography as a methodology and reflectivity and participant observation as methods, I learned that providing dialogic feedback is a skill as well as an art that needs to be practiced with humility and perseverance.

As with most studies, the design of the current study is subject to limitations. First, this study involved only a few groups of medical students at only one medical school. The unique cultures of the medical school, educators, and patients involved affect how they interacted. Consequently, analysis of the findings considered elements of cultures where the interactions occurred. Second, autoethnographic methodology employed in this study relied on my personal assumption about the world, which includes my interpretation of the ways people speak, value, and believe. What I find interesting may be different compared to what other people do. Therefore, the findings of this autoethnographic study should be understood in light of my positionality and personal view as a tsunami survivor, medical doctor, and teacher working with marginalized patients at the disaster-affected area, which made writing this article both reflective and uncomfortably challenging (Farrell, 2017). Despite these limitations, the application of the autoethnographic methodology in this study contributes methodologically to production of meanings and emotional dynamics in the student-teacher interactions (Ellis et al., 2011).

Given the limited scale, scope, and the specific methodology of this study, further explorations are recommended to study the utilization of Freire's dialogic concepts in dialogic feedback in broader and different settings and use different approaches such as phenomenology, critical discourse, or conversation analysis.

Conclusion

The employment of Freire's ideas in this research indicates the usefulness of these ideas in providing feedback for medical students. Freire's five elements of dialogue provide directions for medical educators in offering dialogic feedback. The findings of this study also call for medical educators to be cautious of the challenges of providing dialogic feedback, such as asymmetrical power relations between teachers and students. Other instructional methods employed (e.g., pimping) may also affect the power relations between teachers and students and negatively impede dialogic feedback effectiveness, especially in a context where medical education is in a context where hierarchical relationship is a norm of student-teacher relationships. Without careful attention to power relations, it is challenging to stimulate students' reflexivity toward self-actions. Therefore, this paper calls for an implementation of educational transformation that creates a more balanced power relation between teacher and students. This may enable dialogic feedback to take place, which may benefit medical students, teachers, and their future patients, especially those who have experienced marginalization.

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Education for Black Liberation: Freire and Past/Present Pan-Africanist Experiments

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Popular education has played a central role in Pan-African liberation struggles historically and in the present moment. In the period following African independence, social movements that emerged around and through education in Africa were informed by and in dialogue with related decolonial movements of the Global South. However, the specific contributions of Pan-Africanist revolutionaries to the broader philosophy and praxis of education for liberation is often under-appreciated. This paper explores this impact through Paulo Freire's political and intellectual engagement with Pan-Africanist popular education movements, radical intellectuals, and broader revolutionary struggles. In considering Freire's work in dialogue and practice with African revolutionary thinkers, this paper shows that, while Freire shaped elements of liberation education in Africa, he was also deeply shaped and influenced by the historical conditions of the time and key African revolutionaries who were struggling towards similar objectives. Additionally, we explore the continued salience of Freirean educational praxis in contemporary Pan-Africanist social movements, through the example of a present day online pedagogical experiment, the Pan-African Activist Sunday School and Solidarity Collective.

Introduction

Popular education has long been part of struggles for liberation in Africa and the cultivation of Pan-Africanist philosophies, consciousness, and solidarities that have historically made these struggles possible. With roots in global decolonization movements as well as the rich traditions of African indigenous education, popular education has politically shaped revolutionary cadres, organizers, activists, and broader processes of social transformation across the continent in the form of national and universal education, radical print media and radio, political education, and literacy campaigns (Choudry & Vally, 2017). Though radical social movements that emerged around and through education in Africa were informed by and in dialogue with related decolonial movements of the Global South, the specific contributions of Pan-Africanist revolutionaries to the broader philosophy and praxis of education for liberation is often under-appreciated. This paper explores this impact through Paulo Freire's political and intellectual engagement with Pan-Africanist popular education movements, radical intellectuals, and broader revolutionary struggles.

With his role as a chief architect of popular education, Freire has a mixed legacy in Africa that is only beginning to be explored (Assié-Lumumba et al., 2019; Freire, 2006; Freire & Macedo, 1995; Kirkwall, 2004). On the one hand, his exchanges with African revolutionary leaders, including Amilcar Cabral and Julius Nyerere, situated his work at a critical stage of decolonizing efforts for education in the 1960s and 1970s following the independence of many African nations. On the other hand, the educational projects implemented directly under his supervision often fell short of expectations (Thomas, 1996). The role of Paulo Freire—and his educational philosophies—in Africa during this immediate post-

independence period highlights the challenges of decolonization in enduring imperial systems like education, as well as the possibilities of radical movement building through popular education across cultural, linguistic and class divides.

In considering Freire's work in dialogue and practice with African revolutionary thinkers, this paper shows that while Freire shaped elements of liberation education in Africa, he was also deeply shaped and influenced by the historical conditions of the time and key African revolutionaries who were struggling towards similar objectives. Additionally, we explore the continued salience of Freirean educational praxis in contemporary Pan-Africanist social movements, through the example of a present day online pedagogical experiment, the Pan-African Activist Sunday School and Solidarity Collective. We argue that contradictions of culture and language, which were once the chief preoccupation of Freire and his contemporaries in the liberation movements and nation-building projects of post-independence Africa, have been subsumed within considerations of technological access and inequality, especially with the global surge in online learning and digital organizing during the Covid-19 pandemic. The pivot to participatory and online modes—of education and struggle—signal new directions and possibilities for revolutionary movement building through popular education, and we conclude with recommendations for the contemporary praxis of education for liberation in Freirean and Pan-Africanist traditions.

Freire and African praxes of education for liberation

Prior to the need for education for the purpose of liberation from colonialism in Africa, education in indigenous African societies had multiple social purposes including socialization, specialization into a trade or skill, civic orientation, and training to become a full member of society (Abidogun & Falola, 2020; Fafunwa, 2018). However, the advent of imperial forms of Western and Islamic education in Africa shifted the purpose, content, structure, and relations embedded within learning and teaching, disrupting indigenous ways of life including the role of African languages, customs, and traditions within formalized schooling (Rodney, 1972; Nafziger, 2020). Missionary schools and early colonial schools, for instance, were designed in service of empire, destabilizing both the organic social evolution of young people into active members of their communities, and creating deep divides between the school, teacher, and student on the one hand, and the family and community on the other (Ekechi, 1972; wa Thiong'o, 1992). As independence movements swept across the continent, the newly independent nations of the 1960s and 1970s saw great potential in popular education as a springboard for accelerated development as well as the spread of revolutionary ideas to the broader masses (Turner, 1971). While there has not been extensive documentation of education for liberation within African social movements more broadly (Tijani, 2012; Vally & Treat, 2013), the documented role of education within student movements in Africa provides a rich archive of the role of popular education in radical change (Choudry & Valley, 2017; Federici et. al, 2000; Nafziger & Strong, 2020).

In the struggle to build emancipatory education in early African independence movements, African leaders were in critical dialogue with educators from the Global South, including Paulo Freire (Assié-Lumumba et al, 2019). Freire worked as a consultant in the establishment of popular education projects in former Portuguese colonies, like his home country, Brazil. His early work in Tanzania later expanded into the newly liberated Lusophone states of Guinea-Bissau, Cabo Verde, and Sao Tome in Principe. These experiences were molded by the revolutionary contexts Freire met on ground, which in turn informed his approach to a broad range of educational issues, including culture,

language, and the politics of education within revolutionary struggle. Freire's collaborations with revolutionary leaders such as Amilcar Cabral of Guinea-Bissau and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania occurred at a time when African theories of education for liberation were already challenging colonial education across the continent. Examples of these emancipatory paradigms include Nkrumahism, developed by Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana to advance African liberation through socialism (Nkrumah, 1963), and Zikism, put forth by Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria, which concerned methods of mental emancipation (Azikiwe, 1961).

Freire's lifetime of work brought together different global theories and praxes into a coherent articulation of radical and critical education, and African praxes of popular education impacted Freire's philosophy. Though much of the literature on Freire in Africa focuses on his impact on Africa (Godonoo, 1998; Assié-Lumumba et al., 2019), we argue that a closer examination of Freire's influence on African popular education reveals that he often borrowed heavily from African revolutionary leaders, whose rich ideas were often unacknowledged or only narrowly theorized in his writings. We explore the reciprocal influence between Freire and African revolutionary thought through an examination of his educational work in two African countries, Tanzania, and Guinea-Bissau, and then turn to his intellectual engagements with revolutionary African thinkers around the role of culture and critical consciousness before discussing a present-day experiment with Pan-Africanist popular political education, which builds on these legacies.

Freire's sojourns in Africa began as a guest professor at the University of Dar es Salam, Tanzania, in 1971, while serving as a Special Consultant in the Department of Education in the World Council of Churches during his exile from Brazil (Abraham, 2013; Sing, 2004). In Tanzania, Freire encountered President Julius Nyerere, whom he had admired from afar and expressed his appreciation for Nyerere's 'practicalization' of the connections between education, national liberation, and community life (Hall, 1998). Nyerere is also reported to have read *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and had conversations with Freire about his work (Hall, 1998). Nyerere, who is affectionately known as *Mwalimu* ('teacher' in Swahili), had implemented a large-scale educational experiment in Tanzania, integrating popular education into the nation building project with a focus on human liberation and social change, guided by the African indigenous philosophy, *Ujamaa* (familyhood in Swahili). When Nyerere became President of a newly independent Tanzania in 1962, over 80% of the population was illiterate. Nyerere believed that each person needed to be valued for their worth in society (Nyerere, 1961; Nyerere, 1968). Although Nyerere's philosophies were not named 'humanism', there is a clear linkage between his ideas of innate value and contributions that is reflected in Freire's writings. But while Freire often did not articulate how his ideas could be implemented at national or international scale, Nyerere's philosophy of the state's responsibility in ensuring equal rights was fully implemented through policies such as the nationalization of all the major means of production in Tanzania in 1967 (Mulenga, 2001 p. 450).

Kirkendall (2010) and Hall (2013) describe Freire's admiration of Nyerere's approach to development and the concept of 'ujamaa' as a democratic model where popular participation was 'indispensable' (Kirkendall, 2010, p. 105). Unlike most other African countries, which officially maintained colonial languages, the indigenous African language, Kiswahili, was adopted as Tanzania's official and national language, to unify the over 126 ethnic groups which make up Tanzania. Today, Tanzania remains one of the only African countries to return fully to an indigenous language after colonialism, though South Africa did follow suit after the end of apartheid. Freire's ideas of 'cultural action'

were no doubt influenced by the time he spent in Tanzania where he urged President Nyerere to set up an international institute for popular education, which would be based on their shared ideas (Hall, 1998).

Freire's second stay in Africa was upon an invitation to Guinea-Bissau in 1975 by Commissioner of Education Mário Cabral to lead revolutionary revisions to the education system. Freire was invited by the government to oversee the efforts for universal education and Freire led the literacy campaign for the African Party of the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) from 1976 to 1979. Freire's book, *Pedagogy in Process* (1989) describes his sojourn in the country and their efforts to construct a national literacy campaign after a prolonged liberation struggle and the assassination of revolutionary leader Amilcar Cabral. As in his Tanzanian visit, Freire came in his capacity as a consultant to the World Council of Churches and, after five years of work in Guinea Bissau, had mixed results (Chicana & Ceccon, 2017). These efforts faced several challenges, including the problem of teaching in Portuguese while most of the population spoke Creole, bureaucratic red tape from the government, and other issues such as a lack of trained teachers and educational resources (Kirkendall, 2010; Moran, 2014). Thomas describes some of these challenges:

> These experiments were by no means successful; as Freire has himself admitted, centralised bureaucracies, programmes de-linked from the production process and communicated in the language of the coloniser, Portuguese, in this case, blunted the radical potential of the method and the objective of literacy as a means to coming by a new consciousness, and stymied the capacity of people to '...read not only the word but also read the world' (1996, p. 24-25).

The many challenges of the literacy campaign cannot be attributed to Freire alone. Freire acknowledges some of these in his epistolary memoir of the campaign (Freire, 1978). Even if Freire held overly romanticized views of the revolutionary leader Amilcar Cabral and his philosophies of re-Africanization as a method of decolonization, difficulties in the implementation of education for liberation in post-independence African societies were widespread. Dreams of African independence were compromised as disruptions caused by counterrevolutionary forces, civil wars, and the continued imperialist tactics of Europe and the United States destabilized young nations and stymied their efforts towards national development. Unlike Tanzania where Nyerere held a stronghold and was able to implement his ideas, Cabral was assassinated in 1973, leaving behind the *Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné-Bissau e Cabo Verde* to continue as a central ideological force in the global Pan-Africanist political struggle to transform class structures in Africa and reclaim culture for liberation. Cabral's vision of a unified sovereign nation was never fully realized, as the nation descended into conflicts, never fully realizing Cabral's vision of an educated and liberated Guinea-Bissau (Forrest, 1987, p. 116).

Freire was part of an important moment in the history of education for liberation in Africa. His ideas were borrowed from and applied to the struggles in Tanzania and Guinea-Bissau. However, it is important to emphasize that education as a force of revolutionary struggle was already in place when Freire arrived in these nations, and his role in these movements should not be over emphasized, nor should the role of African leaders such as Cabral and Nyerere be diminished.

Culture and Liberation

Beyond the implementation of national experiments with popular education for liberation, Freire's ideas on the role of culture and language in the struggle for liberation

were themselves in conversation with African revolutionary scholars, who were all struggling around the role of colonialism in undermining African cultures and identified the destruction of culture as a primary means of oppression. In his writings, Freire conceptualizes the role of colonialism in the destruction of native cultures and the imposition of a foreign culture. The destruction of culture is also articulated by Cabral, who offers a more expansive theorization of power and domination.

In Freire's formulation, cultural inferiority and superiority work to inculcate the values of oppressors and alienate the oppressed from their own cultural values:

> For cultural invasion to succeed, it is essential that those invaded become convinced of their intrinsic inferiority. Since everything has its opposite, if those who are invaded consider themselves inferior, they must necessarily recognize the superiority of the invaders. The values of the latter thereby become the pattern for the former. The more invasion is accentuated and those invaded are alienated from the spirit of their own culture and from themselves, the more the latter want to be like the invaders; to walk like them, dress like them, talk like them." (Freire, 1970, p. 153).

Freire's language of cultural destruction and invasion reflects a more militarized description of the influence of colonialism on indigenous cultures, in a way, removing some of the agency of the oppressed. In contrast, Cabral uses the term cultural 'domination' in describing the influence of colonizers on indigenous cultures. In Cabral's view, liberation requires a return to culture as an active form of resistance: "national liberation is necessarily an act of culture [that] every liberation movement should be capable of making in relation to the imperative of the struggle" (1974, p. 43-44). Nyerere was also a strong proponent of culture as resistance, and he advocated for re-Africanization, or a return to African cultural values and norms, as foundational to the struggle for freedom. The idea of culture as resistance resonates across the writings of Cabral, Nyerere, and Freire and speaks to the multifaceted nature of the struggle against colonialism to transform not just the material conditions of the people, but psychological conditions as well. The strategy to pursue cultural liberation, and the timing of it, was an enduring question as articulated by Cabral:

> A reconversion of minds of the mental set is thus indispensable to the true integration of people into the liberation movement. Such reconversion—re-Africanization, in our case—may take place before the struggle, but it is completed only during the course of the struggle, through daily contact with the popular masses in the communion of sacrifice required by the struggle (1973, p. 45).

At this time, newly independent African nations were still struggling against the realities of colonialism and the threat of Cold War neo-colonial and counterrevolutionary forces. Cabral and Nyerere, alongside other revolutionary leaders, were actively fighting to shed the yoke of colonialism, while preparing the people they fought alongside for mental as well as physical battles.

Dialogue and Conscientization

Beyond their articulation of education's role in combating the cultural domination of colonialism and restoring the cultural sovereignty of the oppressed, the critical role of education in cultivating political consciousness through dialogue cuts across the ideas of Freire and his African contemporaries. Dialogue was part of the praxis of revolutionary ideas; it is a demonstration of the acknowledgement of the humanity of the oppressed,

and the need to engage them fully in the struggle for their own liberation. Freire argues that dialogue must be carried out at every stage of the revolution and cannot be compromised to ensure that the oppressed masses are liberated and fully empowered in the process:

> Critical and liberating dialogue, which presupposes action, must be carried on with the oppressed at whatever the stage of their struggle for liberation. The content of that dialogue can and should vary in accordance with historical conditions and the level at which the oppressed perceive reality…But to substitute monologue, slogans and communiques for dialogue is to attempt to liberate the oppressed with the instruments of domestication. Attempting to liberate the oppressed without their reflective participation in the act of liberation is to treat them as objects which must be saved from a burning building; it is to lead them into the populist pitfall and transform them into masses that can be manipulated (Freire, 1970 p. 65).

Freire emphasizes the need for reflection and action to transform the world as well as the need for revolutionary leaders to work with the oppressed and not for them. African leaders understood that dramatically changing the colonial system of education to a liberatory form of education would not only build up the consciousness of the people but their capacity to act as well. In fact, one aspect of Cabral's leadership that Freire admitted a deep admiration for was how Cabral worked with the people towards the revolution in Guinea Bissau. In his description of Cabral's practice of teaching seminars in the bush during the revolutionary struggle, Freire described how Cabral used the story of an amulet to explain revolutionary struggle, highlighting Cabral's respect for African cultures (Horton & Freire, 1990, p. 134).

Nyerere also saw the need for Africans to challenge colonial repression by regaining critical consciousness. However, the methods through which African people would return to this consciousness would necessitate refocusing on African traditional values, communalism, and cooperation. For both Nyerere and Cabral, the process of being at one with the oppressed could not be separated from the process of regaining African culture. The importance of culture in raising critical consciousness, as theorized by African revolutionaries, is reflected in Friere's discussions of 'cultural action' (Freire, 1970), which also leans heavily on the work of another scholar who wrote earlier on the role of culture in African liberation struggles, Frantz Fanon (1961; 1963). The efforts of cultural reinvigoration and re-Africanization could not take place without consciousness raising. However, the practical steps that this would take differed widely by country, as did the results that emerged from the process of cultural action and conscientization.

The Pan-African Activist Sunday School and Solidarity Collective

Despite the centrality of popular education to struggles for African liberation and nation-building, radical Pan-Africanist movements in theory and praxis suffered a stark decline in the last decades of the twentieth century, due to the assassination and exile of a generation of revolutionary African leaders, the infiltration and co-optation of African states, and the larger effects of neo-colonialism, militarism, and neoliberal capitalist entrenchment (Ackah, 2016; Adi, 2018; Mazrui, 2005). However, in recent years, popular forms of political education and Pan-Africanist solidarity are witnessing a resurgence with the growing frequency of political movements throughout the Pan-African world aided by the mobilizing power of social media platforms and digital tools. The convergence of political struggles and digital mobilization tools has been the subject of

considerable research on contemporary global protests (Castells, 2015; Earl & Kimport, 2011; Gerbaudo, 2012; Mason, 2013) and African Diasporic social movements more specifically, which have struggled to overcome digital divides and parochial solidarities (Royston & Strong, 2019; Strong, 2018; Taylor, 2016). In this section, we examine one ongoing experiment in popular education for liberation, of which we are conveners and participants, the Pan-African Activist Sunday School and Solidarity Network, which formed in response to the #EndSARS movement in Nigeria and speaks to the continued necessity and ongoing challenges in implementation of popular education for liberation in Pan-African struggles.

In October 2020, #EndSARS protests formed after the murder of a young man by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a rogue unit of the Nigerian Police Force, went viral. After nearly three weeks of the largest mass mobilizations in a generation led by the country's youth, on October 20th, Nigerian soldiers massacred dozens of youths protesting the country's rampant police violence. As the rise and violent state suppression of the #EndSARS movement sparked global attention and outrage (Strong, 2020), we collaborated to convene an intergenerational, gender- and class-diverse group of Pan-Africanist organizers connected to anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist, and police abolitionist movements throughout Africa, North America, and Europe collaborated with grassroots Nigerian organizers to share political strategy and build solidarity for the #EndSARS movement during a moment when the struggle was facing intense suppression and violence from the government led by former military dictator General Muhammadu Buhari. Out of this solidarity work—which expanded to include support and amplification of other radical movements attempting to sustain struggles against state violence—emerged the Pan-African Solidarity Collective, composed of organizations that explicitly center Pan-Africanist political ideologies and goals, and which are situated in four continents including Black Lives Matter (USA), Pan-African Community in Action (USA), Afrosocialists and Socialist of Color Caucus (USA), Black Alliance for Peace (USA, Haiti, Colombia), Coalition for Revolution (Nigeria), Socialist Workers League (Nigeria), End Museveni Dictatorship Mutual Aid (Uganda), Red Pearl Movement (Uganda), and Ubuntu Reading Group (Uganda).

The most public-facing manifestation of this collaborative solidarity work across movements is the Pan-African Activist Sunday School (PASS), an intergenerational, popular education series that uses virtual live streams to foster critical dialogue between Black activists and organizers from around the world and political consciousness around Pan-African strategy and movement building through social media. Before forming into a popular education series, the seeds for PASS began with a more narrow purpose: to bring together grassroots organizers based in Nigeria, who were urgently seeking support to sustain their movement after the massacre of youth protesters and the announcement of a protest ban by the Nigerian government, with grassroots organizers outside of Nigeria who had experience with sustaining movements against state violence and could amplify the struggle in Nigeria under conditions of escalating repression of media, financial resources, and political action.

Prior to the 2020 #EndSARS protests, we previously collaborated on research on the revolutionary legacy of the Nigerian students' movement (Nafziger & Strong, 2020) and, in our different institutional settings in Pennsylvania, Philadelphia and State College, we separately joined grassroots efforts around police violence and social justice issues impacting these communities. Krystal joined the leadership of the Philadelphia chapter of Black Lives Matter. Nanre organized around police murders and for Black lives through the 320 Coalition, and around racial and economic justice through the Afrosocialist

Caucus. During the historic 2020 uprisings in the U.S. after the murder of George Floyd, our respective organizing efforts shifted to waging local campaigns and direct actions around police abolition and racial justice, which were met with state suppression and opposition. As two U.S. based scholar-organizers of African-descent (Nigerian American and African American), who are connected to organizers and youth activists in Nigeria through research and activism and also had recent experiences in sustaining struggles around police violence, we saw the emergence of #EndSARS protests as a critical opportunity to create space for solidarity and dialogue among Pan-African organizers around immediate political strategy during a vulnerable moment in the #EndSARS movement. In recent years, social media has become critical to the amplification of social movements, particularly in contexts where state suppression of movements is an impediment to grassroots mobilization, and as a tool for connecting organizers and supporters of movements and social justice to direct lines of communication with activists on the ground. Previous social movements in Nigeria were activated and strengthened through social media and grassroots mobilizations such as #OccupyNigeria, #BringBackOurGirls, and #RevolutionNow, as have global Pan-African movements like #WeAreRemovingADictator in Uganda, #RhodesMustFall in South Africa, and #BlackLivesMatter in the United States.

Our solidarity efforts began through convenings on the Zoom and WhatsApp platforms, which gained global utility in the period of the COVID-19 pandemic as both a method for virtual communication and a means for sharing publicly accessible educational resources. We reached out to activists in Nigeria, who were at the forefront of the struggle, many of whom we had prior relationships with through movements such as #BringBackOurGirls and student organizing, or through our prior research in the country. After a few initial dialogues among activists with participants from Nigeria, the Nigerian Diaspora in Europe, and Black organizers in the U.S., the first Pan-African Activist Sunday School session was ideated as a way to directly lend support to the #EndSARS movement by raising awareness about the conditions of the movement and its root causes, given the growing international interest in understanding and supporting the movement, which trended internationally with 48 million tweets in just 10 days (Nendo, 2020). After deliberation on how to most effectively design a popular education format for the purpose of (1) reaching the largest global audience to put international pressure on the Nigerian government, (2) cultivating space for fostering critical dialogue, and (3) creating an effective channel for sharing accurate information directly from organizers on the ground on how to interpret the political moment and support protesters, the global group of organizers (at that time, approximately 20 people) decided to move away from the Zoom platform being used for internal conversations among organizers, to a virtual livestream format that would allow the broadcast to be simultaneously streamed on multiple social media accounts across platforms for maximum impact.

The technical form and pedagogical approach of the Sunday School, which we began to internally define as a popular education series by and for activists, explicitly borrows from historical examples of popular political education in Pan-African organization traditions such as those pioneered by Cabral, Nyerere, and Nkrumah, as well as the conventions of contemporary digital organizing that have been made possible by the growth of social media infrastructures. With the shift of academic and political organizing work online in the context of the pandemic, closed virtual platforms (i.e., Zoom) and livestream and multi-stream services (which are capable of simultaneous broadcasts to platforms like YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook) have emerged as the primary options for popular online (political) education. With consideration of Zoom's closed platform and limitations for number of live participants, we settled on a multi-stream service that would allow viewers

to join the stream from multiple social media platforms and accounts, to comment on the live stream feed through text messages which are visible to all participants and could be highlighted on the livestream, and to view an archived version of the session at any point. Streamyard, our platform of choice, had other limitations around the number of participants who could appear on the broadcast: no more than 10 simultaneously in the virtual broadcast studio. In some ways, the livestream approximates the experience of the mass rally or lecture, but without the intimacy and dialogic nature of the political study circle. This was a trade-off we weighed but decided to air on the side of maximum viewership and circulation given the goals of this aspect of our collective organizing work to amplify the needs of organizers on the ground as widely and effectively as possible.

Given the limitations of the live stream form, which only permits dialogue with viewers in the form of text-based comments on the various streams, our first session designed to amplify and build solidarity for #EndSARS protesters, titled, "From Protest to Movement: Intro to #EndSARS and the History of Activism in Nigeria," was organized as a series of short talks of fifteen minutes or less from an intergenerational group that included #EndSARS protesters as well as movement elders who represented decades of experience in student, labor, and feminist organizing in Nigeria (see Figure 1). The informal presentations were followed by moderated questions to these organizers that focused specifically on the connections panelists saw between the #EndSARS movement and past historic struggles in Nigeria, struggles against police brutality and government in Africa and other parts of the world, and strategies and tactics from moving from a protest to a sustainable movement that can withstand efforts at government suppression. This was then followed by questions from the audience that were offered during the broadcast by viewers, which included requests for additional educational resources, how to connect with the organizers featured on the broadcast, class privilege in the struggle, and what the #EndSARS movement should learn from other movements. The first session, an experiment for all the organizers who were accustomed to boots-on-the-ground mobilization and more intimate forms of political education (i.e., study circles, organizational meeting), was received with great enthusiasm.

Figure 1
Pan-African Activist Sunday School Promotional Graphic

***Note*. Graphic Design by Krystal Strong**

The livestream garnered over 8,000 views across Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube accounts. In the comments on the livestream broadcast, viewers offered the following assessment of the impact of the Sunday School (emphasis added):

> Greetings Africans! Thank you all for *this important conversation in Pan African unity and struggle!* Especially today, as we observe the 22nd anniversary of our dear brother and comrade, Kwame Ture, joining the Ancestors . . . . our victory is certain!
>
> *I'd love to see more cross-cultural exchanges like this* that is student centered. I think *it would go a long way in bridging the gaps* that too often exist among Black students from various different cultural backgrounds.
>
> This is very important information to know. *It highlights the need to understand and know the background of how these things came to be.*
>
> the panAfrican (sic) mindset has definitely decreased in the US movements since the 90's and then further with the election of Obama, however *I hope it will encourage people that there is an upturn, and a new wave of solidarity is building.* I believe that we are seeing a resurgence of panAfricanism (sic) in the movements in the US, and *things like this great discussion will move it further, broader, deeper and more quickly than ever before*!

These responses draw historic connections to revolutionary movements and pioneers of popular education for African liberation like Kwame Ture, formerly known as Stokely Carmichael, leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the All-African People's Revolutionary Party. They affirm the political importance of revitalizing "a new wave of solidarity" given the decrease "since the 90s"; the usefulness of "cross-cultural exchange" and historical and political "background" in "bridging the gaps" in political consciousness; developing political analysis to understand present conditions and struggles; and strengthening global movements for liberation.

Seeing the unexpected reach of this livestream format, which permitted us as grassroots organizers to engage with other organizers, allies, and interested parties beyond our local organizing contexts, we continued with further sessions to amplify active movements in need of support and solidarity. Over the next six months, we hosted four additional sessions on the following topics: the movement to defund the police in the United States, resistance movements in South Africa, the struggle to end the Museveni dictatorship in Uganda, and a session providing updates from the frontlines of movements in Uganda, Ghana, Nigeria, Colombia, Haiti, and Palestine. In each of these sessions, we emphasized historical analysis of imperialism, militarism, and capitalism as the context for the contemporary struggles, specific political tactics and strategies organizers were employing and the limitations of them, and direct ways that viewers and other organizers could support these efforts (i.e., by donating to organizations on the ground, following their social media platforms, and amplifying their message). Across these sessions, nearly 20,000 viewers tuned in. Along the way, we made shifts in the design and pedagogical approach after recognizing the limitations for dialogue with the livestream format. For example, PASS organizers created presentation slides to make the speaking segments more accessible and engaging; we tried to limit the length of presentations, which proved difficult to manage for facilitators; and we tried to increase the overall time for questions and answers from the audience. As scholar-organizers whose scholarship and political work often reaches limited audiences due to the paywalls of academic publishing and the

ebbs and flows of public support for social justice organizing, our experimentation with the Sunday School pedagogical model in comradeship with Pan-African organizers has generated new methods and possibilities for challenging the boundaries that often exist between the academy and political movements: collaborative virtual instruction; multimodal discourse; mass remote learning; digital archiving; and community-centered political pedagogy.

The Sunday Schools also revealed two major obstacles in Pan-African solidarity through popular education. The first is the challenge of technological access for organizers and viewers in the Global South, where bandwidth is often limited and internet access costly. During several sessions, organizers based in Africa who were scheduled to appear on the livestream struggled with slow internet speed or were not able to participate at all due to challenges with bandwidth or restrictions around electricity or internet access. The second was the way these technological challenges limited the ability of organizers in Africa to fully participate in other aspects of organizing the PASS sessions, planning content and to a lesser extent shaping the ideological direction of the collective, in ways that were not a barrier for organizers located in the Global North.

These specific challenges of access and accessibility would become much more pronounced as our collective organizing effort transitioned from supporting #EndSARS with solidarity, to cultivating the Pan-African Activist Sunday School popular education platform, to expanding the scope of the organizing effort to the "Pan-African Activist Solidarity Collective," which reflected shared goals of building power across political movements through popular education, collaboration, direct solidarity work, and movement building. This expansion has created opportunities for the development of collective solidarity campaigns around the End Museveni Dictatorship (EMD) campaign, international advocacy for members who were being threatened with political imprisonment for protest, and political strategization around the planning of protests under the threat of government repression. Still, as with the example of literacy campaigns and state popular education efforts in Africa in the 1970s, the implementation of these efforts was compromised by structural conditions: in our case, the ability to build strong solidarity campaigns has been limited by barriers to participation and a deep digital divide for activists on the ground in Africa, where movements that need the most material support and amplification were located.

Strengthening Practices of Education for Liberation Today

> Today, liberation is a continuing process. It signifies not only the consolidation of victory but also makes concrete a model of society already, in a certain sense, designed during the stage of struggle… (Freire, 2016, p. 68).

Despite ongoing forces of neo-colonialism and militarism, African organizers and social movements continue the quest for decolonization set out by earlier generations of African revolutionaries, whose experiments with popular education continue to resonate today. From our analysis of the recent experiment with popular education for liberation in the spirit of Freirean and Pan-African traditions for which we are co-conveners and participants, the Pan-African Activist Sunday School, several important themes emerge related to the continued relevance of popular education in radical movements and the critical role of leadership and solidarity during times of political upheaval in sustaining the conditions for revolutionary action. These themes offer valuable lessons that we can learn in applying Freirean concepts to contemporary Pan-African movements. This paper

thereby makes the following recommendations for the theory and practice of education for liberation as a historical legacy and an ontological reality:

1. ***Education for Black Liberation***

Revolution and education are irrevocably, though not inevitably, intertwined. The theory and praxis of revolution in Africa and the Global South during the decades of decolonization, as characterized in the intellectual and political leadership of Amilcar Cabral and Julius Nyerere, powerfully demonstrate the role of popular education in creating the conditions for oppressed people to understand and struggle for liberation, beginning with the liberation of the self. We find ourselves in a historic moment of global Black rebellions across the African continent and throughout the Diaspora that is not unlike the revolutionary period of the 1960s and 1970s. As with past Pan-African experiments with education for liberation, the Pan-Africanist Activist Sunday School as one contemporary example brings back into focus the necessity of equipping grassroots activists who are in the streets fighting for freedom—and radical educators who are in the classroom raising consciousness—with the tools of liberatory education as a pathway to strengthening and sustaining this new phase of struggle under the banner of Black Liberation. Learning transversely across our struggles illuminates commonalities in the conditions of anti-Black oppression and state violence, which imperil the lives of Black people in Nigeria, Uganda, South Africa, the United States, and around the world that might otherwise be lost. As Black Liberation has emerged as a grammar for the present, popular education for Black Liberation is a critical tool in envisioning and building the world that we want.

2. ***Action as antidote to disillusionment***

At a time when there is massive democratic recidivism in Africa and politicians continue to manipulate political and economic systems to suppress the will of the people, there is a need for popular education to create and sustain radical movements which advocate for inclusion and participation, particularly among the most marginalized populations. Godonoo predicts that the Freirean legacy of education for liberation could empower "disillusioned" Africans across the continent:

> Freire's work has resonated with millions of Africans who have become disillusioned with failed regimes across the continent. Thus, many Africans who have read and listened to Freire have become willing risk-takers for the sake of social justice, building social movements and organizations that seek to challenge the various regimes (1998, p. 26).

The teachings of Nyerere and Cabral, among other African revolutionaries, similarly articulate the important role of culture and consciousness as sites of struggle and a necessary element of education for liberation. Thus, deepening the capacity for oppressed people to articulate—through critical consciousness—and then struggle to create the world that we want—through action—is a necessary condition for collective liberation. While many Pan-African social movements have emerged over the past decade to fight for social change across the continent and throughout the Diaspora, severe repression and human rights violations have become the normative state response to grassroots struggle, as we witnessed with #EndSARS. It is therefore also critically important for popular movements to build stronger structures at the grassroots level, which can combat disillusionment and building the critical consciousness needed to sustain movements. Cultural and political study circles and digital forms of engagement and mobilization are useful starting points for attracting, retaining, and empowering people within our

movements, as we experienced with the reception of the Pan-African Activist Sunday School.

3. Learning across cultural and geographic divides

This article examined the flow of ideas and practices between revolutionaries and scholars, who were at the forefront of decolonization movements in the Global South. They understood culture and consciousness as key terrains of liberation struggles, and popular education as an indispensable weapon. The nascent work of the Pan-African Activist Sunday School offers an example of how transnational solidarities are re-emerging in a new phase of the fight for Black liberation, in which the structures of white supremacy, imperialism, capitalism, and militarism are alive and well. The efforts from this group of activists on the frontlines of contemporary radical movements to create mechanisms for popular education in a moment of global upheaval and state repression reveals the constant need for movements to reinvent themselves and for modes of movement learning to be passed down not only from generation to generation but also transversely across geographic contexts. With access to digital tools that facilitate mass remote learning and rapid mobilization, radical movements from below can broaden our pedagogical approaches to popular education for liberation in the current moment and, ultimately, transforming the ways in which a new generation of activists understand the political stakes and global implication of our collective struggles.

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Reinventing Freire in the 21st Century: Citizenship education, Student Voice and School Participatory Budgeting

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This year marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Paulo Freire, one of the most influential educational thinkers of the 20th century. In the 21st century, he continues to inspire many progressive educators around the world. This paper focuses on the connections between Freire's work and ideas (especially those related to citizenship education and school democracy) and school participatory budgeting, a process that has been growing significantly in the last decade and is presently being implemented in thousands of educational institutions around the world. The paper traces a line that connects Freire's work at the Social Service of Industry (SESI) during his youth, his work as Secretary of Education of Sao Paulo upon his return to Brazil from exile (particularly the Escola Cidadã project) and the current efforts around school participatory budgeting (School PB). The discussion on School PB is illustrated with two cases from Arizona: an inclusive model piloted in three schools, and a district-wide School PB initiative on school safety that includes students, parents, and staff in 20 high schools.

Keywords: participatory budgeting, participatory governance, civic education, citizenship education, civic engagement, democratic schooling, Paulo Freire

Reinventing Freire in the 21st century: Citizenship education, student voice and school participatory budgeting

"I don't want to be followed; I want to be reinvented," Paulo Freire said on several occasions (Vittoria, 2021). It is in this spirit that we approach this paper. Inspired by Freire's ideas, and especially by his practice as an educator in Brazil (both before his exile and after his return), we discuss the recent development and expansion of a process known as School Participatory Budgeting (School PB). We first outline how the School PB model emanated from Freire's project of Escola Cidadã (Citizen School). The School PB process aligns well with Freire's ideas on dialogue, participation, collaboration, creativity, student agency, and change, and disrupts both traditional authoritarian models of school governance and rote practices of citizenship learning. We trace the expansion of both Youth PB and School PB from their modest origins in Brazil to where now this participatory democratic process has been taken up in many countries across the globe, including Argentina, Mexico, Perú, Colombia, Spain, Russia, France, Italy, Zambia, South Korea, Czech Republic, Portugal, United States and Canada. We then highlight examples of the growing School PB movement, focusing on two cases from the experience of School PB in Arizona. We chose Arizona not only because that is where the first School PB process in the U.S. was designed and implemented, but also because it is a place for continuous experimentation and innovation. We next discuss methodological challenges and

limitations to studying School PB and conclude by returning full circle to Freire with some comments about his legacy and his influence on School PB.

In the beginning was SESI: From a 'culture of silence' to dialogue and self-governance

In 1947, after a brief practice as a lawyer and several years of high school teaching, a 26-year-old Paulo Freire started a 10-year period as director of Education and Culture of the Social Service of Industry (SESI) in the state of Pernambuco, one of the poorest regions of Brazil. SESI had been created in 1946 as a non-profit organization to promote social welfare and cultural development of industrial workers, their families, and the communities. Those formative years at SESI were crucial in the development of Freire's educational ideas that would be articulated two decades later in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1970). Most of Freire's reflections on knowledge, human development, dynamics of oppression and liberation, and the role of education in those dynamics that appear in that book originated from his experiences in Northeast Brazil. In *Letters to Cristina*, Freire (1996) described his decade at SESI as the most important political-pedagogical practice of his life (p. 81).

SESI was a pivotal moment in the life of young Freire for several reasons, of which three are particularly relevant to this paper. Firstly, the daily interactions with workers and peasants allowed Freire to become more aware of their realities and perspectives, and to understand the impact of colonialism, exploitation, illiteracy, and banking education on what he eventually called a "culture of silence" (Freire, 1970). Secondly, SESI gave Freire an opportunity to explore the possibilities of overcoming that culture of silence through a pedagogical approach that promoted critical reflection on reality, valued local knowledge and nurtured dialogue. Indeed, at SESI Freire learned that dialogue was not only an element of the educational process, but also the moment when people meet to discover reality and transform it together (Freire, 1970). Thirdly, as SESI's director, Freire established an open and horizontal style of administration and implemented a system that he called "parlamentarization" that consisted of a combination of study groups and action groups. Through these initiatives he wanted to demonstrate that dialogue, democracy, and self-governance could be implemented in institutions, hence involve children and their families in discussions about educational and social issues, usually held in learning circles and workers' clubs. Indeed, the democratic, open, and flexible management system that Freire implemented at SESI relied strongly on school-family relations. In the educational institutions managed by SESI, Freire invited students and parents to participate in forums about education and society, to discuss issues that affected learning like child labor, malnutrition, and authoritarianism (Jeria, 1984). He believed that those and other social and educational problems could only be solved with the participation of parents and the community. Moreover, he hoped these forums would encourage parents to become more involved in the development of school policies, to participate in decision-making bodies in schools and eventually transfer those capacities to other civic and political spheres (Flecha, 2004; Gadotti, 1994, 1996; Gadotti & Torres, 2009; Gerhardt, 1989; Romao, 2001; Rosas, 2001; Schugurensky, 2014). At that time, the leadership of SESI was not interested in those reforms, and Freire was asked to resign.

