Chapter 11
Globalisation, Ideology and Politics of Education Reforms

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Education Reforms for the Future

When discussing the politics of education reforms, and role of the state, and dominant ideologies defining policy priorities, we need to go beyond the technicist and business-oriented model of education, which focuses on accountability, efficiency and performance indicators. Why? Because there are other forces at work as well. From the macro-social perspective, the world of business, while real and dominant, is only one dimension of the complex economic world system. At the macro-societal level, we need to consider the teleological goal of education reforms. Are we reforming education systems to improve the quality of learning and teaching, academic achievement and excellence, and do we hope to change our societies, creating the 'good society'? At the level of critical discourse analysis, we need to consider dominant ideologies defining the nature and the extent of political and economic power, authority and the existing social stratification, both locally and globally. They all have profound influences on the directions of education and policy reforms. A number of scholars have argued that education systems and education reforms are creating, reproducing and consolidating social and economic inequality (Avalos-Bevan 1996; Arnove and Torres 1999; Klees 2002; Apple 2002; Astiz et al. 2002; Benveniste et al. 2003; McLaren and Farahmandpur 2005; Milanovic 2006; Raffo et al. 2007; Zajda 2015a).

One could argue that the process of reproducing and consolidating social and economic inequality is one of the effects of forces of globalisation and neo-liberal ideology (Anyon 1979; Bourdieu 1984). Educational organisations, having modelled its goals and strategies on the entrepreneurial business model, are compelled

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to embrace neo-liberal ideology, characterised by the corporate ethos of the efficiency, accountability, standards, performance and profit-driven managerialism. Hence, the politics of education reforms in the twenty-first century reflect this new emerging paradigm of standards-driven and outcomes-defined education policy change (Zajda 2014).

Globalisation and the competitive market forces have generated a massive growth in the knowledge industries that are having profound effects on society and educational institutions (Carnoy and Rhoten 2002; Waters 1995). In the global culture, the university, as other educational institutions, is now expected to invest its capital in the knowledge market. It increasingly acts as an entrepreneurial institution. Such a managerial and entrepreneurial re-orientation, as part of neo-liberal ideology, would have been seen in the past as antithetical to the traditional ethos of the university of providing knowledge for its own sake (Sabour 2005; Zajda 2015b). Delanty (2001) notes that "with business schools and techno science on the rise, entrepreneurial values are enjoying a new legitimacy …the critical voice of the university is more likely to be stifled than strengthened as a result of globalisation" (Delanty 2001, p. 115). It can be said that globalisation may have an adverse impact on the higher education sector and education in general. One of the effects of globalisation is that the university is compelled to embrace the corporate ethos of the efficiency and profit-driven managerialism. As such, the new entrepreneurial university in the global culture succumbs to the economic gains offered by the neo-liberal ideology (Zajda 2010b).

Education in the global economy is likely to produce a great deal of discontent and conflict. We are reminded of the much-quoted words 'All history is the history of class struggle' (Marx and Engels 1848). Globalisation too, with its evolving and growing in complexity social stratification of nations, technology and education systems, has a potential to affect social conflict (Anderson 1996). When discussing the complex and often taken-for granted symbiotic relationship between consumer production and consumption in the global economy, it is worth considering extending Marx's famous theory of the fetishism of the commodity, to include the 'production fetishism', or an illusion created by 'transnational production loci, which masks translocal capital', and the 'fetishism of the consumer', or the transformation of the consumer's social identity through 'commodity flows' or global consumerism, made possible by global advertising (Smith 1991). Appadurai (1990) suggests, that through advertising in the media and commodities, the consumer has been *transformed* 'into a sign', both in Baudrillard's sense of a *simulacrum*, and in the sense of 'a mask for the real seat of agency, which is not the consumer but the producer and the many forces that constitute production' (Appadurai 1990, p. 308). In a postmodern sense, a post-industrial global culture can be considered as a new hybrid of *global* cultural imperialism (see also McLaren and Farahmandpur 2005).

There is a trend in educational systems around the world of shifting the emphasis from the progressive learner-centred curriculum to 'economy-centred' vocational training. This was discovered in a comparative study of education in China, Japan, the USA, Great Britain, Germany, Russia and the Scandinavian countries. Although these nations are vastly different in terms of politics, history

and culture, and *dominant ideologies*, they are united in their pursuit for international competition in the global market. Hence, curriculum reforms and school policies increasingly address the totalising imperatives of the global economy discourse: competition, academic standards, performance, productivity and quality.

