

Liberating Adult Education, Animation
and People Centred Democracy

Education for Sustainable Development for policy-makers
through critical-reflective interviewing

Popular education and well-living: a new pedagogical narrative
for a learning Planet?

Does what goes around come around? – the late 20th century
adult learning and education agenda today

Remembering Jane Mace (1943 –2022)

The Educational Philosophy of Luis Emilio Recabarren. Pioneering
Working-Class Education in Latin America, María Alicia Rueda

Published by the UNESCO Chair in Global Adult Education, Faculty of Education,
University of Malta, in cooperation with the International Council for Adult Education

Editorial Committee

Editor

Peter Mayo, *Malta*

Members

Shermaine Barrett, *Jamaica*

Maria Brown, *Malta, Book Reviews Editor*

Alicia Cabezudo, *Argentina*

Prasenjit Deb, *India*

Heribert Hinzen, *Germany*

Timothy Ireland, *Brazil*

Tonic Maruatona, *Botswana*

Katarina Popovic, *Serbia*

Patricia Rodney, *Guyana*

Contents

Convergence Volume 44 Number 1 2023

An International Adult Education Journal

Editorial by Peter Mayo	1
-----------------------------------	---

Articles

Liberating Adult Education, Animation and People Centred Democracy by Marjorie Mbilinyi	3
Education for Sustainable Development for policy-makers through critical-reflective interviewing By Pierre Hili and Paul J. Pace	17
Popular education and well-living: a new pedagogical narrative for a learning Planet? by Timothy D. Ireland	42
Does what goes around come around? – the late 20th century adult learning and education agenda today by Chris Duke	54

In Memoriam

Remembering Jane Mace (1943 –2022) by Ursula Howard	71
---	----

Reviews

<i>María Alicia Rueda, The Educational Philosophy of Luis Emilio Recabarren. Pioneering Working-Class Education in Latin America. Routledge, New York, 2021, pp. 135</i> <i>ISBN13: 978-0367861193</i> By Pablo Toro-Blanco	74
Convergence Submission Guidelines	76

Editorial

Peter Mayo

The last few years were eventful ones with regard to birth centenaries of people who have made an impact on Adult Education globally. In 2021 we celebrated Paulo Freire and Raymond Williams and last year we celebrated Julius Kambarage Nyerere. This year will be the turn of one of Italy's foremost critical pedagogues, Don Lorenzo Milani from Tuscany. The UNESCO Chair in Global Adult Education under whose aegis this journal, *Convergence. An International Adult Journal* in its new online format, is being produced, in concert with the International Council for Adult Education, has celebrated these events with global webcasts. A three day webcast dedicated to Paulo Freire was held in December 2021 featuring a host of top notch critical educators (key Freire scholars, collaborators and practitioners) on or inspired by Paulo Freire. They gave half an hour presentations followed by q & a sessions. We had to spread the event over three days. Two days after the event, Raymond Williams' birth centenary was marked with presentations by key scholars of the Welshman and in Cultural Studies. The last webfest was held towards the end of last year and was devoted to former Tanzanian President and Education, including Adult Education, policy maker and catalyst, Julius Nyerere. The webfest, as in previous years, involved a series of time differences involving East Africa, Europe and North America. Speakers were in the main from Tanzania and the rest of East Africa, besides North America and Europe, They included people who worked with Nyerere or in Tanzania during his presidency. All podcasts concerning the three events are available on the UNESCO Chair in Global Adult Education website which also contains all issues of *Convergence* since its re-mergence, in April last year, in its new online format.

Julius Nyerere is remembered in this issue, a few months after his birth centenary year, in a revealing article by Marjorie Mbilinyi, one of the speakers at last December's Nyerere webfest. He was strongly associated with Adult Education and decolonisation, as well as rural development in the context of 'education for self-reliance' and ujamaa vijijini (village socialism). His connection with adult education was significant and his speeches on the vast area are staple readings for those engaged in this field. He also was honorary President of the ICAE and, during his presidency, Tanzania hosted, in 1976, this international organisation's first World assembly of Adult Education. This has been documented in previous issues of *Convergence*.

We are at a time when the International Council for Adult Education is celebrating its 50th year. We are therefore planning a special issue of *Convergence. An International*

Adult Education Journal marking this event. Of course it will contain a couple of miscellaneous papers to avoid a backlog. We hope to have one on don Lorenzo Milani; 2023 is his birth centenary. In this regard, the articles by Chris Duke and Timothy Ireland in this issue, both stalwarts in this organisation with strong connections with this journal, are in keeping with the spirit of this momentous occasion. It might not be amiss for the UNESCO Chair in Global Adult Education to host an activity to mark this 50 year event. Among the topics engaged with by the ICAE over the years and reflected in *Convergence* is that of Education for Sustainable Development, treated qualitatively in the article by Pierre Hili and Paul J. Pace, the latter a renowned exponent of this specific area.

Readers will have noticed the editorial decision to revert to the journal's original full name, with a slight adjustment: *Convergence. An International Adult Education Journal*. This is to distinguish this journal, founded by J. R. Kidd in the late 70s, from the other journals that came after and that carry the title *Convergence*. The subtitle underlines the journal's true identity as one focused on International Adult Continuing Education. It is, after all, one of the oldest international journals in the area that are extant in the English language.

Liberating Adult Education, Animation and People Centred Democracy ¹

Marjorie Mbilinyi

Adopting Issa Shivji's paradigm, "The philosopher in Nyerere was informed by, and in constant search for, human equality and freedom, while the king in him was driven by the imperatives of building a nation-state" [Shivji 2020 Book Three: 2]. Mwalimu Nyerere advocated transformative pedagogy and liberating adult education, which he linked to nation building and people-centred participatory development, especially at grassroots level. He argued that adult learners have knowledge to share. They need to be encouraged to think, analyse critically and act on their own behalf so as to improve their situation. They thereby became active subjects, and participated equally in making key decisions on resource allocations at all levels and benefited equally. While referring to individual demands for freedom and dignity, Mwalimu emphasized the collective nature of these demands, and argued that the African people can only realize real democracy and freedom by uniting together so as to fight against neo-colonialism and corporate globalisation and to struggle for equitable, just development and economic liberation. At the same time, he was a powerful ruler who established an Executive with no checks and balances and focused on nation building and African liberation, not socialism. He denounced global elites and Northern based imperialism, but in the early years he rarely took action against the growth of a bureaucratic bourgeoisie in his own state and party. The failure to translate his ideals of equality and justice into a popular mass movement of workers, peasants, students and others contributed to the ultimate downfall of ujamaa. At the same time, he succeeded in sustaining national unity in an increasingly hostile context during the 1980s debt crisis and confrontation with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) demands for Structural Adjustment (SAP) and neoliberalism [Shivji 2020 Book Three].

¹ Based on presentation to Global online Centenary Fest in honour of Julius K. Nyerere and Adult Education, 7 December 2022

Mwalimu throughout behaved with integrity and commitment to the development and welfare of Tanzanians and the sovereignty of Tanzania and the African continent. Adult educators can learn from the struggles that emerged to put transformative education and participatory democracy into practice. For example, participatory methods and philosophy of learning, organizing and action research have been developed within the animation conceptual framework, often called [participatory action research](#). Several activist organizations in Tanzania have adopted animation as the way they organize themselves, and also how they facilitate dialogue, advocacy and participatory action among the communities in which they work. How prepared are they/we to put into practice Nyerere's call for liberating adult education in solidarity with the people?

Liberating Adult Education

Education for Self Reliance (Nyerere, 1968) emphasized the basic principles of people centred development, saying the educational system is not

“designed to produce robots, which work hard but never question what the leaders in Government or TANU [now CCM] are doing and saying. ... Our Government and our Party must always be responsible to the people, and must always consist of representatives – spokesmen and servants of the people. The education provided must therefore encourage the development in each citizen of three things: *an enquiring mind; an ability to learn from what others do, and reject or adapt it to his own needs; and a basic confidence in his own position as a free and equal member of the society, who values others and is valued by them for what he does and not for what he obtains.*” [author's emphasis].

In most schools and adult education programmes, students continued to receive what Paulo Freire (1970/2000) called 'banking education': the teacher deposited information and knowledge into the minds of the students; the students transferred that same deposit of information and knowledge onto their examination paper or homework – without any call for original thinking, problem solving or creativity. Banking education continues to prevail today at all levels of education, including the University.

ESR principles were advocated for both schooling and adult education. In his speech on 'Adult Education and Development' (1976), Mwalimu Nyerere summarized the key principles of what we now call *uraghibishi* or animation.

"..Man can only liberate himself or develop himself. He cannot be liberated or developed by another. ...

..The same is true of education. Its purpose is the liberation of Man from the restraints and limitations of ignorance and dependency. .. The ideas imparted by education, or released in the mind through education, should therefore be liberating ideas; the skills acquired by education should be liberating skills..."

This means that adult education has to be directed at helping men to develop themselves. ..it particular it has to help men *to decide for themselves – in cooperation – what development is*. It must help men *to think clearly*; it must enable them to examine the possible alternative courses of action; to make a choice between those alternatives in keeping with their own purposes; and it must equip them with the ability to translate their decisions into reality.

..every adult knows something about the subject he is interested in, even if he is not aware that he knows it. He may indeed know something which his teacher does not know....It is on the basis of this knowledge that greater understanding must be built, and be seen to be built. ...

The organizers and teachers in an adult education programme *..have consciously to identify themselves with those who are participating in it primarily as learners. Only on this basis of equality, and of sharing a task which is of mutual benefit, is it possible to make full use of the existing human resources in the development of a community, a village or a nation."* [NB: *my emphasis*; note the male bias in Mwalimu Nyerere's writings; read [wo]men, her/himself]]

Liberating pedagogy has a political agenda, a revolutionary agenda. Mwalimu used the concept of "agitation" and linked it to organizing and mobilization. In Mwalimu's words ("Adult Education and Development" 1976),

".. the first function of adult education is to inspire both a desire for change, and an understanding that change is possible. For a belief that poverty or suffering is "the will of God" and that man's only task is to endure, is the most fundamental of all the enemies of freedom. Yet dissatisfaction with what is must be combined with a conviction that it can be changed, otherwise it is simply destructive. Men living in poverty or sickness or under tyranny or exploitation must be enabled to recognize both that the life they lead is

miserable, and that they can change it by their own actions, either individually or in cooperation with others.” (137)

“Education has to increase men’s physical and mental freedom – to increase their control over themselves, their own lives, and the environment in which they live... Teaching which induces a slave mentality or a sense of impotence is not education at all...(“Adult Education and Development” 1976,135)

According to Mwalimu, adult educators “are not politically neutral; by the nature of what they are doing they cannot be. For what they are doing will affect how men [sic] look at the society in which they live, and how they seek to use it or change it ... Adult Education is thus a highly political activity. Politicians ... therefore ... do not always welcome real adult education” [Ibid]. In a speech on the *Implementation of ‘Education for Self Reliance’* to the National Executive Committee Meeting of TANU, Musoma, November 1974, Mwalimu said: (Nyerere 2005):

‘... education ought to enable whoever acquires it to fight against oppression...’ [101]

‘...we have not succeeded in liberating ourselves mentally, nor in having self-confidence, nor in selecting that which is most suitable to our objective conditions instead of continuing to ape the systems of other people whose economy and mode of life is totally different from ours’ [103]

What is the role of an adult educator cum teacher in the revolution? In a passionate speech to teachers in Dar es Salaam in 1969, Mwalimu said, *‘The Job of Teachers is Revolution’*:

“When we talk of change or revolution in education, teachers begin arguing: ‘Oh! You will lower standards!’ But whose standards? They are colonial standards – and of how much use have they been to us? If these standards were good and relevant to our situation, we would not be talking of weakness and poverty today. We must be able to see what is good for ourselves and only in this way can we change. You teachers therefore must accept to be revolutionary teachers, not teachers to make people go to sleep.”

“Even if you are working in the village your job is to bring about African Revolution. You are carrying out your duty for the whole of Africa. Because history has given us Tanzania, we have to

eradicate weakness and poverty in Tanzania. But we are not working for Tanzania alone. We are also working for Africa because of the suffering we have experienced as Africans.”

“You are working for Africa and secondly you are playing your part in a world-wide revolution. A situation where the rich exploit the poor will go. All exploiters will be dealt with in the world.”

Animation methodology philosophy and Transformative Feminism

Mwalimu’s philosophy of liberating pedagogy is the centre of what is referred to as participatory pedagogy, participatory organizing, or what we now refer to as animation – *uraghibishi*. Historically animation has been used as part of a process of strengthening the capacity of grassroots women and men to organize themselves, analyse their own situation, identify basic causes of their problems, and carry out strategic actions for change (Freire 1970/2000, Rahman 1993). As Mwalimu Nyerere noted, the process is normally highly political [with a small ‘p’]; the process leads participants to collectively challenge local power structures and to demand their rights, as women, as youth, as peasants and workers, as ‘ordinary’ villagers.

Animation is used interchangeably here with participatory action research, to connote the breakdown of the barrier between research and action, as the poor/grassroots become the owners of the research/action process. Animation also refers to transformative pedagogy, providing an alternative approach to adult learning and education [ALE]. A wide variety of potential actions can be envisaged here, from short-term strategic planning and implementation to solve short- and long-term problems at community level, to advocacy for change at local and national level. In all cases, however, these actions are about exercises in the use and control of power to depict reality, its causes and what to do about it. For this reason, it is a mistake to view participatory research and action primarily as a set of techniques.

Participatory action research involves a reversal of power relations within the research or learning process, as well as within different levels of society itself. Indeed, the main goal of the enterprise is social change, rather than the collection or transmission of information. The key actors are the poor themselves, often working through local grassroots CSOs. They set the research agenda, according to priority issues identified at the local level. Analysis tends to be holistic and in depth, in order to provide the kind of rich information needed for the tasks in hand.

Although outsider experts may be called upon to help facilitate the process, their tasks are defined by the grassroots actors through negotiation and debate. A bottom up decision-making structure is thereby established, which becomes a school for democracy in general. Ownership is held and claimed by the grassroots, and they often provide substantial resource support for the process. Having planned the research activity as part of their programme for social change, members of the community are highly motivated to participate, and will have a strong desire to analyse the findings. Hence, the separation between research and information dissemination breaks down, at one level, and becomes more complex on another. Grassroots groups will want to develop different kinds of information packages for advocacy purposes: media briefs, popular booklets, pamphlets and posters, but also expert reports for use in advocacy work with policy makers in government and development agencies and in wider social movements.

The empowerment which results in the context of transformation is understood to be a process which increases the capacity of the poor and disempowered to (TGNP 1993:29/30):

Analyse and know the world at all levels;

Act on their own behalf; and

Increase their power and control over the resources necessary for sustainable and dignified life.