Freire and the transformative potential of schools

Several decades later, after a successful literacy campaign and 15 years of exile, Freire would have another opportunity to try to democratize hierarchical educational institutions in Brazil as Secretary of Education of the City of Sao Paulo, the largest urban metropolitan area of Brazil and one of the largest in the world (Schugurensky, 2014). One of the initiatives of this administration, the Escola Cidadã (Citizen School), constituted an

important attempt to transform education. This project relates to two ideas that were part of Freire's conceptual framework. First, unlike his contemporary deschooling advocates like Ivan Illich, Everett Reimer, John Holt and Paul Goodman, Freire not only believed that schools were one of the few avenues still available for upward social mobility in unequal societies but also that they could contribute to social transformation by becoming more democratic institutions, equipping students with critical thinking and citizenship skills, equalizing opportunities and partnering with the community to address local problems (Freire, 1970; Jeria, 1984; Schugurensky, 2014). Second, his proposal to change school culture was rooted in his concept of "inédito viável," which has been translated as "viable unheard off," "untested feasibility," or "doable solutions." Freire argued that traditional authoritarian cultures can change over time, but this demands consistent efforts and the continuity of alternative processes that are more participatory and democratic (Freire, 1970). The collective construction of such a liminal democracy requires a paradigm shift. Freire outlines leaving behind banking education, paternalism, elitism, and top-down decision-making and nurturing the emergence of a new ethos and innovative practices guided by a shared vision.

Freire's ideas on institutional democratization, participation, dialogue and cooperative learning were also influenced by the progressive school movement, and particularly by the writings of the educational philosopher John Dewey. These ideas were popularized in Brazil by Anísio Teixeira, an intellectual leader who had taken courses with Dewey at Teachers' College Columbia University in the late 1920s and became Director of Education of Rio de Janeiro in the early 1930s (Warde, 2005). Inspired by those ideas and by his experiences at SESI and at several literacy campaigns in different parts of the world, Freire argued that education for democracy cannot be separated from the practice of democracy and that democracy can be learned more effectively through direct and active participation in one's communities. To those who criticized him with the argument that most people did not have the responsibility required to make decisions, he replied - echoing Dewey's dictum that the cure to the problems of democracy is more democracy- that the best way to learn social and political responsibility is experiencing such responsibility (Schugurensky, 2014). This was an important pillar of Escola Cidadá, which was conceived as an antidote to the authoritarian model of school governance and to the traditional approaches to citizenship education.

Ails and allays of citizenship education

Traditional models of citizenship education have two common problems. The first is the emphasis on rote memorization of historical, geographical, and institutional content connected to a test (Center on Educational Policy, 2007; Dee & Jacob, 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2012; West, 2007). We acknowledge that many of these facts are important and certainly deserve a place in the curriculum. However, an overreliance on a memorization of facts is problematic not only because students would forget that information after the exam (the more irrelevant and distant the information to the lives of the students, the more likely to be forgotten), but also because it does not pay enough attention to the development of democratic competencies, dispositions, and mindsets. Moreover, the overt attention on hegemonic historical knowledge often leaves out multiple perspectives of historical events and counternarratives of marginalized peoples and can perpetuate a nationalistic "glory story" instead of acknowledging and exploring the impacts of the "gory story" - including those stories and experiences still present and affecting students today (Allen, 2014; Gibson, 2019; Levinson, 2012; Shaver, 2017; Vasquez & Altshuler, 2017; Westheimer, 2015).

The second problem lies within the structure of opportunities for youth civic engagement. In many nonformal and formal educational institutions there is an overrepresentation of the "usual suspects," that is, students who are already afforded leadership opportunities because they have more means and ability to participate and therefore continue to engage and reap the benefits of democratic participation. This civic engagement opportunity gap has increased over time and plays a key role in reinforcing the 'Matthew effect' in civic participation and political representation (Klein, 2021; Levinson, 2007; Mirra et al., 2013; Pape & Lim, 2019; Pope, 2015, Snellman et al., 2015; Swartz et al., 2009). As Sherry Arnstein (1969) put it:

> The idea of citizen participation is a little like eating spinach: no one is against it in principle because it is good for you. Participation of the governed in their government is, in theory, the cornerstone of democracy—a revered idea that is vigorously applauded by virtually everyone. The applause is reduced to polite handclaps, however, when this principle is advocated by the have-not blacks, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Indians, Eskimos, and whites. And when the have-nots define participation as redistribution of power, the American consensus on the fundamental principle explodes into many shades of outright racial, ethnic, ideological, and political opposition (p. 24).

In many countries, low-income schools and minoritized student populations have had unequal access to civic learning opportunities for a long time. Hence, the citizenship education opportunity gap is part and parcel of a citizenship education debt owed unto historically marginalized youth and families (Bauman & Brennan, 2017; Hart & Atkins, 2002; Kahne, 2009; Levine & Kawashima-Ginsberg, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 2007; Levinson, 2009; Lo, 2019; Sherrod, et.al., 2002; Wilkenfeld, 2009). These cleavages are wider along lines of race, class, and ability since affluent, white, able-bodied students are often afforded more civic-oriented government classes, service-learning opportunities, democratic simulations, exposure to and discussion of current events, and classroom environments open to teamwork and deliberative conversations (CIRCLE, 2013; Kahne & Middaugh, 2008; Kawashima-Ginsberg, 2013; Levinson, 2012; Terzi, 2007). Conversely, students in poorer communities, nonwhite students, and students with disabilities have fewer opportunities to develop the knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices necessary for full participation in democratic life (Levine, 2009; Levinson, 2007; Pope, 2015). This situation has long-lasting implications, as uneven participation in schools can extend unto adult life with uneven political participation and power (Kahne, 2009; Levinson, 2009, 2010; Westheimer, 2015). In this regard, several studies have shown correlations between socioeconomic status, ability, and race, on the one hand, and exposure to civic education and levels of adult political participation, on the other (CIRCLE, 2012; Comber, 2003; Flanagan & Levine, 2010; Hart et al., 2014; Jamieson et al., 2011; Levine & Kawashima-Ginsberg, 2015; Levinson, 2010; Rebell, 2017). Uneven access to citizenship learning opportunities erodes equal democratic representation and puts into question the notion of governing 'of and by the people'. By the time youth leave school, the opportunities that they had to develop citizenship knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices would largely influence their propensity of civic and electoral engagement as adults (Jamieson et al., 2011; Levine & Kawashima-Ginsberg, 2017).

Citizenship education, civic engagement and school democracy

Inspired by Freire's ideas and work, one way to address the ails of citizenship education is to develop an ecosystem that connects citizenship education, civic engagement, and school democracy. Such an ecosystem would create a variety of democratic learning opportunities that provide students with authentic engagements in civic action and lay

the groundwork for a participatory readiness through project-based learning, experiential citizenship education, and active participation in self-governance (Allen, 2014; Gill et al., 2018; Levinson, 2012; Youniss, 2011). Schools that provide students with opportunities to engage in deliberation and decision-making processes have been found to nurture a culture of democratic engagement (Gutmann & Thompson, 2009; Hansen et al., 2003; Ito et al., 2010). When youth are involved in democratic processes, whether in school or other spaces, they are more likely to increase civic and political interests, knowledge, and skills and social-emotional learning (Albornoz-Manyoma et al., 2020; Augsberger, 2017; Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Hess & Torney, 1967; Levine, 2007; Westheimer, 2015). Furthermore, students who engage in curricular and extracurricular citizenship education activities tend to participate more as adults considering measures like civic duty, community involvement, political attentiveness, and political efficacy (Hahn, 1998; Hess & McAvoy, 2015; Jamieson et al., 2011; Lerner, 2004; Levine, 2007, 2013; Levinson, 2012; Niemi & Junn, 1998). Augsberger et al. (2017) also found that when provided opportunities for shaping civic knowledge and participation skills in schools, a young person's likelihood of voting increases as an adult.

The development of an ecosystem of citizenship education, civic engagement, and school democracy makes sense because schools have many initiatives, programs, and courses in each area, but they usually operate in silos, with few connections among them. This ecosystem should promote student agency but at the same time should recognize the significance of adult allies who support youth empowerment and allow for autonomous decision-making as part of a power sharing relationship (Finlay et al., 2010; Mitra, 2005). While many schools around the world have experimented with these ideas since the early 20th century, occasionally these initiatives have been implemented at a larger scale, like a school district that covers an entire city. This was the case of the Escola Cidadã (Citizen School project) that Freire and his collaborators implemented when he was Secretary of Education of Sao Paulo in the late 1980s and early 1990s, it was later adapted by other Brazilian cities (most notably Porto Alegre) and inspired teachers and educational reformers around the world (Schugurensky, 2014). While the Escola Cidadã project has many dimensions, in this paper we focus on one dimension (school democracy) and one specific process that is currently gaining traction in many countries: School Participatory Budgeting.

Escola Cidadã (Citizen School)

Escola Cidadã, or the Citizen School project, is a world-renowned example of an educational reform aimed at embracing counter-hegemonic policies and practices to create transformational social spaces for learning democratic processes and citizenship education (De Azevedo & Schugurensky 2005; Fischman & Gandin, 2009; Gandin & Apple, 2004; O'Cadiz, Wong & Torres 1998). The Citizen School project began in 1989 and its growth was spurred in tandem with Brazil's Working Party, formed by industrial workers and peasants as a movement under the Popular Administration (Fischman & Gandin, 2016). The project was guided by many of Freire's ideas, particularly the design of the organizational structure that enacts a transformation of the status quo of schooling and catalyzes "a new architecture of knowledge" (Torres, 2017, p.15). At their core, these schools function as a citizenship learning center where rights and responsibilities are fostered and discourse within a diverse community is valued.

As an allay to traditional models of citizenship education, the Citizen School is grounded in the practice of democratization and operationalizes this concept in three ways: a) accessibility and pedagogical constructs, b) curriculum and participation, and c) governance and decision-making relationships among all school-related stakeholders (Fischman & Gandin, 2009, 2016). Citizen Schools were strategically placed in the most

disadvantaged areas of Brazil and supportive structures, such as cycles instead of grade levels and the Learning Laboratory for students with specific needs, were put into place to ensure individual student success (Gandin & Apple, 2004). Drawing on Freire's critique of the banking model of education, an overarching tenet of the *Escola Cidadã* is a reconstruction of the curriculum. *Escola Cidadã* embeds and contextualizes the curriculum within the community itself, replacing the historically whitewashed curriculum with community experiences and perspectives that have long been excluded and oppressed. In turn, the learning shapes a student's own cultural and community manifesto in that students learn through the histories of their family, culture, and community. Citizen Schools value cooperation and solidarity in relationships among students, families, educators, and administrators. Within this framework, all school community members play a role in the management of the school and the reorganization and construction of knowledge. School community members regularly come together to design and deliberate on administrative principles, resource allocation, project foci and curriculum mapping (Fischman & Gandin, 2016).

Although similar models of transformational learning spaces like *Escola Cidadã* exist in other school districts, very few have focused at the same time on democratizing access to knowledge and democratizing administrative decision-making within schools. The case of Porto Alegre is particularly relevant because the experiment lasted three continuous municipal administrations (from 1989 until 2000). Further, it combined key elements of the Citizen School pedagogical model proposed by Freire with an instrument for civic engagement and municipal democratization, namely the participatory budgeting, which has sparked the international School Participatory Budgeting movement that is blossoming in the 21st century (Cabannes, 2004).

School Participatory Budgeting

School Participatory Budgeting (School PB) is a tool for citizenship learning, civic engagement, and school democracy. In a typical School PB process, students and the school community facilitate, implement, and engage within a participatory process to decide how to spend a portion of the school's budget. School PB stems from municipal Participatory Budgeting (PB), the democratic process of deliberation and decision-making over budget allocations that originated in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 1989 and is now implemented in over 11,000 cities around the world. Some countries like Dominican Republic, Peru, Panama, Poland, South Korea, Angola, Kenya, Portugal, Ukraine, Indonesia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Scotland have laws requiring some form of PB in municipal budget allocations (Cabannes, 2004; Dias, 2018; Dias et al., 2019).

Research on this process has revealed that participatory budgeting has positive impacts on a variety of areas, including civic participation (from neighborhood associations to electoral turnout), governmental transparency, accountability and effectiveness, community wellbeing, gender equality and redistribution of resources within cities. Moreover, participatory budgeting is also known as an informal school of citizenship, because participants increase their levels of political efficacy and civic capacities (Cabannes, 2004, 2006; Curtis, 2020; Lerner & Schugurensky, 2007; Lerner & Secondo, 2012; Schugurensky, 2006; Touchton & Wampler, 2014).

In Brazil, School PB has been utilized alongside the *Escola Cidadã* project in the late 20th century and early 21st centuries, but those processes have not been continuous due to changes in the leadership of municipalities and school districts. At the same time, in some cities around the world, students have been involved in city-wide participatory budgeting

processes as participants but have not led a process themselves. A few cities have offered a youth-led participatory budgeting process alongside the wider municipal process. Although not wholly conducted within an institutionalized school setting, Youth PB exists as a participatory engagement opportunity for young people in partnership with municipalities and non-profit organizations. One of the earliest documented Youth PB processes took place in 2004 in Rosario, Argentina with $80,000 allocated from the city's budget (Lerner, 2006). In 2014, Cluj, Romania, implemented a Youth PB process with the goal to fund 250 youth-proposed and -led projects (Brennan, 2016). The Portuguese City of Cascais allocated 150,000 euro to a Youth PB project in 2017 through the mayor's office and city council in partnership with fourteen local schools to engage youth with "the sphere of political decisions which concern them" (Resende, 2018). In 2018, the Newry, Mourne and Down Community Planning Partnership of Ireland expanded its participatory budgeting process to include the local youth in submitting ideas and voting on final projects (Communities Leading Change, 2018). Over the last three years, Poland has seen multiple Youth PB initiatives unfold across cities spanning from Mrągowo to Szczecin (Projects, 2020). The UK has also administered Youth PB processes across various cities for the past decade, including Brighton and Aberdeen (Duarte, n.d.) and North Ayrshire and Glasgow in Scotland (Projects, 2020).

In the U.S., the city of Boston began a Youth PB process in 2014, allocating $1 million dollars from the city's capital budget for youth ages 12-25 to vote on 14 different projects (City of Boston Mayors Office, 2017). Research on this process reported an increase in confidence to enact community change and greater likelihood to contact public officials, vote, volunteer within the community, and work with others to solve community problems (Augsberger et al., 2017; Grillos, 2014; Levine, 2014). The city of Seattle allocated $700,000 of its 2016 budget to a Youth PB process called Youth Voice, Youth Choice (Habte & Apone, 2016.) During Fall 2018, in Bloomington, Indiana, the Common Council approved to allocate $15,000 of the municipal budget to a 2019 Youth PB process (City of Bloomington, n.d.). In 2020, Vermont Afterschool, a statewide nonprofit, provided each community youth council $5,000 to fund youth-led projects through a Youth PB process (Katrick, 2021).

Youth PB and School PB share some common features, including a shift from an adult-centric model of decision-making to one that transfers power to youth and a process in which young people work with adults in identifying and solving problems through democratic processes of deliberation and decision-making. The main difference is that School PB takes place within K-12 schools and pays particular attention to its pedagogical dimensions, whereas Youth PB takes place in other community settings, includes older youth, and does not necessarily focus on the educational side of participatory democracy.

The School PB process, like the municipal PB and the Youth PB processes, is typically organized in five steps: 1) students propose ideas to improve the school community; 2) students transform these ideas into viable proposals; 3) students campaign for and present proposals to fellow students; 4) students vote for top proposals, and 5) winning projects are funded. At the outset of the School PB process, a "steering committee" of students is recruited to be shepherds of the process, charged with developing the framework of the process, communicating the process to the rest of the school community, and serving as leaders throughout the process (Johnson, 2020). In many cases, at the conclusion of the School PB process, all school community stakeholders conduct an evaluation and make recommendations for improvements for the next cycle. All stages of the School PB process are led by the students themselves, with the support of their teachers and, at times,

community organizations. A full School PB process takes several months, but shorter processes have been implemented.

School PB is a unique model of citizenship education and an effective learning tool for democratic processes due to its authenticity and inclusivity. The School PB process is not a simulation or tokenistic exercise absent of any realistic, tangible outcomes. Instead, students participate in an electoral cycle centered on student-driven ideas that result in real public resources being spent on the winning project ideas. The School PB process is also inclusive in that all stakeholders of the school community are involved in the decision-making process and engage in both the deliberative democracy and electoral phases of the process. Additionally, many School PB processes draw a representative sample of the school population to be on the steering committee as a "mini-public" to mindfully ensure that traditionally underrepresented students are included within the student steering committee. School PB's objectives include increasing participant civic knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and dispositions through centering participant voice to increase advocacy, efficacy, empowerment, and trust. The School PB process aims to empower participants to lead as community problem-solvers and acquire skills and attitudes needed for lifelong active civic engagement (Brennan, 2016; Cohen et al., 2015; Schugurensky, 2002).

School PB: A growing international movement

In the last two decades, more and more schools adopted School PB. In this brief section we provide a general overview with some examples from different countries. In Canada, as early as 2005, Ridgeville Elementary School in West Vancouver, Canada implemented School PB in collaboration with the Parent Advisory Council's budget allocations (Participatory Budgeting Project, 2014). In 2015, a cross collaborative School PB model between three elementary schools and a community center in Chelsea, a small municipality of Quebec, Canada, was successful in implementing School PB as a partnership between the school and greater communities. English-speaking and French-speaking students involved in this School PB process overcame linguistic barriers to communicate back and forth in English and French almost all the time through teacher support and the utilization of creative mediums -an important implication for the historical divide between Anglophone and Francophone populations within this region and many others worldwide (Schugurensky, 2017).

In Europe, the case of France is particularly interesting because PB began at the school level in the Poitou-Charentes region and was later adopted in Paris at the municipal level, then expanded throughout Parisian schools (Kovalenko et al., 2020). Since 2005, over 90 public high schools in the French Poitou-Charentes region have implemented School PB using an allocation of 10% of the schools' budget with students guiding the process design and decision-making, while parents, teachers, and school employees serve as a support structure (Participatory Budgeting Project, 2014; Röcke, 2014). By 2014, the city of Paris adopted a PB process for Parisians to decide how to spend 5% of the municipal budget, and in 2016 France expanded its already-existent municipal PB process into the school system to include 91% of Parisian elementary and general schools (Kovalenko et al., 2020). Spain has employed a School PB process called *Agora Infantil* in six schools from within the Andalusian provinces since 2014 (Albornoz-Manyoma et al., 2020). Outcomes of a study on students engaged in Agora Infantil found an improvement in psychological empowerment among student participants as well as increased decision-making and deliberative skills (Albornoz-Manyoma et al., 2020). In addition, Portugal launched School PB throughout all schools within the country in 2017, allocating one Euro per student with a minimum of 500 euros per school to fund the winning projects (Nelson, 2018). In Italy,

School PB is implemented in Milano through a project called "Decide 4 your School" (Stortone, 2017) and in several other cities and communes, including Roma, Ancona, Pordenone, and Trebisacce (Stortone, n. d.). Poland launched School PB in Warsaw in 2017 and has since expanded to three other cities including over 50 schools (Kovalenko et al., 2020). Also in 2017, Slovakia implemented a School PB process in one high school as a pilot after intermittent municipal PB processes throughout the country (Gažúrová et al., n.d.). In 2019, Lithuania piloted School PB in two Vilnius district schools with a post-process evaluation revealing increases among students' understanding of budgets and desire to engage in the school community (Duncikaite, 2019). Ukraine has borrowed from its robust municipal and community level PB processes to establish School PB in 122 schools across two community regions since 2019 (Kovalenko et al., 2020). In the UK, School PB has been implemented in elementary schools as well as in high schools (PB Unit, 2010), and in Scotland, the Participatory Budgeting Charter and PB Scotland Hub have called for increased opportunities for young people to be able to contribute to school budgetary decisions (PB Scotland, n. d.).

In Russia, as part of a country-wide adoption in 2017, School PB has been adopted utilizing regional budgets of municipalities in collaboration with schools (Shulga et al., 2019). In South Korea, School PB is implemented in several cities. The first school district in South Korea to experiment with School PB was Seoul, but the most notable case is the city of Daegu (the 4th largest city in the country) because it implemented School PB in all its K-12 schools (No, 2018). Zambia began its first School PB in 2017 called *My School, My Vote* wherein 4000 students from two secondary schools participated and submitted 140 idea proposals (Dennis, 2020). Several cities in Brazil (especially São Paulo, Porto Alegre, and Recife), have implemented School PB processes in over 200 schools (Best et al., 2011). Beyond Brazil, School PB processes are taking place in other Latin American countries like Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Argentina, Venezuela, Mexico, and Chile (Cabannes, 2006; Taft & Ramirez, 2019).

In the United States, the first School PB process took place in Bioscience High School in Phoenix, Arizona in 2013. Since then, the Phoenix Union High School district has incrementally adopted School PB into all twenty of its high schools. Other Arizona schools have followed suit in an incremental adoption of School PB in Chandler, Sunnyside (Tucson), Queen Creek, Mesa and Tempe, with approximately 50 K-12 schools engaging approximately 50,000 students every year (Bartlett et al., 2020). More schools and new districts are committed to implement School PB next year. Probably one of the most significant moments of the School PB movement in Arizona took place in 2020, when the Phoenix Union High School District, building on their successful experience with the process for several years, started a School PB process to reimagine school safety, reallocating $3.6 million from the budget hitherto devoted to school resource officers (school police). We will return to this in the next section (Phoenix Union High School District, 2020).

In Chicago, Sullivan High School conducted a semester-long School PB pilot in 2015 with 575 students. After successful outcomes and community feedback, School PB expanded in 2017 to three Chicago high schools (Steinmetz College Prep, Hyde Park Academy, and Al Raby High School). By 2021, School PB is now implemented in 16 schools. It is pertinent to note here that Chicago was the first city in the U.S. to implement municipal PB, with an experiment in the 49th ward in 2009. In a recent evaluation of the Chicago School PB, 94% of students reported having a better understanding of how to apply skills learned during the process to the real world and 88% of student participants "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that collaborative problem solving is more effective than solving problems on

one's own. Additionally, teachers reported the School PB process as beneficial in supporting the existing school curriculum and desired learning outcomes (Crum & Faydash, 2018). In 2018, New York City launched the largest scale of School PB processes in over 400 of the city's high schools (Lerner, 2018). There have also been several individual schools that have implemented School PB within the US, including Walker Upper Elementary School in Virginia (Johnson, 2020), Overfelt High School in San Jose, California, and Met High School in Sacramento, California (Mathews, 2018). Further, there have been newly emergent School PB processes like Syracuse City School District in New York with seven of its schools participating during the 2020-2021 school year.

School PB, citizenship education and empowerment: the case of Arizona

Arizona has been at the forefront of the School PB movement in the US. This can be explained by three factors. First, as noted above, the Phoenix Union High School District (PXU) launched the first School PB process of the country in 2013 and the first district-wide process in 2016. Second, there is a coalition of schools, nonprofits and a local university that has promoted constant experimentation, innovation, capacity building and a gradual, organic expansion of the process. Third, a team of local researchers (especially graduate students at Arizona State University) have conducted process evaluations and impact evaluations aimed at providing feedback and improving the process. These studies have shown increases in participant knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices concerning citizenship education and empowerment, as well as an improvement in school climate, specifically with improved trust and communication between students, teachers and staff, and school and district leaders (Bartlett et al., 2020; Cohen et al., 2015; Gibbs, et al., 2021; Keidan, 2020; Kinzle, 2019). Given space constraints, it is impossible to discuss in detail the variety of School PB processes taking place in Arizona since 2013. Hence, in this section we will discuss two recent innovative cases: Inclusive School Participatory Budgeting (ISPB) and Re-imagining School Safety through School PB.

Inclusive School Participatory Budgeting (ISPB)

The ISPB model was first implemented in one Arizona middle school in 2019-20 as a pilot project in partnership with the Center for the Future of Arizona, Arizona State University's Participatory Governance Institute, and the Arizona Developmental Disability Council. In 2020-21 the school decided to continue the process, and two high schools from another Arizona city also adopted the model (publication forthcoming). The ISPB model is based on three pillars of inclusivity throughout the process. First, including and representing all students (especially students with disabilities) throughout the process and more specifically within the student steering committee. Second, providing students and school community stakeholders with multiple opportunities to engage throughout the process (especially through a primary vote and deliberations in core Social Studies classes). Third, engaging all the stakeholders of the school community (students, teachers, staff, and family members) in the process, including the vote on the final project proposals. Putting these pillars of inclusivity into practice, the student steering committee was a representative sample of the overall student population, with an overrepresentation of students with disabilities. While Social Studies classes promoted student-led presentations and discussions, the student steering committee welcomed broader participation through open meetings, tabling and campaigning, and voting.

Taking into consideration limitations around survey-only data collection with minors and students with disabilities, the research team conducted one-on-one interviews with students while simultaneously administering a survey about changes in civic Knowledge,

Attitudes, Skills, and Practices (KASP) that included 40 indicators, and additional indicators on changes in school climate. During the interviews, students were asked to explain their perceived level of change for each KASP indicator. Findings revealed significant mean changes for all students involved in the ISPB process across the following indicators:

- Increased knowledge of participatory democracy
- Increased knowledge of how decisions are made within their school
- Increased knowledge of other students' needs
- Increased feeling of ideas being heard
- Increased ability to campaign for proposals
- Increased desire to work on more projects to improve the school
- Increased propensity to help make decisions at school

More specifically, students with disabilities had significant mean changes in the following indicators:

- Increased knowledge of how a budget works
- Increased feeling of confidence in making a difference in the school
- Increased ability to speak publicly
- Increased ability to make decisions in a group
- Increased practice of talking to teachers outside of class

Overall, students involved in the ISPB process reported experiencing a greater sense of belonging and collaboration, an increase in psychological empowerment, and better relationships with their teachers and peers. Within focus groups, the teachers and school community stakeholders reported observing increased confidence and leadership skills of the steering committee members, increased positive interactions among students with and without disabilities, and growth in deliberative skills and communication abilities (Bartlett et al., 2020). Survey findings also revealed a significant increase in the political efficacy of students, as indicated by a large effect size (Gibbs et al. 2021). Looking forward, the findings and outcomes from the ISPB model have produced promising results for individuals with disabilities and civic engagement, especially considering people with disabilities have a lower sense of political efficacy (Gastil, 2000), are less connected with and consulted by public officials (Schur et al., 2003; Silverstein 2010; Parker Harris et al., 2012), and have lower voter turnout rates (Coley & Sum, 2012; Shields et al., 1998).

School PB to Re-imagine School Safety

In 2020, the Phoenix Union High School District (PXU), the birthplace of School PB within the U.S., recently expanded and added a focus to its annual School PB process: re-imagining school safety. Prompted by demands for an equity-based overhaul of school discipline trends, (Anyon et al., 2014; Gregory et al., 2020; Losen & Gillespie, 2012; Skiba & Rausch, 2006), PXU has opted to not renew its contract with the Phoenix Police Department's School Resource Officer program for 3 years (Phoenix Union High School District, 2020). Instead, this budget of $1.2 million per year has been re-allocated to a School PB process over three years, for a total of $3.6 million.

A steering committee from each of PXU's high schools drives the PXU School PB process; each school's steering committee is composed of students, staff, and parents. The PXU School PB process follows the calendar year, with the first cycle set to be completed in December 2021. Due to COVID-19, the process has taken place virtually thus far, with in-person programming slated to resume Fall 2021. To date, the school community proposed project ideas have been submitted to the online platform, and committee members have

participated in monthly meetings to discuss the process and further develop idea proposals for the final vote. The district-wide final vote will take place in November 2021.

The PXU research team will use a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach in a convergent mixed methods case study design to evaluate the PXU School PB process. Data will be derived from the steering committee members' participation in a survey and focus groups and be used to evaluate the process implementation, participant experiences, and school community-level impact. This School PB process will be the first district-wide, community-driven deliberation and decision-making participatory process focused on school safety. Implications include an improvement in school community-based participatory processes and an increase of community-based strategies for school safety.

Methods, Challenges, and Limitations

School PB is a relatively new and ever-expanding experiment of democratic participation in school communities. Given its malleable nature, innate inclusivity, and capacity for innovation, School PB enables schools and communities to adopt and modify the process to fit their own context and initiatives. Evaluations of School PB have typically involved a mixed methods approach, combining survey data with interviews and focus groups conducted with participants and observations recorded throughout the process. More recently, School PB evaluations have encompassed participatory methods like youth participatory action research (YPAR) and community-based participatory research (CBPR) to center participant experiences and include participants in the evaluation itself. Additionally, some School PB evaluations have used arts-based research methods such as photovoice, improvisation, and digital artifact curation (Appleton, 2018; Bartlett et al., 2020).

These exciting opportunities in creative and extensive evaluative methods also pose methodological challenges when evaluating the effectiveness of School PB processes in fostering democratic knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices. Outside of issues in navigating research with minors (e.g., informed consent and assent, participation, confidentiality) involved in a School PB process, characteristics of the school community setting can play a role in the rigor of the evaluation, as well as the research design. As schools and districts adopt a variety of evaluation methods, comparative research approaches have also proven to be difficult. Additionally, to date, there has been no longitudinal analysis of students' participation in a School PB process.

Concluding Remarks

Paraphrasing Obama's acceptance speech in 2008, many things can be achieved when educators put their hands on the arc of history and bend it once more towards a more democratic and just society (Obama, 2008). There are many ways to reinvent Freire in the 21st century, and one of them is to continue -and deepen- his efforts to nurture a citizen school, one in which everyone can experience tensions of democracy and exercise the rights and obligations of citizenship (Freire, 2003). For Freire, democratic self-governance can contribute to transform authoritarian schools in creative spaces, in which student learning is connected to their experience, to collective actions for improving their own reality, to feelings of joy and hope, to genuine dialogue, to a sense of common purpose, and to the development of active citizenship (Freire 1997; Carvalho de Souza & Krupek 2021; Barcelos and Azzolin 2021).

In the last two decades, School PB has been taken up throughout cities and countries around the world (Dias 2018; Dias et al., 2019). The studies on the impact of participant experiences on learning and changes in knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices, however, are still in their infancy. To begin to explore these effects, many process and impact evaluations on the School PB process have been conducted, as well as both small- and large-scale rigorous research pilot and case studies. The findings from these evaluations have produced promising results to further support School PB as a high-impact pedagogical approach to connect civic engagement, citizenship education, and school democracy (see, for instance, Albornoz-Manyoma et al., 2020, 2021; Falck & de la Rosa, 2021).

Circling back to Freire, School PB encompasses both the analysis of reality and the collective construction of solution-oriented actions, two phases of the educational process that the Brazilian educator conceptualized as dialectically related. For him, the nurturing of citizenship requires transformative actions, connecting the subjective and objective dimensions of the development of consciousness. As he noted, education is praxis: action and reflection of men and women upon the world to transform it (Freire, 1970). While he was writing this in the context of adult literacy circles in Northeast Brazil in mid-20th century, such a process of transformation can also take place today in schools and involve children and youth, as well as teachers, non-teaching staff, parents, and community members. Through PB and related initiatives, students can transform not only their school environment but also transform themselves from objects to subjects and from mere recipients of content to active agents of learning. Moreover, they can learn democracy by doing in inclusive environments (like the case of ISPB) and acquire the habits of self-governance and cooperation by working together with the rest of the school community on relevant projects (like the case of Phoenix Union).

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People, Policy, and Praxis: Freirean Pedagogy and Local-Level Policy Implementation

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Ambiguity in policy implementation guidance can result in discrimination and disenfranchisement. Adult education programs grounded in Freirean pedagogy can be responsive to these situations through an open dialectic that provides for an exchange between internal program relationships and external organizational relationships. This case comes from my experiences as an educator in a Freirean, Spanish-language, high school equivalency (HSE) program in New Jersey during significant national changes to HSE credentialing in 2014. It describes policy implementation in the local context in relationships between governing institutions, service organizations, and the people policies are meant to govern. I construct a narrative for relevant policy environments and actions through the assemblage of primary sources, such as policy documents and internal organizational reports, as well as an analysis of 25 news reports and commentaries taken from 2013-2014. I argue that all policies, even those initiated at the national level, are ultimately enacted locally through the dialectic relationships between policy makers, administrators, program staff, and students at a variety of public and private organizations. I show how Freirean approaches to program design and operation respond to political, policy, and programmatic complexities to address discrimination and disenfranchisement. In conclusion, I discuss implications for educators seeking to adopt a Freirean framework into their own program design and implementation. These include reflection and action at the local level within an analysis of larger oppressive structures, thoughtful design and critical flexibility to work closely with students in program operation, and engagement in dialectic relationships with existing or potential collaborators.

Keywords: Freire, adult education, high school equivalency, program design, policy implementation

Introduction

Before 2014, people in the county who sought to obtain a high school equivalency (HSE) diploma sat for the GED exam at the Pine Street School.[1] When I began at Bridgeway, a local nonprofit organization, in 2011, I joined colleagues in adult education who shuttled between our office and the Pine Street School to complete registrations, coordinate with test proctors, drop off and pick up students on test day, and pick up test results. At registration, test-takers indicated in which language they wanted to complete the exam:

[1] Names of places and organizations have been changed to preserve anonymity.

English or Spanish. On test day, they brought a money order for $50 and a number 2 pencil, presented an ID, and were assigned a seat intermingled with other test-takers completing the test in the language of their choosing. If they obtained a high enough score on each of the five sections of the test, NJ's Department of Education (NJ DOE) mailed them a high school diploma within 6-8 weeks. However, our routines changed drastically in January 2014, as they did nationwide, when the GED exam publisher made substantial changes in content and delivery to the exam, requiring new HSE policies in response.

The same year these changes took place, Bridgeway engaged in a partnership with other local nonprofit organizations to launch *Juntos en Comunidad* (*Juntos*), a multi-organization initiative that provides English- and Spanish-language social and educational services to the Latin American immigrant community in the county and the surrounding area. My colleagues and I navigated the confluence of changing education, labor, and immigration policies as we envisioned, developed and operated the program.[2] As the initiative's HSE program manager and as a Freirean educator, I designed the program as mother tongue-based instruction (see Benson, 2004) rooted in three Freirean guiding principles (Freire, 1992, 2000b, 2000a; Horton & Freire, 1992). These principles include the open dialectic embedded in praxis, the action-oriented hope of liberation, and the impossibility of political neutrality. Together, they proved to be a useful framework from which to respond to both the curricular changes that the new GED prompted as well as to local action that effectively disenfranchised students who were not able to complete the Spanish-language HSE exam locally for fifteen months.

The case presented below has two simultaneous goals. The first is to articulate the rationale for our pedagogical practices. The second is to convey the relational nature of the political, policy, and programmatic complexities involved in local HSE policy implementation. I argue that all policies, even those initiated at the national level, are ultimately enacted locally through the dialectic relational exchange that happens between policy makers, administrators, program staff, and students at a variety of public and private organizations. Because Freirean pedagogy is grounded in relational exchanges that bring together disparate, often competing or conflicting—even oppressive—persons and ideas, *Juntos*'s HSE program was able to critically and flexibly engage with other agents. This study will highlight dialectic relationships, that is relationships in exchange, involved in HSE credentialing in one county in NJ by focusing on the interactions that occurred at the local level specifically around disenfranchisement and language ideologies. I also emphasize policy implementation as a relational process occurring between governing institutions, service organizations, and the people policies are meant to govern.

This article contains four major parts: a theoretical description of Freirean pedagogy, the construction of the case, two examples of praxis at *Juntos*, and implications for educators. First, I describe the three guiding principles listed above. Second, I summarize how the case has been constructed, outline the changes in and responses to HSE testing, review exam changes as described in news reports and commentary, and consider local policy implementation. Third, I present two examples of how the Freirean guiding principles listed above manifested between *Juntos*'s internal and external relationships with other agencies and organizations. These examples advance the argument that policies are ultimately enacted locally within the context of these dialectal relationships. Finally, I conclude with a discussion of implications for other educators.

[2] Two other important policy changes occurred during this period that are not fully addressed in this paper: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals in 2012 and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014.

Freirean Pedagogy

The central thesis of Freirean pedagogy builds on the idea of an open dialectic, which Freire develops in the context of oppressive social structures (Freire, 2000b). The dialectic refers to mutually influencing relationships between people and their world. The openness of the dialectic process refers to differences or even conflicts between members; these may or may not resolve but nonetheless remain mutually engaged (Freire, 1992). From here, he defines praxis as "reflection and action upon the world to transform it" (Freire, 2000a, p. 51). Praxis is a purposeful, iterative, political process. Within this definition are several important assumptions: first, the world in its present condition is oppressive; second, the world can and should be transformed to end oppression; and third, transformation comes through purposeful and decisive action. For Freire (2000a), praxis is the process of self-liberation, wherein "the oppressed must see themselves as women and men engaged in the ontological and historical vocation of becoming more fully human" (p. 56).

As such, praxis creates a framework for dialectic relationships within the component parts of educational, social, and political processes. Romão (2019) writes that praxis does "not result from the profound opposition of the opposites but from the possibility of dialogue that exists between them" (p. 508). Freirean pedagogy emphasizes the mutually influencing relationships between people and their world; between the past, present, and future; between reflection and action; between educators, students, content, and methods; and even between oppressed and oppressors. Praxis, then, accepts and engages in yet unresolved tensions towards a transformed world (Freire, 1992, 2000a, 2000b).

Because praxis seeks to transform the world from its present oppressive condition to a liberated condition, it necessarily includes an action-oriented hope. Freire (1992) writes, "I do not understand human existence, and the struggle needed to improve it, apart from hope and dream" (p. 2). Like praxis, which requires both reflection and action, hope "demands an anchoring in practice" (p. 2) that simultaneously imagines a transformed future while working upon the present moment. Indeed, Freire warns that without action, hope "dissipates, loses its bearings, and turns into hopelessness" (p. 3). The future transformation (liberation) affirms the impossibility of political neutrality. Freire continues,

> There is, nor has there ever been, an educational practice in zero-space time... To try to get people to believe that there is such a thing as this, is indisputably a political practice… It is as political as the other practice, which does not conceal—in fact, which proclaims—its own political character. (p. 67)

All educational practices, whether explicitly or implicitly, originate from and participate in political perspectives. Therefore, educators should strive to practice "the difficult exercise of the virtues of humility, of consistency, of tolerance" rather than towards an unattainable neutrality. Although these principles are considered in sequence here, they are in reality mutually defining and reinforcing within the implementation of Freirean pedagogy. Therefore, they are further explored in the examples taken from *Juntos* later in this article.

Methodology

This case concerns local implementation of policies enacted by NJ DOE and involves a range of public and private agencies and organizations spanning national, state, and local jurisdictions. Therefore, it examines a variety of documents to engage in "a process of

reflection which is set in a thoroughly historical context" (Freire, 2000b, p. 32). This process was conducted in two parts. The first involved collecting primary sources, alongside autoethnographic fieldnotes, to create a chronology of events, stretching back to early federal adult education legislation up to 2014. The second involved collecting news reports and commentary specifically on the 2014 HSE testing changes.

The assemblage of the primary sources listed here constructs a narrative for the relevant policy environments and actions described in greater detail in the sections that follow. While this article focuses on the events immediately before and after 2014, the review included historical documents, policy documents, governance, and compliance reports in the form of meeting minutes and internal organizational operation reports. I selected documents from public institutions based on relevance and availability that represent federal, state, and county government: federal adult basic and secondary education legislation from 1962-2014;[3] New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and Department of Education policies regarding HSE test publishers, test preparation programs, and test centers[4]; and the local Workforce Investment Board's Literacy Committee meeting minutes from 2013-2015.[5] Documents from private organizations vary in topic and scope: statements on the development of the Common Core Standards and the GED Testing Services' rationale for adopting them; statements from CBT/McGraw-Hill and ETS regarding their exams' equivalency with the GED and validity for federal education programs; and 29 internal *Juntos* reports, dated October 2014-December 2015, on operation of the HSE program. I supplemented these with autoethnographic field notes from my time as Adult Education Manager at Bridgeway.