New Paradigm Shift in Pedagogy

Already in *Towards Schooling for the Twenty-First Century*, Per Dalin and Val D. Rust (1996) argued that there had to be a new paradigm shift in learning and teaching for the twenty-first century. The authors discuss major transformations globally, including political, economic, ecological, epistemological, technological and moral 'revolutions' (Dalin and Rust 1986, p. 32). They stress that in a conflict-ridden world, the 'school must play a basic role in peace education' (Dalin and Rust 1986, p. 64). One could argue that the new and evolving paradigm shift in pedagogy is dictated by forces of globalisation, politico-economic change, 'knowledge society', and ITCs, to name a few. As argued recently in *The Politics of Education Reforms*, the term 'globalisation' is a complex cultural and social theory construct and, at times, a convenient euphemism concealing contested meanings and dominant perspectives and ideologies, ranging from Wallerstein's (1979, 1998) ambitious 'world-systems' model, Giddens' (1990, 2000) notion of time-space distantiation' (highlighting the 'disembeddedness' of social relations and their effective removal from the immediacies of local contexts), and approaches, to globalisation by way of networking, where the power of flows of capital, technology and information, constitutes the fundamental paradigm of an emerging 'network society', to a view of globalisation as a neo-liberal and bourgeois hegemony, which legitimates an 'exploitative system' (see Bowles and Gintis 1976; Apple 2004; McLaren and Farahmandpur 2005; Zajda 2014). We have suggested that globalisation, with its political, social and economic systems, and the competitive market forces have generated a massive growth in the knowledge industries and information communication technologies (ICTs) that are having profound and differential effects on educational institutions and nations in general (Zajda 2015a).

Creating a More Inclusive World

In October 2009, Angel Gurría (OECD Secretary-General) in 'Education for the future – Promoting changes in policies and practices: the way forward' described some of the changes and priorities in education for tomorrow. Some of them focus on creating a 'more inclusive world', and inter-personal competencies:

…We need to form people for a more inclusive world: people who can appreciate and build on different values, beliefs, cultures. Inter-personal competencies to produce inclusive solutions will be of growing importance. Second, the conventional approach in school is often to break problems down into manageable bits and pieces and then teach students how to solve each one of these bits and pieces individually. But in modern economies, we create value by synthesising different fields of knowledge, making connections between ideas that previously seemed unrelated… Third, if we log on to the Internet today, we can find everything we are looking for. But the more content we can search and access, the more important it is to teach our students to sort and filter information. The search for relevance is very critical in the presence of abundance of information…The twenty-first century schools therefore need to help young individuals to constantly adapt and grow, to develop their capacity and motivation, to expand their horizons and transfer and apply knowledge in novel settings (Gurria 2009).

Globalisation, Policy and Education Reforms

Globalisation, marketisation and quality/efficiency driven reforms around the world since the 1980s have resulted in structural and qualitative changes in education and policy, including an increasing focus on the "lifelong learning for all", or a "cradle-to-grave" vision of learning and the "knowledge economy" in the global culture. Governments, in their quest for excellence, quality and accountability in education, increasingly turn to international and comparative education data analysis. All agree that the major goal of education is to enhance the individual's social and economic prospects. This can only be achieved by providing quality education for *all*. Students' academic achievement is now regularly monitored and measured within the 'internationally agreed framework' of the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). This was done in response to the growing demand for international comparisons of educational outcomes. To measure levels of academic performance in the global culture, the OECD, in co-operation with UNESCO, is using *World Education Indicators* (WEI) programme, covering a broad range of comparative indicators, which report on the resource invested in education and their returns to individuals (OECD 2014, *Education at a Glance –* OECD *Indicators*).

Clearly, these new phenomena of globalisation have in different ways affected current developments in education and policy around the word. First, globalisation of policy, trade and finance has some profound implications for education and reform implementation. On the one hand, the periodic economic crises (e.g. the 1980s), coupled with the prioritised policies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (e.g. SAPs), have seriously affected some developing nations and transitional economies in delivering basic education for all. The poor are unable to feed their children, let alone send them to school. This is particularly evident in Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, Asia, Central Asian Republics (former member states of the USSR), South East Asia, and elsewhere, where children, for instance (and girls in particular, as in the case of Afghanistan Tajikistan and rural

India, to name a few) are forced to stay at home, helping and working for their parents, and thus are unable to attend school. Second, the policies of the Organisation for Economic and Cooperative Development (OECD), UNESCO, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), and the General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS) operate as powerful forces, which, as supranational organisation, shape and influence education and policy around the world. Third, it can be argued that in the domains of language, policy, education and national identity, nation-states are likely to lose their power and capacity to affect their future directions, as the struggle for knowledge domination, production, and dissemination becomes a new form of a knowledge and technology-driven social stratification. I would like to stress that one of central and unresolved problems in the process of globalisation within a post-modernist context is the unresolved tension, and ambivalence 'between cultural *homogenization* and cultural *heterogenization*' (Appadurai 1990, p. 295, italics mine), or the on-going dialectic between globalism and localism, between faith and reason, between tradition and modernity, and between totalitarianism and democracy.