According to TGNP (1993:30), "The concept of empowerment connotes a process whereby a community (or a marginalised social group) increases its power, by challenging structures of society which disempower and removing the barriers to transformation. Both individual and collective action are called for to change power relations, often in several sectors at the same time."

The most promising examples of putting Education for Self Reliance into practice through animation during the last forty years have not been in formal schools but in informal education cum animation spaces created and nurtured by advocacy civil society organizations. Methods are adopted to facilitate participants to carry out their own assessment of the situation, analyse basic causes, and act to change the structures and systems which are oppressing and exploiting them (Mbilinyi 2003). The use of poetry, drama, case studies, art and song not only enhances the analysis process, but also energises people's creativity, linking logical analysis with 'art' which everyone can practice. Small group discussions, visual representations of key concepts, and open question

and answer sessions ensure that every participant has a role and a voice, while encouraging cooperation and strong criticism and self-criticism of ideas and actions. Dialogue among participants who share the same ultimate goals, but have access to different kinds of information and knowledge, generates new knowledge about the situation and how it can be changed. There is a direct link between analysis and action, theory and practice, and a constant challenge to hierarchies of power, whatever their foundation may be.

The outcome in the immediate short term is enhanced self-esteem, a recognition of the knowledge and skills which the participants already have, and growing recognition of the need for more analysis and more information and where to find it. Animation ignites a passion for justice among animators and participants alike, which feeds into action. The democratic principles which are adopted within the animation education/research/organizing process become models of the kind of alternative power structures that people want and try to create in their families, communities, workplace, schools and in the political arena.

Animation has been embraced by transformative feminist movement building in Tanzania and world wide. Elements of what we now call transformative feminism were articulated by progressive third world feminists in the 1970s and 1980s onwards. Of paramount importance is the emphasis on the need for feminist work to challenge patriarchy, capitalism, racism and globalization; as well as to embrace struggles for national and regional liberation and development and women's liberation. In the present context of Tanzania and Africa, transformative feminism concentrates on patriarchy and neo-liberalism, which are perceived to be interwoven and inseparable.

People centred democracy as alternative to neoliberal globalisation

Education for Self Reliance called for a revolution not only in the classroom and the school, but throughout society-- a complete transformation in how people governed themselves and how they organized processes of production and reproduction. The people were not to be 'robots' who 'never question what the leaders .. are doing and saying'. Mwalimu was calling for an entirely different form of leadership, one which would be participatory. Transformative education was also linked, in his view, to people-centred democracy and development.

Democracy to Nyerere was embodied in new principles of politics as well as economics, as argued in "The Purpose is Man", an impromptu speech he made

at a Teach-In at the University of Dar es Salaam on 5th August 1967 (Nyerere 1968: 324, author's emphasis):

Socialism, however, is not simply a matter of methods of production. They are part of it but not all of it. The essence of socialism is the practical acceptance of human equality. That is to say, every man's equal right to a decent life before any individual has a surplus above his needs; *his equal right to participate in Government*; and his equal responsibility to work and contribute to the society to the limit of his ability.

In Tanzania this means that we must safeguard and strengthen our democratic procedures; we must get to the position where every citizen plays an active and direct role in the government of his local community, at the same time as he plays a full role in the government of his own country. It also means that we have to correct the glaring income differentials which we inherited from colonialism, and ensure that the international imbalance between the wages of factory and service workers on the one hand, and of agricultural workers on the other, is not reproduced within our own nation. ..

In "Socialism and Rural Development", Nyerere argued that (1968: 347): "... there must also be an efficient and democratic system of local government, so that our people make their own decisions on the things which affect them directly, and so that they are able to recognize their own control over community decisions and their own responsibility for carrying them out. Yet this local control has to be organized in such a manner that the nation is united and working together for common needs and for the maximum development of our whole society."

Participatory democracy begins at the level of the village assembly and/or the neighbourhood - *kitongoji/mtaa*: (ibid: 359):

...Village democracy must operate from the beginning; there is no alternative if this system is to succeed. A leader will have an opportunity to explain his ideas and to try to persuade the people that they are good; but it must be for the people themselves to accept or reject his suggestions. It does not matter if the discussion takes a long time; *we are building a nation, and this is not a short-term thing*. For the point about decisions by an ujamaa village is not just whether the members do or do not decide to dig a well or clear a

new shamba. The point is that by making this decision, and then acting upon it, they will be building up a whole way of life – a socialist way of life. ... Therefore everything which relates exclusively to their village, and their life in it, must be decided by them and not by anyone else.

The quality of leadership was central to this analysis. Mwalimu Nyerere demanded a transformation in the power relations between leaders and citizens. In “The Varied Paths to Socialism” (1967 in Nyerere 1968: 309), Nyerere argued that there must be “among the leadership, a desire and a determination to serve alongside of, and in complete identification with, the masses. *The people must be, and must know themselves to be, sovereign..*” The people are sovereign – not the state, but the people!

However, when the people responded to the call for democratisation and transformation of education, factories and rural society in *Mwongozo 1971*, Nyerere consistently sided with the bureaucrats. Of central concern to him was the power of the Party and the State. He also had to contend with struggles within the Party. The clearest example was his about face when it came to the Ruvuma Development Association (RDA). At the beginning he provided the young peasant leaders with full support in their efforts to create independent production and social systems under their own control in the 1960s. However, when they collided with bureaucratic demands of regional authorities, he allowed the Party to ban RDA. When university students denounced government corruption and the self-aggrandizement of Members of Parliament, they were rusticated. Workers who seized their factories, and locked out management for being autocratic and corrupt, citing the *Mwongozo* principles, were fired. These outcomes brought to the surface the contradictions between Nyerere’s ideals and his practice when power struggles emerged. The Party and the State must be paramount. [See Shivji 2020 Book Three: 162-220].

Struggles and Crisis: Struggles over Neoliberalism and Structural Adjustment

Leaders in the government and state parastatals took advantage of their position to amass wealth in contravention of the Leadership Code. Corruption, financial mismanagement and growing inequality between the bureaucratic bourgeoisie and the majority of people led to visible dissatisfaction at grassroots level. This was heightened during the period of severe shortage of basic goods and immiseration of the people during the debt crisis of the 1980s. Crop authorities extracted surplus from the peasantry, forcing many to drop cash crops in favour of food crops they could sell on parallel markets. Within

the Party and the government, a growing number of leaders began to espouse neoliberal principles [Shivji 2020 Book Three: 162-230]. In his speech to the TANU National Congress in 1987, Mwalimu spoke openly about class divisions and struggles within the nation: “[i]f a minority can be clearly seen to be swimming in wealth obtained from theft, smuggling, and exploitation while the majority face extreme distress, it is not easy to defend unity and it is not easy for the government to succeed in its efforts to revive our economy” [Shivji 2020 Book Three: 351].²

At the same time, Mwalimu faced growing external pressure to drop socialism and self reliance and adopt structural adjustment principles. For eight years he defended Tanzanian government’s prioritisation of people over things, and justice over markets. His eloquent speech to the City of London on the mounting debt burden, IMF constitutionalities and SAP in 1985 exemplifies this:(Shivji Book Three: 341):

“If African Governments are really representing their people, they cannot accept conditions which would lead to more hunger, to social chaos, to civil war, or to the use of armies against their people...It is not a rhetorical question when I ask, should we really let our people starve so that we can pay our debts?”

Mwalimu Nyerere continued to speak out against neo-colonialism throughout his life. In his speech to the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs in 1986, he said:

“Yet policy mistakes by our young governments, or the existence of shameful corruption in many countries, is not sufficient explanation for Africa’s current economic condition. Although all African Governments differ in ideology, policy, and structure ... all countries have suffered a similar kind of economic regression and now face similar problems.

I believe that the basic explanation for Africa’s present economic condition lies in the fact that no African country has yet managed to shake off the neo-colonial hold of industrialized nations over our economies. .. Africa therefore continues to have an unequal

² “Address by Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, Chairman of Chama cha Mapinduzi at the Opening of the National Conference” (typescript) Dodoma, 22 Oct 1987, 10 [Haroub Othman Collection]

dependency relationship with the developed nations - mostly former colonial powers." [pp 8-9]

In the same speech, Mwalimu reminds his listeners of the historical context leading up to the present situation, which was defined by the struggles of African peoples against colonialism and racism:

"Our people's demand for independence, however, derived its major strength from their demand for human dignity and freedom. They wanted to govern themselves, in their own interests. And while they were demanding improvements in their conditions of life and in the provision of social services, they also wanted freedom and peace in their villages and towns and in their own lives." [pp 5-6]

Mwalimu then goes on: "... on balance, it cannot be said that we have fulfilled our people's hopes for democracy and Human Rights" [p. 6]

While referring to individual demands for freedom and dignity, Mwalimu also emphasized the collective nature of these demands, and argued that the African people can only realize real democracy and freedom by uniting together so as to fight *against* 'neo-colonialism' [i.e. imperialism] and to struggle instead *for* equitable, just development and economic liberation. These were not just abstract words - under Nyerere, Tanzania was the leader of the front line states fighting against colonialism in eastern and southern Africa. Moreover, Mwalimu's notion of emancipation and people-centred development was on a global scale. Hence his commitment to the South Commission in Geneva.

In his speeches and writings on North South relations in the 1990s, Nyerere is scathing about the lack of international democracy and the forced imposition of structural adjustment on poor nations by the World Bank and IMF. In a speech at Urbino University in 1994 entitled "The South and the North Together", Nyerere said (1994 in Nyerere 2011 p. 295):

We all live in one world. We have, of necessity, created systems to regulate or govern our relationships, one with another. Yet, at the moment, there is no democracy at all at the international level, when countries of both North and South are involved. Instead, the international institutions we now have give added strength to the already strong and powerful. ..

Yet, while democracy continues to be urged at the national level, international governance is being made ever more undemocratic. Increasingly, issues with any connection to economics are being transferred to the World Bank or IMF or now to the new World Trade Organization. Control over the Global Environment Facility was thus given not to the UN Environment Programme based in Nairobi, but to the World Bank!..What happens will not depend upon the interests of the majority but on the wishes of the rich minority!

Democracy must be applied internationally as well as nationally, and the people of the North, have to give it a chance. (297)

All of us -- black, white, brown and yellow people -- have to work together for peace and harmony in this one world in which we all live. But nationally or internationally peace cannot be imposed; for genuine peace is a product of justice. Let us dedicate ourselves to work for peace through justice for all human beings."

References

- Freire, P (1970/2000) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* London: Bloomsbury
- Mbilinyi, M (2003) Animation and the Feminist Social Movement, in Mbilinyi, M, Rusimbi, M Chachage S L & Kitunga D (eds.) *Activist Voices: Feminist Struggles for an Alternative World* Dar es Salaam, TGNP & E&D Limited
- Mbilinyi, M (2009) Reflecting with Nyerere on people-centred leadership. *Pambazuka News* 452 (2009) Special Issue *How We Wish You were Here: The Legacy of Mwalimu Nyerere* ed C.Chachage and A. Cassam [77-92]
- Mbilinyi, M (2016) Politics Of Education For Self Reliance: Reflections Of A Former Young Teacher Educator And Activist In 1968 - 1980. Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Professorial Chair in Pan African Studies (Kigoda) *Mwalimu Julius Nyerere: A People-Centred Development Vision Dar es Salaam: Proceedings of the 8th Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Intellectual Festival, UDSM, 14-16 June.*
- Nyerere, J. K (1968) *Freedom and Socialism* Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press
- Nyerere, J. K (2005) *Nyerere on Education* vol. II; Dar es Salaam: HakiElimu
- Nyerere, J K (1986) Reflections on Africa and its Future. Address at the Nigerian Institution of International Affairs [8th December] mimeo
- Nyerere, J. K (2011) *Freedom and a New World Economic Order* Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press
- Rahman, M D Anisur (1993) *People's Self-Development, Perspectives on Participatory Action Research* London: Zed Books
- Shivji, I. G., Yahya-Othman, S and Kamata, N (2020) *Development as Rebellion: A Biography of Julius Nyerere* Book Three Issa G Shivji *Rebellion Without Rebels,,* Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota.

Liberating Adult Education, Animation and People Centred Democracy

Marjorie Mbilinyi

Abstract

Mwalimu Nyerere embraced a philosophy of equality and justice at all levels; and at the same time as head of the ruling Party and President of the nation created a powerful Executive branch with no checks and balances. He advocated transformative pedagogy and liberating adult education, which he linked to people-centred participatory development. Nyerere emphasized the collective nature of individual demands for freedom and dignity, and argued that the African people can only realize real democracy and freedom by uniting together to fight against neo-colonialism and corporate globalisation and to struggle instead for equitable, just development and economic liberation. His priority was nation building. The ruling party reigned supreme in the One Party State. Nevertheless, Nyerere ruled with integrity, and commitment to the welfare of Tanzanians and the sovereignty of his nation and the African continent.

Key words

Animation, transformative pedagogy, liberating adult education, people-centred participatory development

Libérer éducation des adultes, animation et la démocratie centrée sur les personnes

Marjorie Mbilinyi

Résumé

Mwalimu Nyerere a adopté une philosophie d'égalité et de justice à tous les niveaux ; cependant, en tant que chef du parti au pouvoir et président de la nation, il a créé un pouvoir exécutif puissant sans contrôle ni contrepoids. Il prônait une pédagogie transformatrice et une éducation des adultes libératrice, associées à un développement participatif centré sur l'individu. Nyerere insistait sur la nature collective des demandes individuelles de liberté et de dignité, et soutenait que le peuple africain ne pouvait parvenir à une véritable démocratie et à la liberté en luttant contre le néocolonialisme et la mondialisation des entreprises, mais plutôt en luttant pour un développement équitable et juste ainsi que pour la libération économique. Sa priorité était la construction de la nation. Le parti au pouvoir régnait en maître dans un État à parti unique. Néanmoins, Nyerere a gouverné avec intégrité et engagement pour le bien-être des Tanzaniens et la souveraineté de sa nation et du continent africain.

Mots clés

Animation, pédagogie transformative, éducation des adultes libératrice, développement participatif centré sur les personnes.

Educación de adultos liberadora, animación y democracia centrada en las personas.

Marjorie Mbilinyi

Resumen

Mwalimu Nyerere abrazó una filosofía de igualdad y justicia a todos los niveles; sin embargo, como jefe del partido gobernante y Presidente de la nación, creó un poderoso poder ejecutivo sin controles ni equilibrios. Defendió la pedagogía transformadora y la educación liberadora de adultos, vinculándolas al desarrollo participativo centrado en las personas. Nyerere hizo hincapié en la naturaleza colectiva de las demandas individuales de libertad y dignidad, argumentando que el pueblo africano sólo puede lograr una democracia y libertad reales uniéndose para luchar contra el neocolonialismo y la globalización corporativa, y en su lugar luchando por un desarrollo equitativo y justo, así como por la liberación económica. Su prioridad era la construcción de la nación. Sin embargo, Nyerere gobernó con integridad y compromiso con el bienestar de los tanzanos y la soberanía de su nación y del continente africano.