Additionally, I selected news reports and commentaries from national and local news outlets across the country, dating between January 2013-December 2014. Using a key word search in Google News in the year leading up to and a year after the GED Testing Services released the new College and Career Ready GED exam, I chose 25 pieces that describe events related to test publishers, state governments, local organizations, and students across the country preparing for and responding to the change in the GED exam. There was relatively little coverage of these events, and a significant number of pieces were simple announcement of test prep program hours or eligibility rather than news reports or commentary. Initial coding identified actors involved in the change (i.e., state government, publishers, local organizations, students), actors' goals (i.e., economic development, education, employment), and the challenges actors faced in providing or accessing HSE credentialing (i.e., financial, logistical). Focused coding further analyzed goals challenges related to economic impact, operational capacity, rigor, and technology. I used the frequency of individual references to specific topics to identify primary areas of concern in the reporting and commentary.

[3] Workforce Opportunity and Innovation Act of 2014; Workforce Investment Act of 1998; Job Training Partnership Act of 1982; Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973; Manpower Development and Training act of 1962.
[4] NJ DLWD Adult Education & Literacy policies, NJ DOE Request for Qualifications for publishers of high school equivalency exams, and NJ DOE Request for Qualifications for high school equivalency test
[5] The Literacy Committee was a subcommittee of the local Workforce Investment Board (under the Workforce Investment Act) that coordinated adult education activities, publicly and privately operated, in the region. The 2014 passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act updated the role of the local boards. For more information of workforce development governance in New Jersey, see https://www.nj.gov/njsetc/about/

Overview of Policy Changes

National and Local Adult Education Policy

Changes to content in the GED exam came on the heels of widespread adoption of the Common Core Career and College Readiness Standards, first released in 2010 ("About the Common Core Standards," 2021). The standards, developed by the National Governors Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the nonprofit education reform group Achieve, sought to establish new benchmarks for K12 education "to ensure that all students graduate from high school with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in college, career, and life, regardless of where they live" (para. 2). The following year, the American Council of Education, the nonprofit publisher of the GED exam, announced a new partnership with Pearson VUE to establish the for-profit GED Testing Service, which would update the existing GED exam to align with College and Career Readiness Standards (Kim, 2013; Sieben, 2011; Trask, 2012). On December 31, 2013, the GED Testing Service retired the previous exam version and on January 1, 2014, launched its new, computerized College and Career Ready version. The new registration fee more than doubled the cost of the exam. In response, two other major publishers released their own high school equivalency exams: CBT/McGraw-Hill's Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC)[6] and the Educational Testing Service's High School Equivalency Test (HiSET). These exams were updated more gradually over a two-year period from 2014 to 2016 to align with Career and College Readiness Standards, were offered at lower costs compared to the GED, and could be completed either on paper or on the computer (Adams, 2013; Sieben, 2011). All three publishers created both English and Spanish language versions of their exams.

NJ DOE took a market approach to its adoption of HSE credentialing pathways by approving all three test versions. That is, NJ DOE framed test-takers as consumers in an HSE testing marketplace that spanned the entire state, where they could choose from among the vendors which provided them the greatest value. In theory, test-takers could choose which of the three exams to take, and therefore determine how to prepare for, how to complete, and how much to pay for credentialing. However, NJ DOE left it to test centers to decide, based on organizational capacity, which test publishers they would engage and, based on local demographics, which languages they would offer. Additionally, all test centers needed to recertify with NJ DOE to ensure proper implementation of new procedure. This decision was announced in December 2013 (New Jersey Department of Education, 2014).

This arrangement, however, did not actually establish a market relationship between the test-taker and the test publisher. Instead, recertification created ambiguity at the local level between the NJ DOE's intention, test center's self-perceived capacity, and students' stated desires regarding access to educational opportunity. What NJ DOE meant as a bureaucratic affirmation of test centers' capacity and compliance with new procedures became an opportunity for test centers to renegotiate previous norms regarding language access to educational opportunity and credentialing under the guise of organizational efficiency. Policy ambiguities allowed centers to drop Spanish-language testing that had previously been offered. This effectively disenfranchised students, barring their access to HSE credentialing by reformulating the credential not as one based on the Common Core standards but rather on English proficiency.

[6] TASC is now a publication of Data Recognition Corporation. See https://www.mheducation.com/news-media/press-releases/data-recognition-corporation-drc-announces-agreement-acquire-key-assets-ctb.html

High School Equivalency in the News

In news reports and commentaries about changes in HSE testing, the increased rigor derived from the College and Career Readiness Standards and state responses to changes were the central focus. Across the 25 pieces, there were 130 individual references to the change in standards, the requisite curricular changes at test prep programs, and concern about test-takers ability to pass the exam at its new standards. This was followed closely behind with concerns about technology, with 101 individual references. These concerns included requisite skills for employment and post-secondary education, programs' operational capacity to acquire equipment and incorporate computer training, and test-takers ability to manage the computer-based format of the test. Concerns around rigor, technology, and cost were framed as problems of operational capacity for state education or workforce agencies, local test centers, and local test prep programs as often as they were described as personal challenges for students. Writers took direct quotes, in order of frequency, from program operators, test publishers, students, and state policy makers. Student quotes talked about personal goals, rigor, and technology. Test publishers focused on workforce participation and economic impact. State officials and program operators focused on operational capacity, or rather limitations in capacity, to adapt programming and facilities to meet the requirements of the new exam.

Workforce participation, whether immediately after obtaining the HSE or in the future after post-secondary training or higher education, was the primary rationale offered for increased rigor and the computerized format. The pieces framed educator and student comments about rigor, technology, and workforce participation around students' time out of K12 schooling, experiences with low-wage work, and responsibilities as parenting. However, writers made no reference to demographic data, including race, ethnicity, language, or income level except in two instances: one writer discussed mean and median income, another discussed race. Overall, student statistics focused on test completion and enrollment in post-secondary education. Students are described in terms of their present employment ("low-income") as linked to their lack of HSE credential or potential employment if they acquire it. In terms of economic impact of an HSE credentialing market and of successful HSE candidates, 11 pieces discussed improved individual or familial economic conditions and 14 talked about a distributed economic benefit to society at large. Most frequently, however, the pieces focused on workforce participation and improved employability.

State officials' and program operators' concern with operational capacity, coupled with test publishers' rationale about society-level economic benefits, confirms a bureaucratic view of HSE credentialing within the larger workforce development system. Together, the pieces describe the HSE credential as a tool for maintaining individual and social economic stability. The increased rigor and computer-based format is seen as ensuring students maintain sufficient skills and knowledge to produce wealth both for themselves and for society at large. The emphasis on economic impact is consistent with American modernism wherein "poverty [has] become an organizing concept and the object of a new problematization" whose "solution was economic growth and development" (Escobar, 2012, p. 24). Poverty, reframed here as a lack of economic stability, is a social problem with a technocratic solution wherein local test centers and test prep programs are coordinated through state policy. The economic framing of the problem eclipses racioethnic and linguistic dimensions. These are overlooked because they cannot be readily incorporated into the "the ideological scheme" and subsequently "either go unnoticed or get explained away" (Irvine & Gal, 2000, p. 38).

It is clear that the issue of linguistic disenfranchisement in HSE credentialing is not a widely considered topic in national conversations. In the pieces analyzed here, there was no reference to English- or Spanish- language testing. Test publishers' choice to develop a Spanish-language exam and NJ DOE's (or any other state agency) decision to accept the Spanish-language exam as a pathway to credentialing do not come up in news reports or commentaries. There was no discussion about language at all. In fact, key word searches in Google News that included "Spanish" or "language" alongside "high school equivalency" yielded no relevant results, only announcements about local English as a Second Language programs. The news reports and commentaries reveal that operational capacity, and not language access, have been the primary concern for the majority of state officials and program operators.

Thomason (2001) writes that "language contact (which is itself a result of social history) has social consequences" where "the language of a minority culture is used by a dominant culture as a marker of cultural differentness: not only does it provide a means of identifying the people to be discriminated against, but it also offers a target for discrimination" (p. 7). Omission of Spanish-language testing in the media generally constitutes erasure from public discourse and justifies discrimination and disenfranchisement at the local level for a lack of conformity to the dominant culture's norms.

Language-based Disenfranchisement

Although we can trace policy actions related to HSE from the federal level down, such as in the design, promotion, and adoption of the Common Core standards, policy implementation always occurs locally. Borrowing from Mariana Valverde (2011), I argue that policy interventions are implemented through "embodied, experiential, and relational categories" (p. 280). The interaction between local organization and government agencies and the people the policies are meant to govern influences how policies actually operate day to day (Valverde, 2011). Others have described the policy implementation in terms of top-down and bottom-up (Sabatier, 1986) and explored the way local "street-level" bureaucrats enact policies (Lipsky, 2010). Valverde (2011), however, is of particular relevance here because she describes these relationships as "dialectic in form, [and] open-ended rather than closed" (p. 280). For example, test publishers and NJ DOE's actions to facilitate HSE credentialing in both English and Spanish indicate a certain intention at the national and state levels. However, at the local level, the option to discontinue Spanish-language testing at the local level affirmed language ideologies that gave English primacy, minoritized Spanish, and barred access to educational and credentialing opportunities for Spanish-speaking students seeking to demonstrate their academic knowledge and skills in their native language.

The ambiguity created by the recertification policy was exacerbated in the county by test center operations being passed between organizations. The local school district had operated the GED test center at the Pine Street School from time immemorial. However, in view of changing test center requirements, the school district declined to continue operating the testing center. The local community college (CC)'s adult education department agreed to operate a local test center, but availability of testing was delayed both by indecision about which test publishers to engage and language to offer as well as a backlog at NJ DOE of recertification requests from across the state. In this vacuum of local testing services, test-takers would need to (and in fact did) travel outside the county to testing sites 30 miles (for English-language testing) to 75 miles (for Spanish-language testing) away. Finally, CC began scheduling test-takers sit for the HiSET exam in December 2014 but decided to continue only in English. They defended this decision as a

problem of operational capacity, citing a lack of Spanish-speaking personnel at the college generally and in the adult education department specifically as the major reason.

Chun and Lo (2015) describe how language difference, used as a proxy for racioethnicity, allows for characterization of language users as competent and appropriate. However, language cannot be reduced to purely technical skill (language proficiency for test completion) or logistical limitation (organizational capacity). CC attempted to objectify English- and Spanish-language HSE testing using these frames. By focusing on operational capacity, rather than expressed local desires, CC failed to see test-takers as more than "an abstract category and [see] them as persons who have been unjustly dealt with, deprived of their voice" (Freire, 2000b, p. 50). Alim (2010) characterizes educational institutions "as designed to teach citizens about the current sociolinguistic order of things, without challenging that order, which is based largely on the ideology of the dominating group" (p. 28). CC failed to consider how excluding Spanish-language testing reformulated English-language competency as a feature of HSE credentialing. They "fail[ed] to acknowledge language minoritized students' common racial positioning and the ways that such positioning suggest deficiency…normalizes these racial hierarchies and provides them legitimacy" (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p. 166).

Although HSE test-takers were effectively disenfranchised, *Juntos* and its students nonetheless engaged dialectically, internally between staff and students to respond curricular requirements, and externally to confront discriminatory language policies. In the end, the decision to restore Spanish-language testing was brought about through Juntos' commitment to Freirean pedagogy and the relational exchange between a variety of local and state entities, organizations, and individuals.

Praxis at *Juntos en Comunidad*

Juntos largely operated as a fully bilingual community center at First Baptist Church's parish house-turned-office space. Besides HSE classes, *Juntos* offered ESL classes, parenting support groups, financial coaching, homeownership counseling, and more. Each of these services was coordinated by organizations with complementary specialization. I represented Bridgeway 's workforce development division and oversaw the HSE program. Drawing from my own experiences as a Latin American immigrant and long-time county resident, I sought to create a program firmly grounded on Freirean pedagogy that would offer hope and solidarity for the Spanish-speaking immigrant community in the region. I was convinced then, as I am now, that "[h]ope is an ontological need" (Freire, 1992, p. 2) and that the practice of education is itself an act of hopefulness. Freire (1992) writes, "One of the tasks of the progressive educator, through a serious, correct political analysis, is to unveil opportunities for hope, no matter what the obstacles may be" (p. 6).

Juntos, however, existed in "the tensions, contradictions, fears, doubts, hopes, and 'deferred' dreams that are part and parcel of living a borrowed and colonized cultural existence" (Macedo, in Freire, 2000, p. 11) Funded exclusively through private foundation dollars, *Juntos* operated within the constraints not only of larger neoliberal ideologies directing the operation of adult education programs towards labor market considerations, but also of the foundation's beliefs about self-sufficiency.[7] While we affirmed the

[7] *Juntos en Comunidad* was funded beginning in 2014 by a private, family foundation with a 30-year charter sunsetting in 2022. The foundation engaged the Walter Rand Institute for Public Affairs at Rutgers University to validate its approach for economic self-sufficiency for low-income families. Grantee organizations operate collaboratively to engage the families through shared case-management

potential, individual economic benefit of the HSE, we were "unimpressed with dogmatic methodologies" (Gadotti, 2019, p. 40). Freirean pedagogy was for us, "more oneiric than epistemic," as Rubem Alves describes; our guiding principles were more like "prophetic maps" by which we could orient *Juntos's* HSE program as we sought alternatives to "the circularity of education's well-worn byways" (as cited in Gadotti, p. 46). Education-in-praxis, instead, engages and rearrange social relationships to develop and update visions for the future that liberate both the oppressed and the oppressor alike—and is therefore necessarily political (Freire, 1992, 2000b). At *Juntos*, we "never understood literacy education of adults as a thing in itself, as simply learning the mechanics of reading and writing, but, rather, as a political act" (Freire, 2000a, p. 117) that maintained access to educational opportunity and credentialing for otherwise marginalized Spanish-speakers.

Internal Dialectic Relationships

A significant component of *Juntos's* programming generally, and the HSE program specifically, was volunteerism oriented around reciprocity and solidarity, such as neighborhood park cleanups, a community garden, meal prep for the local code blue shelter, Back to School party, Christmas posada, and more. Beyond the volunteerism coordinated by *Juntos*, students maintained a larger network that facilitated spontaneous and organic social organizing. Students coordinated mutual aid, including school pickups and at-home childcare to accommodate work and study, additional study sessions, making and dropping off meals, and rides to classes and to testing centers. These types of volunteerism rebel against the oppressive present (the lack of safe housing, safe places to gather, adequate food, and opportunities for celebrating shared values) while bringing about the desired future through an action-oriented hope. *Juntos* "accept[ed] neither a 'well-behaved' present nor a predetermined future—root[ed] itself in the dynamic present and [became] revolutionary" (Freire, 2000b, p. 84). Gadotti (2019) elaborates the point, "The world that surrounds us is an unfinished world and this implies the denunciation of its unjust and oppressive reality and, therefore, of a transformative critique and announcement of another reality" (p. 39). We testify that this future transformed world "is not something given to be received by people, but rather something to be created by them" (Freire, 1992, p. 39).

Students also demonstrated hope and solidarity in their volunteerism as student-instructors who lead cohorts of their peers as they studied HSE materials. Freirean pedagogy denounces education as the mere transfer of knowledge and instead sees it as re-made in new instances with new people, iteratively and collaboratively (Freire, 1992, 2000b). Recognizing our authority as program staff, and acknowledging our students' agency, we engaged in an open dialectic: "The people must find themselves in the emerging leaders, and the latter must find themselves in the people" (Freire, 2000b, p. 163). Student-instructors chose from the workbook what they wanted to teach and were assigned to a corresponding cohort. Some student-instructors volunteered after completing the credentialing exam, others alternated attending a class as a student and leading a class as an instructor.

In between six-week blocks of class, we met over pizza to debrief the last block and plan for the next one. Alongside conversations about schedules and supplies, we also spoke often about critical consciousness, though we seldom used the phrase. We all agreed that teaching for the HSE exam included "the awakening of critical consciousness [that] leads

responsibilities. More specifically, the foundation's approach is a social service delivery method that requires families to identify two adult leaders for the family unit to develop behavioral adjustment plans to complete accomplish goals to stabilize the family and prevent crisis (and the need for emergency economic support through public funds).

the way to the expression of social discontents precisely because these discontents are real components of an oppressive situation" (Weffert as cited in Freire, 1992, p. 36). That is, beyond the content in the workbook, we agreed to also teach about the larger policy landscape that informed test design, test administration, and the value of the credential. By acknowledging the historic reality of the HSE credential, we were able to have critical conversations about the credential's utility. Freire (2000b) writes that educators and their students engage "not only in the task of unveiling that reality, and thereby coming to know it critically, but in the task of re-creating that knowledge. As they attain this knowledge of reality through common reflection and action, they discover themselves as its permanent re-creators" (p. 69). Critical conversations were recreated again and again outside our meetings, moving into our respective classrooms, into individual coaching sessions, and into the car rides, and even mealtimes students organized with each other.

External Dialectic Relationships

For Freire (1992), educational practices are necessarily political. Education cannot be neutral; he writes, "Actually, there is no such thing" (p. 67). He continues, "My concern is not to deny the political and directive nature of education…but to accept that this is its nature..." (p. 68). Our decision at *Juntos* to engage openly and actively in critical conversations about HSE policy affirmed our political nature. Our commitment to ensuring continued mother tongue-based instruction, and therefore Spanish-language testing, similarly affirmed it. However, we understood our political nature within dialectic relationship between students, program staff, and the various organizations involved in HSE credentialing. In most instances, this meant pursuing collaborative opportunities with NJ DOE test centers in the region and throughout the state who could facilitate Spanish-language testing. In fact, through a temporary agreement between NJDOE, Bridgeway, and Allies in Health, an allied health training school in a nearby county, was able to offer the HiSET exam at Bridgeway's office, while the local school district and CC finalized their transition.[8]

Freire's open dialectic, however, also extends to competing or conflicting relationships. He (1992) writes, "My ethical duty, as one of the subjects, one of the agents of a practice that can never be neutral—the educational—is to express my respect for differences in ideas and positions. I must respect even positions opposed to my own, positions that I combat earnestly and with passion" (1992, p. 69). In the case of oppressive relationships, the dialectic takes a different form: "This, then, is the great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed: to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well" (Freire, 2000b, p. 44). Freire explains that the hegemonic power of oppressors cannot fuel liberation, rather "the weakness of the oppressed will be sufficiently strong to free both" (p. 44). By framing their decision to discontinue Spanish-language testing as one of operational capacity, CC objectified and effectually disenfranchised Spanish-language test-takers. It would not be CC on its own, then, who would restore access (in Freire's language: "liberate") for Spanish-language test-takers. It would be necessary to engage in the open dialectic relationship that Freire describes respectfully but not objectively or in opposition. Freire warns, "one cannot conceive of objectivity without subjectivity. Neither can exist without the other, nor can they be dichotomized" (p. 50). He continues, "Only in this interdependence [between objectivity and subjectivity] is an authentic praxis possible,

[8] NJ DOE approved Bridgeway's office as a satellite site for Allies in Health's already certified test center operation located 65 miles to the north of *Juntos*'s offices. However, this arrangement was made only temporarily for two reasons: (1) CC had not yet taken over the local school district's test center operation, and (2) the HiSET test had not yet been computerized and paper-and-pencil test booklets could be transported by Allies in Health personnel to the satellite site.

without which it is impossible to resolve the oppressor-oppressed contradiction" (pp. 51-52).

As mentioned previously, CC cited a lack of qualified Spanish-speaking personnel as the major reason for their decision not to offer Spanish-language testing and further justified it by referring test-takers to alternate test centers in other parts of the state (more than 60 miles away). On these points, we agreed with Freire: "What would be intolerable would be simply pronouncing the democratic, antidiscriminatory discourse and maintaining a colonial practice" (Freire, 1992, p. 58). At *Juntos* we sought to reinsert subjectivity: the distance was a hardship. Whereas CC was only a fifteen-minute drive from *Juntos*, it would take an hour and a half to drive to the nearest Spanish-language test center. CC objectified personnel, reducing people to an operational component; we countered that more than a quarter of the county's population was of Latin-American origin and that nearly a fifth of households were bilingual (US Census, 2014a, 2014b).

Meanwhile *Juntos* students and other Spanish-language test-takers repeatedly expressed their desire for local Spanish-language testing in calls to CC's adult education department, to ETS, and to NJ DOE. In April 2015, after fifteen months of no local Spanish-language testing, CC finally hired a Spanish-speaking test proctor and nine *Juntos* students sat for the test. Immediately afterwards, all *Juntos's* students, not only those who had tested, wrote heartfelt thank you cards to CC's Adult Education Director in their native Spanish. The cards expressed what being able to take the test in Spanish meant to the students; they enumerated the ways in which the English-only decision had blocked them from accomplishing their goals. The thank you cards also worked to humanize students to a bureaucracy that would have otherwise continued to view them as operational objects for which they did not have the capacity to engage. After that initial test, CC began offering the HSE exam regularly alongside English language testing. From April to December 2015, 22 students from *Juntos's* HSE program sat for the exam; all eventually acquired their HSE credential.

Implications for Educators

In justifying their promotion of the Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards, its organizers asserted that the standards had been developed through "research- and evidence-based" methods (About the Common Core Standards, 2021, para 6). However, "It is sometimes the case that policy has nothing to do with research. Instead, policymakers, whether explicitly or not, are making an argument about what is valuable and what should occupy people's attention" (Bomer & Maloch, 2011, p. 38). In the case of Common Core, the subsequent changes to HSE testing, and reports and commentaries of these changes, the shallow standard of readiness for (near-term or eventual) workforce participation was once again asserted as education's main purpose. Freire offers a more complex, dialectal view of education: "In a certain moment it becomes true that one no longer studies in order to work nor does one work in order to study; one studies in the process of working. There comes about, thus, a true unity between practice and theory" (Freire, 2000a, p. 124). In this section, I provide a brief discussion of implications for educators based on the case presented in this paper. I include myself in this discussion because I am foremost an educator, even as I work as an organizer and nonprofit professional.

Firstly, I have argued in this paper, borrowing from Valverde (2011), that policies are ultimately implemented locally through dialectic relationships between actors. Educators seeking to transform the world must acknowledge the dialectic between the local, the

national, and even the global. It is not only possible but imperative that we simultaneously challenge the larger oppressive structures that form the basis of our present society and begin to address immediate circumstances through present, local action. Speaking on work to address structural changes, Freire (2000a) writes, "This should not, of course, be taken to mean that literacy activities cannot begin until after the radical transformation of the system inherited from the colonizers has taken place" (p. 120). Rather, praxis developed in the local environment can "open perspectives for an analysis of national (and regional) problems" (Freire as cited in Freire, 1992, p. 78). In the case of *Juntos*, in our critical conversations with our students and in our negotiations with other organizations and state agencies, we consistently engaged in multi-level analysis of policy and policy implementation even as we designed an operated our HSE test prep program.

Secondly, "that in order for us to create something, we need to start creating" (Horton & Freire, 1992, p. 56). That is to say, program design and implementation do not occur as discrete processes with extended preparation and planning periods. Rather, design and implementation occur concurrently, dialectically, and iteratively. Freire (2000a) recounts that instead of pre-designing a program, his team from the World Council of Churches and the Institute for Cultural Action waited to meet with the team at the Commission on Education in Guinea-Bissau. At *Juntos*, despite the HSE's focus on test preparation, as staff we waited until students joined the program to elaborate our design:

> From the beginning, we rejected the hypothesis of a purely mechanistic literacy program and considered the problem of teaching adults how to read in relation to the awakening of their consciousness… We wanted…a program with men and women as its Subjects rather than as patient recipients, a program which itself would be an act of creation, capable of releasing other creative acts. (p. 81)

At *Juntos*, without knowing what we would create over time, we started creating a program to engage the Spanish-speaking community in the county. This does not mean we were unprepared. With Freirean principles guiding our decision making, we had already assembled Spanish-language materials related to test topics. However, we remained flexible about who would teach and how they would teach. When we engaged student-instructors, we found "It would be through knowing and reknowing together that we would begin to learn and to teach together also" (Freire, 2000a, p. 139). That is, it was with, and not before, our students joined us that we understood what our program would become. Educators should prepare thoughtfully and critically, but also remember that "no one walks without learning to walk—without learning to walk by walking" (Freire, 1992, p. 145).

Finally, our engagement in dialectic relationships facilitates our ability to exist in ambiguity, to respond to changing circumstances, and to manage complex relationships with other players who may not share our goals. Educators should consider their existing and potential dialectic relationships, rather than focusing on oppositional relationships. The changes to HSE to align to College and Career Readiness required us to develop new teaching materials, but our dynamic relationships with students and student-instructors allowed the program to adapt flexibly to student needs. Although the test center recertification process created ambiguity about the language of test completion, ongoing conversations with NJ DOE, ETS, and Allies in Health, allowed us to install a temporary test center at Bridgeway's office. By engaging CC both before and after their certification, that is, both before and after decisions about test center operations were made, we were able to restore Spanish-language testing in the county. Subjectivity allows open dialectic relationships to form, whether we enter as educators, as students, as program managers,

or as policy makers. Objectification reduces these to mechanistic, immutable operators that prohibit transformation. Educators should be wary of oppositional relationships and seek opportunities for redefining the nature of relationships. This is an iterative process: "Education that supports reflection and action, then, is constantly remade in praxis. In order to be, it must become…[it] is revolutionary futurity. Hence it is prophetic (and, as such, hopeful)" (Freire, 2000a, p. 84).

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Intersections Between Education and Health Reforms in Brazil: When the "Target Population" is an Active Builder of the Public Policy

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This article is an argumentative literature review that discusses the history of the intersections between health and education in Brazil, exploring its connections to segregation practices and, also, to movements towards democratic ideals. We focus on the importance of population participation for the reforms in the health sector, allowing for the construction of the Brazilian Public Health System and health practices that aim to not collude with inequalities. We argue that an ethical posture in public policy consistent with the one proposed by Paulo Freire has incentivized population participation in a way that strengthens the commitment to democracy in public policy. Such ethical posture 1) considers social determinants of the phenomena that happens to an individual, and 2) requires constant effort to not fall for the tempting silencing of one's existence and full citizenship. We comprehend Freire's ethical posture as one that can help build intersectoral actions on public service, facilitating social participation to inform public policy and help improve citizen's well-being. We propose that intersectoral participation spaces can be compelling devices to hear the population's input as an alternative to separating people's experiences in participation Councils of each public sector area.

Introduction

Health disciplines have historically been used to justify social differences through "biologization" and individualization of the causes of socioeconomic inequalities (Foucault, 2002). In Brazil and other countries, psychology and psychiatry served to justify racism and school failure, instead of searching for methods to address the multicausality of school failure (Patto, 1990). Within this multicausality, social inequities are a central factor (Patto, 1990, Feinstein, 2003). Pondering social inequities into healthcare policy debates in Brazil contributed, during the democratization process, to opening the discussion on health system changes to the population, leading to structural reforms (Paim, 2006). We understand that the lines of thought and practice that successfully carried a democratic way of reaching critical reforms towards democracy in Brazil's health policies are connected to Paulo Freire's propositions of democratic participation. For Freire, social participation in education was crucial not only for educational engagement purposes, but because participation itself was a *sine qua non* element to overcome the Brazilian "democratic inexperience" (Freire, 2003) and its high illiteracy rates. Freire (2003) pointed out the social determinants of illiteracy and highlighted the democratic issues in the Brazilian legislation Republic, in which literacy was a criterion for being allowed to vote up until 1985.

For the authors from the Brazilian Collective Health movement and other people connected to the Health Reforms in the 1980s, population participation was an essential element to drive policy towards equity and to boost movements of change into having reform and democratic dimensions (Paim, 2006; Ensp Fiocruz, 2016). They also pointed out the social determinants in the health-disease process and considered there would be no democracy without health for all (Paim, 2006). Inspired by those movements, the Brazilian Constitution states that "Health is a right for all and a State's duty" (Brasil, 1988).

This argumentative literature review was composed to collaborate with the discussion of comparative education fields dedicated to understanding the role of education in social transformation (Butts, 1968 apud Wilson, 1994). The role of education in democracy has been an ongoing discussion since the end of the XVIII century up until now (Bueno, 1993; Glaeser et al., 2006). We consider that exploring the historical intersectoral interactions might add layers of understanding to what works or not in guaranteeing democratic processes towards equity in education, as discussed by the comparative education field (Wilson, 1994). This article focuses on presenting parts of the history of the Brazilian Health and Education sectors, giving special attention to the elements that were necessary to convey change towards equity.

Methodology

This argumentative literature review draws from previous research (Penalva, 2020) that discussed intersectoral actions amongst Mental Health and Education workers. This study was part of an iterative method of developing and informing actions to support the learning process of marginalized students at schools in a peripheric region of São Paulo, Brazil. The bibliographical review's purpose was to provide historical data to these intervention questions: 1) "how can workers from mental health disciplines collaborate with educators for an inclusive education?" 2) "and how can they achieve that without silencing social processes?".

These questions arose from the observance of issues in the communication and not-so-combined actions between health and education workers who assisted the same children and adolescents. The non-encounters between these professionals resulted in the loss of opportunities to create gathered strategies to diminish school failure (Penalva, 2020). We then decided to research how intersections between Education and Health could collaborate with inclusion and mitigate educational inequities (Penalva, 2020).

This literature review was non-structured and based on the search for authors that 1) critically explained the historical role psychology and psychiatry have in justifying school failure (Foucault, 2002) and/or 2) proposed changes that respected teachers and considered multi determination of school processes (Angelucci, 2014; Machado, 2016). The final bibliography comes from field specialist recommendations, research of core Brazilian national literature on the fields of School Psychology (Patto, 1990), Collective Health (Paim, 2006), Mental Health (Tenório, 2002), Education (Freire, 1987) and Special Education (Mendes, 2010; Bueno, 1993, Angelucci, 2014), and from non-structured literature review.

Psychology and psychiatry historical background as contributors for educational segregation and oppression

By the second half of the 19th century, the bourgeois model of society had not fulfilled its promise of equal opportunities for all. In this promise, the school was an important piece at play, considered as a solution to placate economic, social, and cultural differences (Patto, 1990; Machado, 1996; Machado, 2016; Patto, 2017). In 1857, Morel published a thesis on degeneration, creating a biological justification for lower social classes and specific phenotypes to be considered inferior (Foucault, 2002). Morel proposed a biological and hereditary basis for the "immoral" behavior, strengthening the connection between psychiatry and the judiciary systems – in which psychiatry would tell the judiciary if there was something "monstrous" about the suspect for them to be convicted. Through this perspective, *differences* created by historical exploitation were understood as having been caused by individual and biological features (Navarro, 2010; Foucault, 2002).

Later in the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, psychiatry, mainly represented by the name of Bourneville, and psychology with Binet and Simon, created the practice of classifying children. These classifications defined which types of children would be allowed to study in regular schools and which would be directed to asylums and special education schools (Bueno, 1993). Binet and Simon created an intelligence scale and test, defining intelligence in a specific way and circumscribing the concept to the Psychology field (Nicolas et al., 2013). This test did not measure solely biological features, and the ones who created it also remarked the social aspects of intelligence. Nonetheless, their remarks remained circumvented as a warning, and the intelligence test started to be used to determine who was to be considered *abnormal* or be in regular schools (Machado, 1996; Patto, 2017).

In Brazil, different medical and psychological services would define, throughout the 20th century, who was to be in special education and how special education would function. Nonetheless, the method to classify who was *abnormal* could commonly be the "scholar-empirical" method, in which the medical field used the school report to determine who would be their students or not. A 1904's Law determined that the "incapable of receiving education" would not be registered for formal education (Januzzi, 2012). It was a circular model that legitimized and fostered segregation.

Throughout history, we see these intersections between mental health disciplines and education as varying amongst two different lines of thought/practice, but that do not necessarily oppose each other. The first line of thought categorizes potential students to better insert them in education, whereas the second one categorizes to segregate. Both of them focus attention on the student, not on the educational system and its relation to society's structures. The first line of thought/practice goes back to Jean Marie Gaspar Itard, who published L'Éducation *d'un Homme Sauvage* (in English, "The Education of a Wild Man"). This text was considered the first publication about the education of a person with intellectual disability, in which he describes the experience of educating the "the wild man from Aveyron" – the "sauvage d'Aveyron" – (Januzzi, 2012). Itard opposed himself to what we consider here as the second line of thought/practice: the one of Esquirol and Pinel[1], who believed that "*idiocy*" was irreversible and that the "sauvage d'Aveyron" was untreatable. Categorization would serve to designate places where people could circulate – either regular schools, special education schools, or asylums. Along the first line of thought, Itard's line, there are names like Seguin or Montessori, who believed good prognostics could come with specific methods (Marfinati & Abrão, 2014). The German

[1] Esquirol and Pinel were the ones that argued that madness was not a crime, but treatable (Bueno, 1993). They "released" the ones considered mad from prisons… but enclosed them in psychiatric asylums.

school of psychiatry was more aligned to Pinel. Both these lines of thought and practice had an important influence in Brazil.

The "trend" begun by Morel on biological explanations for social differences set the origins of eugenics, proposed by Francis Galton as a "*science*" for the "improvement of the race" (Navarro, 2010). Such thinking only became officially considered a pseudoscience after the end of the Second World War (Verzolla, 2017). During Hitler's Reich, eugenic laws allowing for "sterilization of the degenerate" people and "merciful death" for the "mentally ill" were installed from the beginning (Navarro, 2010).

Not only in Germany, but in other countries, attention was turned to how to prevent "degeneration". Thus, childhood started to be more debated in the Psychiatric field. Such eugenic thinking heavily influenced certain groups of psychiatrists and psychologists in Brazil during the 1920s and the 1930s. Specifically, the Brazilian League of Mental Hygiene (Liga Brasileira de Higiene Mental -LBHM), funded in 1923. The LBHM started their work assisting the "mentally ill". Later, in the 1930s, they began to direct themselves towards practices and advocacy for "prevention" of "degeneration" in the name of "the nation's future" (Costa, 1980). For them, children from lower classes were naturally more prone to "delinquency" and needed special focus. Prevention actions would entail, for instance, institutionalization, "crusades" against alcoholism, propositions of sterilization of the "degenerate", and criticism on religion and philanthropy "that helped the physical, psychic degenerates and criminals to live and thrive"[2] (Kehl apud Costa, 1980). They would also recommend European immigration and miscegenation among races in Brazil to "whiten" the population (Costa, 1980) and "improve" the nation. This type of theory constitutes a strong trait in the history of racism in Brazil.

On the other side, there were also Mental Hygiene Services that focused on the social causes of what could be in the way of a child's access to education. But the phenomenon of mental health ruling about ideal actions in other fields of knowledge was still similar. These other Mental Hygiene Services were associated with the *New School* movement in Brazil and advocated for school access to reach democratic ideals. As health professionals, they provided recommendations for parents and teachers. Still, they focused their actions mainly on psychologically understanding the students to recommend educational actions for inclusion, rather than restructuring the educational system. These were the Service of School Mental Hygiene (Serviço de Higiene Mental Escolar), created in 1938 in São Paulo and directed by Durval Marcondes, and the Service of Ortofreny and Mental Hygiene (Serviço de Ortofrenia e Higiene Mental), created in 1934 and ran by Artur Ramos in Rio de Janeiro (Garcia, 2014).

Durval Marcondes's service offered child evaluation and parents' and teachers' orientation. There were also written reports in which Durval Marcondes addressed schools, by recommending the importance of meal providence to kids in school or guiding special education services, for example. The interventions with the family had a hygienic conduct code imposition that was external to the people cared for in the service (mothers should be caring, fathers should be an authority). Arthur Ramos in Rio de Janeiro had more focus on children that were considered aggressive and recommended changes in the children's immediate environment, such as telling the parents not to beat their children. Ramos talked about the subjective consequences of racism and recommended teachers to incite kids to talk in school for their wellness, based on the psychoanalytic idea of *talking cure* (Garcia, 2014, Freitas 2009).

[2] The translation was made by the authors of the present paper.

Arthur Ramos was invited to direct his service in Rio de Janeiro by Anísio Teixeira, the main name in Brazil regarding the *New School* movement and John Dewey's ideas. Anísio Teixeira had an important position in the 'Education for All' movement in Brazil and advocated that education was the basis and most important public sector area to improve for a true democracy with equal opportunities to be built (Teixeira, 1956).

Similar to Anísio Teixeira, Helena Antipoff, a Russian psychologist from Sorbonne, was an important name in Brazil *New School* thinking. She believed in school as a social transformation factor and that it was vital to know the "nature" of every student to plan pedagogical activity for each of them. As a professor in a College for Teachers in Minas Gerais, she advocated that all kids could go to school, in opposition to laws that *disobliged* to do so the ones who did not have such *possibility*. *Possibility* meaning what was considered intelligence aptitude, but also living close to a school. As a solution, she introduced the practice of different classrooms with homogeneous students considering scholar aptitudes, measured by psychological tools (Campos, 2009). This model was spread in Brazil during the 1950s and became a tool that collaborated with segregation. Artur Ramos's propositions also suffered a backlash. Trying to dislocate the idea that children from lower social classes were "delinquent-children", he coined the term "problem-children" (in Portuguese, *criança-problema*) to denunciate the violence, injustices, and oppression they suffered. The term "problem-child" became almost a diagnostic itself, a label in schools to talk about children that would cause trouble to the school and probably fail (Freitas, 2009), justifying the future school failure in a self-fulfilling prophecy functioning.

Segregation through special education classrooms continued to exist in Brazil until the 2000s. From the 1980s forward, groups of psychologists started to expose more intensely how multiple factors that acted upon the relation student-school were being ignored, and only students' features were considered when justifying school failure (Patto, 1990). Especially, they uncovered how most of the students that were classified as having a mild intellectual disability and were referred to special education were prevalently from low socioeconomic status, questioning the way this diagnostic is built (Machado, 1996; Patto, 1990; Machado, 2016; Patto, 2017), and showed how difficult it was for special education classrooms to have any connection to what the regular education classrooms were (Machado, 1996). Special education classes had a curriculum that strongly consisted of manual activities to "prepare" for alphabetization (Mendes, 2010), an alive heritage from Dr. Bourneville's methods (Muller, 2000), and served more to intensify social marginalization than to increase educational achievement options (Bueno, 1993; Mendes 2010).

In 1985 when Brazilian democracy was restituted, 25% of the Brazilian population was not able to read. Up until then, not reading meant not being allowed to vote (Westin, 2016). Educational marginalization was deeply connected to the lack of full citizenship. In 1964, when Paulo Freire was working with adult literacy, more than half of the population could not read or vote. The president at that time, João Goulart, wrote in March of 1964 to the Congress about voters not representing the whole nation fairly (Westin, 2016).

On April 1st of 1964, a military coup overthrew João Goulart from the presidency, and with United States' active support, a two-decade military dictatorship was installed in Brazil. The first military president after the coup, Castello Branco, was present at the

celebration at the end of Paulo Freire's 40 hours experience of Angicos[3] in June of 1963. So was João Goulart, who read the letters of the recently-literate graduates during the ceremony. One of them mentioned that the experience not only had taught them how to read the ABC but also how to change it. On that day, Castelo Branco commented that Paulo Freire was "teaching a pedagogy with no hierarchy" (SescTV, 2020). Paulo Freire had to leave the country during the dictatorship.

Paulo Freire, Democratic Education, and Collective Health: public policy de-alienation and participation

Access to education was literally connected to citizenship in Brazil. Freire's proposition – to consider the underlying social determinants that are present in the act of education and base the lesson in a dialogue with the students instead of "categorizing" them – constitutes an ethical position that deeply influenced other sectors, such as the Health sector. We will briefly explore some of these relations and later discuss the 1980s Brazilian Health movements, which led to the restructuring of mental health assistance and the creation of the only Public Health System of continental-size in the world.

Paulo Freire talked about political rights and the importance of what the workers created in the world while he was teaching them how to read words. In his perspective, these elements were connected in the most visceral sense. Paulo Freire's approach in Angicos consisted of an objective method, built from years of education experience based on dialogue and working with adults. Experiences, for instance, such as the Cultural Circles ("Círculos de Cultura") at the Movement of Popular Culture from Recife, in which the adult education was based on discussions the students chose to have and where themes like "Brazilian political evolution", "Right to vote and illiteracy", "Development" and "Profit outflows" commonly appeared (Freire, 2003).