Apart from the multi-faceted nature of globalisation that invites contesting and competing *ideological* interpretations, numerous paradigms and theoretical models have been also used, ranging from modernity to postmodernity, to explain the phenomenon of globalisation. When, for instance, a writer or a seminar speaker uses the word 'globalisation' in a pedagogical and educational policy context, one wonders what assumptions, be they economic, political, social and ideological, have been taken for granted, and at their face value—uncritically, as a given, and in this case, as a *globocratic* (like technocratic) phenomenon. The politics of globalisation, particularly the hydra of ideologies, which are inscribed in the discourse of globalisation need to be analysed critically, in order to avoid superficial and one-dimensional interpretation of the term.

If we define the global system (e.g. the global economy, the global markets, the global media etc.) as referring to economic, political and social connections which crosscut borders between countries and have a significant impact on 'the fate of those living within each of them', then we are focusing on culturally and economically interdependent 'global village'. The term 'culture' already includes all other dimensions and artefacts. In an attempt to explain the phenomenon of globalisation Giddens focuses on the 'increasing interdependence of world society', whereas and others argue that globalisation reflects *social relations* that are also linked to the political, social, cultural and environmental spheres. The globalisation process is characterized by the acceptance of 'unified global time', the increase in the number of international corporations and institutions, the ever-increasing global forms of communication, the development of global competitions, and, above all, the acceptance of global notions of citizenship, equality, human rights and justice.

The above critique of globalisation, policy and education suggests new economic and political dimensions of cultural imperialism (Zajda 2014). Such hegemonic shifts in ideology and policy are likely to have significant economic and cultural implications for national education systems, reforms and policy implementations. For instance, in view of GATS constrains, and the continuing domination of multi-

national educational corporations and organisations in a global marketplace, the "basis of a national policy for knowledge production may be eroded in a free-market context of a knowledge-driven economy" (Robertson et al. 2002, p. 494).

Current Developments in Education Reforms: Case Studies

In addressing the topic globalisation, ideology and politics of education reforms, some authors in *Globalisation, Ideology and Politics of Education Reforms*, focused on global citizenship education, history education and language awareness in promoting intercultural coexistence (Rapoport; Henderson and Zajda; Tsyrlina-Spady and Lovorn; Tulasiewicz). Others discussed education reforms in secondary schools in countries like China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Georgia, Uganda and Australia (Zhou and He; Lee and Gopinathan; Janashia; Hallam et al.; Wright).

Rapoport argues that the construct of 'global citizenship', despite its conceptual and terminological vagueness, is gradually acknowledged as one of the systemic models of citizenship. He suggests that his resocialisation framework can serve as both theoretical and applied tools in global citizenship education. He describes major points of global citizenship debates in education, concluding that resocialisation is not a panacea in teaching global citizenship but one of many possible frameworks that schools and individual teachers can utilize in their practices.

Henderson and Zajda analyse recent policy reforms in the national history curriculum in both Australia and the Russian Federation. They discuss those emphases in the national curriculum in history that depict new representations and historiography and the ways in which this is foregrounded in History school textbooks. In doing so, the authors consider the debates about what version of the nation's past are deemed significant, and what should be transmitted to future generations of citizens. In this discussion of national history curricula, consideration is made of the curriculum's officially defined status as an instrument in the process of ideological transformation and nation-building. Henderson and Zajda also examine how history textbooks are implicit in this process, in terms of reproducing and representing what content is selected and emphasised in a national history curriculum.

Tsyrlina-Spady and Lovorn examine the nature of patriotism, history teaching and history textbooks in Russia. They discuss the extent to which government-endorsed, patriotic curriculum is being implemented throughout the Russian Federation, particularly through the promotion of new, grand narrative-style high school history textbooks. The authors conclude that Russian history/social studies education is shifting backwards, by promoting the hyper-nationalist ideas of the Cold War, rather than concepts of global democratic citizenship promoted during the 1990s.

Tulasiewicz, on the other hand, discusses the role of language in intercultural education, in the context of the current socio-political agenda of the European Union, and the drive for more languages that can be used for communication. It also serves as a reminder of the urgent need to practise interculturality. He argues that the

effective use of a Language Awareness model can help to overcome bias and prejudice in society at both local and global level.