Palabras clave

Animación, pedagogía transformadora, educación de adultos liberadora, desarrollo participativo centrado.

Education for Sustainable Development for policy-makers through critical-reflective interviewing

Pierre Hili and Paul J. Pace

Introduction

This paper provides a reflexive account of the conceptual framework and methodology developed during research built on qualitative data-generation and inductive thematic data-analysis informed by critical theory, constructivism (Charmaz, 2006) and phenomenology (Van Manen, 1990). This approach was deemed appropriate to address questions about the views of policy-makers on SD, the related decision-making process and power relations, and the role of ESD for Maltese policy-makers in seeking critical reflection (Brookfield, 1995) through emancipative communicative reasoning (Habermas, 1984) and problem-solving (Freire, 1970). Through reflective interviewing (Roberston, 2004), the research sought to promote reflection and critical thinking in the participants as a form of ESD. The paper includes a review of the research concepts and design, their appropriateness, and a discussion of the participants' stakeholder groups. In addition, it also discusses the credibility and trustworthiness of the research and addresses issues of accessing and interviewing the powerful.

Problem of research

The research area aimed to address the apparent lacuna around education for policy-makers to promote SD (UNESCO, 1987) and the issues related to accessing and interviewing the powerful (Walford, 2003). The professional standing of the main researcher as a civil servant¹ was instrumental in

¹ The first author served for over thirty years in Malta's Public Service teaching sciences in a State Secondary School, as a diplomat in the Diplomatic Service of Malta, in the Ministry for Finance and currently at the Planning Authority. The views expressed in this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Planning Authority.

facilitating access as it enhanced the chances of being granted an interview by policy-makers (McHugh, 2003). The insider status was an asset as knowledge of the field helped to understand more reflexively the research context (Olesen, 1994) in the acknowledgment that facts cannot be separated from their constituent values (Griffiths, 1995).

ESD was seen as an example of transformative education. As educators can be transformative intellectuals (Giroux, 1989; Mezirow, 1991), it was held that the interview interaction could assist policy-makers in thinking critically on SD. Nonetheless, working with policy-makers is a complex matter because of the individuals' condition, the social interactions, and ethical issues (Griffiths, 1998) as well as their differing modernist and postmodernist views on knowledge and the effects of power (Foucault, 1983, 1997; Popkewitz, 1999; Torres, 1999). These considerations on SD policy-making and ESD for policy-makers necessitated a research design within a critical theory perspective based on the following research questions that were developed through a cyclical process based on reflection:

Research question 1: What are the views of Maltese high-level policy-makers on their awareness; knowledge/understanding; attitudes/values/responsibilities; skills; and participation/interests, with regards to SD?

Research question 2: How and why do Maltese high-level policy-makers arrive at decisions on SD related matters?

Research question 3: How is ESD perceived by Maltese high-level policy-makers? How can ESD be delivered/provided to Maltese high-level policy-makers?

A qualitative research design, not immune to self-doubt and uncertainty (Ely et al., 1991; Law, 2006), was adopted to seek in-depth understanding (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005) of the views of policy-makers. A positive force of reflexivity shaped the process through a heightened awareness of the subjectivities of the researcher and of the participants while acknowledging that simplicity does not do justice to a messy world (Law, 2006). Given the constructivist ontology and interpretative epistemology, a qualitative method using semi-structured interviews as a tool was chosen to address the research questions. Apart from its phenomenological objective to describe the perceptions of policy-makers, the critical-inductive research built on constructivist ontology "by aiming for interpretative understanding and situated knowledge ... as it positions inquiry in its historical, cultural, social situational, and interactional location and thus

recognizes partialities” (Charmaz, 2008: 133). Critical theory provided the basis of the research process that critically delved into power relations and SD promotion. Notwithstanding this critical perspective, the construction of knowledge was deemed partial, local, and regional (Foucault in Foucault and Deleuze, 1977) in the post-structural awareness of the complexities emanating from socially derived constructions of reality (Brown and Jones, 2001). The researchers reflected on the views of the participants keeping in mind individual positions and subjectivities (Griffiths, 1998) and explored change without prespecifying it (Blake and Masschelein, 2003; Foucault, 1983).

This research emanates from a philosophical position that realities are multiple and shifting and all enquiry is value-bound (Ely et al., 1991). So, the process aimed at understanding the policy-makers’ experiences by seeing events in a context and by giving policy-makers the opportunity of a counter-narrative space (Walsh, 2012) through an interactive process. Noting the uncertain nature of knowledge due to its dependence on local and provisional values (Foucault in Foucault and Deleuze, 1974; Griffiths, 1998), the study generated experiential narratives about SD policy-making and ESD within the cultural context of Malta. The analysis of data delved into personal motivations, but also social contexts that support individual views (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The interviews were based on critical reflection on understandings (Brookfield, 1995; Mezirow, 1991) through undistorted interaction (Habermas, 1984). The idea of value-free knowledge was rejected in favour of political engagement (Brydon-Miller et al., 2003) arising from the critical stance (Anyon et al. 2009) towards the political commitment of Maltese politicians, and the need for socially-engaged and purpose-oriented critical research (Cookson Jr, 2003). The interactional setting promoted awareness and consciousness through reflection (Freire, 1970) to hopefully improve social practice (McTaggart, as cited in, Brydon-Miller et al., 2003; Macey, 2000; Popkewitz, 1999).

General background of research

Appropriateness of the philosophical underpinnings of the research design

Aware of the limitations of multiple realities imposed by positionality, partial knowledge and variation, the study rests on constructivist ontology, interpretative epistemology, inductive and methodological flexibility (Charmaz, 2008). The researchers avoided imposing their own world view (Freire, 1970) on the participants. Thus, the interview involved problem-posing to policy-makers providing them with a setting to explore their possible potential with respect to social inclusion, equitable economic distribution, and environmental protection. The research approach upheld these objectives by

engaging with values to question taken-for-granted dominant policy views (Ozga, 2012).

Cognizant of Habermas' theory of communicative rationality the process was embedded in the lifeworld of the participants and based on respectful dialogue (Walseth and Schei, 2011). Policy-makers were engaged through communicative action to seek awareness of their potential ability to promote SD and thus of the needs of the oppressed (Mickelson, 2003), by considering the limitations of their actions imposed by power relations and power discourse (Cookson Jr, 2003; Foucault, 1972). This course of action was taken as the aims of SD, could be better served by having committed policy-makers rather than disempowered ones, as social conditions are created through social institutions (Cookson Jr, 2003). This study did not forfeit the quest to potentially represent a reality, albeit constructed and interpretative, with respect to SD promotion in the cultural context of the smallness and islandness. This position significantly contributed to the rationale of the research.

A constructivist intersubjective dialogue based on problem-posing (Freire, 1970) for self-reflection by policy-makers on their lifeworld, while avoiding its colonization (Habermas, 1984) was adopted, as a means of reflective learning conversation and methodological device for emancipatory transformation. Following critical theory, the methodology sought some form of common understanding based on situated knowledge on SD in the Maltese islands but remained aware of postmodern concerns about the quest for certainty (Parkin, 1996). By looking into the world as experienced by the individual (Kafle, 2011), the processing of data along thematic aspects (Van Manen, 1990) was conducted through a hermeneutic cycle by reading of the interview texts, reflective writing in the forms of analytic memos and interpreting (Laverty, 2003). Based on these research concepts and role values (Griffiths, 1998) the research design evolved (Burgess, 1984) as the research proceeded as a moving target (Law, 2006).

The main phases of the research design

Each research phase built on the previous ones, leading to co-creation of data-generation (Griffiee, 2005: 36). Questions were personalised and open-ended leaving enough space for policy-makers to develop the interview as a participative constructive dialogue of their lifeworld (Habermas, 1984). The research project and interview question were firstly discussed in an open manner with the participants (Engward, 2013) to verify their relevance to policy-makers (Eckersly, 2002). Secondly, a senior civil servant who worked on SD evaluated the relevance of the research objectives and interview questions

thus comparing them with the experience of an expert in the field (Biesta, 2006) to strengthen the democratic values of the study (Brookfield, 1993). The consultations field-tested the research and interview questions with experts (Cookson Jr., 2003) in preparation for the interviews as a dialogic space (Craft, 2012; Freire, 1970).

Thirdly, a pilot interview was conducted to address any unclear questions (Peabody et al., 1990) and ensure that pertinent questions were built on the life experiences of policy-makers (Freire, 1985; Hamilton, 2013) and aligned to a culturally and historically determined interview (Kong et al., 2002, as cited in, Fontana and Frey, 2005). Consultations gave more power to the participants (Deem, 2003), but ensured that the questions reflected not only what the researchers had set out to study, but more importantly what was there to find out (Ely et al., 1991).

Problem-posing semi-structured interviews promoted critical reflection for emergence of consciousness (Freire, 1970) to possibly influence future policies (McHugh, 2003) hence serving as a narrative of benefit to policy-makers (Denzin, 2003; Weston, 1998 as cited in, Fontana and Frey, 2005). Feedback was sought at the end of each interview from policy-makers on their views on the interviewing session. The data generation, preliminary coding and data funnelling refined the outcomes of the research process (Charmaz, 2006). Further interviews promoted a more refined data generation guided by the data in hand and an evolving set of interview questions (Charmaz, 2006). After interviewing 60% of the stakeholder groups no new patterns emerged and saturation was reached (Engward, 2013).

Population

This study did not assume that all potential participants are interchangeable, but held that different stakeholder groups (that is, politicians, civil servants, and advisers) have different power, interests and insights. The stakeholder groups consisted of elected politicians including Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and Members of Parliament (MPs); Permanent Secretaries (PSs) as the top public officers in each Ministry and; Heads of the Ministry's Secretariat (HOSs) as the main adviser of each minister and parliamentary secretary.

The total number of high-level policy-makers consisted of sixty-nine elected politicians including Cabinet members, eleven PSs and thirteen HOSs making a total of ninety-three policy-makers, with only eight policy-makers being females. The age of the stakeholders ranged from the mid-thirties to the late-sixties. These three sub-groups were chosen because they constitute the top

brass of the executive and administrative arms of government and of parliament thus taking into consideration the legislative, executive, and administrative aspects of policy-making.

Sample method and size

The elite sample covered the range of opinion on SD matters (Cookson Jr, 2003). As the number of high-level policy-makers was relatively small it was decided to target the whole group. This decision was taken as there was no guarantee that if a sample had been taken, rather than the total stakeholder group, the interviewed number of stakeholders would not have been reduced even further by policy-makers opting out.

Out of ninety-three policy-makers, fifty-six were interviewed amounting to 60% of the total number. Out of a total of sixty-nine MPs, thirty-seven were interviewed amounting to 54% of MPs: sixteen of them were Nationalist Party (PN) MPs (the Government) and twenty-one were Labour Party (PL) MPs (the Opposition). Moreover, six out of eleven members of Cabinet, that is, 55% of ministers were interviewed. Nine out of eleven PSs were interviewed amounting to 82% while in the case of HOSs ten out of thirteen were interviewed leading to a success rate of 77%. The female gender was adequately represented as out of eight female policy-makers four or 50% of them were interviewed.

Instrument and procedures

Semi-structured reflective interviews

Semi-structured reflective interviews were adopted to provide insights into policy-making that are not public and easily available and explore policy-making networks and the ideas and values of the key actors (Fitz and Halpin, 2003). This reflexive problem-posing interviewing provided policy-makers the opportunity to actively explore their beliefs (Robertson, 2004), promoted reflection and constructive dialogue (Eckersly, 2002) and led to a discussion-based interaction (Brookfield, 2008; Freire, 1970, 1983; Hamilton, 2013; Goulet, 2007) favouring new understandings within a social context (Mulkay and Gilbert, 1982, as cited in, Freebody, 2003).

The interview setting has implications on interviewing, hence 'where' and 'when' specificities were considered (Odendahl and Shaw, 2001), while keeping in mind that the interviewer was eliciting information from participants "whose professional and institutional locations suggested that

they were skilled at releasing very little" (Fitz and Halpin, 2003: 37). As prior preparation to the open-ended semi-structured interviews (EPIC Workshop, 2002), research on the individual participants' background was conducted in the knowledge that interviews do not offer an authentic picture of the interviewee (Freebody, 2003). This issue was also addressed by building a rapport with the interviewee (Kogan, 2003) built on emancipatory expression (Craft, 2012). This personal approach limited situations where policy-makers conveyed only the official views of their ministry (Fitz and Halpin, 2003).

Access, informed consent, and confidentiality

Access was gained through personal contacts with prospective participants and gatekeepers rather than academic status (Semel, 2003). Nonetheless, a good dose of logistical flexibility was inevitable. Access for individual interviews was not difficult as all approached policy-makers accepted to be interviewed (Walford, 2003). Information letters avoided unnecessary detail that might be counterproductive (Dexter, 1970, as cited in, McHugh, 2003). Civil servants were given the option of remaining anonymous as this guaranteed their participation in policy research (Fitz and Halpin, 2003). After following conventional procedures (Fitz and Halpin, 2003) a number of PSs accepted to be attributable following clearance from the Principal Permanent Secretary (PPS).

Researchers must be ready to answer questions as the powerful might want to make sure of one's credentials. This was crucial to build a rapport with the powerful based on mutual respect, academic thoroughness, and a disposition to learn from them (McHugh, 2003). Access to the high-level policy-makers proved to be a process in time that called for creative strategies and was dependent on the particular setting in which the researcher operated. There is no one-size-fits-all and one must identify the most suitable strategies. Access was a demanding process in terms of time, but it could also be termed as easy in terms of success rate (Fitz and Halpin, 2003; Whitty and Edwards, 2003). This research confirmed that gaining access to members of elites is not as difficult as some envisage; working with policy-makers is challenging, but worthwhile (Walford, 2003).

Instrumentation, validity, and reliability

Semi-structured interviews were used as the research tool as interviewing provides insights about motives that explain how policy makers function (EPIC Workshop, 2002) and some level of control over politicians who tend to dominate discussions (Fitz and Halpin, 2003). The researcher remained flexible

during the interviewing stage to be open to emerging issues. The intra- and inter-interviewing probing resulted into a cyclical process of doing, thinking and doing (Ely et al., 1991). Rather than adopting a positivistic type of interviewing characterised by detachment, the researcher interacted with policy-makers in a reflexive manner to create new meanings. Subjectivities (Scheurich, 1995) were used to enhance the research process while at the same time remaining aware of the assumptive world view (Kogan, 2003). The researcher discussed with policy-makers, and was aware of doing so (Fontana and Frey, 2005) helping them to better understand themselves in relation to SD through an exercise in self-awareness rather than through the identification of some meta-narrative or truth about the achievement of SD.