From these Cultural Circles, he started to try similar experiences with alphabetization. The result was a careful procedure that considered what made sense to people who would have worked all day before class. Senseless words from an out-of-context and pre-done cart would not engage. Contextless words also did not collaborate to overcome neither illiteracy in Brazil nor the country's "democratic inexperience" (Freire, 2003). The method consisted briefly of[4]:

> 1) Listing, through informal meetings, of the most used words by the students. This would also build the relationship between educators and students;
>
> 2) Selection of the words based on phonemic richness, phonetic difficulties that match the language difficulties, and word usage level (to incite better engagement). The selected words became the "generator words";
>
> 3) Creation of problem-situations based on typical local experiences that provoke analysis of regional and national problems, to be discussed in the groups;
>
> 4) Building scripts to support coordinators to spur the debate;

[3] The experience of Angicos: Angicos was a city in the Brazilian northeast with a high rate of people that could not read. In 1963, Paulo Freire and a team of 19 university students, with the great support of the university and the government, went on an excursion to the city to offer a 40-hour course. Over 300 people participated. Up until today, we can access testimonies of the people who learned how to read in that experience.

[4] This is a very simplified scheme of the method. To understand it better, please read Freire (2003).

> 5) Making notes of the decomposition of the phonemic families that correspond to the generator words;
>
> 6)Practical execution: a real-world problem is pictured on the board and presented for the students. They discuss it, the word connected to it is visualized, and its semantic link to the discussion is exposed. Right after, the word is exposed in syllables, and the student recognizes the chunks. The same procedure is repeated, but now with phonemes, showing the phonemic family of each of the chunks, what leads to understanding the vowels (the example given by Freire (2003) is about the word brick – ti-jo-lo: phonemic families are shown for each of the syllables (ta-te-ti-to-tu, ja-je-ji-jo-ju, la-le,li,lo,lu) and, from there, new words can be built and discovered by the student. Freire gives the example of a man who wrote "tu já lê" from this exercise, which means "you already read").

There are two levels of participation to be looked at here in this example. One is a more micro level: student participation is needed for the objective of the teaching activity to be successful. Participation is not just used because it is "correct", it is the bulk of the work that does not fulfill its objective without participation. In addition, there is the second participation to be looked at: democracy would not be representative without more adult learning. Learning to read words and learning about their actions in the world. To change the social structure that placed Paulo Freire in the social position he occupied in relation to the adults he taught, the dialogue was vital, *their* participation was needed. Society would *be* more if *they were* more, as Freire points out in the Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1987). But to guarantee true dialogue with them, Freire reports that constant based-on-dialogue-supervision of the coordinators was needed, as it is very tempting to enter an anti-dialogue posture (Freire, 2003). It can be easy to silence *the other* and move on with the "teaching-task". But if this happens, the aim of the task is lost along the way.

We understand this posture is also present in the construction of the Collective Health field in Brazil, which ultimately collaborated with the Sanitary Reform that helped build the Brazilian Public Health System (Sistema Único de Saúde – SUS). Collective health is an interdisciplinary field of knowledge (Paim & Almeira Filho, 1998) that began in Brazil in the 1970s. It makes an inflection in the Public Health field by denying the monopoly of knowledge in Health to the biological disciplines (Birman, 2005). The variation that comes with changing the name "Public" for "Collective" removes the hegemonic power of the State to regulate life, giving importance to social life (Birman, 2005).

Historically, collective health is inspired by two fields coming from North America: preventive medicine and community medicine. The principles of preventive medicine, which had been more present in economically central countries, came to Latin America through the Seminars of Viña del Mar (1955) and Tehuacan (1956) with the support of U.S. foundations and the Pan American Health Organization (Paim, 2006). In their arrival to Latin America, community medicine and preventive medicine were merged, resulting in the opening of departments of *medicina preventiva* (preventive medicine) in the colleges of Health, mainly during the 1960s.

In the United States, community medicine was a movement dedicated to caring for the impoverished population who were not covered by private medicine (Rivera, 1989). Preventive medicine was the one that brought the notion of integrality and criticized the fragmentation of medical specialties. Its theoretical basis is the natural history of diseases of Leavell and Clark (1965 apud Arouca, 1975), which initiated a discussion on the

multicausality of diseases and different levels of health care for different moments of illness, in an attempt to rearrange medical care so that the State would be responsible for primary care. In this proposition, prevention and health promotion are considered primary care; treatment and prevention are secondary care, and intensive treatment is tertiary care. This movement propositioned to inculcate values of preventive and social order in the medical body through medical schools, understanding the doctor as an actor of change in society (Paim, 2006). At the same time, this arrangement forged the idea of planning in medical schools with optimization of resources and reduction of costs. In Brazil, it was from the courses of *medicina preventiva* (preventive medicine) that the field of collective health was created in the 1970s in an effort to de-alienate health, broadening its definition (Paim, 2006).

In 1978, the Alma-Ata Conference reaffirmed that health should no longer be seen as the absence of disease but as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being". Additionally, it states that inequality in health between developed and developing countries is unacceptable and reiterates the commitment of Health for All in the 2000s (from 1977). Finally, it emphasized Primary Care as an essential health strategy and the importance of action in other sectors.

In alignment with the world trend, the conceptual mark of collective health is considered to be the "overcoming of the dominant biologism, of the naturalization of social life, of its submission to the clinic and its dependence on the hegemonic medical model" (Paim & Almeira Filho, 1998, p. 310). Collective health widens the health field by incorporating new disciplines and considering the social determinants in the health-disease process (Paim, 2006). Due to the importance that social determinants have in collective health, and considering that, by the 1980's, inequalities were being broadened by a Brazilian Health System that only provided health care to formal workers, the discussion about health improvement was soon connected to the debate about democracy.

Influential authors that contributed to the construction of Collective Health as a field of knowledge would cite Paulo Freire or other education authors, like Demerval Saviani, an author that proposes an emancipatory education to overcome an education that maintains inequalities. One of these collective health "builders", Joaquim Alves Cardoso de Mello (Zancan & Matilda, 2015), for instance, argued in 1986 that health education should not be focused on teaching the population not to get ill, as this position would entail that it is their individual responsibility for getting sick. Such a position was not coherent in a country where an enormous part of the population did not have access to a sewage system, while 10% of Brazilians possessed 50% of the country's wealth (Mello & Valla, 1986). So, for Cardoso de Melo, Health education would better fit Brazil's reality if it focused on issues such as agrochemicals, pollution, and human rights claims. This type of discussion was not the newest in the Health sector. However, now, it was boosted with different understandings of what was needed to build democratic practices and had the names of Freire and Saviani consistently being cited. In health professionals' formation, Paulo Freire became an author with considerable importance (Silva et al., 2020).

Sanitary reform and mental health reform: participation that drives change

We have briefly gone through some Brazilian propositions and movements in the education and health sectors during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. However, a more thorough depiction of how Brazil was and how reforms happened calls for a succinct description of the military government's performance in these areas.

In education, the government had forsaken its responsibility towards Special Education. The increase in the number of dropouts and school failure was being linked to theories of mild intellectual disability and reinforced the justifications for creating special classrooms (Mendes, 2010). The discourse "for all" was not enough to guarantee that everyone would have an education. The major portion of special education classrooms and schools were administrated by private institutions or family associations, traversed by a strong speech of philanthropy instead of the one about rights and citizenship (Mendes, 2010).

In public health, the sanitary crisis contrasted with the alleged "economic miracle" declared by the military government. Infant mortality rates were high, access to health care was difficult, labor accidents had increased, endemics were strengthening, and a meningitis epidemic had been set in place (Paim, 2007).

In mental health, psychiatric asylums were a revenue business for private institutions, in which the government paid such institutions to care for the patients. If the patients never got cured (stayed for as many days as possible), if their number was higher, and if these institutions could decrease the costs with technology and professionals, this meant more guarantee of profit. This scenario generated atrocious dehumanization situations, including torture, silencing, and abandonment (Tenório, 2002). Until the end of the 1970s, there was consistent criticism of the psychiatric asylum models, especially after the deflagration of frauds in the partnerships with private institutions.

What became known as the Brazilian Mental Health Reform also heated up with the struggle for a democratic society: until 1978, the movements against the working mental health care in Brazil were mostly composed of workers that criticized privatization, overcrowding, and mistreatment, but did not argue so strongly against the psychiatric asylum model itself (Tenório, 2002). In 1979, there was an event in Brazil with Basaglia and Castel[5], which impacted workers' movements. They began to intensely criticize the asylum model itself and gathered with family members and users[6] of the mental health system. Combined, these three categories formed the Anti-asylum Struggle Movement (Movimento da Luta Antimanicomial – MLA) by the very end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s (Nader, 2017). "Social inclusion" began to appear in the worker's vocabulary (Dunker & Kyrillos, 2015). Their main claim became the citizenship of the insane, of the ones who could not speak for themselves before. Or better, could speak but would not be heard.

As a result, community-based services started to pop up with experiences in which the services and the mental health care were constructed with its users. The proposition of the reform was that the ones who had intensive psychic suffering would not have their whole lives determined by one specific health condition and would be assisted close to their community (Tenório, 2002; Nader, 2017). The mental health reform restructured mental health assistance and participation in two levels: 1) at the relationship between mental health workers and users, and 2) at the whole mental health assistance's organizational model.

Regarding the first level, the place that madness occupied in the relationship between therapist and patient was dislocated. Treatments started to be reorganized to open space for the humanity of mental health service users. The vertical separation between workers and users was blurred. Activities were conducted in ways that the mental health service

[5] Important international references in remodeling mental health assistance.
[6] There was a dislocation in naming: from *patients* to *health service users*, because they were more than "ill people" being treated, but were citizens who helped build the health system.

workers and users could exchange knowledge amongst themselves. This included soccer or chess matches, movie discussions, book writing, museum excursions, freedom of circulation in general, therapeutic and non-therapeutic groups, town halls to review the service's organization and deliberate on problems and solutions. This new paradigm on the original psychiatric institution was inspired by the experiences of Tosquelles and Jean Oury in La Borde (Goldberg, 1996).

The second level led to radical changes in the organization of mental health assistance in Brazil. As a result of the strong advocacy of the Anti-asylum struggle movement, a Brazilian Law known as the Anti-asylum struggle Law was approved in 2001. It instituted that mental health assistance had to be community-based. This "arm" of change in assistance and participation was inspired by the Italian reform, represented mainly by Franco Basaglia (Goldberg, 1996).

Soon, new laws contributed to organizing this change in assistance, from which the Psychosocial Community Centers (Centro de Atenção Psicossocial – CAPS) were instated as the secondary attention for mental health. The primary attention happens in the Basic Health Units[7], and the tertiary attention is based on general hospitals – rather than in the former psychiatric-only asylums. Different parts of the health network also became responsible for supporting mental health users who had long lived in psychiatric asylums, aiding them with their citizenship needs, such as residency, work, leisure, and their rights as citizens. Each CAPS counts with a multi-professional team that works together with each mental health service user in their Singular Therapeutic Project, built in composition. No more the only saying in the treatment would come from the doctor or the therapists.

Psychosocial attention in the Brazilian Mental Health Assistance context does not mean adapting a *psyche* to *the social* (Paiva, 2013). It is rather the opposite: considering the multiple determination between psychological and social determinations in the health-illness process (Capistrano et al., 2021) and exploring actions in *the social* to better nurture the encounter between the subject(-not-anymore-object) and the social. This perspective goes in line with the ethical posture that we saw in Freire and in these mobilizations we have approached so far. It is connected to the type of participation that Freire proposed, and it furthers the effort of distancing Mental Health practices from the Mental Hygiene Services presented at the beginning of this text. Participation is not to improve rapport or to "help" the marginalized. The participation itself is a fundamental element for the whole society to *be more*. In the case of the Mental Health Reform, a person being able to be a citizen meant every person not running the risk of having their citizenship denied.

As the Mental Health Reform, the Sanitary Reform gained boost and dislocations when the population joined the discussion. Since the 1970s, two associations (Cebes and Abrasco) composed mainly of Health workers and academics were at full mobilization to construct a critical position about the public health system and formulate new models of a Health System. Cebes (Brazilian Center for Health Studies) was committed to spreading

[7] Primary Health Unit in the Brazilian Health System is the most frequent type of health service in Brazilian territory. They are divided along the neighborhoods so that each Unit is responsible for the primary health care of approximately 12,000 people. Primary Health Units are more "generalist" units, in which all residents in that specific territory location are seen by primary health care teams and can participate in prevention and health promotion actions. If there is a need for a more intensified and prolongued treatment, residents are referred to specific secondary units, such as the CAPSs in the case of mental health. The tertiary attention in the health system is usually used when an existing health condition requires intensified treatment, with few actions dedicated to prevention.

the Collective Health discussions that emerged from academia to society. They fueled debates, meetings, books and magazines on the democratization of health (Paim, 2007).

Cebes' magazine was called *Saúde em Debate* (Health in debate), and their second issue, in 1977, contained an editorial arguing that *health is a citizen's right*, mentioning the need for a "sanitary reform". This is when the proposition of the Sanitary Reform was born (Paim, 2007); a proposition that had its first actions aligned with its positions: not keeping the good ideas in academia, but spreading it.

By the beginning of the 1980s, Brazil started a democratic transition that culminated in a civil presidency by indirect elections in 1985. Actors identified with democratic policy started to gain terrain in the government. Amongst them, Sérgio Arouca became the president of Fiocruz[8]. Debates and discussions on a more equitable health system started to gain place in legislature debates. The financing of the public health system and how welfare would be administered were at the center of the debate (Paim, 2007). The proposition of transferring the working Health System of the time – which only assisted the employed population, using their wages contributions – to the Ministry of Health was denied. The justification from the central government was: "this decision belongs to the workers". Sérgio Arouca, in response, decided that the 8th Health Conference would call workers from the whole country to participate (Arouca, 2002 apud Paim, 2007).

Workers were called in all possible types of communication (Ensp Fiocruz, 2016). Registration for participation in the 8th Health Conference was open to every civil society association. The communication team from the 8th Conference even announced the call for registration on a famous soap opera of the moment: the priest character of the soap opera dedicated some minutes in the show to publicize it (Ensp Fiocruz, 2016). The result was 4,000 people, 1,000 elected delegates, and 98 working groups. The delegates came from all regions and social classes, and the debates could last several hours. The three main subjects were "health as an inherent right of the citizen, reorganization of the national health system, health system finances" (Paim, 2007, p. 92). The resulting reports from these working groups composed the 8th Conference Final Report, which guided the discussions and the writing of the new Brazilian democratic Constitution, approved in 1988 (Paim, 2007). The Brazilian Constitution states that health is a citizen's right and, consequently, a State's duty.

The result was the Brazilian SUS (Unified Health System – Sistema Único de Saúde), a system with *universality*, *equity*, and *integrality* as its three main principles. Today, anyone who seeks health assistance in Brazil has the right to it. No bill is received for any procedure by the users. Ambulances, HIV treatment, sanitary vigilance, alternative practices, vaccination, health promotion actions, primary care, and high complexity procedures are free for the population.

Discussion: today's open challenges

After the Mental Health Reform[9] accomplishments in the 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s, public mental health policies in Brazil are mainly guided towards social inclusion and consider the multi-determination of mental health suffering. Mental health services for infants and adolescents dedicate an essential part of services to intersectoral actions for better inclusion and well-being (Taño & Matsukura, 2019; Penalva, 2020). In Public Health, Brazil has considerably decreased infant mortality (Leal et al., 2018) and mortality from

[8] Fiocruz is the main public health research institution in Brazil.
[9] That is still ongoing and struggling with backlashes in the last few years (Vincentin & Blikstein, 2019)

infectious and parasitic illnesses since the beginning of SUS (Paes & Silva, 1999). Even though SUS has had many conquers and is an overcome itself, thanks to the popular participation and a posture of dialogue with the population in similar ways to what Freire proposed, many improvements and revisions must be pursued. We list some of them below.

First, Mental health workers that had a formation marked by the Mental Health Reform usually dedicate discussions and practices to not marginalize service users nor silence their existences with categorizations or diagnostics. Nonetheless, the urge for practices that are more connected to a democratic relationship with mental health users doesn't always reflect in the relationship with workers from other sectors. Teachers in the public education sector can often refer students to the CAPSs, asking for categorizations or justifications of why a student does not learn and, sometimes, there can be some dispute over the right way to proceed (Penalva, 2020).

Regarding the steps Freire used in the alphabetization of adults, Freire argued for the constant supervision of one to guarantee this one would not become the oppressor or silence the other. Nonetheless, this supervision has to be done with dialogue. The education sector itself in Brazil did not go through the same process of Reforms with the population participation as the health sector did. Public health workers have justification for having some space on their agendas for social participation or multi-professional team meetings, while education workers do not have the same possibility (Penalva, 2020). Giving support to think of better inclusion strategies inside the classroom, and not just away, in the clinic, may bring interesting outcomes for children, as Portugal's experience indicates (Rodrigues, 2001).

There is a need to develop better intersectoral actions amongst the different sectors to guarantee qualified public sector actions towards equity. The ethical position that dialogues with the alterity and searches to understand multicausality in how things are has to be present in the relation with other workers as well.

Second. Social participation is a SUS's working engine. Every Health Unit has its Management Council, composed of 50% by their users, 25% by workers, and 25% by the Unit's directory. The Unit's Councils are gathered in Regional and Municipal Councils. Regional and Municipal Councils are gathered and represented in the State Council and, at last, a National Health Council. The National Health Council is still active and has helped the system to resist different attacks[10]. Other sectors have similar functioning, inspired by SUS (Oliveira & Kahhale, 2020).

Nonetheless, the institutionalization of these Councils has voided some of the transformation potential in these places, with tasks occasionally becoming bureaucratic. Also, experts (Gershman, 1995; Paim, 2007) point out that the health reform was partial because some propositions were lost along the way, as has popular participation for the major decisions. There are still inequities to be corrected, and the State is constantly proposing changes to SUS that favor private corporation's interests. Health users that have the time to participate in Councils usually have specific profiles, considering that most of the population is constantly juggling between different jobs and family responsibilities

[10] For instance, in 2017, The Health Councils prevented São Paulo's mayor, Dória, from closing the pharmacies in the Primary Health Units to offer medication assistance through a partnership with private pharmacies. The main problem in this proposition, amongst many, was that there are regions that lack private pharmacies and rely mainly in the Primary Health Units' pharmacies. Private entities do not need to consider the population need and equal distribution of resources as the Public Sector does.

(Penalva, 2020). In a country that is still deeply unequal (Souza & Medeiros, 2017), Council participation is not enough anymore. This does not mean that Councils do not fulfill an important role. Solutions in a dynamic context will not be constant. There is the need for constant reviewing to not fall into other ways of silencing change.

Reinvent participation is urgent so that the Public Service – including Education - can be indeed for the public. It only makes sense for the Education sector to create and invent new types of participation if other parts of the Public System, such as Health, guarantee possibilities of legitimate participation. On the other hand, creating institutionalized political participation spaces without constructing experiences of emancipatory political participation in education can collaborate with the maintenance of what makes an unequal system (Saviani, 2012).

Besides the factors we previously highlighted from Freirean ethical posture for participation-building[11], Freirean experiences and the history we brought so far can yet point to one more direction. For Freire, education is done through the mediation of the world, through solving problems we live (Shaull, 2006), not through static boxes of knowledge. Boxes of knowledge (math, science, Portuguese, etc.) help solve the world's problems, not the opposite. Nonetheless, our sectors separated as they are (Health, Education, etc.) are abstract separations of the world – during the first Brazilian cases told in this bibliographic review, for example, education and health matters were in the same Ministry –.

Today, the Participation Councils of each social sector have a crucial role in protecting citizen's rights. Nonetheless, intersectoral political participation spaces could be one alternative to reach the population that is now struggling with increasing unemployment, poverty, and hunger rates (Neves et al., 2021). As an alternative to only separating the citizens' political participation in each Council, we propose that intersectoral participation spaces can be interesting devices to hear the population's most urgent inputs. In this sense, it would be interesting to further investigate the strengthening of intersectoral action and participatory intersectoral actions to build the public sector as a result of citizen act and, hopefully, drive change towards diminishing inequalities in Education and other social sectors.

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[11] 1)Considers social determinants of the phenomena that happens to an individual, and 2) requires constant effort to not fall for the tempting silencing of one's existence and full citizenship in order to build political participation, hence, build the public service *with* the population.

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Innovation as a Construct of Social Justice and Decolonization Within Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning

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Synonyms for innovation: "change, alteration, revolution, upheaval, transformation, metamorphosis, reorganization, restructuring, rearrangement, recasting, remodeling"
- Dictionary.com

"Black people have always developed alternative ways of existing outside of [their] oppressions" (Womack, 2013, p. 37). Prior to the social protests of the 1950s and 1960s, and prior to Brown v. Board of Education (1954), Black people resisted and utilized their imaginations and intelligence to innovate ideologies, legal and social processes, and movements to cause upheaval to the societal status quo that denied them education, economic, and political opportunities. "Improvisation, adaptability, and imagination [were] the core components of this resistance" (Womack, 2013, p. 37) and enabled them to use innovation as a socially just construct to decolonize oppressive systems and to create forward momentum for their educational advancement. For centuries, the use and intention of innovation has been used as a construct to alter the present realities, within a particular time and space, and is usually connected with the technological, scientific, and engineering processes intended to modify or improve products and services and is rarely associated with Black people's efforts to change, alter and disrupt the systemic and societal processes that denied them educational opportunities were also innovative - in thought, in the form of a long-term vision, and in action - with the intended result of furthering the educational aspirations of themselves and for themselves. Moreover, I argue for the importance of (re)positioning their efforts to change, alter, and initiate the upheaval of systems that were established to oppress them as ones that are innovative and that such efforts be regarded as those that are aligned with social justice decolonization. Finally, this article will describe a contemporary context where innovative teaching and learning practices occur. It will also analyze how such practices serve as a link to social justice and a visible effort to decolonize learning spaces while creating forward academic momentum for students of color.

Keywords: Culturally responsive pedagogy, social justice, innovation in education, decolonization

"A Jim Crow society breeds and needs a Jim Crow historiography. The dominant historiography in the United States either omits the Negro people or presents them as a people without a past, as a people who have been docile, passive, parasitic, imitative. This picture is a lie. The Negro people, the most oppressed of all people in the United States, have been militant, active, creative, productive."
- Herbert Aptheker

Introduction

Before the end of the Civil War, educating black slaves in the U.S. was against the law. In the northern United States, efforts emerged in free black communities to organize schools, yet few Black students received any education. The 19th Century, however, was an important milestone for the education of Black people in the U.S., as many public schools were established to allow for the education of Black students (The History Engine, n.d.). During this period Black people who were newly freed from slavery, and those who were free during slavery faced the collective reality of disenfranchisement, racial discrimination in public places, and economic threats to their freedom and land. To counter this reality, Black people "established their own institutions, formed activist networks, and participated in reform movements from temperance and abolition to education" (Baumgartner, 2019, p. 5). Further, politically organized and well-educated Black people made the quest for education a central framework for their push for racial equality after the Civil War. (Mitchell, 2008, p. 190).

The 20th Century and early part of the 21st Century saw the emergence of court cases designed to make education equitable for children who were minoritized by socio-economic factors or oppressive education policies. The following cases - *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), *Lau v. Nichol*s (1974), *Plyler v. Doe* (1982), and *Williams v. California* (2001) - have been argued for or against from a basis of whether the federal or state laws have an obligation to uphold the decisions made in court. Nevertheless, "over the past sixty years, the courts have established that education is a critically important right in U.S. society" (Oakes, 2018, p. 121). However, despite education being upheld as an important right presumably for all in our society, it does not appear to be granted in an equitable fashion to all.

Prior to the 20th Century, a series of court cases, social movements, and organized political and social appeals were launched by Black people that voiced concern and emphatically objected to the oppressive methods used by those driven by racism to quell and often prohibit the education and societal advancement of Black people.

Today, public schooling has been placed in a position of reacting to education policies decided upon or originated within the courts and state legislated laws. "This reactive role has strengthened the conservative nature […] by interpreting policy coming into the schools through established dominant traditions and discourses" (Gitlin, 2009). As a result of the influence of the dominant culture in the shaping of public schooling, minoritized students from lower economic means are often stripped of power and lack social justice leaders with the power to challenge and transform the effects of the dominant culture.

To be sure, public schooling, its students, and society as a whole can no longer wait for the widely used social justice instruments of action, activism, and written scholarly pronouncements to succeed at overtaking dominant discourses within public schooling spaces. Rather, what is needed is a re-imagined view of social justice that not only generates a new, innovative way of producing knowledge within our students but also disavows all remnants of the dominant, conservative discourse that has crippled the

spirits of so many and denied opportunities for advancement to students who have become further minoritized by the socio-economic and education policies within the United States. The timeline I chose to center this argument is pre-Brown vs. Board of Education, as I maintain that the efforts made by Black people to advance their cause for education in the pre-Brown vs. Board of Education era helped to generate forward progress toward the systematic dismantling and decolonization of overt segregationist efforts in education spaces.

Social Justice and Social Justice Design

Social justice is "the capacity to organize with others to accomplish ends that benefit the whole community" (Novak, 2009). Building off this, social justice education embodies the acknowledgment of difference and empowers those within a learning space to work towards the reversal of oppressive elements that result in [the] marginalization of students (Applebaum, 2009). To accomplish the reversal of oppressive elements with the education system, a set of tools, mobilized enactments, and actions were developed and implemented by Black people to educate and empower, and that enabled them to not only acknowledge the oppressive systems that marginalized them but to also work to eliminate such obstacles to their education. Before the Civil War, "African American girls and women in the North from working and middle-class families engaged in conscious, vigorous, and sustained acts of defiance and protest in their quest for an education" (Baumgartner, 2019, p. 2).

Within the public school system, there existed an absence of organization to accomplish ends that benefited all. Rather, what was evidenced were a series of policies that were created to impose rules and laws with which to force academic achievement. Yet, those for whom the policies were intended to benefit were not thriving academically nor economically, and were, in some instances, relegated to far worse positions than before the enactment of the policies. For example, Ron Unz, a man of economic privilege, "founded, funded, and led the anti-bilingual organization English for the Children" (Oakes, 2018). As a result of his successful campaigning and influence with the California State Government, California passed a law requiring instruction to be conducted only in English, which cast many bilingual students into low academic levels in schools. If one were in support of Unz's stance, one would argue that he acted in defense of maintaining America's English-speaking, "love it or leave it" values. Would his stance not attempt to ensure that the entire American community benefits? To counter the exclusionary approaches made by individuals like Unz, I maintain that the linguistically diverse students who were harmed by Unz's racist ideologies also needed to utilize a set of design tools that were centered in resistance, socially just innovative educative practices, like the groups of Black people prior to *Brown vs. Board of Education*, in order to innovate a new path that moved forward their education agendas and aspirations.

Innovation As a Social Justice Design Consideration

Human-Computer Interaction scholars Dombrowski, Hartman, and Fox (2016) suggest that "social justice might best be understood not as a single concept, but as a constantly evolving mechanism for thinking through how power, privilege, and access affect social structure" (p. 2). Within this article, I focus upon social justice design that centers on specific dimensions of justice that were created by political philosopher, Hennie Lötter. He developed six social justice design strategies as a way for human beings to design systems in more socially just ways: transformation, recognition, reciprocity, enablement, distribution, and accountability (2011). I am centering the points within this article using

Lötter's social justice design strategies to explore how the educational advancement efforts of Black people, serve as considerations for innovation as a social justice design construct in practice, for the purposes of disrupting societal systems that have traditionally oppressed, silenced, and marginalized Black people. Further, I pose two questions that serve as guides in this exploration:

1. How might innovation and social justice design strategies make an impact on societal systems during *pre-Brown vs Board of Education* times that serve to advance equitable education opportunities for the marginalized?
2. How might innovation and social justice design strategies during *pre-Brown vs Board of Education* times make an impact on societal systems that did *not* provide equitable education opportunities for the marginalized?

The 19th Century efforts of Black people to advance their educational opportunities are not typically heralded as innovative, for, traditionally, the word, innovative, is usually reserved for the technological and scientific spaces. However, I maintain that during the time where the majority of Black people were realizing freedom for the first time, and there was, in the antebellum period, only an estimated population of 319,594 free Black people, as compared to a total slave population of 2,009,048 (Statista, n.d.) the majority of Black people were subjugated to non-citizen status in all of society. However, the efforts made by Black people to assemble as a collective, to develop documents that were presented to legislative bodies to appeal for education rights, and to publish treatises of protest and resistance in local papers that denounced inequitable education policies, were in fact efforts centered in innovation. Such efforts reveal evidence of intentions to disrupt the status quo found in a society that disenfranchised Black people and treated them as non-citizens. Based upon what many of us have been taught or conditioned to be regard certain discoveries, inventions, or technologies as innovative and the historical implications framed in dominant culture that tend to fail to acknowledge Black imagination and genius in mainstream society, I posit that my argument to regard Black people's 19th Century actions to advance their education opportunities as innovative may require some introspection beyond the case made in this article. For each of the design strategies presented within this article, I will make correlations with examples of 19th Century work and efforts by Black people, as well as contemporary educators, in order to make a case for the work that is representative of social justice design constructs as consideration for innovation.

Innovative Design to Achieve Transformation

In 1794, Prince Hall founded one of the oldest Black organizations designed for social change and transformation - the Prince Hall Freemasons, whose initial mission was to "transform black men into symbolic artisans, and thus citizens of the masculine body politic, which reveals a dialectic of African-American male "social self-creation through labour" (Wallace, 2002, p. 407).

In 1787, Prince Hall, the founder of the Negro Masonic Order, an organization created to advance the social order of Black people, drafted a petition to the Boston state legislature to appeal for equal educational rights of Black students (Aptheker, 1951). Hall's individual action is one that represents social justice design for transformation, which I maintain may be one of the first social justice design strategies designed and evidenced to support the educational advancement for Black people in the United States. Though individual action rarely brings about the transformation of inequalities on a large societal scale, the consideration is for such action to be taken up on a more collective scale, in order to bring

about innovation to disrupt the existing social order, thereby resulting in the possibility of transformation writ large if more individuals take up the strategy.

Innovative Design to Achieve Recognition

The next dimension of the social justice strategy involves that of recognition. "Recognition focuses on identifying unjust practices, policies, laws, and other phenomena, as well as identifying those people who are most negatively impacted by such phenomenon" (Dombrowski, 2016, p. 6). In 1818, the Pennsylvania Augustine Society, an organization founded by free Black people to serve the social, educational, and welfare of the Black community (Aptheker, 1951), created a constitution of the society with a preamble that addressed the need for equitable resources and education opportunities so that those within the Black community could learn a trade and make a fair wage. The actions demonstrated by the Pennsylvania Society clearly represent a strategy evoked to address the need to shed light on unjust practices thrust upon the Black community in Philadelphia. The appeal within the preamble was written,

> We the Subscribers, persons of colour of the city of Philadelphia, [ ] sensibly impressed with the high importance of education, towards the improvement of our species, in an individual as well as social capacity [are] convinced that it is an unquestionable duty which we owe to ourselves, to our posterity, and to our God, who has endowed us with intellectual powers, [ ] to procure for our children a more extensive and useful education than we have heretofore had in our power to effect. (Aptheker, 1951, p. 73)

Within the text, however, no evidence exists that this appeal was transformed into a legal document or petition filed within the court, therefore I surmise that the preamble served as a motivation for those who read it or had it read to them, in order to instill within them a sense of innovative ways to acquire education, to aspire to an education that would supplant them a place as citizens within the United States, and to remain steadfast in achieving forward momentum in social advancement and positioning in society.

Innovative Design to Achieve Reciprocity

"Reciprocity describes the relationship between those who are owed justice and what needs to occur for the obligations of justice to be fulfilled" (Dombrowski, 2016, p. 7). In 1827, the *Freedom's Journal*, the first Black-owned newspaper founded by Samuel Cornish and John Russworm, emerged in New York City as a counter-narrative to discrimination and slavery. In its first publication, the emphasis on education and training was highlighted: "education being an object of the highest importance to the welfare of society, we shall endeavor to present just and adequate views of it, and urge upon our brethren the necessity and expediency of training their children, while young, to habits of industry, and thus forming them for becoming useful members of society" (Aptheker, 1951, p. 83). During the 19th Century, American education in public schools operated as "an Americanizing agent, an institution whose central purpose was to fuse children from all religions and ethnicities into a single American citizenry" (Baumgartner, 2019, p. 2). Also, during this same period, Black people endeavored to use education as a way to "lift up their race" (Baumgartner, 2019; Butchart, 2013) out of poverty and second-class citizenry, and sought to use education as a way to share with dominant culture society that Black people who were educated were deserving of being treated as productive citizens trained to contribute their skills to various industries. Butchart (2013) cites, ''The very feeling of inferiority which slavery forced upon them fathered an intense desire to rise out of their condition by means of education'' (p. 2). Cornish and Russworm, endeavoring to appeal to the power structure on the need for Black people to be educated and to be granted

educational access to train their children to learn the various ways of industry and how to be productive citizens, in order to contribute to the well-being of society overall. This appeal to the dominant culture to grant access to educational opportunities, or to reciprocate to them what is granted to all White citizens, is an innovative design effort to achieve reciprocity.

Innovative Design to Achieve Enablement

"Oppression occurs when people are unduly constrained by "institutions, laws, policies, and human behavior or unable to engage in their own development" (Dombrowski, 2016, p. 8). The purpose of this strategy, therefore, is to serve as a counteraction to oppression and provide the means, tactics, and strategies by which people can thrive within the society through alignment with institutions, laws, policies, and human behavior deemed acceptable.

Innovative Design to Achieve Distribution

The design strategy of distribution involves how society assets and deficits are distributed evenly. In 1849, a group of free Black people wrote a petition to the State Convention of Ohio (Aptheker, 1951, p. 256A), thereby demanding,

> The vicious character of uneducated communities is seen the world over, and to prove it, we need not cite you to all past history. Therefore, even if the colored educational privileges to them all; but here we are, born on your soil, and unless your own professed principles be a lie, entitled to all the rights and privileges of all others. Consequently, you are doubly bound to act for us as for yourselves.

With respect to their desire to achieve distribution, the free Black people in Ohio were merely appealing to be granted equal rights to education that all people were granted under the Ohio Constitution. In the 1840s Ohio, as long as a Black person came to the state with at least two freehold surety bonds, plus payment of five hundred dollars to the common pleas court, then they were granted the freedoms and rights that were represented within the state constitution (Aptheker, 1951). I maintain that despite their following the rules of the state, and the process for appealing for rights that are normally granted and utilized by White people, it was the societal biases and social injustice practiced by White people that denied the Black people of Ohio the right to achieve equal distribution of education rights granted to them by the state constitution.

Innovative Design to Achieve Accountability

This design strategy involves holding accountable those who benefit from the systemic oppression and marginalization of people. This strategy allows for the development of coalitions of power that hold others in power accountable for their actions that benefit from or enforce systems of power. In 1855, at the First California Negro Convention, which was held in Sacramento, delegates gathered and drew up petitions that denounced the inequitable treatment of Black children, as it related to their being denied education. The delegates appealed,

> We again call upon you to regard our condition in the State of California. We point with pride to the general character we maintain in your midst, for integrity, industry, and thrift. You have been wont to multiply our vices, port Government, at the same time you deny us the protection you extend citizens while seeking to degrade us. You ask us why we are not more intelligent? You receive our money to educate your children and then refuse to admit our children into common schools. (Aptheker, 1951, p. 327)

To be sure, the Black people in California were well versed in their knowledge of the rights under the law of California, and utilized the processes for appeal and petition, to denounce the unfair treatment of denying their children access to schools. The delegates' appeal implies that the Black citizens of California paid their fair share of taxes yet were denied the rights granted to tax-paying citizens. Their actions sought to disrupt the current systems of oppression and hold lawmakers accountable for upholding the laws to include them.

Consequently, the actions of Black people during pre-*Brown vs Board of Education* though were innovative and sought to disrupt the societal forces that denied much access to an equitable education, if any education at all, did not yield change but were the harbingers of the societal and educational rights that would come later. I argue that because of these innovative ways that were inserted into the legal fabric of our society, Black people during pre-*Brown vs. Board of Education* paved the way for new ways of incorporating teaching and learning practices that were instrumental in transforming the education spaces for the oppressed, particularly those considered Black or from the African diaspora.

"Institutionalized rejection of difference is an absolute necessity in a profit economy which needs outsiders as surplus people. As members of such an economy, we have all been programmed to respond to the human differences between us with fear and loathing and to handle that difference in one of three ways: ignore it, and if that is not possible, copy it if we think it is dominant, or destroy it if we think it is subordinate. But we have no patterns for relating across our human differences as equals. As a result, those differences have been misnamed and misused in the service of separation and confusion."
- Audre Lorde

A Social Justice Education Policy Centered on Innovation: Culturally Responsive Education

Ladson-Billings (1994) defined culturally responsive pedagogy as one "that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural references to impart knowledge, skills, attitudes" (pp. 16-17). In order for critical thinking and discourse to occur in classrooms, as well as for sociopolitical consciousness to emerge within our students, the curriculum and teaching strategies utilized by culturally responsive teachers are implemented to support students in developing critical stances towards inequities, their communities, and within their own classrooms. The next part of this paper will highlight two contemporary teaching and learning practices or programs that are innovative and have transformed teaching and learning for Black students.

In using culturally responsive education as a pedagogical and curricular framework, the foundation work of two researchers is noted: Geneva Gay and Gloria Ladson-Billings. Gay (2010), whose work focuses on culturally responsive teaching, defines teaching "as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them" (p. 31). In order for a more equitable climate to exist for the ethnically and linguistically diverse students in the classroom, the curriculum and instructional practices must be examined, and the pedagogy of the teacher must be questioned by herself.

Innovation is required to successfully alter the trajectory of failed schools, failed grades, and failed people within our society. Innovation itself - as a social justice design construct - is to be considered. Rather than use affirmative action to force change that initiates the position, advancement, and academic achievement of students, public schooling requires innovative action that uses a multi-faceted approach to social justice. Further, public school requires innovative action to affirm the varied cultures of students and the communities and countries from which they are informed and to forge those cultures into the curriculum, school culture, and pedagogical strategies of teachers, leaders, safety workers, and food handling staff who operate in the public schooling systems. A social justice education policy that will enable a transformed way of educating students and thereby results in innovative approaches to knowledge acquisition addresses more than the need to redistribute assets, create education equity, and eliminate the oppressive systemic barriers to access and opportunity. Rather, "the unprecedented crisis we are in requires thinking and action that [ ] foster citizens that see equity between groups as in everyone's interests (i.e., it is in everyone's interest to work across differences such that difference is the engine for learning and growth, not violence and the destruction of the "other") and are able to act based on thinking that does not simply repeat the failed proposals/policies of the past" (Gitlin, 2009).

An education policy centered on innovation that is directed towards designing and sustaining social justice is one that goes beyond the traditional teaching and learning strategies found in public schools. It is one that puts cultural responsiveness at the core of its pedagogical and curricular framework and uses innovation and problem-based methods to direct the work of students, teachers, the community, and policymakers. Further, such a policy operates on a continuum, resulting in that policy continuously evolving to fit the needs of the entire ecosystem made up of students, teachers, the community, policymakers, and conditions within the school, the community, student achievement levels, and societal changes. Culturally responsive education generates an improvement in education for students whose cultures have been marginalized or silenced in education spaces (Neito, 2018).