Zhou and He focus specifically on education reforms in schools. In this case, they offer an overview of a national school-based curriculum movement, especially the public understanding of the value of developing a school-based curriculum (SBCD). They argue that even the basic facts about SBCD in China have received scant attention from researchers and policy analysts in the West.

Lee and Gopinathan argue that one of the major goals of education reforms in Singapore and Hong Kong is one of inculcating civic, political and social identity among the younger generation, so as to keep the "local" alive in the "global" environment. The authors evaluate the ways the reform policies were, and are, formed and implemented in Singapore and Hong Kong, and in what ways they differ from each other because of the divergences in the orientation and strength of the state in both city-states. They argue that while globalization is a major trigger, different reform policies found in both city-states are best seen as an action of integrating between the "local" and the "global" in the process of "glocalization".

Janashia argues that the Georgian (the former Soviet Republic in the USSR) school system has undergone profound changes. After the fall of the centralized Soviet system, arrangements have yielded to more open, market-driven, competition. Georgia has borrowed the pervasive notions of globalization from the West, such as school choice, vouchers, school autonomy, and parent involvement in school-based decision making. At first, after the Rose Revolution in 2003, experimental market-driven secondary education became part of the systemic arrangements, also including the implementation of conceptual approaches related to new financial, administrative, and political problems. Janashia examines the voucher system, and school choice in Georgia.

Hallam, Boren, Hite, Steve J. Hite and Mugimu discuss how Ugandan headteachers, as school-level leaders in Uganda, build cultures of trust with teachers at their schools. In particular, the authors examined how different types of Ugandan headteacher visibility influenced teachers' perceptions of their interpersonal trustworthiness. The authors argue that the understanding gleaned from this study will not only help Ugandan headteachers in their trust-building efforts, but also assist school leaders in other geographical contexts.

Wright discusses the construct of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) was introduced by to describe the knowledge needed by teachers in order to make a topic accessible to learners. Subsequent field-based research globally has supported the presence of specialised knowledge needed for teaching mathematics, established ways to measure it, and associated it positively with teachers' ability to improve student learning. The literature on systemic reform, based on international testing, finds some commonalities in practice among high-achieving countries but is usually not specific about the types of knowledge enacted by teachers in those nations. Wright argues that research on PCK has much to offer initiatives for improving student achievement and in giving teachers a voice to assert their professional expertise in a climate of market-driven education policy.

Evaluation

In evaluating the shifts in methodological approaches to globalisation and education reforms and their impact on education policy and pedagogy, we can make the following observations.

First, some authors used history textbooks, and curricular material to document the relationship between globalisation and education reforms (Rapoport; Henderson and Zajda; Tsyrlina-Spady and Lovorn; Lee and Gopinathan). They discussed such topics as global citizenship education, national history curricula and the process of ideological transformation, and nation-building, how curriculum can inculcate political and social identity, as well as patriotic curriculum.

Secondly, the role of language in intercultural education in the context of the current socio-political agenda of the European Union was discussed by Tulasiewicz. He argues that intercultural education is necessary to overcome bias and prejudice.

Thirdly, some authors focused on reforms associated with school-based curriculum (SBCD) in China (Zhou and He) and the tensions between centralization and decentralization, the voucher system, and school choice in Georgia (Janashia), as one of the outcomes of privatisation in education, school-level leaders in Uganda and their impact on schools (Hallam et al.) and the use of Pedagogical Content Knowledge, in response to OECD performance indicators in teaching to improve student learning (Wright).

All of these authors, in one way or another, debate the nexus between ideology and education reforms, and their impact on educational policy, innovation and classroom pedagogy.

Conclusion

The above analysis of social change and education policy reforms in the global culture shows a complex nexus between globalisation, ideology and education reforms – where, on the one hand, democratisation and progressive pedagogy is equated with equality, inclusion, equity, tolerance and human rights, while on the other hand, globalisation is perceived (by some critics at least) to be a totalising force that is widening the socio-economic status (SES) gap and cultural and economic capital between the rich and the poor, and bringing power, domination and control by corporate bodies and powerful organisations. Hence, we need to continue to explore critically the new challenges confronting the global village in the provision of authentic democracy, social justice, and cross-cultural values that genuinely promote a transformative pedagogy (Dalin and Rust 1996; Zajda 2010a). We need to focus on the crucial issues at the centre of current and on-going education reforms, if genuine culture of learning, and transformation, characterised by wisdom, compassion, and intercultural understanding, is to become a reality, rather than rhetoric.

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