In qualitative studies “validity and reliability are encompassed by credibility, transferability and trustworthiness” (Golafshani, 2003, p. 600) and refer to whether the interview questions are formulated in a manner that reflects what one is trying to find out (Guba and Lincoln, 1985). Having open-ended personalised questions gave the participants the opportunity to bring up issues of importance to them so that any foreshadowed issues came to the surface. Trustworthiness (Ely et al., 1991) was sought for by having prolonged engagement in the field, triangulation, the identification of negative cases, and the checking of the data generated with the participants. The interview data was corroborated with the interventions made in parliament by MPs on the legislation on SD. As to transferability (Guba and Lincoln, 1985), the research context was described in detail and any assumptions outlined so that readers could make an informed judgment as to whether the outcomes could be applicable to similar contexts. Reflecting on the context of the interviewing and generating a narrative based on a degree of exchange of views addressed the fact that interviewing elites does not give the whole story (Fitz and Halpin, 2003).

Ethical considerations

The research process followed key ethical considerations (Cookson Jr, 2003) such as honesty as well as adequate data collection and analysis. Research was conducted in line with the Data Protection Act (Cap 440) and provided the necessary precautionary measures to ensure high ethical standards, safeguard the confidentiality of the participants as necessary, refrain from deception and protect them from harm in the knowledge of possible consequences (Ely et al., 1991). No names were mentioned of participants who asked for anonymity, and the recording of interviews was conducted with prior authorisation from the participants.

The issue of whose side the researcher was on (Becker 1967, as cited in, Walford, 2003) was very clear to the participants. Participants were involved as collaborators to give them a voice in the research process. By treating the policy-makers involved in this study with respect by acknowledging their status (Dalton, 2011), the study was conducted with and for policy-makers. Ethical considerations were taken with respect to the integrity of the research by trying to be accurate, fair and trustworthy. Bias as it emerges from one's values (Peshkin, 1988 as quoted in Ely et al., 1991) did affect perceptions, but researcher bias was brought to the surface. This was addressed by giving an in-depth account of positionality, describing the context of the study and by conceding that the knowledge developed is based "on uncertainty, fallibility and risky judgments made in particular material, historical circumstances" (Griffiths, 1998, p. 91) and that the narrative is an interpreted description (Deem, 2003). The researcher also tried not to prejudge the interviewees by remaining open to their points of view (Jones, 2003). The research process tried to engage with policy-makers to provide them with a setting to become more aware, responsible and sensitised on SD by bringing to the fore SD-related issues to the attention of, and for reflection by, policy-makers (Freire, 1970).

Data analysis

Transcripts were analysed critically by line-by-line reading, reflective writing and interpreting, to identify codes and categories as well as through the writing of analytic memos to develop critical themes. The large volume of data was analysed using the method developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) based on six phases: familiarisation with data through reading; generating initial codes through data collapse and complication; combining codes into categories, sub-categories and themes; checking how themes work in relation to the entire data set; defining/naming themes through ongoing data analysis; and deciding which themes are meaningful contributions to understanding.

Methodological and respondent (Bush, 2002) triangulation, seeking convergence of the information (Wiersma, 1995 as quoted in Freebody, 2003), of semi-structured interviews, observations, and the review of relevant documentation was conducted while keeping aware of hegemonic (Gramsci, 1971) and discursive power (Foucault, 1972) implications, and the limitations of triangulation. The theoretical critical themes were developed as a form of emancipatory (McLaren, 2012), democratically developed non-banking knowledge (Freire, 1970). This transformative participatory space approach was geared for policy-makers to reflect on their views on SD to move from creativity discourse to performative discourse (Craft, 2012; Griffiths, 1998).

Results of research

Policy-makers' views on the interviewing process and its outcomes

This section presents the feelings of policy-makers on the interview and their perceptions on its outcomes. Policy-makers described the process in various manners including: a discussion; a means of reflection; an awareness-creating process; a challenging process for education; and a learning experience conducive to future action for SD.

A discussion of ideas

The interviewing process was perceived by policy-makers as a discussion which served as a reminder of their responsibilities towards the promotion of SD through policy-making:

"As we were talking, I remembered things which we could have done in a better way, I recalled things which we should have done and we didn't, and it got me thinking on the need to have a more structured way of carrying our policy-making process." (PS 1)

It was deemed that this discussion centred on ideas and elevated policy-makers to a higher level from the mundane work responsibilities since *"the problem is that we rarely discuss the abstract as we are too focused on the enormous load, and we rarely have a discussion of ideas. Therefore, yes, we need more discussions like this interview."* (HOS 1)

Moreover, the interview was perceived as a two-way interacting process of expressing and sharing views. Such discussions have also been termed as focused and direct which helped to think about SD: *"...it was... as we are talking in a focused and direct manner. It was very helpful as it made me focus on sustainable development"* (HOS 2). Deep down the interview process turned out to be an exercise in sharing life experiences and thoughts on some very important issues.

A means of awareness and consciousness

A number of policy-makers defined the interviewing process as a means of awareness and an eye-opener on SD-related issues: *"Yes, it made me think. Through reading I was always sensitive on the broader issues, but you have to find the time"* (PS 2). This awareness promoting exercise in some cases helped to instil an interest in the participants to learn more about SD in the Maltese context.

Such awareness seemed related not only to knowledge, but more importantly to values related to SD:

“Yes, I hope this research will serve as an eye-opener to convey more awareness on sustainable development and also sustainable morals... as against the existing quest for money, egoism, and immorality.” (PN MP 1)

This discussion provided a time efficient means for bringing up SD issues among this group: *“Yes, I reiterate that I found this discussion very useful as it opens your eyes and say that I could have delved further to work in a better way” (PN MP 2).*

While some issues were already known to policy-makers and the interview helped to think more about them, new issues came to the fore during the discussion: *“In fact I told you that I had not thought about certain issues, and I started thinking about them as we talked and I started realising new issues” (PN MP 3).* So, in many cases the interviews provided an opportunity to think of SD in a more holistic, professional, and wider perspective:

“... I am not saying that I found all the solutions; but usually when we talk of SD, without knowing one thinks about the environment while you provided me with the occasion to think and say certain things as well as to think on sustainable development in a wider manner.” (PL MP 1)

Others hinted that this newly found consciousness, facilitated through a discussion setting, led to an awareness of one’s role in the promotion of SD and thus empowerment on such issues:

“You made me realise how important sustainable development is and moreover that I have a role in all this. While my point of departure was that of coordination ... I think that you made me push myself a bit further to say that even my opinion is important.” (HOS 3)

Interviewing as a challenging process

The interview was described as a challenging process which contained an educational element and *“there is no doubt since when you are challenged with questions you have to think. The interview is also a means of education” (PN MP 4).* In fact, this helped policy-makers to reflect to promote sensitisation, consciousness-raising and opinion-forming:

“... coming with a set of probing questions like these and expecting an answer made me think. It definitely made me reflect; and these questions are a means to sensitise those being interviewed so that, if not conscious they become conscious... and it is a feather in your cap that you helped me reflect.” (PL MP 2)

An exercise in reflective thinking

Most participants were of the opinion that the interviews served as a means of reflection on SD since *“...it was a means to reflect on sustainable development and on the possible means of awareness in this area for me and other MPs” (PN MP 5)*. This interactive process provided policy-makers with an interlocutor on SD, through whom they had the opportunity to conceive a framework for their responsibilities:

“Locally I do not find individuals with whom I talk on sustainable development... therefore when you have an opportunity like this one for discussion, in a mental fashion you start inserting your responsibilities within the framework of sustainable development.” (PS 3)

Apart from this, policy-makers also maintained that through such reflection they managed to bring together the different social, economic, and environmental mosaic pieces to see the whole picture of SD:

“... it makes you think, as what happens is that you are aware of many initiatives; however like in a mosaic you start putting them one next to the other and you start coming up with one beautiful picture which is the picture which indicates where our country should be moving towards.” (PN MP 6)

Policy-makers, in particular Cabinet members, said that the interview made them question themselves about the reasons behind the decisions they take on their duty:

“... you made me reflect on what I am actually doing and for what ...why am I doing it? The fact I had an interview which I had never had one like it before, I must say the truth, it means that I had to ask myself the reasons behind my decisions.” (PN MP 7)

Having the opportunity to stop and reflect was seen as a luxury as politicians have little time to reflect on SD issues. In certain instances, they claimed that they realised their personal responsibility to promote SD through the interview

“... and I say mea culpa ...I have to start from myself.” (HOS 4). The interviews were seen to help move SD away from the political backburner by serving as a refresher:

“The fact that we talked, increased my consciousness and I think there is a role for expert individuals like you to increase consciousness on sustainable development so that everyone understands that it is related to our lives.”
(PL MP 4)

Interacting with policy-makers: A learning and empowering experience for future action

A good number of policy-makers underscored that the interviewing resulted in a learning and empowering experience: *“... to use an expression... I need human petrol to understand”* (PN MP 8). This human interaction was seen as a learning experience as it was said that *“...during this discussion I learnt a lot”* (HOS 4), as well as a gauge of their consciousness and values:

“... certain circumstances come your way, like this interview, where one feels the need to react to questions in a thoughtful manner which in itself is an exercise which shows you whether you have attained a certain consciousness.” (PS 3)

Another way to put it is that this researcher-participant interaction served as a primer for thoughts on SD: *“You instigated me to come up with certain things which I would not have thought about alone ... you were educating at the same time”* (PL MP 5).

It transpired that this learning experience encompassed not only issues of knowledge and awareness, but more importantly incorporated a focus on personal values: *“And it serves as a soul-searching exercise both to me personally ... and to the political class”* (PL MP 6). There was a realisation of the need for this kind of interview as *“... it would be good to have this type of interviews which are more frequent for all politicians”* (PL MP 7).

It was underscored that the interview session was considered as an educational experience that promotes further thinking. It also provided policy-makers with a reflective opportunity to analyse their attitudes and values on SD:

“Yes, as while I was speaking with you, I externalised things which I had thought about and which are a part of my life, but which however no one had made me reflect on ... this interview helped me a lot. Yes, yes in fact

before, these thoughts were always internalized, and I think that today I had the first opportunity to externalize them.” (PL MP 8)

It thus transpires that the interviewing process can be seen as a critical pedagogical tool that seeks to promote an intra-personal SD-based counter-narrative in policy-makers through dialogical encounters aimed at perspective transformations.

Discussion

Data-generation

Notwithstanding planning, there are always external factors influencing the collection of data. While embarking on the interviewing stage, there was a political crisis. Thus, care was taken not to seem irrelevant to MPs when outlining the objectives of the study. This situation of political instability might have affected the way MPs reacted during the interviews. When interviewing government MPs there were a number of disenchanted PN MPs who were, to various extents, critical of their government with Opposition MPs being very critical of government. The coincidence of issues such as on the “current decision-making process” and “related power relations” between the interview questions and the political debate at the time, where the PN government was being accused of being dominated by a non-elected inner clique that wielded a lot of power, reassured that the questions were credible, valid and pertinent to Maltese politicians.

Stock of the situation was taken to crystallise the research questions, to refocus the interview questions and verify any emerging categories. The interview sessions became characterised by a two-way process of clarifications, exchanges of views and recapitulations. This created a virtuous cycle that led to a joint exploration of ideas that promoted awareness in the powerful rather than disempowering them (Walford, 2003). This co-ownership process led to a reflection on the self. The interviewing and data-generation were not conducted for the research, but a case where the research was conducted for the interaction with the participants and its outcomes.

Access

Issues of access are very important when studying policy-makers as they have very busy schedules. With a 60% interviewing rate the research indicated that access is a demanding process in terms of time for preparations, but it could be considered as easy in terms of success rate (Fitz and Halpin, 2003; Whitty and

Edwards, 2003). Suggestions to other researchers to secure access to policy-makers include:

- flexibility by the researcher with regards to logistics of the interviews including time and venue;
- the building of a trusting relationship during the access process and a rapport where policy-makers see themselves as a contributor to the goals of the study (Kogan, 2003);
- honesty by making the aims of the interview known and by discussing the project in an open manner with the participants (Engward, 2013);
- a realisation that personal and professional connections with policy-makers and their gatekeepers are more important than academic status in gaining access (Semel, 2003);
- information letters and consent forms should be concise, courteous, clear and non-patronising and should underline the benefits for the participants as well as give an assurance that the researcher has no ulterior partisan motives;
- follow conventional procedures (Fitz and Halpin, 2003) and ask for institutional approval as necessary;
- seek assistance of gatekeepers and identify any personal contacts to access ministers;
- be sincere and convey a disposition of learning from policy-makers;
- show respect and acknowledge differences in status;
- avoid putting policy-makers in a defensive mode;
- researcher needs to be practical and aware of the needs, concerns, and constraints of the powerful and move accordingly; and
- consider timing issues as start and end of a legislature should be avoided due to learning curves and election modes constraints respectively.

Interviewing and indoctrination concerns

Researchers should remain aware of concerns of indoctrination with regards to 'for' type of education like ESD that can be interpreted from a prescriptive perspective. As to socio-political and ethical implications of the research, policy-makers can be engaged by providing them with a setting to explore their views and awareness on SD (Freire, 1970). However, care needs to be taken of the 'how' issues while conducting ESD exercises with policy-makers not to fall in the trap of indoctrination. Thus, the need for a number of precautionary measures. Interview questions should be personalised and open-ended to leave space for participants to develop interviewing in an iterative and participative manner. The research process should be discussed in an open manner with the

participants (Engward, 2013) in preparation for the interviewing stage to get the participants' perspective and identify areas of interest for them to be included in the interview schedule. This should address influence on the shaping of the interview questions as determined by the researcher's theoretical premises (Freebody, 2003). The whole process of interacting with policy-makers should be democratically-embedded and the themes should be member-checked by the participants as the ones in the field. The dangers of unacknowledged bias and indoctrination can be limited by the adoption of a constructivist ontology where realities are seen to be multiple and where reality is seen as an individual construct based on situation, and interpretative epistemology based on subjectivity of knowledge aiming for interpretative understanding and situated knowledge.

The new ESD learning space for policy-makers developed by this research suggests an approach that favours a critical reflective discussion on SD through problem-posing (Freire, 1970) with the aim of searching for alternative views, meanings, and possibly new understandings (Brookfield, 1987). Policy-makers can reflect on their role with regards to SD by holding a particular experience in awareness and seeking its significance and not by imposing ready-made knowledge or some meta-narrative on SD, as a means of active learning to consider developing new contexts (Jackson, 2011). Thus, research should be accompanied by a process of making the values involved in the educational process (Freire, 1970) and the purpose of education (Biesta, 2006) explicit. A progressive philosophy of adult education that strives to liberate people through dialogue, reflection, and mutual investigation of issues (Walter, 2009) rather than on the imposition of views, beliefs and values together with alien knowledge fits perfectly with ESD goals for policy-makers.