"Your story is what you have, what you will always have. It is something to own."
- Michelle Obama

Using Innovation and Culturally Responsive Education to Teach For Social Justice: An Integrated Critical Analysis

This next section examines the proposed policy of education innovation within which research into teaching, learning, curriculum, and assessment practices are conducted. The analysis is illustrated through work that exemplifies the principal characteristics of each practice. I maintain that current social justice ideologies are centered upon tenets that result in equity and that enable students to achieve full agency in their classrooms, which leads to an increase in academic achievement (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Nasir, 2011) what occurs as lacking in and around public schooling places, as it relates to minoritized students: equality, resources, conditions, power, learning. Further, this reimagined policy of innovation is centered in a *culture of equality* (Carothers, 2018), which supports the varied modes of student learning and multiple intelligences and calls for teachers to extend their pedagogical strategies and curricular tools to support student knowledge acquisition according to their intellectual abilities. At the time of this article, there does not exist a national education policy to support utilizing a curriculum centered in a culture of equality.nNonetheless, the following paragraphs cite contemporary practices that support a framework behind innovative education policy that is steeped in a social justice framework: the teaching practices found within a New York City-based nonprofit

organization called STEM Kids NYC, which I established, and those found within a program called Science Genius.

Methodology

In order to generate my analysis of STEM Kids NYC, I employed the standard of authenticity, whereby I captured, through recordings of classroom activities, interviews with teachers, and review of student work product, the original context of the setting and the perspectives of the participants. A theory I used to inform my analysis was a qualitative research methodology known as portraiture. Originated by Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot (1997), it is a methodology that is in connection with illuminating the good that is occurring within communities that are socio-economically marginalized, as well as illuminating the accomplishments of those who live in those communities.

Critical Analysis

The mission of STEM Kids NYC is to bridge the gap between a current school curriculum and the immediate need for schools to prepare students for STEM skills and for jobs that do not yet exist. Science Genius "is an initiative focused on utilizing the power of hip-hop music and culture to introduce youth to the wonder and beauty of science" (HipHopEd, 2021).

A practice that can be designed and implemented to support the generation of social change and transformation is the teaching practice of using cultural responsiveness in the classroom. Sleeter (2017) posits that "curriculum development requires considering not only how students learn to consume knowledge, but also how they learn to evaluate and produce it" (p. 29). Culturally responsive teachers who choose to connect social issues with the curriculum and that exist within the communities in which their students reside can use inquiry-based strategies to present content from a multicultural perspective, as well as present problems, issues, or challenges that affect or benefit students' multicultural communities, in order to create student-student discourse to examine and reflect upon the main ideas of the content presented. It is from this discourse that students can collaboratively work together - with the teacher serving as a guide, to devise solutions to address the social issues or challenges.

Within STEM Kids NYC, which was founded in 2015, culturally responsive teaching practices are enacted, and culturally responsive curriculum and lesson plans are implemented for students in various New York City, Brooklyn, and Queens schools and community-based centers. Within STEM Kids NYC locations, learning spaces are ones where cognition is purposely situated around the student's prior knowledge and their multimodal learning style. Further, the STEM Teachers develop what Eglash et al. (2013) cite Bransford (2000), Eglash, Bennett, O'Donnell, Jennings, Cintorino (2006), and Villegas & Lucas (2002) and emphasize that culturally responsive teachers use

> materials and modes of inquiry that are culturally relevant, modifying instruction to accommodate students prior knowledge, encouraging cooperative learning environments, using model-based approaches, and facilitating staff reflections on students' progress. (p. 632)

Further still, within STEM Kids NYC, there exist teachers of various groups- African, African American, Korean, White, Indian, and Mixed race - and all are members of one or more STEM professions or majors: Science, Computer Science, Engineering, Creative

Technologies. Some are undergraduate or graduate students and some already have their PhDs. What they have most in common is a set of culturally responsive STEM teaching tools that are integrated within a culturally responsive STEM curriculum I designed and enacted professional development sessions to train the STEM Teachers: To address the absence that is evident in K-12 curriculum regarding the contributions of people of diverse cultures in the STEM fields, STEM Teachers integrated STEM icons of color in their lesson plan activities, and presented these icons to their students. The common practice used is that whatever STEM domain reflected in the lesson plan, the teacher introduced a STEM icon that had a mastery in that particular STEM field. The intention is so that the icons, who look like the students, would resonate with the students and they would develop a belief that they also belonged in STEM because others who looked like them were successfully contributing to advance the field. This presentation of *historical culture*, a term defined by Eglash et al. (2013), addresses the "myths of genetic determinism: showing students that there is a history of Black mathematicians in contemporary academia" (p. 633). This introduction further diminishes any preconceived negative notions that students may have about their race or another peer's race.

The actions demonstrated by the STEM teachers are reflective of the innovative design tool of transformation, in that the use of STEM icons is intended to transform the mindset of students of marginalized groups, who may not see the contributions of people who look like them in K-12 textbooks. This design tool is used to disrupt the hidden curriculum that exists in public school education, whereby the contributions of diverse populations are nearly absent in history, science, mathematics, and engineering textbooks.

Another tool the STEM Teachers use is centered on design-based thinking and participatory action research that make up social justice design processes. Students are presented with problems in society or asked to brainstorm issues with design or within society, and then are taught various ways to solve those problems using a STEM solution. Eglash (2013) cites the work of Terry (2011) and Gutstein (2003) for using statistical analysis to "illuminate injustice in society and affirm cultural accomplishments and social justice triumphs" (p. 634). Through various lessons in Science, Computer Science or Engineering, and design, STEM Kids NYC students learn to interrogate various problems within society and, with the teacher serving as a guide, create prototypes or models of solutions that address those problems. For middle and high school students, they are introduced to ways to engage with government leaders, to present their models and prototypes for consideration to effect change and transformation in their communities. The activities that occur within STEM Kids NYC classrooms that guide students in interrogating systems that are deemed unjust in society are representative of the innovative design tool of accountability, whereby the students become empowered to hold accountable those who enforce the systems and practices that oppress and subjugate groups who do not hold power in society.

The third teaching tool STEM Teachers use is an inquiry-based style of teaching, and is representative of the innovation design tool of enablement, whereby students are empowered by their teachers to engage with them to in the development and production of their knowledge constructs. Teachers who utilize the enablement design tool are seen engaging in constructionist activities to support students in developing their ways of knowing and allowing them to derive their individual knowledge constructs that are centered around the lesson and the content. The term, constructionism, is an epistemological framework that was originated by mathematician, computer scientist, and educator Seymour Papert, who spent the majority of his career teaching and conducting research at MIT. As a founding member of the MIT Media Lab, Papert

centered constructionism in the activities of learning by doing, and extended the social scientist term of constructivism, to include "building knowledge structures'' irrespective of the circumstances of the learning" (Papert & Harel, 1991, p. 2).

This form of teaching for discovery is the opposite of most traditional classroom settings, particularly in STEM learning spaces. Traditional STEM classroom settings tend to facilitate a more structured approach to teaching, with an aim of deriving a scripted answer, rather than what STEM Kids NYC teachers use, which is the utilization of a student's use of their own language and tacit knowledge they've constructed through their experiences with STEM phenomenon.

In summary, students who are enrolled in STEM Kids NYC programs demonstrate a high self-efficacy around Science, Computer Science, Engineering, and Robotics, and can articulate knowledge of particular concepts within the STEM disciplines, as well as have a more informed identity of themselves as Scientists, Computer Scientists, Engineers, and scholars. The teaching tools, curricular framework, and ways of being of the instructors within STEM Kids NYC are excellent representations of innovative ways of educating Black students who otherwise may not have been exposed to a STEM learning space that supported and elevated their quest for learning, and are also great examples of ways teachers instill within their students the belief that they can also be members of a group of scholars and professionals who are in STEM fields. Compared to a traditional academic setting, where many students of color do not feel welcome in STEM learning spaces, I maintain that STEM Kids NYC's work is centered on innovative social justice design.

The next contemporary organization that demonstrates a culture of equality and social justice innovative design is a program called Science Genius, which was founded by Dr. Christopher Emdin, Associate Professor of Science Education at Columbia Teachers College. Science Genius is

> an initiative focused on utilizing the power of hip-hop music and culture to introduce youth to the wonder and beauty of science. The core message of the initiative is to meet urban youth who are traditionally disengaged in science classrooms on their cultural turf, and provide them with the opportunity to express the same passion they have for hip-hop culture for science. (Hip Hop Ed Website, 2021)

Methodology

The primary data source for this analysis included field notes from attending Hip Hop Ed conferences in June 2019, whereby I took field notes of student performances that demonstrated their use of scientific knowledge infused with a rap that resulted in authentic work product, as well as reviewing secondary sources of video vignettes of classroom activities in science learning spaces. A theory I used to inform my analysis was a decolonizing theoretical framework developed by Smith (2021). The framework suggests that ways of knowing traditionally created by Western traditions that historically colonized nondominant cultures have privileged dominant cultural narratives and influenced the construction of knowledge in schools. Smith's framework is centered on presenting counternarratives to knowledge construction by non-dominant groups and acknowledges that these alternative ways of knowing are on an equal plane as Western ways of knowing. I also used a feminist poststructuralist framework to analyze and critique the way in which power relations are produced and enacted in non-dominant communities and learning spaces.

Critical Analysis

Science Genius utilizes Hip Hop Pedagogy, a framework that incorporates the hip hop elements of rap, b-boying, beatboxing, DJing, MCing, and rap battles into a style of teaching and learning Science. This approach is shown to give students in urban science classrooms access to a connection to the science content (Adjapong, 2019).

The Science Genius teachers use a culturally responsive teaching framework of instructing students on how to create "bars" or lyrical lines of rap that center on specific science content. Further, the science content is integrated with a rap that represents poetic rhythm synced with the scientific vernacular. Students are, in theory, creating their study notes for Science quizzes and Regents tests. In addition, the teachers within Science Genius are K-12 science teachers, science graduate students, and science professors who often resemble the ethnic makeup of their students and often come from the same neighborhood as their students. Like the teachers within STEM Kids NYC, the Science Genius teachers facilitate from a framework of what Eglash (2013) terms heritage culture, but also from vernacular culture (Eglash 2013), which is representative of urban youth cultural and linguistic practices, or some other form of culture that is centered on local social networks. The pedagogical style of the teachers within Science Genius enables students, like the STEM Kids NYC teachers, to generate deductions from presenting the content, yet also give their students creative license and freedom of self-expression to present their science knowledge constructs in multiple modes through rap, music, beatboxing, and digital presentation.

I attended the Hip Hop Ed conference in 2019 and witnessed the genius and confidence of students reciting science facts integrated with a hip-hop beat that is cleverly interwoven with both the beat and other lyrics they used. What I observed were students combining culturally relevant phenomena and lived experiences they relate to in their life, which were likened to witnessing a miracle occur within an urban learning space that would otherwise depict disengaged urban youth as being disengaged in science classes. Thevenot (2021) emphasizes that

> Researchers have uncovered many reasons as to why Black and Latinx students do not persist in STEM. The lack of success in STEM and the perceived declining persistence in STEM for Black and Latinx students is attributed to the social barriers they face within their academic environments, or the lack of preparation they received prior to entering the STEM program. (p. 60)

My observations gave me pause to reflect upon the innovative design tool of reciprocity and the remembrances of what Cornish and Russworm accomplished in the 1800s with their paper, the *Freedom's Journal*. Cornish and Russworm, like those at Science Genius, sought to illuminate the academic brilliance of those in the Black race, in order to show the dominant culture that their brilliance is just as deserving to be given opportunities to contribute to the field of science. In the case of the Science Genius students, their demonstration of knowing scientific knowledge and their facility to creatively engage with science content using rap is proof that the students are truly scientists and are positioned for success in science - as scientists.

Themes were derived from my review of video vignettes that served as archival data retrieved from the Hip Hop Ed website. What I observed were students who shared their personal narratives of initially not being comfortable with science vernacular found in science textbooks or worksheets. After their experiences with the Science Genius teachers,

students became empowered through the use of rap and hip-hop pedagogy and created authentic raps centered in science. The use of rap allowed students to not only express themselves through the historical references of their culture and also demonstrate their ways of knowing centered in science knowledge constructs. I maintain that Science Genius uses innovative ways of teaching, centered on social justice, in order to engage Black students in acquiring knowledge in Science and thriving in the Science learning space. What Science Genius has accomplished is also representative of innovative social justice design.

The Test for Innovative Practices

"Scholars today have demonstrated quite convincingly that people develop intelligence as they interact with others and as they use the tools and symbols of their culture to make sense of the world and their experiences in it" (Oakes, 2018, p. 200). Thus, in innovative learning spaces that are centered in STEM, like at STEM Kids NYC and Science Genius, individual student knowledge as a meaningful context is brought into those learning spaces and utilized to create a rich curriculum and activities that benefit all of the students. Both STEM Kids NYC and Science Genius utilize innovative design tools of transformation, enablement, reciprocity, and accountability at the core of their practice. For curriculum practices to support the framework of being innovative with socially just design tools, they must include the students in the center of such practice and cannot treat the students as subjects on which to shed light to administer focused teaching. Both organizations place students at the center of their practice. Further, for innovation to be evidenced, students have roles as collaborators in curating their education and learning spaces that may include fluid dialogue between them and teachers, the community, and policymakers, and includes a framework of multiculturalism and discourse that brings to light oppressive constructs that marginalize and silence their voices. Within STEM Kids NYC,

> the [curricular strategies used by the teachers] provide for the promotion and encouragement of active student participation in STEM learning spaces and empowers students to utilize both their cultural voice and evolving STEM proficiency to contribute as full participants in STEM environments who demonstrate a sense of belonging. (Thevenot, 2021, p. 65).

Within Science Genius, students are empowered to utilize the innovative design tool, *innovative design to achieve enablement*, to extend their learning beyond the traditional borders created by K-12 curriculum, and engage in creating a dialogue with teachers about their education. Adjapong (2019) maintains that Science Genius programs enable students to advocate for their learning and initiate discourse with their teachers:

> Genesys had the agency to ask her chemistry teacher to alter her project to allow her to submit a rap as opposed to a timeline or a monologue. After participating in the Science Genius Program, Genesys similar to other students realized that using Hip-Hop to write content-themed raps was an effective method of learning for her. Genesys asked her teacher to allow her to submit a science-themed rap for her project because she felt that it was it was an effective alternative that will help her gain a deep understanding of the content in an engaging manner as opposed to the other options presented. (p. 22)

I maintain that both STEM Kids NYC and Science Genius utilize a culture of equality that allows students to collaborate with their teachers, as well as to lead in the facilitation of their education.

On the whole, using innovation as a social justice construct and as a practice for generating learning presents social and academic empowerment contexts for students, in that innovation, brings about the freedom to express, the placement of new ideas, the empowerment to take risks, and an education structure in which to use findings of oppression, racism, and systemic forces that silence the voice to replace - immediately - those forms of oppression with new ideas, knowledge constructs, and a framework of innovation that results in the initiation of change or elimination of oppressive influences.

Within STEM Kids NYC, students are given choices of what they wish to show and teach - they choose a lesson or unit of study they learned and enjoyed, then they produce a science fair-like demonstration, in order to teach their peers and other invited guests, such as teachers and parents. Then, students participate in showcases throughout the school year, at the conclusion of a unit of study that is usually 8-10 weeks long.

Within Science Genius, students demonstrate what they know in the form of producing rap and lyrics centered around particular science content and then present this in a concert-like setting called a rap battle. Similar to a science fair, judges give each student or student group points based upon style, creativity in the use of science content, and overall presentation.

In the context of social justice-oriented programs or ones that use a socially just curriculum, the teaching practices of the organizations referenced in this article reveal that: students' cultures are integrated into the curriculum, the multiple intelligences of students are included in the curriculum, the curriculum support students' varied ways of knowing and multiple ways to acquire knowledge and provides a learning space that acknowledges students' varied levels of proficiencies. These practices are exemplars of innovative social justice education.

"To teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin…"
- bell hooks

Implications

In order to be effective in their teaching practice, teachers must be willing to expose their vulnerabilities and biases and engage with the cultural positioning of their students through rigorous self-examination. Further, effective teachers who learn the practice of critical self-reflection will be successful at bringing to the forefront the often painful truths and struggles that are deep-seated within the heart and recesses of their minds, where the drive to succeed is often associated with a carefully crafted narrative that addresses negative stimuli. What shall one do with such stimuli? One suggestion would be to practice care, and the giving and receiving of love to all they encounter in their classrooms, and make their lesson plans rigorous and culturally responsive through the use of innovative design tools that support their pedagogical practices and enable all students to acquire knowledge and develop their facility for initiating social justice enactments that benefit themselves and their communities.

Innovation, framed as a culturally responsive, social justice construct, is a model by which both preservice and in-service teachers who instruct in public, private, and charter school learning spaces can build connections and close the widening gap between their students' understanding of content and knowledge acquisition. Through the effective use of knowledge constructs owned by students or developed within the learning space and the teacher, both the student and the teacher can generate a community of inclusion that

supports a reimagined learning community that includes all students in participatory learning and accomplishes the creation of academic identities for all.

This paper brings to the forefront the direct and creative actions devised by Black people to move their race toward education advancement - a needed process to bring about innovative change and transformation to the downtrodden, minimized, and lowly economic, social, and political positions that plague our society. This action, I maintain, is representative of the truest distinction of what it means to be innovative and the clearest distinction of socially just work that disrupts the systemic status quo of marginalizing non-dominant groups.

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Applying Critical Discourse Analysis in the Classroom: A Guide for Educators

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In this conceptual article, we provide a guide for educators to use Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to: (1) critically examine their teaching and behavioral support practices, (2) guide future interactions with students and families, and (3) teach students to empower themselves through critically analyzing texts, media, and society. To do this, we leverage the CDA frameworks provided by Rebecca Rogers (2011), James Paul Gee (1999), and Norman Fairclough (1989). CDA is a tool that can disrupt cycles of oppression and power in classroom settings and school communities. It makes oppressive systems of institutions visible in order to intentionally interrogate and dismantle them rather than unintentionally reproducing them in educational spaces.

Key words: Critical Discourse Analysis, Literacy Instruction, Media Literacy Instruction, K-12, Higher Education, Critical Studies

Applying Critical Discourse Analysis in the Classroom: A Guide for Educators

Educational spaces reproduce oppression, power, and inequality. This is illustrated in vast research confirming academic and discipline discrepancies between youth of color and White students, as well as the discrepancies for LGBTQIA+ youth and students with disabilities (Schiff, 2018; Mallett, 2016; Welsh & Little, 2018; Taylor et al, 2011). Frameworks such as Critical Race Theory and Critical Law Theory point out that law is never neutral in an oppressive world (Hiraldo, 2010), and authors such as Zinn highlight that individuals' actions cannot be neutral (Zinn, 2002). Therefore, educational policies and practices cannot be neutral: "People in society make up the education system, and thus education research and practice are also infiltrated with matters of race and racism" (Milner, 2007, p. 391).

Within a national and global culture of racism, xenophobia, ableism, homophobia, and misogyny, if we as educators are not constantly analyzing how systems of oppression are perpetuated in classrooms, then we will naturally reproduce them. Nothing teachers do in schools can be neutral; we either actively disrupt power differentials or passively reproduce them. While one teacher cannot account for all implications that come with education's effectiveness of marginalizing certain groups of people, teachers do have additive effects, which have the potential to positively influence the culture of the students and their classrooms (Roychowdhury, 2017). Many teachers are currently working hard to disrupt systems of oppression in classrooms and make curriculum accessible to all learners. We can use the framework of CDA to strengthen our efforts and hold ourselves accountable to continuously implement and improve anti-oppressive action in schools.

The Power of Critical Discourse Analysis for Teachers: Why use CDA?

CDA provides teachers with a tool to analyze power imbalances, oppression, and inequalities in classrooms: "educational practices are considered communicative events; it therefore stands to reason that discourse analysis would be useful to analyze the ways in which the texts, talk, and other semiotic interactions that learning comprises" (Rogers, 2011, p. 1). CDA should be leveraged by teachers worldwide to disrupt systems of oppression in the classroom, and should be used in all educational spaces, from K-12 to higher education institutions. While research and implications surrounding CDA are currently aimed towards higher education and social affairs, we intend for teachers globally to access this tool to build capacity for discussions that address power, privilege, and inequalities. Across contexts, settings, and geographic locations, we internalize these oppressive discourses and power relationships to the extent that they are often deemed "natural" and go unquestioned (Public Broadcasting Service, 2016). The power of CDA is that it gives us a way to make these discourses and systems visible; through it, many practices that are taken as the "norm," often consenting to the "white mythical norm," are questioned and can be recognized as oppressive and discriminatory.

Fairclough (2013) reminds us that "changing the world for the better depends upon being able to explain how it has come to be the way it is" (p. 10). CDA opens us to alternative, more equitable, ways of teaching that increase the accessibility of education to all students. It is a framework that can be used to analyze teaching and behavioral support practices, to guide interactions with students and families, and to teach students to critically examine the world around them. It gives both teachers and students a shared sense of ownership over how we, and our communities, can build better realities: "It is important to note that while critique is an important part of the 'critical project' it is not the end goal. The end goal is to hope, to dream, and to create alternative realities that are based in equity, love, peace, and solidarity" (Rogers, 2011, p. 5). The remainder of this article is broken into four sections and answer the following guiding questions:

- What is CDA?
- How can teachers use CDA?
- How can students use CDA?
- What resources exist on CDA and power and oppression?

Critical Discourse Analysis: What is CDA?

The purpose of CDA is to deconstruct power and its role in replicating, or disrupting, systems of oppression (Rogers, 2011). Van Dijk (2007) argues the perpetuation of oppression in common discourse is the ability of those in power to control political and media messaging to the public. CDA is an approach to interrogating such messages of power and inequality; it examines ways in which inequalities are constructed and perpetuated (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). It does so through making power relations, and how power relations reproduce through language, visible: "Power is a central concept in critical discourse studies. It tends to be defined in terms of negative uses of power, articulated through and within discourses and resulting in domination and oppression" (Rogers, 2011, p. 3). CDA breaks down how language and discourse reinforce oppressive systems through positioning power. Discourse within CDA is defined as "social practices, processes, and products" that consist of everything "from language use, to statements that assign meanings to an institution, to social identities, relationships, practices, and categories" (Rogers, 2011, p. 4). While CDA can be a multi-faceted tool, "approaches to CDA share a set of core assumptions. Those assumptions include an interest in uncovering and transforming conditions of inequality; analyses that transcend the interpretation of language and, instead, aim to explain the work that language performs in society" (Mullet,

2018, p. 118). This expanded view of discourse illustrates "the ways in which social grammars and 'language bits' (to use Gee's term) interact and build identities, relationships, and narratives of a social world" (Rogers, 2011, p. 6). In this way, teachers can leverage CDA to highlight the ways power differentials are perpetuated in classrooms (Åberg & Olin-Scheller, 2018; Fairclough, 2010; Rogers, 2011). Furthermore, Fairclough offers flexibility to how CDA can be used: social theories, political campaigning, explicit textual analysis (Fairclough, 2002). We assert that CDA can also be used with students to help them uncover hidden messages of power and oppression within the classroom and in greater society.

Fairclough breaks the deconstruction of power into 'the power to', 'power over', and 'power behind' (Fairclough, 1989). Janks (2009) argues that readers need to be able to decode, make meaning from, and interrogate text, while Gee separates the word choice and the explicit language use, or the Little "d", with the societal and historical beliefs, values, and contexts, or the Big "D" (Gee, 1999). We leverage the notion of Big "D" and Little "d" discourse as a tool that simultaneously infuses decoding with context. We apply these notions in our guide for educators in questions such as, 'Who holds the power?', 'Who is being dominated?', and 'Is power supporting one group over another?'. As scholars, educators, and lifelong learners, we assert that CDA is a tool for all humans to use in their anti-oppressive, anti-racist journey. This article provides a guide for educators to use CDA to analyze the ways in which our teaching, behavioral practices, and interactions with students contribute to the perpetuation of exclusionary ideology; through interrogating ourselves and our actions within school spaces, we learn how to do and be better.

Applying Critical Discourse Analysis: How can teachers use CDA?

CDA gives educators a structured way to uncover and transform conditions of inequality in order to intentionally create classrooms that interrupt the status quo (Mullet, 2018). In helping teachers zero in on what language and actions in their classroom perpetuate the 'isms' in our society, it gives educators a sense of agency over those disrupting oppressive systems that often feel too big to disrupt. The power of CDA is that it can be used anywhere that language and discourse lie. We encourage educators to use CDA in analyzing their teaching and behavioral approaches (examples: lessons, assessments, class discussions, behavior logs, behavior referral forms, behavior plans, student support plans), their daily interactions with students and families (examples: transcriptions of family teacher conferences, teacher team meetings, interactions with students, phone calls with families), and as a teaching tool to help build students' critical media literacy.

While "there exist no comprehensive 'guides' for frameworks for conducting CDA" (Mullet, 2018, pg. 138), we build on Gee's (1999) idea of closely attending to language while simultaneously examining power ideologies to create a step-by-step guide for educators and students to use CDA. The guiding questions of "How is it [power] being produced, reproduced, and consumed?" and "What is the social and historical context?" were central to the construction of our guide and its prompting questions (Reyes, 2021). Figure 1 is the step-by-step educator guide to CDA. Then, below the figure, we use the CDA guide to deconstruct and analyze an education policy from Vermont, United States as an example on how to use the guide.

Figure 1

Step-by-Step Educator Guide to CDA

Step	Guiding Questions
Step 1: Choose the Artifact	*-Does this artifact have potential for us to uncover messages of power and inequity in this artifact?* *-Who is the author?* *-Who is the audience?*
Step 2: Leverage a Critical Framework *(Examples: Critical Disability Studies, Critical Race Theory, DisCrit, Critical Feminist Theory)*	*-What is the context of my artifact? Will that help me choose a framework (s) to leverage?* *-What lens, or lenses, do I want and/or need to take to analyze?*
Step 3: Discourse Analysis: little "d"	*-Are words repeated throughout the text? Which ones and how often? (Word cloud)* *-Is there a pattern among repeated words?* *-Are there words that show possession, or 'us' v 'them'? (our, their, mine)* *-Are there words that show the opinion of the author?* *-Is there use of subjective language?* *- Is there evidence of author separation? (they, them versus we, our)*
Step 4: Discourse Analysis: Big "D"	*-What is the societal and historical context of this artifact?* *-What historical events and eras connect to your theoretical framework and your artifact (example: for CRT, Civil Rights, Slavery, Jim Crow Era)?* *-What current events connect to your theoretical framework and artifact (example, for CRT, killing of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, Black Lives Matter protests being seen as violent despite being mostly peaceful (Kishi & Jones, 2020), Police Brutality)?* *-Is power supporting one group over another?* *-How does this lead to inequality?* *-Is there evidence of constructed power?* *-Who has the constructed power?* *-Who holds the power and who is being dominated?* *-Is the power being shared?* *-How is power being produced, reproduced, and consumed?*

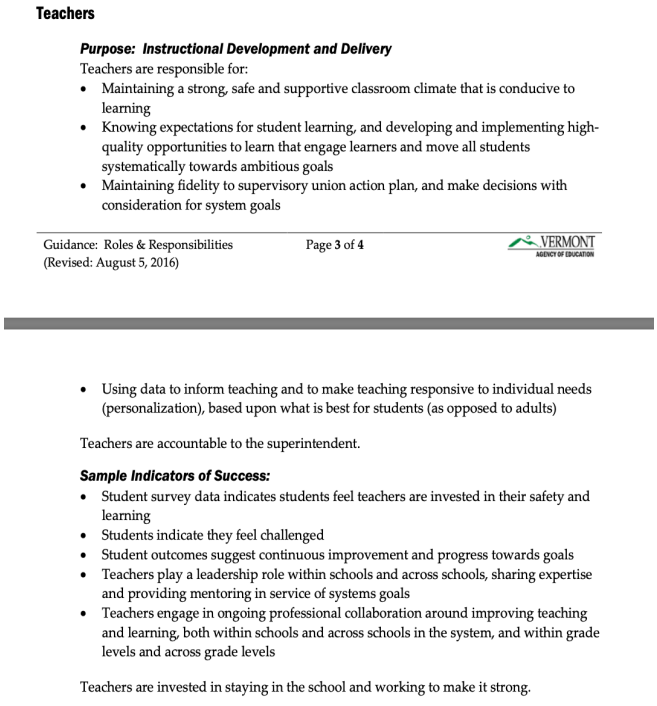
	-Where is there space for anti-oppressive language? *-Where is there space to use language of inclusion rather than language of separation (our, we)?* *-How can I incorporate more inclusive language?*
Step 5: Implications for Reconstruction and Action	*-Where is there space to intentionally share power? -How could I share power?* *-Where is there space to eliminate evidence of hierarchy? How could that happen? What actions do you need to take?* *-Where is their space to empower the group that has been historically dominated? What can I do to empower those groups?*

Step 1: Choose the Artifact

The first step is choosing the text or discourse that you are interested in deconstructing. This can be an excerpt, a literary piece, a transcription of speech, or any other form of language. For teachers, this may be a rubric, a lesson plan, an email, a transcription of conversation, lecture notes, or a piece of curriculum. For our example, we are using a model policy written by the Vermont Agency of Education (2016). We choose this artifact specifically because of the content, "Roles and Responsibilities in Vermont School Systems." This content has historical implications of power in governance, and we predict will have clear messages of inequities upon deconstruction.

Figure 2

Vermont Agency of Education Sample Policy



Teachers

Purpose: Instructional Development and Delivery

Teachers are responsible for:

- Maintaining a strong, safe and supportive classroom climate that is conducive to learning
- Knowing expectations for student learning, and developing and implementing high-quality opportunities to learn that engage learners and move all students systematically towards ambitious goals
- Maintaining fidelity to supervisory union action plan, and make decisions with consideration for system goals

Guidance: Roles & Responsibilities (Revised: August 5, 2016) Page 3 of 4 VERMONT AGENCY OF EDUCATION

- Using data to inform teaching and to make teaching responsive to individual needs (personalization), based upon what is best for students (as opposed to adults)

Teachers are accountable to the superintendent.

Sample Indicators of Success:

- Student survey data indicates students feel teachers are invested in their safety and learning
- Students indicate they feel challenged
- Student outcomes suggest continuous improvement and progress towards goals
- Teachers play a leadership role within schools and across schools, sharing expertise and providing mentoring in service of systems goals
- Teachers engage in ongoing professional collaboration around improving teaching and learning, both within schools and across schools in the system, and within grade levels and across grade levels

Teachers are invested in staying in the school and working to make it strong.

Step 2: Leverage a Critical Framework

After choosing our artifact to examine, we then explore the frameworks that we have chosen to leverage. We encourage educators to use critical frameworks, in that the "critical" nature aligns with the interrogation of power messages that we aim to explore. For this step, we encourage educators to lean on the Little "d" and Big "D" concept (Gee, 1999). These two focus on discourse, the Little "d", as in the explicit language use (grammar and words), and the Big "D" as messages or cues of societal and historical beliefs and values (Gee, 1999). Critical Disability Studies, Critical Race Theory, Dis/ability Critical Race Studies, and Critical Feminist Theory, are critical frameworks that can support educators in making invisible walls visible, and in beginning to break down these barriers for students and society. Note that multiple frameworks can be leveraged simultaneously while performing CDA on a specific artifact.

We begin the process by examining the context of the written policy to guide our lens. Given that Vermont is a predominantly White state with predominantly White schools, indicating hypersegregation, we utilize Critical Race Theory (CRT) when interrogating this policy. CRT acknowledges how engrained racism is in the fabric of our society, so much so, that racist discourse is normalized (Ladson-Billings, 1998). The five tenets include the notions that: (1) racism is ever present and widespread, (2) racial progress is only allowed when it benefits Whites, (3) race is a social construct created by people, (4) validating, believing, and honoring counter-narratives is crucial to disrupting oppression, and (5) Whites have been benefited from law, including Civil Rights legislation (Decuir & Dixson, 2004). In our CDA example, we leverage CRT to give us a resolute picture of the Big "D" context: the current and historical objectification of Black and Brown students in schools. (Not sure why this part is in red?) Therefore, as we begin to deconstruct the language of this policy, we will look for examples of counter-storytelling, the permanence of racism, Whiteness as property and/or as desirable, the 'mythical norm', interest conversion, and the critique of liberalism.

Step 3: Discourse Analysis - Little "d"

Now we begin our analysis! We begin with analyzing the words and grammar, or the Little "d" (Gee, 1999). Figure 3 represents a word cloud, a tool that aims to quantify the verbiage by using larger size font to represent words that were found more often in the artifact, and smaller font for words found less often. We encourage educators and students to use word clouds to visually quantify how certain words hold power through repetition. Figure 2 (I think you mean Figure 3, but not sure?) gives space to 'teachers, goals, students(s), learning, within, across, levels, towards, schools, engage, invested, data, system, strong, towards, make'. Many of these words, such as 'strong, goals, towards, across', historically symbolize strength in our society. We also note that words such as, 'invested, data, goals, engage' are often used as portrayals of success. The word 'maintaining' is used to assert dominance, or power, over the classroom, or students. In a school with a predominantly White teaching force, we connect this to "Whiteness as property," or predominately White teachers asserting their power over students.

The phrase "knowing expectations" is another example of hierarchy represented in schools. This signifies that teachers need to respond to the expectations formed by someone in power, such as an administrator. This phrase also can imply that teachers are called upon to enforce expectations, rather than co-create expectations with students. Additionally, the word 'students' (as opposed to adults) indicates a separation of students versus adults, which implies the students cannot be classified as adults, and therefore are inherently subordinate to adults. Finally, 'individual needs' messages that there is a deficit or need of the individual students, rather than a deficit or need in the system. This leads

us to the deconstruction of the Big "D," or localized and globalized messaging of power and inequality.

Figure 3

Word Cloud of Sample Policy

Step 4: Discourse Analysis - Big "D"

Next, we dive into the societal and historical context surrounding the artifact, or the Big "D" (Gee, 1999). First, the entire policy, "Roles and Responsibilities in Vermont School Systems," encompasses school board, superintendent, principal, teacher, and advisory committee roles. We noticed the size of roles and the order of roles, with teachers and advisory committees at the bottom of the policy taking up the least amount of space, compared to the school board, and superintendent positions that are the first two roles listed in the policy, and take up the most amount of space. When thinking about the Big "D" or the societal messaging, this serves as evidence as a hierarchy of importance, or significance of specific roles within the public school system.

While racism is arguably the most oppressive construct that impacts education today, there is no mention of race or racism in the policy. This is evidence of interest convergence, where White people say they are committed to anti-racism yet show no evidence of that in their actions and discourse: "The most threatening racist movement is not the alt right's unlikely drive for a White ethnostate but the regular American's drive for a 'race-neutral' one. The construct of race neutrality actually feeds White nationalist victimhood by positing the notion that any policy protecting or advancing non-White Americans toward equity is 'reverse discrimination" (Kendi, 2019, p. 20).

While the document does address the need for data informed teaching, there is no evidence of using data to close the opportunity gap, or to support students who have been and currently are disenfranchised in school. In continuation, the sentence "make decisions with consideration for system goals" shows us the prevalence and sustainment of a system that has been historically built on racist ideology, or the permeance of racism and

White Supremacy. This leads us to the possible implication of reconstruction of this role, with an actively anti-racist stance.

Step 5: Implications for Reconstruction and Action

Finally, we move to our implications for reconstruction of the artifact (if possible) and action. We begin by looking for space to call for anti-oppressive action and language. As stated, this artifact has no mention of historically disenfranchised groups of students, which indicates a level of color-blindness. We advocate for a shift of the first bullet, from "maintaining a strong, safe, and supportive classroom climate that is conducive to learning" to "empowering a strong, physically and emotionally safe, and supportive classroom climate that is conducive to learning, especially for students who have been historically marginalized." Note, we take out "maintain" which is a word that indicates power of the beholder, to "empower" which indicates a share of power. We also use the tenets of CRT to explicitly call attention to anti-racism and to name the system of oppression.

For the second bullet, we suggest an alternative verb to "knowing" that indicates power, to "co-construction," which indicates a share of power. We also offer an alternative for "move all students systematically towards ambitious goals." We use counter-story telling as a tenant to frame our suggestion of "progress for all students, specifically those who have been historically failed by the education system towards a successful academic agency." Again, we acknowledge the systemic effect that racism has had on students, and ultimately, the systemic failure that students have had to face. Below is a visual to display the shift after completing CDA for each of the bullets in the artifact:

Figure 4

Step-by-Step Guide to CDA

Original Artifact	CDA Analysis	Reconstructed Artifact
(Teachers are responsible for) maintaining a strong, safe, and supportive classroom climate that is conducive to learning	*Evidence of Whiteness as Property* *Evidence of interest convergence* *Possessive Language* *Evidence of power*	*(Teachers are responsible for) empowering a strong, physically and emotionally safe, and supportive classroom climate that is conducive to learning, especially for students who have been historically marginalized.*
(Teachers are responsible for) knowing expectations for student learning, and developing and implementing high-quality opportunities to learn that engage all learners and move all students systematically towards ambitious goals	*Evidence of Whiteness as Property* *Evidence of interest convergence* *Evidence of counter-story telling* *Possessive Language*	*(Teachers are responsible for) co-constructing expectations for learning and developing and implementing high-quality opportunities to learn that engages and progresses all students, specifically those who have been historically failed by the education*

	Evidence of power	*system towards a successful academic agency.*
(Teachers are responsible for) maintaining fidelity to supervisory union action plan, and make all decisions with consideration for system goals	*Evidence of Whiteness as Property* *Evidence of interest convergence* *Evidence of permanence of racism* *Possessive Language* *Evidence of power*	*(Teachers are responsible for) fidelity to supervisory union action plan, and collaborate in decision making that are inclusive, anti-oppressive, and goal oriented.*
(Teachers are responsible for) Using data to inform teaching and to make teaching responsive to individual needs (personalization), based upon what is best for students (as opposed to adults)	*Evidence of Whiteness as Property* *Possessive Language* *Evidence of power*	*(Teachers are responsible for) Engaging in data-informed cycles of inquiry that are collaborative, interdisciplinary, and holistic in order to reduce barriers for student success.*

Applying Critical Discourse Analysis: How can students use CDA?
CDA can be used as a media literacy instructional tool, as well as a literacy intervention; it can be explicitly taught to students to encourage them in making meaning of oppressive discourse, and to interrogate text and conversation as critical thinkers. Critical scholars argue that there is a call for educators to offer spaces to students to critically examine texts, media, and the world around them in order to deconstruct roles of power and its role in oppression (Moje & Lewis, 2007). Therefore, we encourage educators to use current events articles, history excerpts, close readings, songs, poetry, commercials, television shows and movies, and other literary work to guide students in exposing power structures.

When we clearly see and articulate oppressive structures, we know that racism, xenophobia, ableism, homophobia, and misogyny, and their effects on our lives, are not about us as individuals. We are not the problem, the system is the problem; CDA can offer students a structured way to explore that theme. Specifically, CDA enables students to see how the "mythical norm" is constructed, and therefore how to resist it. The "mythical norm" is "defined as white, thin, male, young, heterosexual, Christian, and financially secure" (Lorde, 1984, p. 13). Deconstructing and confronting the notion that this dominant identity is the 'ideal,' 'normal,' and 'successful,' as well as making its role in recreating power and oppression visible, helps prevent students from internalizing the thought that they are broken if their identities do not align with it. It clarifies that power and exclusion are at fault, not them, and empowers them to question and resist the perpetuation of violent oppressive systems.

Below is a step-by-step guide for students to learn and leverage CDA in the classroom. It mirrors the one above in that the steps remain the same, but the language has been slightly altered to make it more accessible for a wider range of individuals. While we changed some language, we believe continuing to use words such as "power,", "oppression," and "inequity" directly with students is crucial to helping them build a critical lens. We

encourage educators to use this as a resource or use this as a baseline to adjust for your specific context and students:

Figure 5

Step-by-Step Student Guide to CDA

Step	Guiding Questions
Step 1: Choose the Artifact 	*-Are there messages of power and inequity in this artifact?*
Step 2: Pick a Context 	*-How are some peoples' rights being excluded?* *-How are some peoples' rights being included?* **Consider BIPOC, people with disabilities, people living in poverty, LGBTQIA+ communities*
Step 3: Hunt for Words 	*-Try a word cloud!* *-What patterns do you notice?* *-Are there words that show the opinion of the author?*
Step 4: Think about Deeper Meaning 	*-What current events are connected to our artifact?* *-Is power supporting one group over another?*

Step 5: Decide on Next Steps

-Where is there space to eliminate evidence of hierarchy? How could that happen? What actions do you need to take?

-Where is their space to empower the group that has been historically dominated? What can I do to empower those groups?