Through questioning, policy-makers can be presented with an opportunity to reflect on their own experience to come up with new meanings (Mayo, 1999, as cited in, Clover 2002). This can be based on authentic dialogue (Habermas, 1984) as an opportunity to analyse and reflect on one's experience and assumptions (Clover, 2002). While trying to explore values for SD it should be kept in mind that the principles of ESD profess that participants should be treated as critical thinkers who can arrive at their own conclusion through participant-based education (Pace, 2010). In this way, the interview should not be restricted to the researcher's questions but developed into a discussion led by the concerns of the participants. Using a reflective approach can promote reflection as a form of democratic cultural transformation (Monroe, 2012). ESD research should distinguish between an instrumental approach which can verge on indoctrination and a more empowering and emancipating approach

(Wals, 2011) through dialogue for learners to envision solutions which are context specific (Jickling in Jickling and Wals, 2012).

ESD learning spaces should be based on a learner-centred constructivist approach whereby learning is closely interlinked with the learner's interests, needs and experience (Missimer and Connell, 2012). Interviewing should seek its own conclusions in the belief that ESD, as 'for' type of education, is necessary but the adopted means to reach this end remained democratically-based to enhance alternative views and new ways of thinking and doing, that is, "an educational process that is contextually relevant, participatory, emancipatory and leading towards SD" (Pace, 2010: 8). The process should be based on the lifeworld of the participants and conveyed in a democratic and respectful manner reflecting 'what' and 'how' issues (Habermas, 1984).

The research process

This process should be conducted in the knowledge that

"... political interviews are in themselves highly political [as] the interviewee has specific aims for and in the interview: to present themselves in a good light, not to be indiscreet, to convey a particular interpretation of events, to get arguments and points of view across, to deride or displace other interpretations and points of view." (Ball, 2003: 97-98)

This process is the result of openness on the researcher's part to leave enough space for policy-makers to develop the discussion (Fitz and Halpin, 2003). As to whether policy-makers do not tell the whole story (Gerwitz and Ozga, 2003), one should be prepared for instances when policy-makers leave certain issues open to interpretation or just insinuate certain things. Through an interaction with participants, interviews can be the basis for an increased consciousness. Having the attention for an hour or so of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, ministers, and junior ministers, MPs, PSs and HOSs should make researchers realise that the interviewing process could also serve as a setting for reflection and therefore as a means of ESD and critical pedagogy. The research process should not only gather data to be subsequently analysed to come up with a set of themes of relevance to policy-makers. The ESD and critical pedagogy component of the research can be present in the whole process of interacting with policy-makers as the ESD process is more about process rather than information.

Conclusions

Access to policy-makers was enhanced because the first author had an outsider-within and insider status to political institutions and the civil service respectively. Getting to know gatekeepers was of ultimate importance to gain access to policy-makers as they facilitated access by introducing the researcher to other potential participants. Once in the field, it is of utmost importance to remain truthful as access to other potential participants could easily be lost. Personal reputation is a very important aspect to secure access. It is also beneficial to directly contact the top gatekeeper in a ministry, to avoid the request having to pass through the dangers of bureaucratic layers. Being recommended by officials high within the organization is a maxim. So, care must be taken as to whom to approach and to come across as a professional and reliable individual and not politically partisan. The sequence of whom to approach to interview is also important, with the highest political levels, being only approached after one has built a good reputation among other policy-makers. Researching the powerful needs persistence and patience. Respect and gratitude are also conducive to obtaining an interview. Unlike prevalent perceptions, getting access and interviewing the powerful is not an insurmountable feat, as it gives politicians the opportunity to air their views which is something they like doing as they are neither intimidated nor inhibited. Thus, the need to find the optimal time to take up research on the powerful. There is also the need to building trust and cultural sharing as these contribute to access and interviewing.

Interviewing policy-makers is highly political and care must be taken in interpreting them. One must be well-prepared including by having interview questions that are relevant and culturally embedded. Interview questions should be field-tested through consultations with potential participants so that they reflect what there is to find out. Interviews should be directed to get personal views rather than official positions that are already publicly available. Researchers must also be ready to answer questions aimed at verifying their status prior to being accepted by the powerful. Speaking the same language is also conducive to access and fruitful interviewing. Research promoting reflection on SD through interviewing requires challenging critical interview questions for an interactive stance without coming across as arrogant or dangerous. This is a very fine balance that researchers must find for themselves after evaluating their interview scenario. Flexibility and space for policy-makers to elaborate their views opens new perspectives. Thus, the interviewer must take up new leads and depart from the original interview schedule to explore previously unexplored areas. Interviews should be conducted,

although not always possible, away from the office, to avoid disruptions, which are to be expected, and to be provided with more interviewing time.

Apart from the gathering of data, interviews with the powerful can be used to influence future policies and decisions. The outcome of the research shows that the interview can serve as a critical-reflective pedagogical tool that promotes reflection by policy-makers with respect to their duties and responsibilities for SD.

Analysing interviews can be challenging and one must read between the lines of the interview transcript as these are highly political. Other interviews should be used for corroboration, and interviews should be evaluated within the prevalent historical and cultural context. Interviewing outcomes should be treated as political power discourse and hence, the researcher has to keep in mind who is saying what and why. Moreover, results must be triangulated with other evidence. Adopting a constructivist and interpretative stance aware of positionality helps to understand the interview outcomes as subjective, situated, partial and interactional knowledge or reality that is co-created during interviewing.

Researchers need to be aware of outside factors that may affect interviewing such as the political scenario. Interviewing should be held away from the political heat of general elections. On the other hand, the relevance of the interview to issues of national importance validates the interview and thus promotes the chances of access and good interview outcomes. Adopting a bottom-up approach whereby policy-makers contribute to the structure and nature of the interview pays off in terms of access and the trustworthiness of the research and to operate satisfactorily within constraints.

The balance of power during interviewing remains with policy-makers, but an insider status, a good rapport and knowing the participants or their gatekeepers, can bridge the difference in power. Provision of information about the researcher and the aims of the study can also contribute to this end. It is also important that researchers convey that they are not after some 'right' answer, but are interested in policy-makers' views, feelings, and perceptions. Interview questions must be captivating to policy-makers and should take into consideration their individual interest and sensitivities while avoiding the dangers of indoctrination.

This research shows that researching the powerful, while requiring good planning and building a good rapport with policy-makers is much easier than previously thought, is highly gratifying, and that critical-reflective

interviewing can serve as an innovative and tailor-made ESD tool for policy-makers. Further to the contribution to the discussion in critical pedagogy in relation to SD, his research addresses the gap in knowledge in critical pedagogy and SD literature with regards to ESD as a critical pedagogy for policy-makers by personally involving policy-makers in their critical education through dialogical encounters aimed at perspective transformational change.

References

- Anyon J, Dumas M, Linville D, Nolan K, Perez M, Tuck E and Weiss J (2009). *Theory and Educational Research: Toward Critical Social Explanation*. New York: Routledge.
- Ball SJ (2003). Political interviews and the politics of interviewing. In: Walford G (ed.). *Researching the Powerful in Education*. London: Routledge, pp. 96-115.
- Biesta GJJ (2006). *Beyond Learning: Democratic Education for Human Future*. London: Paradigm Publishers.
- Blake N and Masschelein J (2003). Critical theory and critical pedagogy. In: Blake N, Smeyers P, Smith RD and Standish P (eds.), *Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Education*. Blackwell Publishing, pp. 38-56.
- Braun V and Clarke V (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2) 77-101.
- Brookfield, SD (1987). *Developing Critical Thinkers: Challenging Adults to Explore Alternative Ways of Thinking and Acting*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Brookfield, S (1993). Breaking the code: Engaging practitioners in critical analysis of adult education literature. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 20 (1), 64 - 91.
- Brookfield, S (1995). Adult learning: An overview. In: Tuijman A (ed.). *International Encyclopedia of Education*. Oxford: Permagon Press, pp. 1-9.
- Brookfield, S (2008). Radical questioning on the long walk to freedom: Nelson Mandela and the practice of critical reflection. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 58 (2), 95-109.
- Brown, T and Jones, L (2001). *Action Research and Postmodernism: Congruence and Critique*. Open University Press.
- Brydon-Miller, M, Greenwood, D and Maguire, P (2003). Why action research? *Action Research*, 1, 9-27. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Burgess, RG (1984). *In the Field: An Introduction to Field Research*. London: Allen and Unwin.
- Bush, T (2002). Authenticity - reliability, validity and triangulation. In: Coleman M, and Briggs ARJ (eds.), *Research Methods in Educational Leadership and Management*. London: Routledge, pp. 58-72.
- Charmaz, K (2006). *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide*. London: Sage.
- Charmaz, K (2008). The legacy of Anselm Strauss in constructivist grounded theory. *Studies in Symbolic Interaction* 32, 127-141.
- Clover, DE (2002). Environmental adult education. *Adult Learning* 13 (2) 2-6.

- Cookson Jr, PW (2003). The power discourse: Elite narratives and educational policy formation. In: Walford G (ed.). *Researching the Powerful in Education*. London: Routledge, pp. 116-130.
- Craft, A (2012). Co-operative transformation: Creative learning conversations. In: Soler J, Walsh C, Craft A, Rix J and Simmons K (eds). *Transforming Practice: Critical Issues in Equity, Diversity and Education*. Trent UK: Trentham Books, pp. 124- 140.
- Dalton, E (2011). Reflections on interviewing Japanese female members of parliament. *Intersections: Gender and Sexuality in Asia and the Pacific*. 25, 1-10. Retrieved from <http://intersections.anu.edu.au/issue25/dalton.htm>
- Deem, R (2003). Researching the locally powerful: A study of school governance. In: Walford G (ed.). *Researching the Powerful in Education*. London: Routledge, pp. 151-171.
- Denzin, NK (2003). *Performance Ethnography: Critical Pedagogy and the Politics of Culture*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Denzin, NK and Lincoln, YS (2005). *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Eckersly, R (2002). Environmental pragmatism, ecocentrism and deliberative democracy: Between problem-solving and environmental critique. In: Minleer BA and Pepperman Taylor B (eds). *Democracy and the Claims of Nature: Critical Perspectives for a New Century*. Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, pp. 49-70.
- Ely, M, Anzul, M., Friedman, T, Garner, D and McCormick Steinmetz, A (1991). *Doing Qualitative Research: Circles within Circles*. London: The Falmer Press.
- Engward, H (2013). Understanding grounded theory. *Nursing Standard* 28 (7) 37-41.
- EPIC Workshop, (2002) *Notes on Elite Interviewing*. Florence, May 2002. Retrieved from www.epic.ac.uk/events/Interviewing.pdf.
- Fitz, J and Halpin, D (2003). Ministers and mandarins: Educational research in elite settings. In: Walford G (ed.). *Researching the Powerful in Education*. London: Routledge, pp. 32-50.
- Fontana, A and Frey, JH (2005). The interview: From neutral stance to political involvement. In: Denzin NK and Lincoln YS (eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage, pp. 695-727.
- Foucault, M (1972). *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. NY: Harper Colophon Books
- Foucault, M (1983). The subject and power. In: Dreyfus HL and Rabinow P (eds) *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, pp. 208-228.
- Foucault, M (1997). *Society must be Defended*. London: Penguin Books.
- Foucault, M and Deleuze, G (1977). Intellectuals and power: A conversation between Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze. In: Bouchard DF (ed.), *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interview*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, pp. 203-217.
- Freebody, PR (2003). *Qualitative Research in Education*. London: Sage.
- Freire, P (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London: Penguin.
- Freire, P (1985). Reading the world and reading the word: An interview with Paulo Freire. *Language Arts*, 62 (1), 24-29.
- Gerwitz, S and Ozga, J (2003). Interviewing the education policy elite. In: Walford G (ed.). *Researching the Powerful in Education*. London: Routledge, pp. 186-203.

- Giroux, H (1989). *Schooling for Democracy: Critical Pedagogy in the Modern Age*. London: Routledge.
- Golafshani, N (2003). Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report* 8 (4), 597-607.
- Goulet, D (2007). Introduction. In: Freire, P *Education for Critical Consciousness*. London: Continuum, pp. vii - xiii.
- Gramsci, A (1971). *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. Southampton: The Camelot Press.
- Griffiee, D (2005). Research tips: Interview data collection. *Journal of Developmental Education*. 1, (3), 36-37.
- Griffiths, M (1995). *Feminisms and the Self: The Web of Identity*. London: Routledge.
- Griffiths, M (1998). *Educational Research for Social Justice: Getting off the Fence*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Guba, E and Lincoln, Y (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Habermas, J (1984). *The Theory of Communicative Action. Vol. 1: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Hamilton, R (2013). Did the dream remain? Adult education and Resurrection City 1968. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 45 (1) 4-26.
- Jackson, MG (2011). The Real challenge of ESD. *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development*, 5 (1), 27-37.
- Jickling, B and Wals, AEJ (2012). Debating education for sustainable development 20 years after Rio: A conversation between Bob Jickling and Arjen Wals. *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development*, 6 (1), 49-57.
- Jones, PW (2003). Research perspectives on the World Bank. In: Walford G (ed.). *Researching the Powerful in Education*. London: Routledge, pp. 174-185.
- Kafle, NP (2001). Hermeneutic phenomenological research method simplified. *Bodhi: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 5, 181- 200.
- Kogan, M (2003). Researching the powerful in education and elsewhere. In: Walford G (ed.). *Researching the Powerful in Education*. London: Routledge, pp. 67-80.
- Laverty, S M (2003). Hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology; A comparison of historical and methodological considerations. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2 (3), 21 - 35.
- Law, J (2006). *Making a Mess with Method*. Retrieved from <http://www.heterogenoites.net/publications/Law2006MakingaMesswithMethod.pdf>.
- Macey, D (2000). *The Penguin Dictionary of Critical Theory*. Penguin Reference Book.
- McLaren, P (2012). Critical pedagogy. In: Soler J, Walsh C, Craft A, Rix J and Simmons K (eds). *Transforming Practice: Critical Issues in Equity, Diversity and Education*. Trent UK: Trentham Books, pp. 3-18.
- McHugh, JD (2003). The Lord's will be done: Interviewing the powerful in education. In: G Walford (Ed.), *Researching the powerful in education* (pp. 51-66). London: Routledge.
- Mezirow, J (1991). *Transformative Dimension of Adult Education*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.
- Mickelson, RA (2003). A feminist approach to researching the powerful in education. In: Walford G (ed.). *Researching the Powerful in Education*. London: Routledge, pp.132-150.

- Missimer, M and Connell, T (2012). Pedagogical approaches and design aspects to enable leadership. *Sustainability*, 6 (30), 172-181.
- Monroe, MC (2012). The co-evolution of ESD and EE. *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development*, 6 (1), 43-47.
- Odendahl, T and Shaw, AM (2001). Interviewing the elite. In: Gubrium JF and Holstein JA (eds.), *Handbook of Interview Research: Context and Method*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp. 299-316.
- Olesen, V (1994). Feminisms and models of qualitative research. In: Denzin NK and Lincoln YS (eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp. 158-174.
- Ozga, J (2012). Theory, values and policy research in education. In: Soler J, Walsh C, Craft A, Rix J and Simmons K (eds). *Transforming Practice: Critical Issues in Equity, Diversity and Education*. Trent UK: Trentham Books, pp. 3-18.
- Pace, P (2010). Education for sustainable development: Current fad or renewed commitment to action? *Journal of Baltic Science Education*. 9 (4), 315-323.
- Parkin, AC (1996). On the practical relevance of Habermas' theory of communicative action. *Social Theory and Practice*, Fall 1996; 22, 3. Social Science Premium Collection.
- Peabody, RL, Webb Hammond, S, Torcom, J, Brown, LP, Thompson, C and Kolodny R (1990) Interviewing political elites. *Political Science and Politics*, 23 (3), 451-455.
- Popkewitz, TS (1999). Critical traditions, modernism and the "Posts". In: Popkewitz T and Fendler F (eds.). *Critical Theories in Education: Changing Terrains of Knowledge and Politics*. London: Routledge, pp. 1-13.
- Robertson, J (2004). *Active Listening-Reflective Interviewing*. Retrieved from <http://soaratpaeroa.wikispaces.com/file/view/Active+Listening+Reflective+Interviewing.doc>
- Scheurich, JJ (1995). A postmodernist critique of research interviewing. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 8, 239-252.
- Semel, SF (2003). Writing school history as a former participant: Problems in writing the history of an elite school. In: Walford G (ed.). *Researching the Powerful in Education*. London: Routledge, pp. 204-220.
- Torres, CA (1999). Critical theory and political sociology of education: Arguments. In: Popkewitz T and Fendler F (eds.). *Critical Theories in Education: Changing Terrains of Knowledge and Politics*. London: Routledge, pp. 87-116.
- UNESCO (1987). *International Congress on Environmental Education and Training*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Van Manen, M (1990). *Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Walford, G (Ed.). (2003). *Researching the Powerful in Education*. London: Routledge.
- Wals, AEJ (2011). Learning our way to sustainability. *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development* 5 (2), 177-186.
- Walseth, LT and Schei, E (2011). Effecting change through dialogue; Habermas' theory of communicative action as a tool in medical lifestyle interventions. *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy* 14 (1):81-90.
- Walsh, C S (2012). Docile citizens? Using counternarratives to disrupt normative and dominant discourses. In: Soler J, Walsh C, Craft A, Rix J and Simmons K

- (eds). *Transforming Practice: Critical Issues in Equity, Diversity and Education*. Trent UK: Trentham Books, pp. 125-135.
- Walter, P (2009). Philosophies of adult environmental education. *Adult Education Quarterly* 60 (1), 3-25.
- Whitty, G and Edwards, T (2003). Researching Thatcherite education policy. In: Walford G (ed.). *Researching the Powerful in Education*. London: Routledge, pp. 14-31.
-

Education for Sustainable Development for policy-makers through critical-reflective interviewing

Pierre Hili and Paul J. Pace

Abstract

The paper critically reflects on the conceptual framework and research methodology applicable to researching the powerful. More specifically it sheds insight and proposes ideas to those about to research high-level Maltese policy-makers including politicians and civil servants with respect to the promotion of sustainable development (SD) and the role of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). It addresses issues of access and interviewing the powerful. It shows that access to high-level policy-makers can be facilitated by building a rapport with the participants based on sincerity and respect, through the help of gatekeepers and by gauging the political scenario. This paper proposes critical-reflective interviewing as a means of ESD and critical pedagogy for politicians and top civil servants.

Keywords

Researching high-level policy-makers; Education for Sustainable Development; critical pedagogy; interviewing the powerful; critical-reflective interviewin

Éducation au Développement Durable pour les décideurs politiques à travers entretien critique-réflexif

Pierre Hili and Paul J. Pace

Résumé

Cet article propose une réflexion critique sur le cadre conceptuel et la méthodologie de recherche applicables à l'étude des décideurs politiques de haut niveau. Plus précisément, il offre un aperçu et propose des idées pour ceux qui envisagent de mener des recherches sur les politiciens et fonctionnaires maltais de haut niveau en ce qui concerne la promotion du développement durable (DD) et le rôle de l'éducation au développement durable (EDD). Il aborde les questions d'accès et d'entrevues avec les

décideurs politiques de haut niveau. Il montre que l'accès à ces décideurs peut être facilité en établissant une relation basée sur la sincérité et le respect avec les participants, en faisant appel à des intermédiaires et en évaluant le contexte politique. Cet article propose l'entretien critique-réflexif comme un moyen d'EDD et de pédagogie critique pour les politiciens et fonctionnaires de haut niveau.

Mots clés

Recherche de décideurs politiques de haut niveau ; Éducation au Développement Durable ; pédagogie critique ; entrevue avec les décideurs politiques ; entretien critique-réflexif.

Educación para el Desarrollo Sostenible para formuladores de políticas a través de entrevistas crítico-reflexivas

Pierre Hili and Paul J. Pace

Resumen

El artículo reflexiona críticamente sobre el marco conceptual y la metodología de investigación aplicable a la investigación de los poderosos. Más específicamente, arroja información y propone ideas a aquellos que están a punto de investigar a los responsables políticos malteses de alto nivel, incluidos políticos y funcionarios, con respecto a la promoción del desarrollo sostenible (DS) y el papel de la Educación para el Desarrollo Sostenible (EDS). Aborda temas de acceso y entrevistas con los poderosos. Muestra que el acceso a los responsables políticos de alto nivel se puede facilitar construyendo una relación con los participantes basada en la sinceridad y el respeto, a través de la ayuda de los guardianes y evaluando el escenario político. Este artículo propone entrevistas crítico-reflexivas como un medio de EDS y pedagogía crítica para políticos y altos funcionarios.

Palabras clave

Investigación de los responsables políticos de alto nivel; Educación para el Desarrollo Sostenible; pedagogía crítica; entrevistar a los poderosos; entrevistas crítico-reflexivas

Popular education and well-living: a new pedagogical narrative for a learning Planet?

Timothy D. Ireland

It is just over a month since the conclusion of CONFINTEA VII, held in June in Marrakesh, Morocco. The Framework for Action which was adopted in the final plenary of the Conference, identified several Principles and Priority areas amongst which we highlight the question of gender and what it calls the 'considerable gender gap', the need to build a new social contract for education in which Adult Learning and Education (ALE) plays 'a key role' and the need to unlock the potential of ALE for climate action.

In general, the Confinteas have provided an opportunity for the international community to weigh up what has and has not been achieved in the previous decade or more and, on that basis, to agree to new signposts and guidelines for the coming years. CONFINTEA VII will perhaps go down in history as the conference which took place at one of the most delicate and critical moments in recent history, since at least the beginning of the series in 1949 and for this reason its signposts and guidelines are of the utmost importance, not just for education but for the future of humanity.

While the sanitary crisis caused by Coronavirus has gained more space in the press, the unravelling crisis which refuses to go away is that of climate change and global warming and, clearly, the two phenomena are intimately related. At times like this, education is generally indicated as part of the solution. In 2022, there is a feeling that education is no longer part of the solution but a major part of the problem: more of the same will only deepen the crisis and aggravate our problems. It was in this sense that the International Commission on the Futures of Education gave centre stage to the need for a new social contract which it defines as "an implicit agreement among members of a society to cooperate for shared benefit' and "one that aims to rebuild our relationships with each other, with the planet, and with technology" (2021, p.2). Without diminishing the importance of the *Marrakesh Framework for Action*, for the field of adult learning and education, it should be read in the context of the report

of the International Commission which by its very nature is a much denser and equally more speculative document.

However, in this article I neither intend to analyse the MFA nor the Futures of Education report, although reference will be made to both. We are still digesting the MFA and *Reimagining our Futures Together* demands a much lengthier analysis. Rather I would like to point briefly to the challenges which humanity at present faces and then focus on two concepts which have become intertwined in Latin America which can perhaps help us to establish 'new signposts and guidelines' for adult educational practice or praxis in the coming years.

Over the last fifty years the field of adult learning and education has become increasingly focused – some would say obsessed – with the world of work. Whilst in industrialised countries the concern of ALE has been with skills, qualifications, and reskilling and requalifying workers for the world of work, in the less industrialised countries in which ALE is more strongly identified with compensatory schooling, that has been justified principally due to the need to provide young people and adults with those competences which are required by the labour market. Hence the dominant narrative for ALE has centred on the competitive requirements of the world of work, with a focus on the individual rather than a collective subject motivated by the imperative to increase production and profits. Both the MFA and the Futures Report – the latter rather more forcibly than the former – point to the need for a change in narrative in which reconnection with the natural world and other forms of life, other forms of knowing, other forms of living is imperative. This should perhaps be called optimistically the survival mode. The existing narrative could perhaps be described as the collective suicide mode in which humanity like a band of lemmings¹ charges gayly headlong towards the abyss.

At the core of this dilemma, we could situate what Hall and Tandon have designated as “knowledge democracy” (Apud Hall & Clover, 2022). This concept, as they suggest, is related to the notion of ‘decolonising knowledge’ or what we might call ‘epistemological justice’ and is based on several principles. These include the recognition of multiple epistemologies which “extend beyond the Western Eurocentric knowledge system to Indigenous knowledges

¹ A lemming is a small animal similar to a mouse that travels in large groups and often follows other lemmings into dangerous situations. If a group of people does something like lemmings, they all do the same thing as someone else even though it may be stupid, harmful, or dangerous.

and other ancient place-based knowledge”, the recognition that knowledge is produced in multiple spheres and that the attempt to assert the exclusive right of academia to produce and share knowledge is yet another example of our epistemological arrogance, the recognition that marginalised, excluded and inferiorised groups produce knowledge which is a critical component in movements for social justice and, finally, that communities have a right to control their own knowledge. The Latin American concepts of ‘popular education’ and ‘well-living’ (*buen vivir*) could both be considered as constituting other forms of knowing, as being part of the movement to decolonise knowledge and as representing ways in which both popular and indigenous movements have reasserted their right to transmit and recreate their ‘other place-based knowledge’ as an essential component of education for life.

In what sense do we suggest then that the period in which we are living can be characterised as one of the most delicate and critical moments in recent history, since at least the end of the last global conflict in 1945? Whilst there are multiple factors which contribute to this situation, I intend to highlight just five although recognising that other crucial components of the crisis exist.

According to the latest report from the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC], half the world’s population is now ‘highly vulnerable’, with the risk of whole communities being erased and many others threatened with extinction. Nothing threatens the future so inexorably as climate change. António Guterres’ warning on 18th May was equally stark: “We must end fossil fuel pollution and accelerate the renewable energy transition, before we incinerate our only home.” The extreme heat wave in Europe at the end of July with temperatures reaching record highs in different parts of the continent is just another example of the challenges which the 26th United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP26), in November 2021, spelt out. At the same time, it is impossible to ignore the pedagogical dimension of this emergency which demands a reset on how we think about the relation between education, development, work and the future of humanity. The ecological crisis is not a passing threat but a cumulative one. Together the pandemic and the ecological crisis oblige us to face up to the fact that the current paradigms of development are materially, ecologically, ethically and humanly unsustainable. We cannot deny that despite important international declarations and agendas, education has been slow to accept its critical role in establishing a new pedagogical narrative which challenges old models.

In Brazil and many other nations the values which are most under attack are democracy and participation which are necessarily based on dialogue – the

capacity to hear the views of others even if we disagree with them. Serious debate has been replaced by and reduced to messaging using social media as a means of reaching that part of the general public which has access to the digital media. Democracy, participation, human rights and ecological justice relate to the very heart of human existence, the capacity to learn, to create human relationships, to comprehend the value of what Freire called 'amorosity' and Illich 'conviviality' and the respect for all forms of life. Democracy, like human rights, is never definitively achieved, it has to be defended and recreated every day, and this in itself is a pedagogical process. As Yuval Harari (2020) expresses it: "A motivated and well-informed population is generally much more powerful and efficient than an ignorant and policed population". In other words, education constitutes a fundamental component of democracy.

Advances in the fields of artificial intelligence, the digital media and other technologies possess enormous potential for solving problems but at the same time, create new challenges. During the pandemic we learnt that access to digital media introduces a new dimension to inequality. In general, technology can include and exclude. Artificial intelligence is being used increasingly to spy on us, and to influence and control us. It is not by chance that Stephen Hawking, the great English physicist, considered artificial intelligence as the greatest challenge to humanity at present precisely because it challenges our very concept of humanity.

Over the last decades, we have seen what Paul Stanistreet [calls](#) the 'depoliticization of education and the grim instrumentalism of neoliberal conceptions of its purpose and value' (2021), in which the focus of education has no longer been that of preparing people for life but only for the labour market. In a similar vein, José Mujica, the former president of Uruguay, describes the process as that of transforming people into consumers and not into citizens, despite the ongoing discussion on global citizenship. The crux of the question is the relationship between the human and natural worlds, or between humanity and other forms of life. For the Brazilian Indigenous leader and philosopher [Ailton Krenak](#) (2020), 'Everything is nature. The cosmos is nature. Everything that I can think of is nature'. The world into which Indigenous people have resisted being incorporated is a world which has converted nature into 'resources' to be exploited in such a way that the market becomes 'everything that is outside/beyond us'. Krenak returns to one of the concepts to which we have delegated the power of attempting to reduce human aggressions on the planet - sustainable development - which he describes as 'a myth invented by the major corporations to justify the assault which they penetrate on our idea of nature'. The COVID-19 pandemic is not an externality but an organism of the planet, a virus, which has launched an attack on 'the

form of unsustainable life which we have adopted by our free choice'. We have developed a style of life which has become divorced from the living organism - Earth - characterized by its attempts to suppress diversity and to deny the plurality of forms of life, existence and habits.

Finally, if we recognize the cultural multiplicity of the world in which we live, with its exuberant human and bioecological diversity, with its diverse cosmologies, religions, visions of the world, belief systems and ethics, we also have to admit that we face not a universe but a pluriverse and, consequently, the replies that we, in the field of education, give to those demands cannot be unique but need to reflect our inherent diversity. To rethink our common destiny and our planetary relations implies radically rethinking how we understand the process of education and formation. This rethinking needs to include/admit/welcome the existence of other epistemologies, besides the dominant western Eurocentric liberal epistemologies.