Through the step-by-step guide for students, we can use CDA to teach students how to critically engage in texts, media, and society to become co-conspirators in positive change. Through the guide for educators, we can leverage CDA to critically deconstruct our own teaching practices, decisions, and interactions to intentionally disrupt the perpetuation of power imbalances, oppression, and inequality.

Additional Resources: What Resources Exist on CDA, Power, and Oppression?

As life-long researchers and our commitment to such, we never aim to deem ourselves experts of anything. We believe that to develop and strengthen critical thinking skills, one must have multiple modes of information. In addition to the example we provide in this article, we provide two examples of using CDA in "Leveraging The Braided Approach: An Anti-Oppressive Framework For PBIS'." Below are four resources that have helped us develop our capacity to use CDA to deconstruct and interrogate oppressive systems:

Åberg, M., & Olin-Scheller, C. (2018). Wolf cries: On power, emotions and critical literacy in first-language teaching in Sweden. *Gender and Education, 30*(7), 882-898. https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2017.1376041

Flores, N. & Rosa, J. (2015). Undoing appropriateness: Raciolinguistic ideologies and language diversity education. *Harvard Educational Review, 85*(2), 149-171. https://doi.org/10.17763/0017-8055.85.2.149

Janks, H. (2013) Critical literacy in teaching and research. *Education Inquiry, 4*(2), 225-242, https://doi.org10.3402/edui.v4i2.22071

Rogers, R. (2011). *An introduction to critical discourse analysis in education* (2nd ed). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203836149

Authors' Positionality

The power of CDA pushes us to continuously reflect on our own bias and gives us a framework to confront them and better ourselves and our writing. As authors, we aim to be transparent within our learning and our identities. Through studying CDA and performing CDA analysis on our own discourse (written, verbal, gestured), we have learned to do better. A symbolic example is the phrase "our students." We often used this phrase in writing to show that we believe in a culture of inclusion. However, through

learning CDA, we uncovered the power that is portrayed within "our students," showing possession of students. This is an example of how Little "d," "our" or possession and hierarchy, feeds into the Big "D," how students have been historically positioned under the authority of educators and scholars. Do we have the right to claim possession over another human being? Absolutely not. Therefore, we shifted our discourse to refer to students as "the students" giving students ownership of themselves. We have been perpetrators of using possessive phrases such as "my class," "my students," "my math lesson," "my expectation." Through CDA, we have learned to shift language that reproduces inequalities and authoritative power. Below are brief descriptions of how we come to the table of education and writing.

Monica: I identify as White Latina; therefore, I have experience with the dynamic of intersection of identity and ethnicity in White America. I am a heterosexual cisgender woman which translates to freedom around my gender and sexual orientation that others have historically not had. I have also had the privilege of a higher education journey and that adds to the limitations of my understanding of poverty and educational oppression. Being the daughter of an immigrant, I show up to this work with a lens of social justice, a passion for empowering underrepresented populations of students, and a fire within me to bring difficult conversations to the table.

Jessica: I am White; my race is a deficit to understanding racial oppression. I am a cisgender woman; while I have experience with gender oppression, I have privilege of being able to fit into gender norms. I identify as queer and have experienced oppression due to my sexual orientation. I was born with a cleft lip and palate and received Title I services as a child. I grew up in a working-class family and I am a first-generation college student and have experienced economic and educational oppression. My hope is that, over time, I can support myself and others to see through a lens of social justice, recognize how oppression self-replicates, and understand how we can see, and treat, all as fully human.

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As co-authors, we commit ourselves to researching, analyzing, and dismantling systems of exclusion within public education. Grounded in anti-oppression, we leverage our experience in public schools to ensure our work is impactful and useful for all educators.

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COVID-19 and Digital Learning in the Dominican Republic: Implications for Marginalized Communities

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With COVID-19 placing a strain on its public institutions, the Dominican Republic is attempting to ensure a streamlined digital education process by extending Digital Republic, a past initiative that provides online frameworks and platforms for its students and teachers. However, already long existing issues are exacerbating access to education for vulnerable communities. While past policies included special needs services, the following initiative has yet to provide information on access for disabled students. Likewise, low-income students face financial challenges to gain the resources necessary to thrive during remote learning. The following case study explores the country's education system, how its policies benefit certain groups and negatively impact others. By conducting in-depth policy analysis and interviews, the study analyzes the impact of digital learning during the pandemic among vulnerable communities in the country.

Introduction

The pandemic has placed an undue burden on educational systems in the Caribbean. This is particularly so for countries with resource constraints like the Dominican Republic. With COVID-19 placing a strain on its public institutions, the Dominican Republic is attempting to ensure a streamlined digital education process by providing more digital platform initiatives (Cobo et al., 2020). The digital tools are an addition to *Digital Republic*, a past initiative that provides online frameworks and platforms for all citizens through the use of technology (Muñoz et al, 2020, p. 83). However, already existing issues are exacerbating access to education, particularly for vulnerable communities. Lack of education access for special needs and low-income students has been a continuous issue. The current education system has seen a divide between urban and rural areas. For example, low-income students residing in rural regions have difficulties accessing quality education and resources compared to their urban, higher-income counterparts (J.A. Rodríguez, Personal Communication, January 29, 2021). Education policies also do not include special needs students. Currently, reforms provide special needs services and programs centered on integration and inclusion (Special Education Directorate & Vice Ministry of Technical and Pedagogical Services, 2017, p. 4-5). However, these initiatives do not fully address frameworks that do not take into account special needs students in regular classes who have little access to specialized services for specific disabilities (Acevedo, 2016). These issues are part of a larger educational gap revealing years of

"institutional capacity issues" (UN Convention on The Rights of The Child, 2015, p. 14). With the implementation of digital learning in response to the pandemic, however, existing problems have been exacerbated with marginalized groups being left behind. Once again education access is being denied, either intentionally or unintentionally.

The following case study explores the current education system in the Dominican Republic, how its digital online policies benefit certain groups, and how it reveals underlying effects for other communities. It will explain how COVID-19 exacerbates previous ongoing issues and how the government addresses them. By conducting policy analysis and interviews, the study analyzes the impact of digital learning during the pandemic among vulnerable communities in the country.

Why are Digital Learning Strategies Important Amidst a Pandemic?

Before delving into the research, it is important to note the impact of Covid-19 in the country. The following case study explores a unique perspective on how Latin American and Caribbean countries are tackling the crisis. Although digital tools like social media apps and platforms have been present in the region, the crisis has pushed many countries to incorporate innovative technological tools and existing media platforms in the classroom (Cobo et al., 2020). By adapting curricula, pedagogical practices, and classroom logistics for online education, teachers and students are using a new form of learning amidst a crisis. The Dominican Republic is only one of many countries incorporating digital learning. However, this innovative solution also has its costs. As a developing nation, the Dominican Republic suffers from structural issues such as lack of access to technology. These problems make it difficult to successfully implement remote learning for all citizens and residents (*El Nacional*, 2020). This is notwithstanding other faults plaguing the country. According to Paige Cone (2019) from The Ohio State University, the country suffers from "inadequate spending in the education sector, scarce quantity of teachers and low quality of teacher education, delays in formation of secondary schools, and expansive management shortages." Exploring the effects of remote learning impacting vulnerable communities, the study aims to be a first step in exploring alternatives and solutions to address the educational gap in the country. Ultimately, these results could provide an avenue by which quality education could be accessible for all students.

Overview: Education System and "Digital Republic"

To investigate the country's issues and ramifications, it is also important to explore the Dominican Republic's education system. Currently, the country offers four levels of schooling: pre-primary, primary, secondary, and tertiary (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization –UNESCO, 2021). Previously, education was compulsory for eight years, providing schooling for children 6-14 years old (OECD, 2008, p. 29). However, compulsory education has been recently extended to 13 years (The

National Institute of Education Planning & UNESCO, 2019, p. 2) For secondary education, children aged 14-18 receive four years of additional schooling to strengthen skillsets. This includes general education within the first cycle while vocational, continuing general education, and art options are in the second cycle. There are also two additional systems in place, or subsystems, that focus on adult education and children with special needs. Each level of education is coordinated through three agencies:

1. The Ministry of Education, (Secretaría de Estado de Educación—SEE or MINERD) which helps to coordinate primary and secondary schools.
2. Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (Secretaría de Estado de Educación Superior, Ciencia y Tecnología –MESCyT) which focuses on colleges and universities as well as research institutions concentrating on technological, biological, industrial, and agricultural advances. And,
3. The National Institute of Professional and Technical Training (Instituto Nacional de Formación Técnico Professional) that centers on alternative schooling for non-traditional students and technical/vocational training (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development –OECD, 2008, p. 29-32)

Currently, there are 2.7 million students who have matriculated at the start of the academic school year as of 2018 (National Office of Statistics, 2019).

While the education system provides a basic approach to education, the country has made a series of reforms over the years to improve. Its most recent, the Institutional Strategic Plan 2017-2020 (Plan Estratégico Institucional), has yielded great results. According to the evaluation report published by MINERD, school literacy has increased with 999, 026 adult individuals obtaining literacy skills thanks to the program National Plan of Literacy Quisqueya Learn with You (Alfabetización Quisqueya Aprende Contigo) (MINERD, 2018 p. 37). Additionally, the report found that more students aged 15 have continued their education from 8.6 years to 9.18 years (MINERD, 2018 p. 36-37). These achievements are a testament to the various programs established including a focus on early childhood development centers and nutritional programs, among other initiatives (MINERD, 2018, p. 94).

Alongside these measures, the government aims to improve its system through online educational tools available to students and teachers. This is where *República Digital* or the *Digital Republic* program comes in. In response to the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, *Digital Republic* aims to provide access for all citizens while "enabling economic and social development" through the use of technology (Muñoz et. al, 2020, p. 83). The program extends beyond the educational system with information and communication technologies (ICTs) to be incorporated within the government (for transparency purposes) and includes gender equity and "social inclusion" (Muñoz et. al, 2020, p. 83-84). One of its purposes is to bridge the "digital divide" among vulnerable populations who do not have access (i.e., low-income families, those from rural areas, and families with

"lower levels of education") (Dominican Republic Government, p. 10). So far, the program offers projects including broadening WIFI access, capacity-building classes on technology for women and low-income individuals, and computer access for children and their families. The results of the program have been met with mixed reviews, however, with some officials calling it a success in closing the digital divide while publications questioning the limitations of the program's outreach to successfully provide access to all communities. For example, the publication *Diario Libre* notes that these projects have only reached 5% of the student population (1 in 4 households) compared to official statistics from the Dominican Republic's Sustainable Development Executive Summary reporting that almost 90% of residents in the country have access to mobile technology (Dominican Republic Government, p. 10)

With the onset of COVID-19, however, virtual learning became a priority. Extending *Digital Republic*, the government implemented a series of initiatives to adapt the educational system into online learning and provide families with the tools they need to continue their education despite a worldwide pandemic. These initiatives include expanding free WIFI up to "1,000 access points," a national education portal where educational content can be accessed by grade level, and social networking apps like WhatsApp which help to connect students and teachers throughout their remote learning (Cobo et al., 2020).

In addition to these resources, the Ministry of Education supported approximately 2,000 vulnerable families by providing sanitary kits at educational centers (*Listin Diario*, 2020). This initiative was in collaboration with the organization World Vision and the General Directorate for Community Participation (Dirección General de Participación Comunitaria) and the Office for International Cooperation (Oficina de Cooperación Internacional—OCI). Sixty centers distributed the kits in the following provinces: Santo Domingo, San Cristóbal, Monseñor Nouel, La Vega and Santiago (*Listin Diario*, 2020). Aside from the kits, World Vision also provided informational videos that can help parents facilitate their homes into educational spaces for their children.

While these initiatives have greatly benefitted some communities, other groups are being marginalized—whether through exclusionary practices or inaccessible methods. Thus, the educational system has two underlying issues that have become more apparent during the pandemic: the socio-economic divide within rural and urban schools among wealthier and low-income students, and lack of access and guidance for children with disabilities.

Urban vs. Rural: Socio-Economic Divide within Digital Learning Processes

One of the most notable inequalities within the Dominican Republic's education system is the socio-economic divide between schools in the cities and institutions in rural areas where access is less defined. For example, secondary schools have a lower attendance in

rural areas compared to urban zones (OECD, 2008, p. 150). According to research by Nidia Beatriz Columna Pérez (2020), the attendance rate for general urban areas is "9.53%, while rural area rates are as high as 19.36%" (p. 2). Keeping in mind discrepancies between the areas, the researcher also emphasizes how both urban and rural provinces have no indicators to provide analysis of policies. Each district and territory are classified "homogenously" by "residence zone" without any other factors making their analysis of policies difficult to discern (Pérez, 2020, p. 2). How then, does socio-economic status link to inequalities in the education system?

Crucial prevalent issues stem from socio-economic divides among the public and private schools, generating a gap between lower-income and higher-income families. With more privileges than their public counterparts, private schools are enjoyed by those who can afford it with higher-income families enrolling often than lower-income students (OECD, 2008, p. 167). There are few resources and inadequate facilities in "marginalized urban and rural areas" (UN Convention on The Rights of The Child, 2015, p. 14). Unlike public schools, private schools have more resources and better-trained staff, providing an advantage in education quality for those who can attend. With the pandemic, however, resources have been spread thin. According to R. Olaechea, a private school coordinator in the city of Santiago, private schools have been ahead in the curriculum than most public schools since the pandemic (Personal Communication, February 5, 2021). Government-funded schools started online learning in November compared to private schools which started in September of last year. This discrepancy is only one example of the advantages of private schools which regularly provide extra hours of schooling to cover more of the curriculum needed. Private schools generally end their classes at 2:00-2:30 p.m. while public schools end at noon. Aside from regular classes, the coordinator emphasized, teachers provide additional hours for tutoring as needed. Not to mention, most parents whose children attend private schools have the money and resources for virtual learning including providing them with WIFI access and computers. Even with the *Digital Republic*'s initiatives to bridge that gap by offering internet and computers, this project is not reaching far enough to those who need it the most. This advantage to one group only increases the gap between private and public schools with around 80% of students in public schools falling behind in the academic year (Garrido, 2021).

Yet, much like their public school counterparts, rural areas also suffer from a similar fate. The school coordinator noted that rural areas as far as the South close to the Haitian border continue to have limited technological access for learning. Her assessment is not only true but troubling. In a large study conducted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other partner organizations (2020), 16% of those who are taking classes remotely have not been able to continue their education, emphasizing that 40% of individuals among this group live in "border territories" (IOM et. al, 2020, p. 1). How, then, do these differences affect school productivity and performance?

In this way, one can see the differences in performances based on economic status. Looking at previous PISA results, one can view how income was a strong "predictor" for performance, at least in math and science compared to reading which found little correlation (Avvisati et al.,–2019, p. 3). However, disparities in access and education quality can be seen among different populations. For example, there is a larger concentration of low-performing students in one area compared to other areas with high-performing students. According to the assessment, there is a lower chance for a disadvantaged student to be enrolled in a top-performing school (around 15%). These "clusters" of students, as indicated in the report, shows where resources have also been distributed. Disadvantaged schools often report more teacher and resource shortages (31% of students enrolled with reports submitted by principals) while advantaged schools have also experienced similar issues but to a lesser extent (17% of students enrolled with reports submitted by principals) (Avvisati, et. al, 2019, p. 5). Yet, teachers are more certified in disadvantaged schools than advantaged ones, although they have less experience (Avvisati, et. al, 2019, p. 5).

While these disparities remain a fixture in the education system, COVID-19 exacerbated them further. In an interview with J.A. Rodríguez, a public teacher for a language immersion program, the instructor noted how family members and their children struggled to keep up with schooling during the pandemic (Personal Communication, January 29, 2021). At first, there were "no classes at all," he said. Once the Ministry of Education implemented television programs with homework packets, however, it seemed that a structure was put into place to help children continue their schooling. At the time, the government spent around RD$ 1,575,043,073 to fund 44 broadcasting companies that would establish educational programming throughout the country *(Servicios de Acento.com.DO,* 2021). While some students benefited from the programming, others continued to struggle to keep up with schooling despite its implementation. J.A. Rodríguez emphasized that not every family has a television in their home which left some students unable to finish their homework. Others could gain access by going to the houses of their friends or family where television was available. For example, the interviewees' cousin and his family are the only household in the neighborhood to own a television. Most of the students nearby go to their house to watch the educational programs to complete their tasks. Ultimately, around 26% of students were able to effectively benefit from the television programs (Garrido, 2021). Access to education and the resources available like the internet and technology is still a "privilege," as the public teacher emphasized.

Unfortunately, these testimonials are not a surprise considering the struggles public schools face since the start of the pandemic. According to a report by (2020), approximately 91% of students in public schools utilize digital tools like WhatsApp on a regular basis to continue their education with "four hours or less" spent on tasks for classes. However, 41% of these students are only able to gain just around "two hours" of schooling (Garrido, 2021). While MINERD's plans to implement television programs were

well intentioned, its execution did not bring about the desired change the Ministry hoped for. The results were once again mixed. For some families with only one television and multiple children at different stages in their education, the programs were ineffective (Féliz, 2020). Reflecting on the implementation, J.A. Rodríguez noted how the television programs were well made but left plenty of students with little motivation to learn. Not to mention, he said, the programming did not reflect the curricula implemented in schools (Personal Communication, January 29, 2021).

The execution may be problematic, but the country's digital strategies also did not consider the gap in access among different students. In a recent joint report by the Dominican Institute of Evaluation and Research for Education Quality (Instituto Dominicano de Evaluación e Investigación de la Calidad Educativa—IDEICE) and local organizational network The Observatory Toward the Implementation of the Convention on The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2020), there is a gap among the use of technology by students (p. 4-5). For example, the report outlined how 79% of students reported having access to internet, leaving behind 450,000 students who do not have access (IDEICE & The Observatory, 2020, p. 5). Additionally, the report noted how some students may have the technology but not the training to use the tools effectively. As a result, digital learning strategies have been ineffective so far in tackling the existing issues within the country's education.

Left Behind: Exclusionary Practices Affecting Special Needs Students

While the education system has suffered from the unequal distribution of resources, the system fails to include those with special needs or who have a disability. In turn, exclusionary practices persist in a country with 1,160, 847 individuals living with a disability (The Observatory, p. 2). According to The Observatory, the education system lacks proper practices to address individuals with disabilities (p. 4). For example, children with disabilities are being turned away at schools, denying them access to primary education. Facilities in public and private schools are not structurally equipped to accommodate those with physical disabilities. Additionally, there are few teachers with little special education training such as individuals familiar with Sign language. Not to mention, Braille is hardly available for individuals who are blind or visibly impaired (The Observatory, p. 4-5). These inadequacies reflect a long-standing education system unable to provide inclusionary practices into their classrooms although these issues are currently being addressed by the government.

In an interview with a public official from MINERD's Special Education Directorate, the publication *Metro* found that at the time "around 48% of public schools [had] students with disabilities in their classrooms" (Acevedo, 2016). While this number was a large percent of students in need of special services, this statistic showed that schools were ill-equipped to provide an inclusive education to students with disabilities; an issue that the government was well aware of. A previous study conducted by the government found

that "59% of educational centers were unable to incorporate inclusive pedagogical practices that could help students in their learning and development" (Acevedo, 2016). In response to these issues, improvements were made but problems continue to surface even today. Nevertheless, incorporating a strategy perhaps may be far difficult considering the infrastructure available. Below is a list of the challenges exacerbated by the pandemic that children with disabilities continue to face:

- A need for a support team of specialists necessary to meet a child's needs.
- The lack of supporting tools and adequate technology to follow their classes from home.
- Difficulties for family mediation, care and personal attention. Particularly, when the country still does not have the legal and social framework that facilitates care and conciliation.
- The economic difficulties experienced by families and that are aggravated by the care of children and adolescents with disabilities.
- A need for a protocol for specialists, health personnel and caregivers of children and adolescents. (La Red Dominicana, 2020)

Ideally, teachers would be able to integrate special needs students within their classrooms by evaluating each child's learning style, adjusting curriculum as needed and planning learning sessions that focus on a child's "cognitive, psychological, and social development (Flores & Hernández, 2016, p. 18). Placing inclusive frameworks into action, higher education institutions in the country are providing certifications and master's programs in diversity and inclusion as well as special education (Peláez & Ramirez, p. 14). These initiatives are being established in response to Law No. 5-13 which stipulates that the National Council of Disability (Consejo Nacional de Discapacidad –CONADIS) must partner with academic institutions to provide training in special education (Peláez & Ramirez, p. 14). Currently, institutions like the Autonomy University of Santo Domingo (La Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo) and the Pontifical Catholic Mother & Teacher (La Pontificia Catolica Madre y Maestra) offer electives or pre-requisites regarding special education needs and diversity (Peláez & Ramirez, p. 14-15).

With the foundation in place to develop teachers knowledgeable in special education, the government has implemented other reforms through the Institutional Strategic Plan 2017-2020. Currently, the Ministry of Education has implemented the Resource Center for The Attention Towards Diversity (Centro de Recursos para la Atención de Diversidad –CAD) which aims to "promote education access for students with special needs – without exclusion toward any condition of any kind" (MINERD, 2018, p. 128). The Centers have "interdisciplinary teams" which provide "psycho-pedagogic counseling in 516 primary-level educational centers" (MINERD, 2018, p. 128). A total of 32,955 students benefited from the program with 1,916 psycho-pedagogical evaluations being implemented, and language evaluations conducted for up to 860 students (MINERD, 2018, p. 129). Furthermore, CAD's implemented support spaces to help students struggling with

reading and comprehension and provided resources and specialized teachers for students with visual impairments (MINERD, 2018, p. 129). There are also other programs with partnered agencies providing further training for individuals working with special needs children. Among these programs is the partnership of National Institute of Education and Training of the Magisterium (Instituto Nacional de Formación y Capacitación del Magisterio –INAFOCAM) and the National University of Pedro Henríquez Ureña (Universidad Nacional Pedro Henríquez Ureña—UNPHU). This project offered a series of workshops for teachers and pedagogical experts working in the special education field (INAFOCAM, 2017). These reforms are a big improvement, considering that just two years earlier the government reported a shortage of untrained staff with 64% of public schools reporting not having any personnel with credentials in special education (Acevedo, 2016).

Looking at these policies and programs, it seems like the Dominican Republic is on its way to providing inclusive education for students with special needs. Yet, reports of unequal access among this vulnerable group persists – especially now more than ever with the pandemic forcing students with disabilities to cease their education.

Currently, research on special education during COVID-19 is limited. However, according to a report by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and UNESCO (2020), the pandemic has exacerbated and highlighted these inequities in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Particularly, the risk of "disengagement and dropping out of school" is a particular concern (p. 14). More troubling are the COVID-19 online platforms that do not address special education curricula or services, even with government efforts planning to include special needs children in their school reopening strategies (Garcia, 2020, p. 15). Furthermore, MINERD's Special Education Directorate has been conducting an assessment to identify what services children with disabilities need during this time (Ozuna, 2020). Although another well-intentioned effort in part by the government, this lack of awareness to include special needs students earlier on shows that services were not even considered when the agency launched its remote learning strategy. As a result, many educational staff who work with students with special needs had no choice but to rely on their "own resources and ingenuities" to help their students continue their education (Ozuna, 2020).

It seems like implementing concrete educational methods for students with special needs and individuals with disabilities continues to be a problem. Yet, there have been improvements since the implementation of the Institutional Strategic Plan 2017-2020. Even prior to the initiative's inception, there were efforts toward inclusivity in the form of cross-collaborative programs that tailor to specific needs or public and non-profit initiatives (pre-pandemic). For example, the Dominican Association of Rehabilitation (Asociación Dominicana de Rehabilitación) and CONADIS continue to provide resources, legal support, educational training, and workshops for individuals with disabilities. However, during the pandemic, there are no inclusionary methods provided across the

board in the classroom. Researcher Katherine Hernández Morales (2021) underscored the need for officials to ensure full inclusivity where agencies "continue developing and adapting curricula and didactic materials, hire specialists for distinct needs, and provide adequate spaces in education centers for greater access" (p. 79). Once again, the realities of implementing inclusive education are far from perfect, leaving special needs students behind in their education despite the progress.

Discussion

The Covid-19 crisis has brought a different dimension onto education systems—one that could be considered a double-edged sword. In the case of the Dominican Republic, digital learning strategies have proven to benefit some students during the pandemic. However, it also laid bare the inequalities that continue to persist in the country. It divided the education system into the have's and have not's, with low-income students in rural regions and public school students struggling to gain access to digital tools and traditional media. For those with disabilities, accommodations and services were not considered during the government's efforts, leaving teachers and students to fend for themselves. While progress has been made over the years, the country's institutional capacity to provide quality education for all has been call into question again. Yet, there is a silver lining to the crisis. Recognizing the importance of digital tools, both policy officials and teachers understand that technology should be incorporated regularly into the classroom moving forward. However, the next question to consider is how we can implement these tools in an inclusive way for all communities. This research is only one step in addressing this question.

Given the limited time frame in this study, future research must take into account the rapid changing policies and programs being implemented in response to the pandemic. These assessments must be flexible in monitoring best practices while ensuring that results are updated on a regular basis. Furthermore, other vulnerable communities that have been impacted should have their own assessments made. For example, Haitian migrants and individuals of Haitian descent should have their own separate study. Further research on this should also consider the impact of Covid-19 and access to their education. Likewise, a gender perspective on education access during this time should also be evaluated.

As it stands, this study only reflects one aspect of the education system. With only a few on-the-ground interviews and extensive policy analysis, the study is limited. More in-depth research should include implementing surveys in public and private schools as well as in rural and urban areas to gauge further improvement or lack thereof in access to resources. Additionally, more interviews with teachers, parents, and students should also be conducted to provide a more holistic view of the issue. Yet, more importantly, researchers must keep in mind the cultural sensitivity of the case study. Given the socio-political and institutional climate in the country, researchers must focus their study on a

local perspective away from the Eurocentric ideals and frameworks used as benchmarks to compare low-income countries. In doing so, the study can be a fair and balanced approach to the country's education efforts.

Conclusion

Remote learning is here to stay. Yet, whether it is for better or worse remains to be seen. As we continue to face our new normal, countries like the Dominican Republic have no choice but to adapt with new technological tools to help its residents continue their education. However, officials must solve how they can successfully implement digital learning strategies in the country. It is imperative that no person is denied their education because of the barriers in place. With Covid-19 leaving its mark, the ripple effects of the Dominican Republic's education system are not only visible but exacerbated. If education initiatives can address these effects during its digital learning programs, students can finally obtain a quality education that is beneficial for their growth and development. In doing so, a better education can be achieved for all students in the country now and into the future.

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O Papel da Bibliografia das Publicações Indígenas do Brasil na Reafirmação das Identidades Intelectuais Ameríndias

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O ensino superior brasileiro e a produção científica foram, historicamente, espaços destinados a uma elite branca privilegiada. Aos povos indígenas, bem como a mulheres e negros, foi-lhes negado, ao longo dos anos, o poder de participação e produção de um conhecimento considerado também legítimo. No entanto, uma nova corrente intelectual indígena decolonial surge para mostrar que há outras formas de saber válidas. Ao mesmo tempo em que se reafirmam enquanto indivíduos e como comunidade, eles contribuem para a difusão de uma pluralidade de ideias e interpretações de mundo. Deste modo, o principal foco deste artigo é entender qual o papel da participação indígena na produção científica acadêmica e como recentes iniciativas – tal qual a Bibliografia das Publicações Indígenas do Brasil – contribuem para o resgate de sua autoestima e a sua afirmação em um meio excludente.

Palavras-chave: indígenas, academia, ciência, metodologia, decolonialismo

Introdução

Karú-Sakaibê é o criador da vida, dos céus e das montanhas, dos rios, dos animais e dos *Munduruku*. Os velhos sábios contam que *Karú-Sakaibê* andava pelo mundo sempre acompanhado de seu grande amigo *Rairu*, um jovem brincalhão, no entanto poderoso. Em uma dessas brincadeiras, *Rairu* formou uma figura de tatu usando folhas e gravetos, finalizando-a com um pouco de cera de resina de mel e, para que secasse, enterrou-a. O que *Rairu* não imaginava, contudo, é que sua mão ficaria colada na cauda do pequeno tatu, e, no intuito de soltá-la, ele acabou o trazendo à vida. O tatu, tão forte quanto seu dono, cavou tanto, mas tanto, que chegou ao centro da terra, arrastando consigo o pobre *Rairu*. Lá, ficaram chocados com o que encontraram: um povo bonito e diferente. Correram, então, para contar a *Karú* o que havia acontecido, e o deus decidiu que aquela gente não ficaria mais escondida ali, mas que agora habitaria a superfície. Por isso, deu-lhes a chuva, a mandioca, a batata, as plantas medicinais e outros alimentos, e eles se tornariam, assim, uma nação orgulhosa e guerreira. Este conto (Munduruku, 2021), bem como incontáveis outros, está no cerne da origem *Munduruku.*

Mitos como estes, centrais na cosmovisão indígena, são comumente classificados como estórias infanto-juvenis, nada além de um folclore ingênuo para os olhares longínquos. Isso se dá pois as formas de conhecimento indígena são invalidadas por uma supremacia branca do conhecimento. Na realidade, os arranjos modernos institucionais garantem um cânone do conhecimento à Europa que perpetua processos racistas ao naturalizar a "excepcionalidade" da europeidade (Araújo & Maeso, 2016). Isso quer dizer que a forma como produzimos saber ainda é pautada em uma perspectiva eurocentrada, uma prática política, histórica e acadêmica na qual grupos excluídos tiveram pouco ou quase nenhum

poder de contribuição. Logo, a maneira tradicional de se fazer conhecimento silenciou as vozes daqueles localizados às margens, como mulheres, negros e povos originários. Esta maneira, classificada como monopólio da ciência por Valadares e Silveira Júnior (2017), evidencia a falta de representatividade na produção do saber, ao passo que quem detinha os meios de conhecimento partia do pressuposto de que a experiência de homens brancos era a mesma da humanidade em geral.

Isto posto, propor-nos-emos, neste trabalho, a fazer uma crítica ao modelo acadêmico no Brasil e, ao mesmo tempo, apontar iniciativas de resistência de contrapúblicos subalternos[1], mais especificamente dos povos indígenas. Estes últimos, por meio de uma coordenação orgânica, buscam reivindicar seu lugar na construção e estabelecimento de epistemologias alternativas que também sejam consideradas legítimas. Além disso, iremos examinar como os povos indígenas, no ambiente acadêmico e fora dele, buscam trazer para si a autonomia de serem produtores soberanos de conhecimento, seja ele tradicional ou não. Deste modo, a participação ativa dos povos originários na ciência se torna crucial para a superação de contradições na academia e nos métodos científicos, propondo e provocando novas metodologias que englobem e validem diferentes perspectivas. É o caso, por exemplo, da Bibliografia das Publicações Indígenas do Brasil (BPIB), organizada de forma colaborativa por diferentes intelectuais indígenas brasileiros e que será estudada a seguir.

Escolhemos este tema a partir do entendimento de que a produção que aborde o protagonismo indígena na academia ainda é limitada e não dá o devido destaque às potentes iniciativas dos povos originários. Nós acreditamos na capacidade dos povos indígenas em ocupar e revolucionar espaços outrora negados, e na importância em estarem presentes em lugares historicamente excludentes e etilizados, como é a academia. Assim, trazer a ótica de quem está na linha de frente desta reconfiguração no fazer ciência representa o nosso desejo em poder entender melhor tal fenômeno e, concomitantemente, contribuir com um olhar sensível às suas formas de agir. No entanto, a falta e o difícil acesso aos dados sobre indígenas na ciência acabam por nos limitar, parecendo-nos a melhor solução nos apoiar em uma bibliografia pré-existente e, sobretudo, nas entrevistas dos personagens principais desta narrativa. Por meio desta metodologia, buscamos usar ferramentas que permitissem centralizar as experiências ameríndias e em seguida analisá-las mediante um processo horizontalizado. Conduzimos a nossa pesquisa no intuito de responder a alguns questionamentos, em particular se participação de povos indígenas na produção científica consegue, em algum grau, fomentar a descolonização da academia e de suas metodologias e de que forma iniciativas como a BPIB contribuem para uma melhora na autoestima dos pesquisadores indígenas na academia.

Para tal, nos baseamos em uma revisão da produção científica dando preferência aos estudos de pessoas indígenas, brasileiras e estrangeiras, mas também recorrendo, caso necessário, ao que já foi escrito por não-indígenas. Além disso, entrevistamos dois pesquisadores indígenas ativistas pela legitimação do conhecimento ameríndio, bem como uma das responsáveis pela criação da BPIB. Ao longo dos meses de junho e julho de 2021, conversamos com o Professor Doutor em Direito Álvaro de Azevedo Gonzaga, da etnia Guarani-Kaiowá; com Edson Krenak, da etnia Krenak, Doutor em Antropologia Cultural e possui Especialização Jurídica pela Universidade de Viena; e com Aline Franca, Mestre em Biblioteconomia e bibliotecárica coordenadora da Bibliografia das Publicações Indígenas do Brasil. Eles nos trouxeram um panorama baseados em suas vivências enquanto indígenas (no caso do professor Álvaro e de Edson Krenak), assim como

[1] A definição de contrapúblicos subalternos foi explorada por Nancy Fraser (1990) em seu artigo *Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy.*

ativistas pela causa e dignidade dos povos indígenas, como é o caso de Aline Franca. As entrevistas foram organizadas de forma semiestruturada, com perguntas gerais e em seguida aprofundadas conforme a discussão se desenrolava, e realizada de maneira remota.

Optamos por esses três entrevistados por serem pessoas que se posicionam de forma assertiva na defesa da produção intelectual indígena. Edson Krenak, por exemplo, é ativista por uma educação descolonizadora e se articula nacional e internacionalmente a fim de repensar as literaturas e metodologias ameríndias. Álvaro de Azevedo Gonzaga, por outro lado, é professor, advogado e militante pelos direitos humanos e pelos direitos dos povos indígenas. Além de já ter escrito livros sobre o decolonialismo indígena, possui uma longa trajetória de investigação e atuação na causa indígena. Aline Franca, cujo tema de dissertação de mestrado em biblioteconomia foi *A Representação Bibliográfica da Autoria Indígena no Brasil* (2016), articula-se diretamente com intelectuais originários para abastecer o seu projeto, Bibliografia das Publicações Indígenas do Brasil. Dessa forma, todos detêm um vasto conhecimento empírico e epistemológico que, ao serem compartilhados, enriquecem o nosso debate e contribuem com novas interpretações críticas sobre o papel deste grupo na consolidação da sua forma de ser e saber.

A invisibilidade na academia

Devemos começar a discutir a participação de grupos marginais[2] na academia – mais precisamente os povos indígenas – fazendo um recapitulativo do modelo de educação tradicional brasileiro. Neste âmbito, é essencial relembrar que o atual estágio de apagamento, contradições e incoerências é o resultado de um longo processo de exclusão sistêmica de todos aqueles que não se encontrassem na interface homem-branco-rico. Foi neste contexto, portanto, que se estabeleceu um modelo totalitário de racionalidade que ainda orienta a nossa forma de classificar o que é conhecimento e, por conseguinte, do que é e como fazer a verdadeira ciência (Piza & Pansarelli, 2012).

A história da educação superior no Brasil é marcada por profundas desigualdades (Derossi & Carvalho, 2021). A exclusão de grupos marginais fez parte, desde o princípio, da agenda portuguesa de impedir a autonomia intelectual em sua colônia mais próspera, monopolizando, assim, a esfera de ensino (Durham, 2003). Tal fato pode ser observado durante a criação da primeira instituição de ensino superior brasileira, em 1808, motivada pela chegada da família real portuguesa fugida da ameaça napoleônica e não pelo desejo intrínseco de suprir as necessidades educacionais nacionais (Braga & Mazzeu, 2017).

Até então, os únicos a terem acesso às universidades eram herdeiros de família abastadas que deviam se deslocar aos centros urbanos da Metrópole, em Portugal, para estudar. Em seguida, para eles também foram destinados espaços restritos de produção de conhecimento quando a mesma já acontecia no Brasil. Deste modo, a educação esteve reservada à uma pequena parcela da população privilegiada, ressaltando seu caráter elitista, excludente e centralizador (Novaes *et al.*, 2018). Para Garcia (2000), os déficits estruturais da educação superior brasileira ainda refletem a "hegemonia dos que se pretendiam proprietários do saber, que eram também os proprietários das terras e de

[2] Partiremos da noção de grupos marginalizados, ou minorias, presente no trabalho de Danner *et al.* (2020). Desta forma nos referimos a grupos invisibilizados, silenciados e excluídos pelo sujeito colonizador. Estes grupos são, segundo os autores, vítimas de uma menoridade moral, condição essa que apaga seus discursos e lhes nega sua maioridade política. No caso dos povos indígenas, eles viveriam numa condição de maioridade relativa, sob uma tutela tecnocrática na qual eles seriam meros objetos do Estado, mas nunca sujeitos.

todas as riquezas produzidas, e que se valiam do saber para justificar seu poder" (p.68). Isto é visível, por exemplo, em dados que revelam que, nos anos 1900, cerca de 65.3% da população brasileira ainda era analfabeta (Braga & Mazzeu, 2017).

A educação moderna, em vista disso, teve como base premissas racistas, classistas e misóginas que deixaram de fora grande porcentagem da população brasileira. A começar pela modernidade que, segundo Ballestrin (2017), é tanto uma época quanto um processo, uma ideologia e uma lógica que positivou a razão e a civilização através da violência colonial sobre outros modelos de sentir, pensar e agir (p. 522). Neste contexto, solidificou-se uma forma específica de racionalidade que tem como uma das consequências a destruição de outras formas de saber (Hoffmeister *et al.,* 2016). Ela pauta, todavia, os nossos princípios epistemológicos e regras metodológicas complexas, tornando-os por vezes inacessíveis. Nesta racionalidade, o que não é quantificável se torna irrelevante. A contínua reprodução das narrativas ocidentais, em particular da europeia, leva à formação de uma subjetividade domesticada e heteronônoma (Piza, 2018, p.113). Por outro lado, ela reduz a sua complexidade ao não considerar outras perspectivas não-imperiais, tão essenciais para a pluralidade no debate das ideias.

O desenvolvimento do capitalismo econômico, que se inicia a partir da acumulação primitiva do capital (Federici, 2004), esteve diretamente associado ao monopólio da ciência, de acordo com Valadares e Silveira Júnior (2017). Tal fato levou a imposição de supostas verdades universais – baseadas, sobretudo, em conceitos da Revolução Científica emergentes no século XVI (Gomes, 2012) – aos grupos explorados. Como consequência, culturas e saberes fora do eixo eurocêntrico foram invalidadas, tornando-se, inclusive, objetos de estudos caricatos e estereotipados vistos sob a ótica dos detentores da *razão*. Deste modo, o conhecimento, como o percebemos hoje, solidificou-se nos objetivos e intenções daqueles que detinham a hegemonia de poder (Monk & García-Ramon, 1987). No contexto brasileiro, esta hegemonia esteve e está intimamente relacionada ao seu passado colonial.

Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2018), em sua obra *Epistemologias do Sul*, explora o epistemicídio como o fenômeno que colocou o colonialismo como uma forma de conhecimento que se autorregulava. Ele o considera, também, um dos maiores crimes contra a humanidade. Segundo o autor,

> [...] o genocídio que pontuou tantas vezes a expansão europeia foi também um epistemicídio: eliminaram-se povos estranhos porque tinham formas de conhecimento estranho e eliminaram-se formas de conhecimento estranho porque eram sustentadas por práticas sociais e povos estranhos. Mas o epistemicídio foi muito mais vasto que o genocídio porque ocorreu sempre que se pretendeu subalternizar, subordinar, marginalizar, ou ilegalizar práticas e grupos sociais que podiam constituir uma ameaça à expansão capitalista ou, durante boa parte do nosso século, à expansão comunista (neste domínio tão moderna quanto a capitalista); e também porque ocorreu tanto no espaço periférico, extra-europeu e extra-norte-americano do sistema mundial, como no espaço central europeu e norte-americano, contra os trabalhadores, os índios, os negros, as mulheres e as minorias em geral (étnicas, religiosas, sexuais). (p.200)

Esta ideia é reforçada por Grosfoguel (2016), ao afirmar que a legitimidade do monopólio do conhecimento gera estruturas que produzem (e reproduzem) o racismo e o sexismo epistêmico, desqualificando a oposição feita ao projeto por sua vez patriarcal, colonial, imperial e universal que regem o sistema-mundo (p.25). bell hooks (2013), indo mais além,

acrescenta que da teoria resultante deste modo de conhecimento é feito um uso instrumental que cria hierarquias desnecessárias de pensamentos que endossam políticas de dominação. Para ela, obras consideradas teóricas são repletas de jargões, referências obscuras e difíceis de ler (p.89) que impedem a identificação e decodificação dos que estão às margens, trazendo-lhes consequências reais e materiais.