It is in this context and faced with these challenges that we turn to two closely related concepts produced and practiced in Latin America for decades but only now gaining some kind of acceptance, respectability and recognition as the Western world comes to terms with the shortcomings of its own epistemologies to fundamental alternatives to educational systems which have proven inadequate to revert the crises in which we find ourselves. It is only relatively recently that western science has recognised that Indigenous knowledges and other ancient place-based knowledge are something more than exotic practices to be studied by anthropologists. The UNESCO 2015 report *Rethinking education: Towards a global common good?* the predecessor to the Futures of Education Report, timidly makes reference to *Sumak Kawsay: An alternative view of education* (p.31, Box 3). *Reimagining our Futures Together* goes further in recognising the potential of indigenous and traditional knowledge in contributing to future educations (p, 59 and, specially, p.110 Learning with the living planet, p.124-125²).

From the Latin American perspective these two closely related concepts - popular education and well-living (*buen vivir*) - offer possible ways forward in that both contribute to a movement of decolonizing knowledge, being and power. Popular education constitutes a paradigm with the potential to offer new parameters for the international debate especially when, from the

² Decolonizing knowledge calls for greater recognition of the validity and applicability of diverse sources of knowledge to the exigencies of the present and future. It requires a shift away from seeing indigenous epistemologies as objects to be studied rather than viable approaches to understanding and knowing the world.

inter/multicultural and pluriversal point of view, it makes possible a dialogue with other alternative paradigms or southern epistemologies equally ignored or inferiorized by the dominant powers in the West.

Popular education does not begin with Paulo Freire but he is its most eloquent exponent in the twentieth century³. For Freire, popular education is an antidote to oppression, “directed at the transformation of society, taking as its starting point the concrete/lived experience to arrive at the theoretical context, which requires epistemological curiosity, problematization, rigour, creativity, dialogue, the experience of praxis and the protagonism of the subjects” (Paludo, 2015, p.178). It constitutes an education which values daily experience and places the quality of life/well-being and collective happiness of its subjects as the goal of education: life as the ultimate curriculum. It is at the same time a right and a fundamental human need, which is part of the ontological vocation of the human being. Learning is part of our DNA as superior animals and of our programming in the Darwinian sense. Popular education is as much concerned with process as with results. It is subject to human agency, and, as process, takes as its fundamental objective that of humanizing, emancipating and making people more creative. In this sense, education is not limited to transmitting but, above all, to producing knowledge as a constituent element of the practice of liberty. Whilst intending to emancipate, education takes dialogue as its starting point and essential instrument.

Starting from our ‘unfinishedness’/incompleteness as human beings, education and learning are understood as processes which underline and underscore our whole life span. Hence the pertinence of the concept of lifelong learning and education. When refusing that fatalistic (neoliberal) thinking which denies the dream of another possible world, utopia becomes the horizon and true reality of the educator. In Freire’s words (2001, p. 52) “The world is not finished. It is always in the process of becoming”. And education as process involves logic and intellect, but also affection and sociability.

Education is never politically neutral because it serves the interests of certain segments of society whilst denying to other segments the most elementary rights. For that reason, education constitutes an intentional political act, since it presupposes a project of society which involves a commitment to liberty and freedom. In this sense, popular education is a pedagogy committed to active

³ Streck and Moretti provide a succinct historical analysis of the concept of Popular Education in their chapter "Latin America: Adult and Popular Education in Dialogue", in the Palgrave International Handbook on Adult and Lifelong Education and Learning (2018).

citizenship and political participation - an education, which values and seeks to deepen democracy, placing ethics at the centre of the search for its radicalization.

If we continue to think of education as somehow separate from life - something which can be reduced to an external process involving students, teachers, strategies, classrooms, equipment, curricula, evaluation etc. - we shall miss the big picture which is the human right to survival which can only be guaranteed if we establish a holistic understanding of rights - the rights of all forms of life to life.

Perhaps the most recent and challenging formulation of Popular Education was that produced within the Brazilian government of President Dilma Rousseff in 2014. Entitled "The Framework of Action for Popular Education for Public Policy" the document reflects the evolution of this concept in the complex conjuncture of the second decade of the 21st century seeking to demonstrate the centrality of practices of Popular Education for the formulation of participatory democratic policy. In essence it proposes popular education as a method of government. The document concludes by affirming that: "The principles of popular education can be lived not only in the spaces of public schools, hospitals and universities and faculties, but also in all those educative and formative community and private spaces, as well as those pertaining to other entities which receive public subsidies, by adopting a methodology of popular work based on dialogue between the different ways of knowing". (2014, p.62). The search for new paradigms of education represents part of the progressive disenchantment with the current western models of development and education. The reinvention of Popular Education characterises it as a critical response to European modernity. However, as Illich argued almost fifty years ago:

Neither revolution nor reformation can ultimately change a society, rather you must tell a new powerful tale, one so persuasive that it sweeps away the old myths and becomes the preferred story, one so inclusive that it gathers all the bits of our past and our present into a coherent whole, one that even shines some light into the future so that we can take the next step. . . . If you want to change a society, then you have to tell an alternative story. (Apud Springer, 2016, p.2)

Part of this 'new powerful tale' or 'alternative story' is necessarily a questioning of standard, accepted forms of knowledge, being and power. Whilst Popular Education challenges the relationships upon which learning processes are

based, the concept of 'well-living' (*buen vivir*) challenges the very nature of development and the relationships between the human and non-human worlds or between different forms of life. It represents, in the words of Donald Rojas (apud Ibañez, 2011), "an indissoluble and interdependent relationship between the universe, nature and humanity", in which the emphasis given to the quality of life should not be interpreted as the capacity to consume or possess goods. What then is the meaning of 'well-living'? Perhaps it helps if we explain what it is not! The concept of 'well-living' should not be reduced or confused with the western notion of well-being. Indeed, as Hessel and Morin (2011, p.24) point out the notion of well-being has dwindled in contemporary civilization to the strictly material sense that implies comfort, wealth and ownership. For Dávalos (2008, s.p), 'well-living' constitutes a life stripped of those parameters which are most dear to modernity and economic growth: "individualism, the search for profit, the cost-benefit relation as a social axiom, the utilization of nature, the strategic relationship between human beings, the total commodification of all spheres of human life, the violence inherent to the egoism of the consumer, etc." He adds that "although the current economic theory attributes to the Cartesian paradigm the notion of the human being as the 'lord and master of nature' and interprets nature as an externality to human history, 'good living' incorporates nature in history (...) not as a productive factor nor as a productive force but as an inherent part of social being. The central concept of 'living well' represents an alternative to the current concepts of development". The fundamental understanding of the Harmony which should exist between the way in which humans relate to the natural world, possesses profound repercussions for learning and education. The way in which knowledge was and is produced takes as its premise this relationship between humanity and nature, which represent two parts of the same unity.

"Buen vivir" or well-living, with its cosmological roots in the original peoples of the continent, has exercised an increasing influence over the way in which we think about Popular Education. Faced by the recognition that "We as human beings are making our very home uninhabitable" Fernandez concludes that Popular Education, historically involved with processes of transformation and social emancipation, identifies new meanings in the ethical, political, pedagogical and epistemological spheres in the concept of 'well-living' which enrich its efforts to achieve the liberation of the common people" (2016, p.31). In the same way as popular education understands that human beings are the subjects and protagonists of their own education, so 'well-living' converts the natural environment into a subject with rights and not an object to be exploited and utilised essentially for human ends.

If we recognise that education is not a preparation for life but life itself, then the corollary of this is that life cannot be reduced to human life. Life embraces diversity and diversity is the essence of life. It is this diversity, which must be at the heart of education, an education which is biocentric rather than anthropocentric, an education whose vital and revitalising source are those pedagogies to be learnt from indigenous people worldwide. In addition, with it must come the recognition that education is life-wide since learning is a process, which is independent of formal institutional spaces.

In many parts of the world, the ALE agenda is characterized as being an instrument which seeks to reduce and correct negative indexes: to reduce poverty, 'eradicate' illiteracy, reduce inequality (between rich and poor, whites and blacks, Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, men and women, countryside and city), to correct school flow, to elevate low rates of schooling, to diminish iniquity by increasing social inclusion. This appears to reinforce the pronounced risk of the process of dehumanization, and not to achieve or develop the human potential to be more.

As humans, learning is a basic human need, essential to our survival as a species. And at the same time, we need to remember, as Hessel and Morin (2011, p.50) remind us, what a human being really is, "in our threefold nature as biological, individual and social entities". Climate change and the ecological crisis have demonstrated forcibly that learning is not a one-way process - we humans must learn from nature and this demands a new pedagogical relationship with the Planet. As Paul Belanger affirmed at the end of CONFINTEA VI, in Belém, in 2009: "The planet will only survive if it becomes a learning planet". This will require citizens of all ages to play their part and to have the humility to recognise that we, humans, are just one of the multiple forms of life, which have a right to existence on this planet and need to learn how to cohabit in what is our common home.

As indicated at the beginning of this article, although the most recent international documents reveal a symbolic but growing opening to other forms of knowing and knowledge, the central debate remains anchored in essentially occidental and Eurocentric epistemologies regarding the relationship between education, sustainable development and interdependence in a finite planet. In order to represent the diverse ways of conceiving processes of development and education, we understand that it is essential to pluriversalise instead of universalising the debate concerning a new educational agenda capable of providing answers to the multiple challenges which the world is facing. In this way it may be possible to stimulate a discussion which is more intercultural than multicultural and to articulate a diversity of solutions and replies to those

same problems in order not to reproduce that universalism in which only one decides in the name of all, without recognising the epistemic diversity of the universe.

The inclusion of new epistemological nuances would open the perspective for an agenda based on an increasingly holistic and less anthropocentric vision, in which humans and nature would no longer be competitors, but partners, in that they share the same rights within a process of coexistence and cooperation which contemplates their necessities within the limits established by the ecosystem.

References

- Brasil (2014). Marco de Referência da Educação Popular para as Políticas Públicas. Brasília-DF.
- Brasil - Secretária-geral da Presidência da República (2014). Marco de Referência da Educação Popular para as Políticas Públicas. Brasília: Governo Federal.
- Davalos, P (2008) . “Reflexiones sobre el Sumak Kawsay (El Buen Vivir) y las teorías del desarrollo”. *Copyleft -Eutsi-Pagina de izquierda Antiautoritaria*, n. 6.
- Fernandez, B. F.(2016) Educación Popular y “Buen Vivir”: interacciones en lo pedagógico. In: *Revista Internacional sobre Investigación en Educación Global e para el desarrollo*. No.10, set. Pp.29-42.
- Freire, P (2001) . *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage*. Maryland: Rowman &C. Littlefield Publishers, .
- Hall, B. L. and, Darlene C. E (2022). Contemporary conversations and movements in adult education: From knowledge democracy to the aesthetic turn. *Convergence, An International Adult Education Journal*, Volume 43, No. 1, pp. 4-16,.
- Harari, Y (2020). O mundo após o coronavírus. Carta Maior,
- Hessel, S. and Morin, E. (2011) *The Path to Hope*. New York: Other Press.
- Ibanez, A. (2011). Un acercamiento al “Buen Vivir” – Parte II. In La Carta CEAAL, 401, 18/01/2011.
- IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) (2022). Climate change 2022: Impacts, adaptation and vulnerability. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Accessed 20 May 2022 from <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/>
- Krenak, A (2020). *O amanhã não está a venda*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2020.
- Paludo, C (2015). Educación Popular. In: Streck, D., R.; Redin E; Zitzoski, J. J. (eds.) *Diccionario Paulo Freire*. Lima: CEAAL,5, pp.176-178.
- Springer, S (2016) *The discourse of neoliberalism: An anatomy of a powerful idea*. London: Rowman & Littlefield International.
- Stanistreet, P (2021). Reasons to be hopeful: learning and becoming in a time of crisis. *International Review of Education*, [online], v. 67, p. 427-433.
- UNESCO (2015) *Rethinking Education – Towards a global common good?* Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO (2021). *Reimagining our Futures Together: A new social contract for education*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO (2022). *The Marrakech Framework for Action*. Hamburg: UIL, 2022.

UNESCO (2010). *Confinteá VI: Final Report*. Hamburg: UIL.

Popular education and well-living: a new pedagogical narrative for a learning Planet?

Timothy D. Ireland

Abstract

In the wake of CONFINTEA VII, this article points briefly to the challenges which humanity at present faces and then focuses on two concepts which have become intertwined in Latin America which can perhaps help us to establish 'new signposts and guidelines' for adult educational practice or praxis in the coming years. The Latin American concepts of 'popular education' and 'well-living' (*buen vivir*) could both be considered as constituting other forms of knowing, as being part of the movement to decolonise knowledge and as representing ways in which both popular and indigenous movements have reasserted their right to transmit and recreate their 'other place-based knowledge' as an essential component of education for life. Both are related to the notion of 'decolonising knowledge' or what we might call 'epistemological justice' or 'knowledge democracy'.

Key words

Popular education; well-living (*buen vivir*); epistemological justice; adult learning and education; diversity.

L'éducation populaire et le bien-vivre : un nouveau récit pédagogique pour une planète apprenante ?

Timothy D. Ireland

Résumé

Dans le sillage de la CONFINTEA VII, cet article évoque brièvement les défis auxquels l'humanité est actuellement confrontée et se concentre ensuite sur deux concepts qui se sont entremêlés en Amérique latine et qui peuvent peut-être nous aider à établir de nouveaux indicateurs et de nouvelles lignes directrices pour la pratique ou la praxis de l'éducation des adultes dans les années à venir. Les concepts latino-américains d'éducation populaire et de bien-vivre (*buen vivir*) peuvent tous deux être considérés comme constituant d'autres formes de savoir, comme faisant partie du mouvement de décolonisation du savoir et comme représentant des façons dont les mouvements populaires et indigènes ont réaffirmé leur droit de transmettre et de recréer leur savoir ancré dans le lieu en tant que composante essentielle de l'éducation à la vie. Ces deux

aspects sont liés à la notion de décolonisation des connaissances, ou à ce que nous pourrions appeler la justice épistémologique ou la démocratie du savoir.

Mots clés

éducation populaire, bien-vivre (buen vivir), justice épistémologique, apprentissage et éducation des adultes, diversité.

Educación popular y buen vivir: ¿una nueva narrativa pedagógica para un Planeta que aprende?