Nancy Fraser (1990), como mencionado anteriormente, aborda o pensamento de subalternidade e de como é possível reagir a ele, especialmente enquanto grupos invisibilizados. Nele, a autora analisa as premissas habermasianas de participação democrática e ressalta a importância da presença de grupos socialmente excluídos nos espaços públicos de tomada de decisão. Na contramão ao discurso de Jürgen Habermas[3], ela demonstra que levar em conta a condição periférica na qual estes segmentos da sociedade estão inseridos é um fator central do processo reivindicatório. Conforme aponta Gayatri Spivak (2010), a manutenção das estruturas que acentuam as diferenças entre grupos hegemônicos e subalternos está no fato de que, para o último, é crucial que outros falem por ele. Ser subalterno, por conseguinte, é não falar ou ter sua fala tutelada por outros. Portanto, o confronto entre contra-públicos subalternos e poder hegemônico acaba sendo uma etapa inicial de democratização, ao propiciar uma maior pluralidade de representação na esfera pública (seja ela em espaços de tomada de decisão ou de ensino, especialmente pelo seu caráter político).

Edson Krenak acredita que a universidade ainda é um local onde não há abertura para a diversidade de expressões. O que acontece, de fato, é que este modelo educacional funciona pela lógica da doutrinação, para uniformizar o pensamento dos estudantes. Trata-se, de acordo com ele, de uma academia colonizada que busca silenciar as vozes e deslegitimar as tradições indígenas.

> Existe, sim, um debate teórico, mas que só interessa aos teóricos para os currículos e egos deles. [...] Não existe nenhuma contribuição política, legal, social, emancipatória para os povos indígenas na universidade. As línguas indígenas, por exemplo, são posse dos departamentos de linguística ou de antropologia, mas elas quase não têm expressão nenhuma em termos de produção de conhecimento. A língua indígena é o local de conhecimento branco, colonizador. (Krenak, comunicação pessoal, 10 de julho, 2021).

Como consequência dessa exclusão conjuntural, estudantes indígenas se sentiam e se sentem abandonados e solitários, em particular face às políticas tradicionais – e equivocadas – de "inclusão". Por outro lado, eles são confrontados cotidianamente frente aos métodos e a professores cujas práticas têm profundas raízes no racismo estrutural. "Indígenas chegavam [à sala de aula] com uma bagagem enorme de conhecimento tradicional e não conheciam equações de segundo grau. Só por isso os professores já os desqualificavam, diziam para voltar para a escola [primária]" (Krenak, comunicação pessoal, 10 de julho de 2021). O ativista ressalta, entretanto, que a própria formação de tais docentes é colonizadora, não poupando sequer professores indígenas de darem

[3] Orientado pela Escola de Frankfurt, Habermas parte do conceito de que há uma suposta racionalidade que deve ser aplicada durante os momentos de discussão, mas que, para isso, é preciso abandonar a nossa identidade e a nossa subjetividade. Para ele, a esfera pública é um local neutro no qual pessoas devem suspender as suas diferenças enquanto indivíduos e debater como se fossem todos iguais. Esta posição é problemática visto que não somos somente diferentes, como possuímos trajetórias diferentes que nos moldam e nos orientam. Nossas emoções, deste modo, são um motor que nos fazem lutar para sermos levado em consideração nas tomadas de decisão em uma democracia.

continuidade à maneira de educar que os oprime. Para ele, falta uma formação essencialmente indígena.

Em contrapartida, a academia é um espaço de onde emergem contra-condutas que, segundo Alabarce *et al.* (2020), causam tensão entre projetos neoliberais que colocam o saber acadêmico constantemente em risco. É no meio acadêmico que se procura entender o mundo, a sociedade e seus fenômenos naturais ou humanos. As universidades, apesar de suas falhas, ainda se mantêm como um espaço de discussão e de busca por educação de qualidade, plural e emancipatória. De acordo com Romão (2013), o ensino superior e a sua maneira de existir estão em uma profunda crise identitária; é certo, porém, que é através deste processo que se torna possível se reinventar. Em diálogo com as obras de Paulo Freire, o autor acredita que a solução para o ensino superior está em sua própria superação institucional, curricular e científica. Para ele, o ato de superar

> [...] não significa negar-se e negar a sua história, mas descobrir-se em um novo contexto, a partir da síntese de suas próprias contradições internas, o que significa encarar a superação dialética como autotransformação, como substituição do imediato pelo mediato, em suma, enquanto "mediatização", como gostava de dizer Paulo Freire (2013, p. 93).

Neste cenário, grupos socialmente esquecidos desempenham um papel central na superação, pois possuem as ferramentas para apontar equívocos e trazer novas interpretações da nossa realidade, muito mais subjetiva do que se ouse afirmar. A seguir, exploraremos como povos originários assumem para si a responsabilidade de serem também agentes ativos na busca do conhecimento, saindo do local passivo de eternos sujeitos de estudo para operarem como produtores de saber.

Ciência também é coisa de indígena

No que tange a participação de estudantes ameríndios na academia, compartilhamos a perspectiva de Smith (2021) ao assegurar que a atividade de se fazer pesquisa é transformada quando povos indígenas passam a ser os pesquisadores e não apenas os meros objetos de pesquisa. Com a sua presença nesses locais, as questões são formadas de maneiras distintas e as prioridades são repensadas (p.193). É a produção de conhecimento feito por eles e para eles e suas comunidades.

O Brasil conta, atualmente, com 494 docentes indígenas em exercício na Educação Superior, dos quais 196 são mulheres e 298 são homens. De 386.073 professores, eles representam 0.1%, do total, conforme dados do Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira (INPE), do Ministério da Educação[4]. No que tange a sua presença nas universidades, eles eram, em 2019, 0.7% dos estudantes matriculados a se autodeclarar indígenas. Contudo, apesar dos números discretos, eles mostram um cenário otimista: a presença de alunos indígenas no ensino cresce exponencialmente a cada ano (Herbetta & Nazareno, 2020).

Os povos originários também estão na pós-graduação, tornando-se mestres e doutores na vanguarda de uma produção acadêmica feita por e para indígenas. Eles fazem parte de uma nova classe intelectual autóctone, sendo a autoria acadêmica indígena um fenômeno social em emergência (Reichert, 2019). É, destarte, uma ação política que ousa romper com

[4] Estes dados nos foram disponibilizados pelo Instituto Nacional de Educação, do Ministério da Educação, através da Lei de acesso à informação. Eles foram baseados no Censo de 2019 sobre o número de docentes total e indígenas das instituições de educação superior.

moldes coloniais. Assim, "a autoria indígena está no fato de ter reconhecido o seu lugar de fala, independentemente da condição em que tal fala se inscreve" (Portela & Nogueira, 2016, p.158).

As autoras ainda lembram que o ingresso de indígenas no ensino superior é um acontecimento recente (2016, p.12), que teve seu início no governo petista de Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003-2010). Os anos 2000, assim sendo, foram marcados por iniciativas que buscavam maior inclusão destes povos no campo social das políticas públicas, em particular no acesso ao ensino superior. Em 2012, a aprovação da Lei 12.211/2012 – conhecida como Lei de Cotas – foi uma inegável conquista e um importante avanço na democratização do ensino a segmentos historicamente excluídos (Baniwa, 2013). A ação afirmativa, sancionada pela ex-presidente Dilma Rousseff (Partido dos Trabalhadores), permitiu que o número de vagas direcionadas a povos indígenas aumentasse em 544% desde a implementação dessa lei, segundo dados do Censo da Educação Superior, do Ministério da Educação (INEP/MEC, 2018). É necessário, porém, observar a iniciativa com cautela, visto que ela é o pontapé para "pensar o enfrentamento mais pragmático das desigualdades associadas à exclusão e discriminação racial, sociocultural, econômica e étnica" (Baniwa, 2013, p.18).

Felipe Cruz, antropólogo indígena brasileiro, percebe, a partir de sua experiência, que estudantes autóctones pretendem dominar não só o conhecimento branco, mas ocupar lugares estratégicos dentro da academia como forma de romper práticas de tutela que vão na contramão do almejado protagonismo indígena (2016, p.26). Deste modo, povos originários buscam, na formação superior, uma via alternativa e legítima de participação sociopolítica para atender seus desejos e os de suas comunidades. Isso também os capacitam na gestão de seus territórios ao mesmo tempo em que lhes dão condições favoráveis para exercerem sua cidadania.

Paralelamente a Cruz (2016), Álvaro de Azevedo Gonzaga, durante entrevista, retoma o conceito de etnocídio mencionado anteriormente por Boaventura de Sousa Santos e explica as razões pelas quais presença de estudantes indígenas no ensino superior é uma estratégia para vencê-lo.

> A luta etnocida [indígena versus conhecimento colonizado] é justamente essa. O etnocídio nada mais é do que 'eu estrangular' a sua cultura. A cultura universitária tem uma política etnocida, na qual os indígenas precisam entender o seu papel na universidade, abastecer-se de conhecimento colonizador para que possa operacionalizar, dentro dos aparelhos estatais, dentro das estratégias políticas que existem, formas de ação. No direito, por exemplo, aprender como se judicializam determinadas questões é uma delas. (Azevedo Gonzaga, comunicação pessoal, 22 de junho, 2021).

Krenak, seguindo a mesma linha de raciocínio que Azevedo Gonzaga, aponta que foi o sentimento de serem massacrados por um sistema que não os contemplava o que os permitiu reagir. "Isso deu espaço para aquilo que é bastante indígena, para a resistência. Nos deu forças para criar laços e comunidades indígenas dentro das universidades. Foi assim que nos fortalecemos" (Krenak, comunicação pessoal, 10 de julho de 2021). Este fortalecimento se deu com maior ingresso de indígenas na universidade e na ocupação de lugares considerados não-indígenas.

> Nós já começamos a trilhar este caminho, ao entrar nas universidades e discutirmos, questionarmos e termos esse debate público. Alguns indígenas têm

> usado suas mídias sociais para questionar estes parâmetros. Nós estamos forçando os portões a se abrirem para nós, mas, quando entramos, não queremos entrar sozinhos. Queremos entrar como parceiros, com nossos conhecimentos e nossas tradições. Não queremos entrar para sermos formados nos padrões colonizadores. A gente quer dialogar e precisamos ter a habilidade de sentar a mesa para negociar. (Krenak, comunicação pessoal, 10 de julho de 2021).

Daniel Munduruku, em sua obra *O caráter educativo do movimento indígena brasileiro (1970-1990)*, acredita que esta tomada de consciência está ligada ao processo de apoderamento, feito pelo seu povo, do mecanismo teórico ocidental. "Esta capacidade de alargar os horizontes mentais para enxergar de forma mais clara o entorno, o nacional, exigiu nova postura e redimensionamento do que era, até então, dado como verdade" (Munduruku, 2012, p.211). A organização dos povos indígenas faz parte de um momento de mudanças históricas que, impulsionadas por transformações políticas, influenciaram a forma como eles passaram a perceber a sua relação com o Estado e como eles se posicionariam face a ele. Surgiram, à vista disso, novas demandas que se converteriam em pautas de luta (Silva, Costa e Esteves, 2017).

Célia Xakriabá (2018) crê que dialogar com outras epistemologias se mostra uma tarefa desafiadora, visto que uma das necessidades é a de descolonizar conhecimentos perpassados no meio acadêmico (p.56). Segundo ela, o protagonismo de acadêmicos e anciões indígenas é crescente. Pouco a pouco eles deixam de ocupar o lugar de objetos de pesquisa para se tornarem produtores de conhecimento das suas comunidades. "Ocupar, marcar e demarcar o espaço no meio acadêmico é sem dúvida uma ferramenta de luta" (Xakriabá, p.102). A autora nos lembra que:

> Apesar de ainda existir um grande desafio, a nossa presença na universidade faz diferença e tem sido muito mais que formação acadêmica, tem também nos preparado para transitar em mundos diferentes, conhecer o "novo", outras culturas, outros conhecimentos, mas com a convicção de que o que queremos mesmo é fortalecer e tornar ainda mais significativas a nossa cultura e a nossa identidade. (Xakriabá, 2018, p.57).

Baniwa (2013) reitera os princípios de comunidade mencionados por Xakriabá (2018), ao ressaltar que povos originários não visam se enquadrar em lógicas academicistas que alimentam e sustentam os processos de reprodução do capitalismo individualista. Na contramão da barbárie e selvageria resultantes do atual modelo econômico, eles gostariam, na realidade, de compartilhar seus saberes, valores comunitários, cosmologias, modos de ser e de viver onde o bem-estar coletivo seja a prioridade (2013, p.18). A grande dificuldade, portanto, está neste encontro entre civilizações que de um lado se baseiam em princípios de partilha, e a de outra, a ocidental, prepotente e autocentrada (Tamaná, 2021).

Os saberes das comunidades indígenas são apresentados através da oralidade e, apesar das extensas tentativas de aculturação coloniais que os cerceiam, eles resistem para manter seu legado. A diversidade cultural presente em seus conceitos epistemológicos é de grande valor para a sua construção acadêmica e para sua pedagogia da vida (Coimbra e Branco, 2020). Ademais, o próprio movimento indígena é considerado como uma universidade por alguns, já que possibilita a produção de um conhecimento corporificado pelo engajamento na luta. É uma instituição certamente invisibilizada, porém que valoriza a trajetória, e não só o ponto de partida ou de chegada (Xakriabá, 2018, p.57).

A ciência indígena se mostra uma via possível e necessária para a construção de uma sociedade solidária, na qual não apenas o bem-estar humano seja levado em conta, mas toda forma de vida que existe no planeta Terra. A proteção dos conhecimentos tradicionais, além de sua aplicação, pode direcionar a humanidade para um futuro em que a natureza não seja vista como território de dominação e sim como parte essencial a cada um de nós. O modo de ser indígena deve servir para a nossa perspectiva ocidental como uma revolução em conceitos que seguem nos colocando em risco, pois ainda funciona como um meio para fins neoliberais.

Não obstante, isso perpassa pela legitimação destes saberes, pela descolonização do conhecimento. Um dos obstáculos encontrados e a ser superado pelos povos originários ao longo de suas trajetórias acadêmicas é a necessidade de aprender teorias e conceitos que não se encaixam no pensar holístico de seus povos, sendo uma agressão ao seu sistema mental (Munduruku, 2017). Quando se trata de saberes tradicionais autóctones, eles se baseiam em uma dependência dos fatos observados, em uma observação contínua e direta do que se estuda relacionada às suas origens e ancestralidade. A ciência, por outro lado, opera com modelos explicativos e pré-estabelecidos. A esta segunda se dá uma heurística maior do que ao conhecimento dos povos originários, que acaba sendo reduzido a estereótipos.

Além disso, mesmo que alguns desses estudantes indígenas se destaquem na formação acadêmica, tornem-se mestres e doutores, ainda figuram no imaginário social como "exceção à regra", tendo sua produção acadêmica pouco difundida (Portela & Nogueira, 2016). É por isso que iniciativas como a Bibliografia das Publicações Indígenas do Brasil, a qual estudaremos a seguir, são cruciais para a divulgação da ciência indígena.

A Bibliografia das Publicações Indígenas do Brasil, uma ferramenta de autoestima

A autoestima é um elemento essencial à nossa existência, que determina como nos sentimos sobre nós mesmos. É o sentimento que valoriza nossos traços sociais, mentais e espirituais que configuram a nossa personalidade, e é um importante indicador do nível de satisfação que uma pessoa tem consigo mesma (Maggio, 2000 como citado em Solano & Salas, 2010). No contexto dos povos indígenas, ela está associada a um período de busca étnica no qual se explora a sua própria etnicidade até que ela seja internalizada. Deste modo, alcançar esta apreciação de si reflete em maiores níveis de satisfação pessoal em comparação com aqueles que não trabalharam a sua etnicidade, mostrando que a forma como os corpos indígenas se posicionam está conectada a como eles veem o seu papel no mundo.

"A coisa mais bonita que temos dentro de nós é a dignidade", disse Eliane Potiguara em 2008, em seu trabalho *Identidade e voz indígena*. Não importa quão maltratados ou tristes estejamos, é preciso ser resiliente. Para ela, bonito é florir, mesmo que isso aconteça em meio aos ensinamentos impostos pelo poder. É lindo poder renascer diariamente. "Um futuro digno espera os povos indígenas de todo o mundo. Foram muitas as vidas violadas, culturas, tradições, religiões, espiritualidade e línguas. A verdade está chegando à tona, mesmo que nos arranquem os dentes!" (p.79).

O processo de resgate da autoestima indígena perpassa, de um lado, por iniciativas de políticas públicas, mas ele provém sobretudo dos meios de ações independentes de empoderamento autônomo próprios às comunidades ameríndias. A fim de superar a tutela de raiz colonial, surgem novos dispositivos que transmutam a responsabilidade de expressão para si e questionam a organização social que os coloca como coadjuvantes de

suas próprias histórias. A Bibliografia das Publicações Indígenas do Brasil, da mesma forma que iniciativas como *Leia Mulheres Indígenas*[5], por exemplo, vem para relembrar que o conhecimento tradicional indígena pode trazer progresso à comunidade que os cerceia.

A Bibliografia das Publicações Indígenas do Brasil foi criada em 2019 por Aline Franca, Daniel Munduruku[6] e Thúlio Gomes[7]. Trata-se de uma bibliografia colaborativa hospedada na plataforma *Wikilivros* que lista as publicações de diversos autores indígenas brasileiros. Sua principal intenção é de possibilitar a autores e pesquisadores, indígenas ou não indígenas, o acesso às produções ameríndias locais. A bibliografia conta com obras literárias, bem como teses e dissertações indígenas. De acordo com Aline Franca, sua fundadora, a bibliografia

> [...] é um instrumento de organização de informação que, para nós que somos bibliotecários, é muito cotidiano, banal. Só que normalmente as bibliografias são temáticas e até então não existia uma bibliografia disposta a registrar essa produção bibliográfica dos escritores indígenas. A questão era resolver essa lacuna informacional que era minha, mas também era dos escritores indígenas, para que a gente tivesse esse repertório e as pessoas pudessem acessar e ver que existe literatura indígena – e ela não é pequena, não. (Franca, comunicação pessoal, 06 de julho de 2021).

A iniciativa surgiu de um sentimento de indiferença com a produção indígena no meio bibliotecário, percebido por ela durante um estágio na graduação.

> No momento em que eu escutei uma pessoa falar "isso é coisa de índio, ninguém vai procurar, não serve para nada, pode deixar em uma caixa ali no canto" e eu falei "não, isso não é justo", ali eu já tinha muito claro para mim, mesmo que eu não soubesse, qual era o meu posicionamento, de qual lado eu estava. (Franca, comunicação pessoal, 06 de julho de 2021).

A bibliotecária, assim, decidiu colocar em prática uma ferramenta que funcionaria para listar documentos que demonstrassem que existe uma produção literária e científica indígena. Franca afirma que houve uma excelente receptividade por parte destes autores e pesquisadores,

> [...] porque veio ao encontro da necessidade que já existia. Eu comecei a fazer o levantamento ao mesmo tempo em que entrava em contato com alguns escritores [indígenas], a apresentar essa proposta a eles e pedir que eles me dissessem se faltava alguma de suas obras. A ideia era elaborar uma ferramenta que fosse fácil, simples e útil, mas que desde a sua gênese fosse coletiva. Assim como as formas

[5] O projeto *Leia Mulheres Indígenas* foi criado por intelectuais e ativistas indígenas no intuito de difundir e valorizar a produção intelectual de mulheres indígenas brasileiras.

[6] Daniel Munduruku, nascido em Belém do Pará, em 1964, é um professor, ativista e escritor indígena brasileiro pertencente à etnia Munduruku. Possui graduação em história, filosofia e psicologia pelo Centro Universitário Salesiano de São Paulo (UNISAL), bem como mestrado e doutorado em educação pela Universidade de São Paulo (USP) e pós-doutorado em linguística pela Universidade Federal de São Carlos (Ufscar). Seus livros já receberam diversos prêmios literários nacionais e internacionais, entre eles o Prêmio Jabuti e o Prêmio Madanjeet Singh para a Promoção da Tolerância e da Não Violência, da Unesco.

[7] Thúlio Pereira Dias Gomes, um dos fundadores da BPIB, é bibliotecário-documentalista da Biblioteca Universitária de Campos dos Goytacazes (BUCG), órgão pertencente à Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF). É graduado em biblioteconomia e gestão de unidades de informação pela Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ). Possui mestrado em ciência da informação pela da Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) em parceria com o Instituto Brasileiro de Informação em Ciência e Tecnologia (IBICT), e doutorado em ciência da informação pela Universidade de São Paulo (USP).

> de ver o mundo dos povos indígenas passa por essa percepção da coletividade, eu queria que a iniciativa tivesse esse perfil. (Franca, comunicação pessoal, 06 de julho de 2021).

Aline, durante a entrevista, usa a metáfora de "colocar pedras preciosas à mostra", algo que ela considera ter conseguido. Trata-se, portanto, de coletar e expor tais pedras em um lugar em que elas precisam estar para serem vistas, para trazê-las para um outro patamar. É assim que elas poderão ser vistas e as pessoas saberão que elas existem. É, logo, um fenômeno de reafirmar e validar tais produções e seus devidos tipos de conhecimento. Isso é valioso, posto que, de acordo com de Oliveira (2006), povos ameríndios ainda atribuem ao outro um alto significado a como eles se reconhecem. A luta pelo reconhecimento identitário é, porém, uma luta política que busca a autoafirmação e que vai ao encontro de uma dignidade tão menosprezada no passado (p.55).

> Eu não percebia a dimensão que a bibliografia tomou. Conforme eu comecei a movimentar alguns pesquisadores para saber se eles me indicavam outros pesquisadores indígenas, eu senti que muitos deles ficavam felizes em contribuir. A bibliografia se tornou algo como se fosse um *hall* dos pesquisadores indígenas. Eu acredito que, de alguma forma, houve esse tipo de impacto. Não foi proposital, porque a ideia não era criar um *hall* dos doutores e mestres indígenas, mas a ideia era justamente agir dando visibilidade para a produção acadêmica desses pesquisadores, que são muitas vezes invisibilizados dentro do próprio universo acadêmico. Eles estão dentro da academia, produzindo conhecimento. Não que o conhecimento tradicional não seja válido, mas eles romperam essa barreira da vivência em um meio não-indígena, se submeteram ao universo acadêmico para produzir conhecimento que também é validado pela academia e eles passam a transitar nos dois campos de conhecimento, no acadêmico e tradicional. (Franca, comunicação pessoal, 06 de julho de 2021).

Para Bergamaschi (2014), essa transição poderia ser descrita como *interciência.* Seria, em outras palavras, o diálogo entre diferentes ciências, levando-se em conta as distintas formas de interação entre ciência moderna e o conhecimento tradicional. Nesse contexto, tais estudantes estariam a cargo de "indianizar" espaços acadêmicos com seus modos de fazer pesquisa e de produzir conhecimento (p.27). Ainda que soe utópico colocar em contato duas culturas e concepções de aprendizagem *antagônicas*, este movimento de ocupação de ferramentas acadêmicas vem para rever, criticar, reformular e, quem sabe, subverter o modelo pedagógico formal, resultando em um universo mais diversificado e fraterno. A BPIB, nesta perspectiva, cumpre a sua missão de coletivizar os saberes.

O professor Álvaro de Azevedo Gonzaga, um de nossos entrevistados, iniciou a nossa discussão ressaltando o papel do reconhecimento étnico para a consolidação de sua autoestima universitária, até então em conflito pelas incertezas de seu passado ameríndio. Para falar sobre o futuro dos povos indígenas, ele precisou passar pelo processo de compreensão de sua ancestralidade. Assim, a sua história de autoidentificação e a busca pela sua ancestralidade indígena começam durante seus estudos na Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo (PUC-SP) ao se deparar com outros estudantes indígenas, mais especificamente o Grupo Pindorama[8]. Nesse período, foi capaz de se reconhecer enquanto membro do povo Guarani-Kaiowá, de reconhecer seus semelhantes e a sua atuação na construção de novos saberes. Esse processo foi o que Bergamaschi (2014) definiu como um "caminho de volta para casa".

[8] O projeto Pindorama foi idealizado por professores da PUC-SP, cujo objetivo é receber estudantes indígenas e de fortalecer as suas identidades.

Atualmente, Álvaro é orientado por uma força decolonial que ressignifica a participação do indígena na ciência. Conforme Backes (2018), isto ocorre dado que povos ameríndios abraçam seus conhecimentos mesmo que a cultura ocidental e sua epistemologia hegemônica teimem em desqualificá-los. Logo, indígenas desafiam constantemente a matriz colonial e constroem pedagogias decoloniais (p.55). Segundo ele, no entanto, além de conhecer os instrumentos coloniais de educação, faz-se urgente impor-se em todas as esferas públicas, sejam elas as ruas, as instituições ou as redes sociais. Afinal,

> [...] se não ocuparmos esses espaços, que força de resistência vamos oferecer? Se a gente desiste, pela dificuldade ou porque não ocuparemos o espaço ostentado, a gente entregou mesmo. O capital venceu. Estamos passando por um momento normaticida[9] extremo, em que a luta, a resistência e todos os instrumentos que forem possíveis, e vozes que nos forem dadas, a gente tem que usar. (Azevedo Gonzaga, comunicação pessoal, 22 de junho de 2021).

Azevedo Gonzaga afirma que é fundamental organizar uma forma de resistência que se apodere dos mecanismos operacionais colonizadores e opressores, cujas técnicas foram, ao longo de séculos, aplicadas contra eles. Durante a nossa conversa, ele fez um paralelo com a famosa frase de Paulo Freire, que acredita que o sonho do oprimido é virar o opressor. Azevedo Gonzaga crê que esse não seria o caso dos povos ameríndios, visto que existe uma dimensão hierárquica, uma dimensão de respeito ancestral que não permite que se seduzam pelo modelo colonizador. Esta mesma perspectiva é vista no trabalho *Intelectuais Indígenas, interculturalidade e educação,* de Bergamaschi (2014), ao afirmar que os emergentes intelectuais indígenas possuem um forte compromisso com seu grupo social e com as lutas de seus povos.

As universidades, para os grupos ameríndios, podem ser aliadas na busca pelo empoderamento coletivo. É um aparato de afirmação, de fortalecimento de seus saberes ancestrais e de sua capacidade de negociação e intervenção no processo de criação de políticas públicas. É, outrossim, um instrumento para reforçar suas identidades, culturas e etnias. Estar na academia lhes dá uma nova força social, política e epistemológica. Propostas como a Bibliografia das Publicações Indígenas do Brasil conectam a formação acadêmica com as tradições dos povos ameríndios e trazem esperança àqueles que buscam reconhecimento em suas práticas. Ela pauta caminhos interculturais entre indígenas e não-indígenas, traz para a arena pública nomes até então apagados e democratiza o acesso a um conhecimento constantemente invalidado. É um compromisso com a justiça social – tão banalizada no Brasil de hoje.

Conclusão

Nós, enquanto pesquisadores, temos a delicada missão de produzir uma ciência emancipatória e também o compromisso moral de fazê-la de forma crítica. É por meio da produção científica que legitimamos discursos racializados que podem – ou não – serem usados contra nós. É preciso, portanto, lembrar-nos que eles não são inocentes, e que por trás de qualquer posicionamento há uma intenção, seja ela hegemônica ou libertadora. No que tange a produção acadêmica atual, fortemente estruturada em pilares racistas, sexistas e colonizadores, faz-se mais que necessário que nos engajemos, de maneira coletiva, para transformá-la. E é o que os povos ameríndios no Brasil, na contramão de

[9] Normaticídio, pela perspectiva de Álvaro de Azevedo Gonzaga, é a aplicação de normas que subtraem direitos de pessoas vulneráveis.

uma onda conservadora que busca destruir toda a forma de conhecimento libertador, fazem a cada dia.

Os povos indígenas possuem a impressionante capacidade de serem fiéis a quem são e ao que acreditam, revelando ter um traço de humanidade que nos parece perdido em meio ao caos e à autodestruição ocidental. Na cosmovisão dos povos originários, valores como como a proteção à natureza, a valorização das suas histórias, de suas vivências e de suas vidas em comunidade atuam como baluarte de sua própria existência. Para eles, somos todos "nós". Portanto, o respeito pela vida, pelos seus ancestrais e pela sua história devem nos servir como uma alternativa legítima de se fazer ciência. Ainda que tenhamos internalizado, através de uma socialização cruel e unilateral, que certas características não servem a certos grupos de pessoas, há uma forte contracorrente que nos mostra que é possível. Mulheres ocupam, cada vez mais, espaços considerados outrora masculinos. Pessoas negras mostram que, hoje, não há mais lugar para o racismo. E indígenas se organizam para mostrar que existem outras formas de ver o mundo e que elas são tão válidas quanto todas as outras. Eles percorreram um longo percurso para chegarem aonde estão e daqui eles não sairão mais.

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I Was Once an Oppressor, But I Found the Strength Within to Free Myself

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Introduction

Imagine attending public schools your entire life and not once having the opportunity to talk about race and racism in America or the world. Years later, you find yourself completing a teacher education program and feeling ready to influence the hearts and minds of culturally, racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse students. However, shortly after your first year of teaching in an urban school district, you realize that your teacher education program failed you. You are uncomfortable and inadequately prepared to facilitate critical conversations about race and racism and what it means to be a historically marginalized individual of Color[1] in your classroom in the United States. This happened to me. During my first year of teaching, I, an educated gay Latino urban educator, had to accept the fact that, rather than being an educator, I was just another oppressor. I chose to uphold the dominant belief that the purpose of schooling in urban America was to teach a Eurocentric curriculum and not to engage in critical conversations about the impact of politics, religion, culture, race, and racism on our lives.

In this short reflective essay, I share how I underwent a metamorphosis during the COVID-19 pandemic. For the first time in my life, I chose to use my education and my life experiences as a historically marginalized individual of Color to decolonize my pedagogy. Thanks to the scholarship of Ladson-Billings (1995) and Freire (1996), I was able to transform my pedagogy into one where the cultural and racial identities and lived experiences of my students are acknowledged and validated in our classroom, one where my students—even just for a short period—can experience what it feels like to not be bound by the shackles of society's oppressors.

My First Year Teaching in Urban America: I Am an Oppressor!

During my first year of teaching, I found myself staunchly upholding the following belief: As a historically marginalized individual of Color, I cannot be an oppressor. But I was wrong; in my very own classroom, I was an oppressor. For instance, during the first two weeks of school, I did not take the time to get to know my students—their interests, cultures, identities, and lived experiences. Thus, instead of being their teacher, I was another oppressor in their lives. While preparing my lesson plans, I approached my curriculum from a Eurocentric and colorblind perspective because I believed that my job as a first year nontenured teacher was to show my school and district leaders that I was a data- and standards-driven professional. The reality is that being an educator in urban America, especially as an individual of Color, means allowing those with power (the oppressors) to recruit and mold you into a compliant puppet—another oppressor.

[1] "Color" is intentionally capitalized to reject the standard grammatical norm. Capitalization is used as a means to empower this marginalized group of students.

In urban America, oppressors see students and their cultures, identities, and lived experiences as test scores and opportunities for federal funding rather than as human beings. While my students never verbally identified me as an oppressor, I vividly recall not genuinely acknowledging their cultures and lived experiences in the classroom. Today, as I reflect on my first year in the classroom, I recognize that to my students' eyes, I was simply another oppressor towering over them. As such, I was responsible for shutting down their minds and making them compliant and fearful of freedom. In the words of Freire (1996), "The oppressed, having internalized the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom" (p. 21). In other words, in urban America today, historically marginalized students of Color cannot find the strength to fight back against an oppressive society and education system, and this allows oppression to continue to thrive in all areas of our society.

Moreover, for those unfamiliar with Freire (1921-1997), he was one of the most influential educational theorists of the 20th century. Throughout his life, Freire fought to provide people with access to a meaningful education that would empower them to grow as learners in an oppressed world. Freire's writings are centered on social, political, and economic inequalities, along with race and social justice. Today, Freire's most notable and seminal text, Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1996), invites us to recognize that we live in an oppressed world where the purpose of education revolves around obedience and transmission of information from teacher to student. The teacher is viewed as the only individual with knowledge, and the role of a student is to be obedient and simply take in the knowledge presented. However, in his book, Freire argues that the purpose of education should be to liberate one's mind. Liberation through education allows students to critically examine power structures and inequalities, which empowers students to become active thinkers and citizens in disrupting the status quo. When students are challenged as learners and empowered to rebel against systemic oppression, they get the opportunity to enhance their critical consciousness. Students and their minds are no longer confined nor required to remain obedient and accept the status quo.

In the next section of this essay, I describe how the COVID-19 pandemic gave me the strength to remove the "internalized image of an oppressor" (Freire, 1996, p. 21) from my mind and the minds of my students. In doing so, I was able to obtain freedom, not only for myself but also for my students.

The COVID-19 Pandemic—Liberation at Last!

COVID-19 has ended the lives of millions of people. However, over the years, I have learned that there is a blessing in disguise in every tragedy, or at least one profound lesson that prods us to evolve and become better versions of ourselves. Being a novice educator during the pandemic took a toll on both my physical and mental health. Yet, it also provided me with the chance to view teaching from a different perspective—transform my classroom from an oppressed society to a culturally responsive learning environment. I learned that I could not allow standardized testing and a Eurocentric curriculum to negatively impact my pedagogy. In fact, Ladson-Billings' (1995) seminal article "But That's Good Teaching! The Case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy" provided me with the pedagogical knowledge and strength I required to become the teacher that my students needed. Using the three tenets of culturally relevant pedagogy (which include academic success, cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness), I built positive and meaningful relationships with my students for the first time in my teaching career. This was a significant turning point in my career, as I was becoming a culturally responsive

teacher. For instance, during our unit of study on Christopher Columbus and the Columbian Exchange, through class discussions, my students and I challenged each other's beliefs, and most importantly, concluded that Christopher Columbus impacted our world in both positive and negative ways. During the unit, my students freely shared their thoughts about race and racism in America. At the end of the unit, I was proud of my ability to apply theory into practice. I felt free at last!

Using the theory of culturally relevant pedagogy, I decolonized my pedagogy and facilitated meaningful and genuine conversations about the social, political, and economic injustices that plague our world. Through class discussions, I enabled my students to realize that their voices and lived experiences matter. Deep within me, for the first time in my classroom, I no longer felt like an oppressor; I felt like an imperfect human being, a lifelong learner, and an educator. Thanks to that experience, today I see myself as a teacher who inspires his students to chase after their dreams. Today I make it my primary duty to constantly remind my students that they have the inner strength to make their voices heard, regardless of how uncomfortable they make society, particularly its oppressors feel.

Post-COVID-19—A Hopeful Future

The COVID-19 pandemic confined students and educators to the four walls of their homes. While I was physically confined, mentally, and emotionally, I was able to envision my classroom as a space where feelings of oppression are nonexistent and where dreams become realities for myself and my students. An important lesson that I learned during the pandemic is that the world needs teachers who seek to free themselves and their students from all types of oppression. As I prepare to begin my third year of teaching, I remind myself of the following important facts: I was once a historically marginalized student of Color in my home city, but today, I am a threat to my oppressors. I am a proud, historically marginalized, gay Latino urban educator of Color. My voice is loud, and my commitment to social justice is just getting started. Our war is far from over.

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Who Made the Yardstick? An Oppressed Critique of the Comparative and the International

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> …the field of 'post-colonial' discourse has been defined in ways which can still leave out indigenous peoples, our ways of knowing and our current concerns.
> (Smith, 2012)

There are two main ways in which comparative research is done: the yardstick comparison and the Venn comparison (Sobe, 2018). Attempting comparative research with a yardstick in hand raises the problem of who created the yardstick; answer being America or a select European country, by the virtue of resource distribution. With Venn comparison, the researcher is often located outside the circles, thus holding a position of power. Comparative learning, of course, is essential. However, in the methodological approach that is commonly seen in the field, "apples and oranges can be easily compared provided that we see them both as 'fruit.'" (Sobe, 2018, p. 333); yet, what about the tomatoes?

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In the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (1972, p. 10) identifies two distinct stages of the humanist and libertarian pedagogy: one, where the oppressed "unveil the world of oppression" to commit themselves to its transformation; and the second, where the pedagogy of the oppressed "becomes a pedagogy of all people." This essay is an attempt at the first stage, to unveil an aspect of the world of oppression that exists in comparative and international education (CIE). It does so through two parallel arguments: one, through the exploration of definitions of CIE, and two, through analyzing the speeches of two CIE Society presidents delivered over a decade apart.

The surest way of critiquing a field is to compare its definition with its use; yet, with CIE the one thing comparativists agree upon is that there is no singular definition. If language defines thought (Wittgenstein, 1992), and definitions give shape to concepts, the lack of a singular definition leads one to assume that each practitioner would understand, and therefore, conceptualize *comparative* and *international* in education differently. Thus, the only way for an outsider to understand what is meant by *comparative* and *international* in education is to look at the field in practice. However, when the field is an uneven playing field, and "the clamor" is "for the immediate comprehensibility by the ideological average" and "not for clarity" (Spivak, 2003), the practice becomes one that gives voice to the hegemony and pretends to give voice to the subaltern that cannot speak.

Hegemonic, in the course of this paper, assumes a wider definition. While imperialism is one form of hegemonic exercise, the term also encompasses other forms of power

imbalances including economic expansion, the subjugation of the 'other', and as a discursive field of knowledge. It follows the definitions put forth by Smith (2012) in "Decolonizing methodologies". Thus, this essay oscillates between colonial power as well as modes of neocolonialism. It approaches the world as one that is entrenched in an imbalance of power to argue that the current practices of CIE aid in the perpetuation of this imbalance using Ross (2002), and Sobe (2018).

The idea that CIE is hegemonic, that it perpetuates power imbalances – be it imperialism, gender inequality or racial discrimination – is not a new idea. Ross (2002) notes the need to "conceptualize the ways lives mesh, transmitting direction and power" while Sobe (2018) stresses that "our comparativist present is also contoured and shadowed by spectres of past[...] all of which arguably continues in full force today". Ross' (2002) presidential address is colored by the tragic events of 9/11, thus calling more loudly than ever to evoke an ethics of care in the research to create a level playing field. Over a decade later, Sobe finds the field's work equally disturbing; these disturbances are furthered by the emergence of Big Data – yet another tool that can easily be co-opted to further silence the subaltern. For, Sobe (2018) writes, "comparison is not just an academic technique, but a style of thought and action located in particular time-spaces" (p. 334). Therefore, from Explorative age to the Post-Explorative (Sobe, 2018) these issues have remained.

As Sadler's famous quotes says, CIE approached the world as a garden of education systems, home-grown and cautioning against ad-hoc borrowing (cited in Bereday, 1964). However, this also posited that comparative education fundamentally was about countries, systems, and comparing them (Klerides, 2015). Practitioners approaching education shaped by the words of Sadler and the garden lend a hand in defining the term CIE. Unaware of the ways in which greenhouses have been created just to grow certain plants; willfully oblivious to the ways in which exotic imports and financially sound exports work in a globalized world, they operate within this narrow definition of CIE, thus contributing to the hegemonic nature of its conceptualization.

Takayama et al. (2017) identified four major textbooks in the field: Comparative Education: The Dialectic of the Global and the Local (Arnove et al., 2013); Comparative Education: Exploring Issues in International Context (Kubow & Fossum, 2007); CIE: Issues for Teachers (Bickmore et al., 2017); and CIE: An Introduction to Theory, Method and Practice (Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014). This is the introduction a novice to the field has, the overview they receive. These textbooks speak of a history that starts with travellers' tales through to quantitative research. A common feature they all share, though, is the nature of the history: it is Anglo-European, relegating the other parts of the world to either the subject of benevolent bestowing of knowledge or completely invisible. Although Bickmore et al. (2017) note the existence of Chinese scholarship, it is not in the same vein as the other; on the other hand, with China being an emerging (or emergent, as some may argue) global superpower, it is evident of the expansion of the hegemony than the presence of the subaltern. Phillips and Schweisfurth (2014) note that in common usage comparative studies are "associated with the western industrialized world", and international education "implies the study of education in all its forms in the developing world", thus creating a binary. While they are firm in distancing themselves from these definitions by calling them "absurd" and "wrong", an alternative definition has not been forthcoming. Instead, these textbooks focus on the practice, the subject, and the methodology which are problematic in their own way.

This is not to say that the founders of CIE have been focused on the ideology of this independent system. Kandel, for example, stresses the importance of context, advocating

for an inclusive approach. This is a view furthered by later scholars in the field like Bray and Epstein (Takayama et al., 2017). The field, indeed, attempts to be inclusive. The World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES), for example, has 41 comparative education societies registered on their website covering considerable global geography from India to Kazakhstan to Haiti to Israel. Yet, which societies are the most funded, the most celebrated, and more importantly, which societies are spoken of the most with scholars entering the field of CIE? Reflecting on her term with the WCCES, Hickling-Hudson (2007) notes the lack of Asian and African representation in the international fora. Yet, the best-known comparative education society would be CIES, its work, conferences, and members being prominent scholars in the field. If the disinterest noted by Hickling-Hudson (2007) is to be taken as an indication of their disengagement with an introspective attempt to be inclusive, it can be concluded that there is a clear imperial power in knowledge production of CIE. Therein lies the discrepancy, which supports the notion that CIE as a field is hegemonic.

The world is now approaching, or arguably in the middle of, what Sobe (2018) calls the Post-Exploratory era, defined by Big Data. As a science, Big Data has not penetrated the field of CIE to a significant extent; but it is only a matter of time. With the ease of comparing large amounts of data to provide "comprehensible" conclusions is the erasure of diversity, of plurality, and the contextual knowledge. As multiple scholars have pointed out, the place of origin in Big Data will further the discrimination and the power imbalance that exists in the world (Boyd & Crawford, 2012; Crawford et al., 2014; Nadege, 2018; Baldo, 2019; Thomas, 2020). Production of data, and the data that is accepted as legitimate, are primarily Western concepts. Thus, certain countries and communities in the Global South would not have what is considered 'legitimate data'. Therefore, it is imperative that the field of CIE takes a revisionist approach to the *comparative* and the *international*, to attempt at balancing the scales. Whichever the epistemology that is used to counter the power imbalance, if there is an attempt to approach comparison as a "co-constructing" (Sobe, 2018), progress could be made.

CIE presents itself as one that is inclusive and diverse; it presents as a field of study that is equal. Yet, a critical look at the practice of CIE, specifically in terms of knowledge production, exposes its hegemonic nature. From the textbooks to societies, from theorizing to methodology, elements of hegemonic nature persist. The practitioners in the field are not oblivious to this, though, as elaborated by several CIES presidential addresses spanning decades tackle this problem. This gives hope for a transformation of the field, to one that is not merely inclusive but is pluralistic. In encouraging this transformation, the field would move one step closer to contributing towards "the process of permanent liberation" (Freire, 1972, p. 10) of all people.

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Freire's Time: Unlocking Energy and Options for Out-of-School Youth in Jordan

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Introduction: This is Freire Time

One afternoon in March 2020, the Jordanian Ministry of Education (MoE) announced the immediate, indefinite closure of all schools in the country to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This affected 2.7 million children and youth (UNESCO, 2017), including 3,000 youth in a non-formal education (NFE) program jointly operated by the MoE and Questscope, a non-governmental organization (NGO) focused on youth on the periphery of society.

Within a month, 75% of these NFE youth (2,400 teenagers!) had contacted each other and their educational facilitators (teachers) through WhatsApp and Facebook to organize lessons and conversations with friends and family. Among students in formal school nationwide, only 54% had access to (though even fewer likely attended) online classes (UNHRC et al., 2020). This contrast between NFE and formal school learners made a lasting impression on educators, as it reflected youths' desire to reconnect with their peers and facilitators.

This eagerness—this drive to stay in a learning community—is a direct result of integrating the seminal approaches of Brazilian educationalist Paulo Freire into Jordan's NFE program. NFE supports individuals' right to make their own choices and learn how to make increasingly better-informed choices–to think critically. The teacher's role as an educational facilitator, and their resulting mentoring relationship with students, lays a critical and hopeful foundation for out-of-school (OOS) youth learners to negotiate the uncertainties of life—a challenge for which they would otherwise be unprepared and unsupported. In this way, the pedagogical approach of Freire unlocks the energy of voluntary learning (learners are there because they want to be, not because they have to be) among OOS youth to explore, examine and create.

This is *Freire time*. In the wake of the pandemic—which affected 1.6 billion children around the world—there has never been a more critical time to apply his pedagogy of hope. Fostering a culture of learning with teachers as cultural workers, and making a path for them to walk alongside students, is a vital solution to the dysfunction of youth education and the social disconnection of these COVID-influenced days. It is a solution that can cultivate hope for those at the margins, whom the pandemic pushed even farther towards the edge, as well as those who accompany them.

Freirean pedagogies enable two especially important outcomes to ready young people for the emerging world that cannot be "blueprinted" in advance:

- Critical thinking about responsibility for oneself and understanding how to succeed in the world in which one finds oneself, i.e., self-efficacy.

- Critical consciousness, in which one is aware of what needs to be/can be changed in the system in which one must succeed in order to make things "better."

The following sections will explore how these approaches have been utilized as part of the NFE program in Jordan.

Letting Go of Legacy Education Systems

The Questscope/MoE NFE program is certified by the MoE and enables 13-18 year-olds to complete the academic requirements for 10th grade within 24 months. NFE is tailored to OOS youth, including drop-outs and refugees, who do not have or cannot access other forms of education, including formal education. The curriculum for NFE is designed based on the public school curriculum in Jordan and is implemented through teaching pedagogies influenced by the ideas of Freire and adapted to the Jordan context. The approach of Freire, practiced in NFE, offers remarkable opportunities for children and youth to learn and secure the benefits of education that open doors that lead *up* and *out*.

The Freirean model of NFE is unique because it provides certification for basic education, which, in Jordan, is required for students to progress academically, vocationally/technically, or to secure regular employment. Such certification was not an initial concern of Freire, given his focus on adult education. However, his participatory learning approach has been very successful for young people in NFE who need certification but cannot get it from a formal system.

NFE is organized around learners, to whom Questscope and the MoE are accountable, and who voluntarily enroll—and stay—in NFE. When a young person leaves formal education, they have a choice of what to pursue next, and they look for the best option available. NGOs such as Questscope must satisfy these youth, or else they—as volunteer learners—will leave the NFE program and find other opportunities, some of which will likely have negative outcomes. Young people are satisfied—and will stay—if learning is safe, appealing, and has an "off-ramp" leading to someplace they want to go. If not, they will leave—and cannot be required to return.

NFE is highly suitable for three types of learners. First, youth who dropped out of school after negative experiences in education because of bullying, intimidation, physical harm, or humiliation. Second, refugee youth who found themselves suddenly cut off from their homes, lives, communities, and friends and faced unsafe and unsupportive educational and social environments. And third, young people disconnected by COVID-imposed social isolation.

Educating OOS children and youth is both a global issue and a local issue in Jordan. In 2018, 258 million young people worldwide were not in school (UNESCO, 2020). In Jordan, over 112,000 young people were OOS (35% Jordanian and 65% other nationalities), and an additional 40,000 were at an increased risk of dropping out (UNICEF, 2020). These figures have likely increased since COVID-19.

While the pandemic may be unprecedented in terms of the number of young people globally who have had their schooling disrupted, the phenomenon of losing months or years of education is not a new experience for vulnerable youth. Young people in low-resource contexts constantly face competing priorities, opportunity costs, and decisions vis-à-vis how to best prepare themselves for the future they want.

COVID has added yet another disruptive factor to this ongoing negotiation and balancing act. In the absence of (formal) education, young people have found, and will continue to find, other alternatives that best serve their ever-shifting needs and aspirations. In this emerging post-COVID era, it is a good time for educators to consider new questions about the ambitions of youth themselves. This is Freire time.

Legacy—that is, established—education systems equate time spent in formal school ("schooling") with learning, which is often not the case (Pritchett, 2013). The Learning Adjusted Years of Schooling (LAYS) measure, developed by the World Bank, indicates that the average Jordanian spends 11 years in school but receives less than seven years of quality education during that time (Filmer et al., 2018). Four (almost 40%) of the years a young person spends in school are not productive for learning, and that "lost" time has a high opportunity cost. Youth who live on the economic and social margins have complex strategies for survival that do not include spending 40% of their effort on unproductive activities that do not lead to any goal.

A New Educational Theory of Change

NFE's theory of change is based on three key elements: adult-youth partnerships, dialectic (not didactic) learning, and youth agency. First, learning occurs in the context of an authentic, nurturing partnership between the youth learner and the adult facilitator. The learner trusts the facilitator to accompany them through an immersive inquiry of their own experiences, and the facilitator allows the learner to determine the course and content of their own explorations. These adult-youth partnerships create an atmosphere of trust, care, and belonging in the classroom that is essential to learning.

Second, NFE learners engage in a critical reflection of their lived experiences through a classroom dialogue with their facilitator and peers. Content learning is based on dialogue shaped around daily encounters and complexities that texture and inform the reality of all young people; the facilitator cultivates curiosity in these experiences.

Third, youth get opportunities to take initiative and exercise self-direction (agency) in what and how they learn. For example, the first assignment for every new NFE class is to create a "class constitution," which sets rules for behavior within the class. Learners in one NFE class decided that smoking was not allowed, so when an inspector came to the class and lit up, a student politely informed him that smoking was not permitted — a corrective action that would have been unheard of in a formal classroom context.

The application of Freirean principles in this theory of change has led to a new genre of educational facilitators who co-learn alongside students. The legacy system of education in Jordan has a wealth of human resource potential in the form of teachers' extensive content knowledge, which has greatly benefitted NFE. Educational facilitators engage in an 80-100-hour ongoing program of formation (training) in Questscope's participatory learning methodology, which includes an initial session followed by refresher trainings every four months. Self-directed professional development through Communities of Practice also provides facilitators with continuing education in Freirean philosophy and practice.

As part of the NFE program, learners also engage in extracurricular activities that range from trips to museums to STEM activities. Community outreach volunteers help to broaden the interest and support of the parents/community around youth, and alliances

are built with youths' employers (for those who abide by International Labor Organization guidelines for safe work) to support education that is mutually beneficial for both the youth and the employer.

In 2010, Questscope and the MoE partnered with the University of Oxford to conduct a randomized controlled trial to evaluate the impact of NFE. The program was found to reduce conduct problems and violent behavior among youth within four months. Youth had statistically significantly improved outcomes related to prosocial behavior, overall difficulties, and hyperactivity/attention. The study also revealed encouraging changes in social and emotional outcomes in youth who had higher levels of attendance and those in NFE centers that offered more initiatives to empower youth in their learning progress. Significantly reducing violent behavior is critical for youth, as learning is almost impossible in an atmosphere where they fear for their personal safety (University of Oxford, 2011).

Conclusion

Educational preparation for the future is no longer an exercise in linear projection within a known context, and formal systems of education are often faulted for not preparing young people for the world in which they must succeed. The NFE program in Jordan has shown that the pedagogies of Paulo Freire can prepare learners for this unknowable future by cultivating the personal assets of critical thinking and critical consciousness. The educational facilitator – the adult partner – has a key role in generating the social and emotional connection and belonging that is critical to sustain Freire's approach. Going forward, this practice of educational mentoring can be combined with technology to scale up both access to education and the quality of learning experiences.

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Situating Iraq in Oxford: Reflections on Identity, Place, and Justice

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I write this essay on a gloomy day, seated in the corner of the cafe at Blackwell's bookshop in Oxford, England. Towering over me in this town are the infirm feet of Cecil Rhodes at Oriel College and the 'Emperor heads' of the Sheldonian theatre. The city's architecture is a constant reminder of this place's colonial history, which was built to exploit people like me."

One hundred and one year ago, women could not pursue degrees from this University. Even today, there are only three Iraqis enrolled as students (University of Oxford, 2021). I am one of the 1,258 graduate students from the United States of America. The greatest number of international graduate students at Oxford come from the United States, making up approximately 10% of the graduate student population. What if my parents had not escaped Saddam Hussein's Iraq for Yemen, later making their way to New Zealand where I was born, and eventually raising my brother and me in the United States—would I be at Oxford? Would I be one of the three?

As a master's student and a woman of Iraqi heritage, researching Iraqi education at the University, I remind myself that there is great power and responsibility in occupying space in this site of sacred knowledge. In this essay, I explore Eve Tuck's theorization of damage-centered research and Scheper-Hughes' activist anthropology and reflect on its relevance to my research. I seek to blur the lines between researcher and researched, highlighting how education can be used as a powerful tool to amplify untold stories.

For my dissertation, I conducted semi-structured interviews with a diverse group of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Iraqi dialect of Arabic; I sought to understand how they navigated educational access for their children. In pursuing this research, I interviewed Farida,[1] whose powerful call for her story to reach the world led me to think critically about how and to whom I need to share my research.

In 2014, Farida woke up to pounding on her door. Outside her intergenerational family home in Sinjar, Daesh insurgents arrived to kidnap or murder her family; they ran to Mount Sinjar to escape the Yazidi genocide. Seven years later, she told me her story in a rented Duhok apartment, not far from the IDP camp she initially fled to, seeing no possibility of returning "home."

In "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities," Eve Tuck (2009) discusses "damage-centered research," which in essence aims to document people's pain and suffering and identifies the long-term negative impacts of this type of research on our conceptualization of communities. Our ideas and assumptions about a community carry real-world consequences. Moreover, real human suffering is often "aestheticized" and "turned into theatre" on the journal's stage (Scheper-Hughes, 1995). As someone with a family living

[1] To protect the interviewee's privacy, I use the name Farida in this essay.

in Iraq, I understand these stories and challenges as tangible, not theoretical, and thus view the exploitation of human pain as personal.

Tuck's letter calls on us to question our epistemological biases - what types of stories do we share about displaced people? Most often, we share and write about their stories of despair. Farida defied much of these stereotypical framings. She spoke with radiance through the phone. She is living a meaningful life and working with the purpose of making life better for her displaced community, especially women. While living in the Duhok camp, she began to work with NGOs to support humanitarian aid provisions. She eventually started her own non-formal education program for women aged 15-45 years old to provide literacy and numeracy classes. Most of the women had never entered a school building, but Farida proposed educational spaces as a place in which these women could have the opportunity to heal through community, support, and skill-building.

As a young girl growing up in Sinjar, she had to stop schooling in middle school due to her family's circumstances. While she could not achieve her childhood dream of becoming a doctor, she, as an adult, is determined to instill hope for a better future in the hearts of her community:

> *"If I could say anything to the world, and I know there are people who have it worse than me, so maybe I am in a better position than so many. And the life I've seen goes so much further than just me. I have a duty to manage all of this. There are so many solutions to our problems. We have hope our lives will get better. I want my voice to reach the world. I think of it from the lens of being a woman. We were persecuted against greatly. I love everyone who can help us. We need someone to lift our voices up. We love peace. We don't hurt people. We are all humans, there's no difference between us. So many people have helped me from different places. Yazidis, Christians, Muslims. I want people to know that there are good of all of us."* (Farida, personal communication, February 20, 2021).

As she was speaking on the phone, I could not help but think that Farida and I, although obviously different with respect to our geographical luck, were the same in many ways. I, too, work to identify practical solutions and raise awareness by uplifting voices alongside a deep-rooted belief in our shared goodness and humanity.

As I conversed with interviewees, I grappled with guilt as I collected and recorded hardship, including near starvation, chronic illness, poverty. These circumstances are both intimately close and far removed from my reality. I kept thinking: this could have been me and my family, so what can I do about it?

Iraqis are painted dominantly as a monolithic, victimized mass in need of Western rescuing. Maintaining this framing not only reinforces the dichotomy of the rescuer (via NGOs and Western governments) and rescued (IDPs) but can quickly cause problems for displaced persons and refugees in that they are then perceived and treated as societal burdens (Parekh, 2020; Ghorashi, 2005).

At Oxford, I was surprised to find that maybe I was framed as someone inherently traumatized and in desperate need of saving to achieve my research aims. When I sought vicarious trauma counseling through the University in order to cope with the emotions arising from the interviews, I was told that my unrealistic motivations to create positive change were rooted in a desire to explore family trauma passed down to me by my mother (and even those generations before her); it would be in my best interest to turn off my emotional faucet in order to be a better tool for research. How could my sensitivity to

human pain have been so misunderstood to be seen as so corruptive to my work, if not for misinformed, preconceived notions of what it means to be Iraqi?

In "The Primacy of the Ethical: Propositions for a Militant Anthropology", Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1995) established the 'militant' approach to anthropology, which is politically and morally engaged, self-critical, and interventionist. Decolonization and critical methodologies "are not a metaphor" but are rather radically directed towards seeking justice and repatriation for indigenous communities facing the violent realities of settler colonialism and imperialism (Tuck & Yang, 2012). To me, being Iraqi means 1) raising my voice to tell a different story by "identif[ying] ills in spirit of solidarity" and 2) consciously using my privilege to collaboratively put social change in action (Scheper-Hughes, 1995, p 419). In short, this lies within the following framework: think critically, speak publicly, and act with and for communities in need.

Scheper-Hughes calls researchers to surrender to the reality that there is no such thing as objective or apolitical human behavior, nor can social science research regarding real-life problems be siloed in the realm of theoretical abstraction. As a first-generation immigrant to the United States, I have never known an apolitical life—my very existence in the post-9/11 United States is inherently political, just as it is at the University of Oxford.

I am committed to building some sort of response to issues in educational navigation (such as the need for after-school support, lack of material resources, and vouchers to cover additional costs of education i.e., transportation) in collaboration with displaced Iraqis. I have begun having conversations with people I met throughout the research process to get these projects started sustainably. In the short term, however, I believe my action lies in highlighting indigenous voices and advocating for education as a human right in the Middle East, specifically Iraq.

I created semi-fictionalized accounts of the IDP interviews I conducted in my research to publish on my personal Twitter in plain English. I believe it is my duty as a researcher to make unheard stories heard. Tuck and Scheper-Hughes' papers influenced my approach to writing and researching in that they reminded me of 1) the care and nuance necessary in framing IDP stories beyond victimization and 2) my duty to act in earnest.

My commitment lies not only within myself, but also the people and topics I work with through research. A crucial part of my work as an academic and activist—but more importantly as a human being—is creating space for critical conversations. Acknowledging the institutional barriers to academic activism embedded within the University, my research creatively subverts oppressive epistemological systems through decolonized methodologies and values. My research aims to center the voices of Iraqi IDPs and emphasize their own agency to spark a conversation for displaced Iraqis and academics alike leading to tangible action. I call for a people-centered ethos to research in which we all, researcher and researched, can nurture our humanity.

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The ARt of Inequality: A Proposed Youth Social Justice Exhibition in Augmented Reality

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Activist art is profoundly involved in politics and social reform (Weibel, 2015). Artistic practice can help increase people's awareness of critical social issues (Adams, 2001), and motivate them to respond and alter their perspectives and perceptions of the environment (Ryan, 2015). The development of digital technologies also provides new opportunities for digital arts. Utilizing technologies as humanizing tools harnesses creation, expression, and interaction (Blikstein, 2008). A core principle of the museum as a public educational institution in a democratic society is to achieve greater inclusion and represent the nation's diversity (Moorhouse et al., 2019). However, museums as cultural institutions have long been silent on their origins (Edwards et al., 2006) and complicity (Ng et al., 2017) in establishing imperialist, colonialist, and oppressive principles. Furthermore, a digital divide (Bower et al., 2014) is exhibited in disparities in access to and proficiency in creative uses of digital technologies. Thus, there is an existing racial and socioeconomic gap in (digital) art, activism education, and museum curation. While museums and heritage sites have adopted the use of augmented reality (AR) for educational and exhibitionary purposes by offering immersive learning opportunities for school children (Moorhouse et al., 2019; Srikanth, 2021), none of this previous work directly addresses honing criticality in student voices and creation in the white cube setting using digital technologies in an explicit manner. Whose stories are told in museum collections, and whose are not? We believe that in fostering students' digital creation process as well as their questioning of dominant narratives, youth can be equipped to externalize dissent and reclaim institutional spaces for their communities.

As such, we raise the question: How can youth be empowered by digital technology as a channel of art activism to address issues pertinent to them and their communities that are not historically addressed in museum spaces?

In response to this question, we introduce The ARt of Inequality, a proposed 15-week long curriculum for high-school-aged youth from minoritized backgrounds that combines social justice and art-activism via the development of digital AR pieces. We drew inspiration from the teen education programs at the Noguchi Museum in New York City,

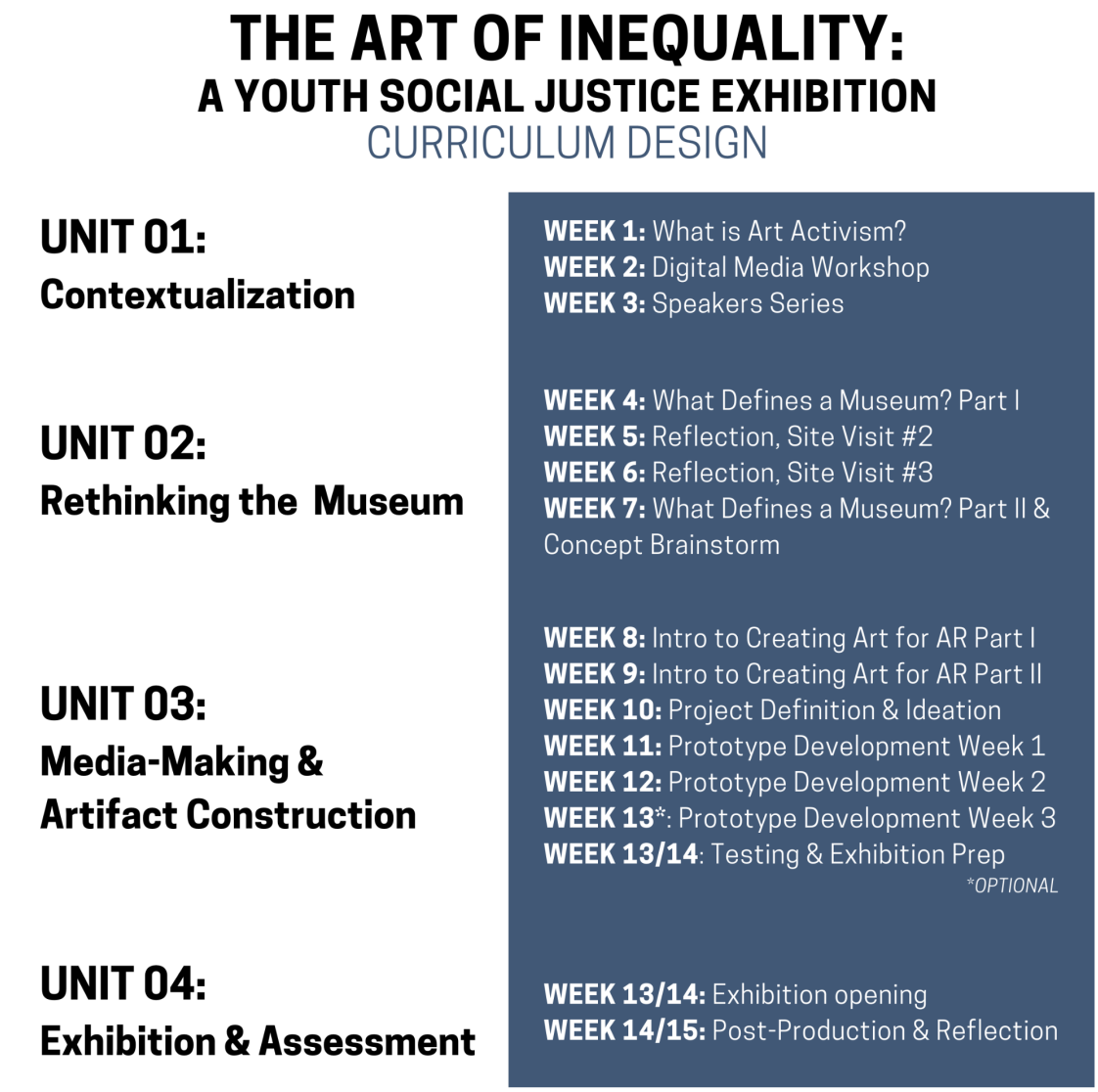
in which local high school students participate in workshops on digital platforms, collaborative creation, and community outreach. This particular museum's efforts to make local student voices heard challenged us to think about ways to connect resources made available by cultural institutions throughout the United States to the youth in their surrounding communities.

We draw heavily from Paulo Freire's seminal work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in the development of our proposed curriculum to encourage and challenge students to view education as a practice of freedom and to actively participate in the world not as a static reality, but one that is constantly shifting alongside their sense of place and identity (Freire, 2005; Thanapornsangsuth & Holbert, 2020). We specifically integrate AR as a storytelling instrument through which students are empowered to implement their transformation of self and surroundings by way of making (Blikstein, 2008; Papert, 1988; Srikanth, 2021). We consider AR creation to align with Papert's theory of constructionism states that learners develop their understanding of the world by creating an artifact outside of themselves (Papert, 1988). Through AR construction, students are purposely positioned as critical designers (Bower et al., 2014; Holbert et al., 2020) who bring their own ideas, beliefs, and critiques of the world into reality through the use of technology. In line with Freire's notion of generative themes (Freire, 2005), our proposed curriculum takes students through researching social justice issues based on their lived experiences and ultimately creating their AR interventions through construction and media-making as a means of critique.

Our proposed curriculum (see Figure 1), broken down into four units, would effectively guide students through the aforementioned digital creation process while also supporting them as they simultaneously challenge oppressive narratives and reclaim institutional spaces, namely museums, for themselves and their communities. Unit 1 aims to provide students with an introduction to and a foundational understanding of the role that art plays in activism. Students learn to contextualize the impact and role that art can have on social justice movements that resonate or are personally relevant to them via a combination of activities, including lectures, digital media-making assignments, and a speaker series that invites local artists and activists to provide insights and additional mentorship to students. Unit 2 invites students to think about the history and purpose of museums critically. In Unit 3, students integrate their critical analysis of museum narratives and incorporate poignant generative themes (Blikstein, 2008; Freire, 2005) they have identified for themselves into a final digital AR piece. In Unit 4, students showcase their work at a designated partner museum and exhibition site. Throughout the curriculum, mentors guide students based in their communities as they establish their own understanding of the partnering museum's existing works, how the space functions and for whom. Upon completing the program, students can exit with the knowledge and skills to further engage in forms of digital art activism moving forward, thus enabling them to continue designing their own interventions and assert previously unseen narratives.

Figure 1

Curriculum Overview



To illustrate the potential of the curriculum for empowering youth, we developed a prototype of a student project (see Figures 3 and 4) that incorporates an artwork titled *Home, Sweet Home* (1931) by American painter Charles Sheeler (see Figure 2). This painting, along with others by the artist collectively known as the *American Interiors* series, showcases a collection of what are considered American artifacts or Americana inside the artist's home (Wilson, 2011). A high school student living in Detroit, Michigan (where the painting is part of a museum collection) who identifies as a child of immigrants might incorporate this artwork into their final project as a way to critique what is/has been depicted as American by overlaying on top of the painting a video clip featuring the sights and sounds of fireworks as well as photos of objects from their own home connected to

their cultural background that might be perceived as 'other'. When the painting is viewed using the AR tool, viewers would revisit the definition of Americana through the lens of a first-generation American youth. In this example, this student would have the opportunity to present a non-dominant narrative in the form of critique of American life in a space traditionally preserved for dominant cultures, thereby reclaiming an institutional space.

Figure 2
Home, Sweet Home (1931) by Charles Sheeler

Note. From *File:Charles Sheeler - Home, Sweet Home - 45.455 - Detroit Institute of Arts.jpg - Wikimedia Commons*, n.d. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Charles_Sheeler_-_Home,_Sweet_Home_-_45.455_-_Detroit_Institute_of_Arts.jpg). In the public domain.

Figure 3

Prototype of Student Project - Artwork with AR Overlay #1

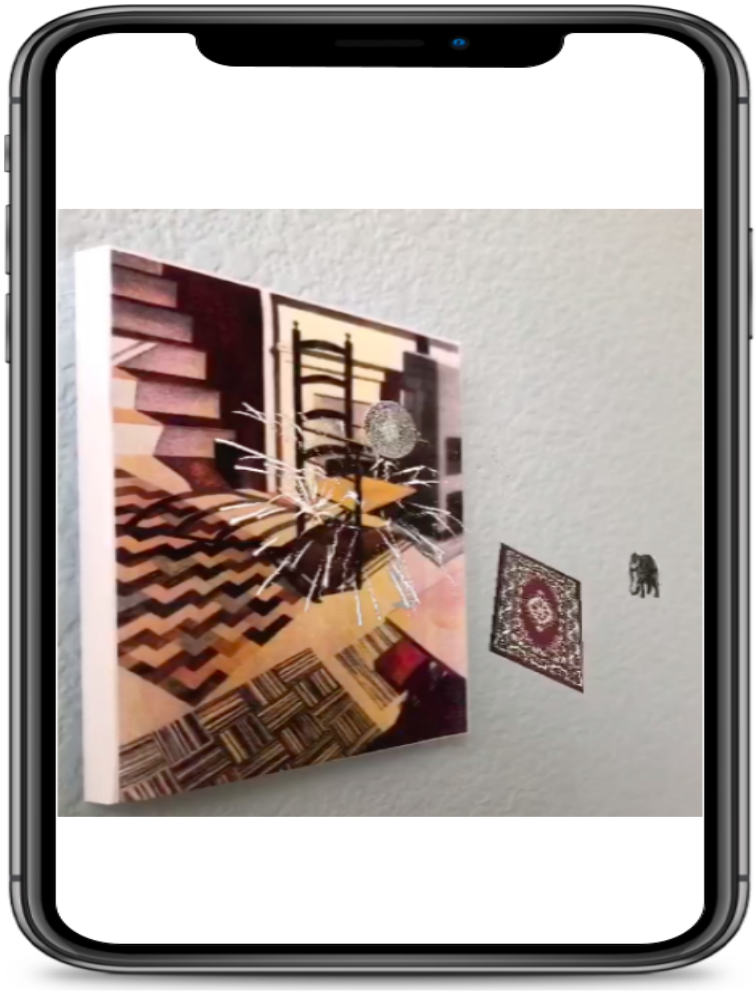


Figure 4

Prototype of Student Project - Artwork with AR Overlay #2

In this essay, we asserted that youth can be empowered to interrogate and critique their world through the use of digital technology and artifact construction and showcased the ARt of Inequality curriculum as an illustrative example. Specifically, the purpose of our curriculum is to bridge the racial and socioeconomic gap in digital art, activism education and museum curation. Students would not only gain a deeper understanding of existing social justice issues, but they would also learn to address them in creative and meaningful ways. We recognize that our proposed curriculum is just one of many possible approaches to achieving these aims, and invite readers to consider how learning experiences that occur in other educational settings or incorporate digital technologies with different affordances for creative expression might support youth empowerment. Through the creation and museum exhibition of personally relevant digital artifacts that address social justice issues, youth can utilize technology to question dominant narratives and experience using art as a vehicle for social change within their communities.

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What Can Decolonial Critiques & Critical Pedagogy Teach the Field of Human Rights Education?

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Foley Jr., W.J. (2021). Suggestions for critical awareness, accountability, and transformation in human rights education. Current Issues in Comparative Education, 23(1), 77-89.

Keywords: Human rights education, transformation, participatory, democratic citizenship, community engagement

Introduction

Human rights education (HRE) is a practice that endeavors to fully develop the human personality and strengthen respect for fundamental freedoms (the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948). Despite the prevalence of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) however, William Foley offers a critical reading of the human rights field and its underlying assumptions, motivated by participatory and transformative critiques. These critiques identify gaps and slippages that frequently undergird contemporary approaches to human rights education. In doing so, Foley challenges students, scholars and practitioners to consider the mass dissemination of human rights in privileging Western ideologies and practices. He argues for critical pedagogy to be more thoroughly embedded in the teaching of human rights education, allowing for the reimagination of the field as we currently know it. In this review, I offer an overview of decolonial critiques and critical pedagogy and apply them to the field of human rights education. Engaging with these critiques provides an alternative understanding of mainstream approaches to human rights and its teaching. Doing so also offers several possibilities for the reenactment of human rights that counter the dominance of the field's predication on asymmetrical power relations and Western epistemologies.

Given the underutilization of critical and decolonial critiques within the field of Comparative and International Education, Foley's piece is a welcomed edition. His work similarly builds on the work of additional scholars including Keet (2014a, 2015, 2017), Tibbitts (2015, 2017) and Tibbitts and Fernekes (2011), all of whom provide concrete examples of how critical human rights education (CHRE) can be implemented in a variety of educational contexts. Foley also criticizes the universal application of human rights as espoused by the UDHR, offering readers a starting point to make human rights education more participatory and present in informal and semi-formal schooling environments. His interventions are particularly relevant to the Current Issues in Comparative Education's 2021 special issue because it allows a wider number of community members such as students and parents, to develop and enact a critical consciousness in favor of social change.

Human Rights Discourses

Foley's first section provides a useful overview of human rights and their relationship with the wider field of Comparative and International Education (CIE). His critical evaluation of HRE begins with an analysis of where it is taught, noting that despite their universal nature, human rights are not ubiquitously applied in practice (78). Authors such as Anderson-Levitt (2012) and Garnett Russell (2016, 2017, 2018) concur with Foley, noting that stakeholders often simultaneously interact with local and world cultures, adapting how universal discourses, including human rights, are applied in local contexts. Foley goes on to highlight that critical pedagogy and practice are central to disrupting long-standing approaches, redressing asymmetrical power structures, and extending access to practitioners outside of formal academic contexts.

I use Tibbitts' transformational model (2017) as a starting point, which allows for the questioning of the UDHR as the fundamental source of knowledge (Keet 2014a) and underscores the embedded cultural and historical frameworks the UDHR takes for granted. Although the second section of Foley's text focuses on Tibbitts' two additional models of human rights education, awareness and accountability respectively, the final model, transformation, is most closely aligned to Freirean critical praxis. This alignment empowers learners to understand their unique role in helping or hindering human rights, and how this is directly related to larger systemic social change. More specifically, transformational human rights education interrogates the foundation of the field, challenging its universalized adoption, which mirrors conversations in the wider field of Comparative and International Education focused on world culture theory and loose coupling (Carney, Rappleye & Silova 2012). Thus, although world culture acknowledges the local enactment of world-level phenomena (such as HRE), assumptions that similar values and understandings undergird human rights, often minimize the wide divergences within the field. Foley's myriad examples including the Zinn Education Project (2019), the Teaching Tolerance (TT) project, and the organization, Facing History (2019), offer the field salient instances of human rights that are embedded and localized to specific cultural and historical contexts, countering the tendency to globalize human rights education.

Collectively, these three organizations provide a space for competing epistemological views to develop through the promotion of community engagement practices and democratic citizenship. Foley's focus on El Puente's project-based learning approach to education is another example of participatory-based education, community engagement, and the deployment of global human rights discourse in a local context. In so doing, Foley severely expands the possibilities of advancing critical human rights and the central tenets of democratic citizenship beyond the classroom setting alone. Doing so similarly underscores the role community engagement plays in transforming power relations and the context and structure of schooling. In particular, El Puente is aided by the active involvement of non-academic stakeholders such as community members and practitioners, who increase equity in the decision-making and implementation processes of curriculum and pedagogy. Thus, participants understand the relevance of human rights in their own contexts.

Critical International Education Research

In addition to Foley's focus on the field of human rights, my review has relevance for other education sectors and how professionals engage discourse around higher and international education research and practice. Foley's multiple examples use a critical and power-conscious lens to understand emergent actors, namely non-academic stakeholders, within the field of HRE. Criticality as a framework emphasizes the deconstruction and

critique of social institutions and the transformation of institutions for the outcome of social justice (Crotty 1998). Critical research also promotes transforming the status quo, rectifying injustices, and inequalities, and understanding power relations to illuminate exploitation and marginalization (Crotty 1998, Giroux 2011). Foley also builds on the work of critical scholars such as Tikly and Bond (2013) and Stein and Andreotti (2017), who assert that criticality is manifested through explicit references to colonialism and by an alignment with postcolonial and decolonial thought. His piece is thus, a steppingstone towards transforming and reorienting the field of human rights education.

Given the action-oriented nature of Foley's writing, he calls for social change, greater equity in educational systems, and more symmetrical power structures. This is a rarity in the wider field, where concrete action steps for engaging in recommended practices are often not thoroughly delineated. Furthermore, given the critical, transformative, and purposeful contributions of Foley's work, I include specific and comprehensive starting points. For example, Dache et al. (2021) argues that Black and Brown neighborhoods created a street pedagogy (*Calle*) that relies on community spaces such as recreational facilities, bodegas, and churches, to employ activist strategies and identity formation beyond the campus walls (2). These often academically overlooked places of knowledge formation and dissemination challenge long-standing discourses that invisibilize learning outside of academic centers. Drawing specifically on community cultural wealth, Dache et al. reject higher learning in college and universities as the only way forward (8). Instead, *calle* allows for the reimagination of a future within the limitations of current cicumstances. El Puente functions using *calle*, situating itself as a site for public resistance, and an avenue toward decolonial imaginaries with community members at the forefront. Criticality also allows us as informed students, researchers and practitioners within the field to ask new questions surrounding how to deepen relationships between higher education institutions and the surrounding community, and how to utilize institutional resources to learn from the community. These questions underscore the salience of decolonial and critical critiques to both the field of human rights and wider field of education. These fields continue to grapple with the kind of interventions that may be adequate to address today's myriad challenges. Climate change, the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and increasingly stratified societies, are prompting the field to both acknowledge and respond to these rapidly changing conditions. Thus, going forward, we will have to contend with the gap between questions raised by decolonial and critical critiques and more long-established questions that predominate the fields of human rights and international education. Nonetheless, how we engage in research related to these topics can allow us to maintain measure with these challenges.

Research Implications

As members of the Comparative and International Education field mark the one-hundredth anniversary of Paulo Freire's birth, international educators need to reimagine ways of helping students fundamentally connect their lived-experiences to our field's wider knowledge base. William Foley's seminal writing brings issues related to critical pedagogy, human rights, and participatory education to the forefront of the field. Collectively, the examples highlighted provide a lens into equity-oriented approaches to education and a deeper understanding of how to conceptualize these reforms. Foley's work additionally demonstrates narrow discourses surrounding the field of human rights, underscoring the need for deeper dialogue and engagement of new perspectives.

Going forward, education scholarship can be better utilized by non-academic stakeholders by deepening collaboration between scholars, practitioners, policymakers, and research participants. Design thinking (DT), espoused by Lake, Flannery and Kearns

(2021) offers powerful insight into stakeholder engagement practices, arguing that DT facilitates working in teams to recognize diverse contributions and engaging in active listening in order to find shared meaning. The iterative, relational and context-responsive process enables for the development of valued and viable responses to challenges through the capacity building of all stakeholders. Stein et al. (2021)'s Developing Stamina for Decolonizing Higher Education: A Workbook for Non-Indigenous People, is a timely resource that allows readers to balance the imperatives of intellectual, affective and relational approaches to decolonization. By moving beyond the inherent limitations of institutional and non-institutional spaces, the co-authors gesture towards approaches that map our responsibilities to Indigenous communities alongside what is feasible in each of our contexts. Ultimately, design thinking and Developing Stamina, prepare us to face the inherent complexity, uncertainty, complicity, and paradoxes within the fields of human rights and education.

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