Timothy D. Ireland

Resumen

A raíz de la CONFINTEA VII, este artículo señala brevemente los desafíos que enfrenta la humanidad en la actualidad y luego se centra en dos conceptos que se han entrelazado en América Latina y que tal vez puedan ayudarnos a establecer nuevas señales y directrices para la práctica o praxis de la educación de adultos en los próximos años. Los conceptos latinoamericanos de educación popular y buen vivir podrían considerarse como constitutivos de otras formas de conocimiento, como parte del movimiento de descolonización del saber y como formas en que los movimientos populares e indígenas han reafirmado su derecho a transmitir y recrear sus saberes anclados en el lugar como componente esencial de la educación para la vida. Ambos están relacionados con la noción de descolonización del conocimiento, o lo que podríamos llamar justicia epistemológica o democracia del conocimiento.

Palabras clave

Educación popular, buen vivir, justicia epistemológica, aprendizaje y educación de adultos, diversidad.

Does what goes around come around? – the late 20th century adult learning and education agenda today

Chris Duke

Introduction

This paper samples 14 *Convergence* numbers from 1976 to 2007, to half of which I contributed, for thought and action in those years, to ask how the field appears and echoes after fifty years of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE). It considers the rise and diversification of adult learning and education (ALE) and lifelong learning (LLL) journals, the language used, and specifically the recent network NGO, PIMA, asking what they tell us about adult and popular education, and community learning.

2022 sees the 7th twelve-yearly global UNESCO Conference CONF VII**, as well as the 3rd analogous Higher Education Conference. Are we recircling and recycling? or building on a rising cycle of accumulated knowledge and capability? Australia scholar and lifelong activist in First Nations affairs, Peter Willis, once wrote of the laborious flight of the pelican as it circled, gradually gaining in height and so vision as it picked up favourable wind currents. Is this a good metaphor for today? Or do inhospitable downdraughts and rising turbulence in the 3rd decade of the 21st century keep us back in a holding pattern?

** The convention of naming the periodic world adult education events as CONF- was adopted midway through their history and carried back to the whole series. Events like the covid pandemic recently varied the period slightly. They took place first in Helsingor Denmark in 1949; then Montreal in 1960; Tokyo 1972; Paris 1985; Hamburg 1997; Belem in Brazil 2009; and this year, 2022, in Marrakech (or Marrakesh) Morocco.

A personal perspective

As I begin withdrawing from leadership of the PIMA international network and editing its bi-monthly Bulletin, which started as a Newsletter and is now approaching its 43 number, I turn increasingly to 'next generation' leadership, and to reflecting on

my own 'learning journey': but more centrally on the story of ALE, and especially popular and community education, during my lifetime. I have been a teacher of one kind or another since 1959-60, the oldest of four siblings 4 to 14 years my juniors, I thus experienced superior knowledge and skills, as well as heavy family responsibilities in and after World War II. This albeit spurious assumed life-wisdom and right to authority leaves its mark. It has taken decades fully to recognise shallowness of knowledge behind the privilege, which I lacked, and the age-place advantage of family. This is less autobiography than to say that formative early years leave a deep and well-nigh indelible imprint.

PIMA is young and quite free, whereas I and perhaps ALE too are burdened by age and memory. As a First Nations person, I would be Uncle Chris, an esteemed Tribal Elder. The same goes for ICAE, where I was in on its foundations and early years. In its short lifetime PIMA has evolved fast, including even in its full name. Growing out of its original parent body PASCAL, the teenage-turbulent PASCAL International Members Association span off in 2015, initially as a kind of supporters' club. (The initial pre-registration title Friends of PASCAL Association was passed over as the French pronunciation suggested the mistake of a faux pas).

Quite recently, PIMA segued across to a new identity via the new PIMA strapline of Promoting, Interrogating and Mobilising ALE. Perhaps covert evolutionary change is a characteristic of the ALE global network community – itself an echo and metaphor for societal evolution itself. PIMA and PASCAL are now part of a growing and I believe strengthening global network of civil society or non-governmental grassroots-focussed champions and practitioners of ALE, increasingly allied and collaborating via the slogan *We Are ALE*, agreed in 2021 as a five-year campaign.

Periodic anxieties?

Have we by words if less obviously in deeds, as a loosely networked global ALE 'community' walked the pathway signalled since 1972 by ICAE? This means engaging with the international governmental systems set up to keep peace and world order post-1945, while stretching from local community to the ultimate power of nation states combined; and influencing those with political power from the UN family of nations, the International Government Organisations (IGOs) to local community action groups, again seeking influential global engagement for civil society locally, this year through CONFINTEA VII?

I have twice experienced the downward side of the pelican in flight: watching idly from a window seat as we left KL Airport in Malaysia and circled for height to head for our destination, I was surprised to see us circling and the same landscape coming ever closer again, alarmingly so in the absence of words from the cockpit. All ended

well, back on the ground that we had left, but the sensation recurs occasionally in a lifetime of ALE.

The second time, in a light plane for four, crew included, we approached an outback Aboriginal community and tried to land as a strengthening cyclone blew in. After several drama-packed bounces we turned back to Darwin. The difference here was that we chatted with the crew of one and agreed with 'management' that discretion outweighed valour.

As once despised Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser advised 'life wasn't meant to be easy'. Change can be difficult but not impossible; it is essential when crisis piles on crisis in the real world outside the comfier home of ALE. There, set arrangements, rules, and half-realised assumptions may invite us to look inward rather than to the bewildering needy world out there.

The expanded literature of ALE

ICAE and the journal *Convergence* were born in an explosive yet more hopeful time for ALE and its multiplying journals worldwide, with more international discourse, collaboration, and emulation. I wrote for the first issue of the new UK journal, then *Studies in Adult Education* in 1969. My country of adoption, Australia, started *AJAE* a little earlier, at a time when multinational immigration was encouraged rather than made difficult. Regionally an *ASPBAE Journal* stuttered into life and was re-energised in the seventies. A similar story could be told in most continents, with richer countries somewhat ahead. Older print journals already existed in mainstream school and higher education, and suchlike areas as educational psychology and teacher training. Of particular interest to me was the German *DVV Adult Education and Development, AED*, which came from the State-supported Folk High School civil society movement *DVV*. *AED* was for and reached out to the 'post-colonial developing world', rather than inward to the mainstream more competitive and constrained world of proven and approved scholarship.

AED's short readable articles, neat cartoons and well-chosen pictures, published in three languages and sent free to all relevant regions and countries, pointed a different way forward. I loved one simple *AED* cartoon showing the meaning of modernisation and its trickle-down theory of development: resources flowing down through several levels for those in desperately needy local communities; down there just a few drips remained. The *PIMA Bulletin* was born in the very different era and mood of the 21st century a few years ago. It had this now sadly deceased model to reach back to in creating its own beliefs and attempts to reach out. *PIMA* is still exploring a best way of working in the modern cultural and media milieu; and especially how print media interact with other modes of communication and influence.

The times they are a-changing – big media changes

The world of publishing, including journals, has fast evolved in one lifetime: from an early explosion of hard copy and paperback borrow-or-buy journals, monographs, readers, handbooks and encyclopaedias to print or now to be read in e-form or on line; and from many usually small to medium recognised publishing houses to aggregation of the academic heartland by a small number of big powerful publishers which bought up smaller fry, at times keeping the old publishing house names, like many other global monopolistic financial powers.

The electronically driven management of this business output transfers most of the actual creation, quality control and production work to the sector (be it ALE, schools-based, higher, or other). With remarkable not to say gullible collusion this concentrates customers into big institutions and their libraries, and locks university and increasingly other interested parties into their policies, staff relations, conditions of job retention and service, status and so career prospects and success. A near-monopoly of staff appraisals and the institutional rankings industry have hardened into a largely closed academic system distancing academe from local community. For rankings as a new industry feeding notably off higher education (HE) see the prolific well-informed work of Ellen Hazelkorn, Director of the Higher Education Policy Research Unit (HEPRU), Dublin Institute of Technology, Ireland. On the wider stage, the venerable and esteemed economist Ross Gittins, recalling the 40-year-old work of Michael Porter, wrote in the *Sydney Morning Herald* that the new Labor Government needed to protect capitalism from the capitalists: market concentration reduces competition and negates the capacity of the capitalists' market to meet client needs (Gitten in the *SMH* Business section p.3, 18 June 2020).

There are however other forms of mainly electronic sharing that have multiplied, often with online access-only output, and self-publishing, backed by the extraordinary plethora and scale of social media discourse and influencing, which goes way out beyond academic publishing: a rich, exciting, hazardous barely monitored, much less regulated, and in an obvious sense highly democratic form of participatory discourse, echoed in some countries by highly participatory TV panel programmes for those able to take part, live and by immediate online input. Campaigning bodies, once established, can muster hundreds of thousands of signatures in a few hours and exercise popular awareness-raising as well as political influence. The popular and political power of academic publication, fragmented into a thousand specialised parts, may have peaked, turned inward, and receded into their many expert ghettos.

Note, partly as a result, the frequency with which the public media now consult individual scholars as authorities in many fields, and the social media that can count 'followers' in their hundreds or tens of thousands.

There remains space for professional and campaigning and sector periodicals like *Convergence* and the *PIMA Bulletin*, but their 'conditions of service' are critical. Their very existence may manifest breaking away from publishing rules and constraints, reaching wider and deeper into more diverse and local communities. They usually rely heavily on voluntary effort and so the civil society sector, perhaps with benefactors who do not exercise control. Celebrities, in turn a modern media product, may be enlisted as influencers. We now talk of culture wars - most often between 'left' and 'right'. These culture wars are for public opinion polls to which political parties are sensitive, and for a dominant narrative where security and stability battle those concerned by inequality especially of access, climate change and global warming, or simply quality of life.

Another new priority for global and local ALE communities, *Convergence* readers included, is 'fake news' and the intentional corruption of truth for gain. PIMA was born into this world, largely unknown in the 1970s when *Convergence* was born.

Convergence revisited and the PIMA Bulletin

On the other hand, we in ALE have our own truth-telling to confront, in ways highly relevant to community and community-based learning. We perpetually confuse the terms *education* and *learning* as if interchangeable, despite some stern signals to the contrary (Illich, 1971, Illich and Verne, 1981). ALE has been nibbled into by VET and TVET, adding vocational training as if different. Participatory action research can be an all but standalone both with and from regulated academic research, but in the heartland of scholarship-assisted community learning.

Two points stand out. First, albeit unintendedly, 'learning' displacing 'education', and so (ignorant) 'recipient' by (authoritative) 'provider'.

Second, there is a tendency as ALE has emerged and marked out its own space, to create catchy novel quotable words and expressions that in making a point give the creator an identity and reputation to stand out in a noisy time and place. This tendency has grown: as helpfully insightful observation and reflection, but increasingly also by dog-eat-dog competition in the ratings-afflicted higher education industry, where citations can influence positional ranking and so reputation.

The 20th century still optimistic years

ICAE was born into a time of democratic optimism: the first big and influential UNESCO Education study was Faure's *Learning to be* (UNESCO, 1972), certainly a champion for learning lifelong and life wide. The Council of Europe's *education*

permanente, when transcribed into English, fed Illich-like concerns about the imperialism of education as its own kingdom, and the diminution of learning. OECD's *recurrent education* was seen as a pathway to lifelong *learning*. All took it as given that adults could go on learning through life, a proposition itself not long established despite lingering scepticism, like 'climate change sceptics' in our present decade.

Since then, brain research has taken that question quite beyond dispute; but ongoing lack of care between 'education' and 'learning' carries its damage into our own discourse today. Today we face ideologically and politically fuelled 'fake news'. The urge to win citations is less sinister than massive disinformation campaigns, virtually unknown when *Convergence* first appeared, but none the less malign in its own way.

Do we see constructive development and change in what we say, think and therefore do in ALE as the twelve-yearly world 'flocking' now known as CONFINTEA VII takes place in Marrakesh in June 2022? Do we behave less like the progressively rising pelican, or more like a murmuration of starlings: dashing about together in incomprehensible harmony and at risk of being picked off by moving outside?

Convergence and ICAE

Going back over the early ICAE and *Convergence* years to refresh my memory, the historian in me was surprised to rediscover that the journal preceded the Council by several years. It was started by Roby Kidd in 1968 as editor of a publication of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. It became an ICAE journal when the Council was set up in early 1973 (Gayfer, 1983, Hall, 1992). In 1976 it was decided to rotate the editorship. Over the years the journal evolved and altered some details of its form as well as contents, for example carrying an 'Ensemble' of short newsletter-type items but altering little in its appearance and style.

The sample scanned here ran from 1976 to 1984 and 1992 to 2007, not long before publication ceased in 2010. As the main written outlet for the Council, its shifting forms of management naturally also reflected the Council's work and priorities. It was led by an evolving Management or Editorial Management Committee, Editorial Advisory Committees, one or more Editors, and five to ten members. Sometimes this body had a two-year term; at other times the term appeared to be open-ended, but apparently made little difference.

By 1992 the Editorial Committee had grown to 13 not including the Editor. With some turnover of editors, and several special issues spanning 2 or even 3 year-numbers, in its global spread, and 10 to 13 members year on year, it came to look more like other academic journals, with a largely sleeping Board or Advisory Panel of well-known ALE leaders who might add reputation rather than give active service. Sitting

alongside the list of ICAE VPs it stressed globalism rather than high academic credentials.

Council purpose, campaigns, and journal - fin de siècle and beyond

As the Editor described it looking back in 1992, when ICAE was created in 1973 'Convergence became the official flagship of the Council' (Yarmol-Frankel,1992). Two periodic reviews of *Convergence* were later published there, by Marg Gayfer in 1983, and Budd Hall in 1992.

'Flagship' was evident in terms of those responsible for it and often contributing articles, but it was far from a narrow mouthpiece. On occasion special issues were dedicated to Council's priorities and special programmes. Big global events including the Council's own conferences loomed large: the Council's significant Dar es Salaam and the 2nd Development Decade in 1976 (volume IX, numbers, numbers 2 and 4), Council's International Conference addressed by President Mitterrand in 1983 (XXI, 1), the ICAE China Symposium in 1984 (XVII, 3), others like the World Social Forum in 2003 (XXXVI 3 & 4), and workplace learning in 2004 (XXXVII 1). Another Special Issue (XL 3&4 in 2007) gave much attention to the upcoming CONFINTEA VI, in this respect reflecting a trend to work closely with and on UNESCO, especially to enhance the influence of the nongovernmental or civil society sector. This purpose can be seen writ large in the PIMA Bulletin, which recently devoted much space to input to and influence the 7th such global UNESCO event in June 2022.

Another subject that ICAE campaigned about in association with international development aid funds came from an ICAE conference in Washington in 1980 on International Aid and Poverty. Poverty, inequality, and access to opportunity have been abiding ALE themes throughout its history. ICAE. A poverty project (*Convergence* XII, 3, 1980, XVI, 1983). in the early eighties led to two Croom Helm monographs much later republished by Routledge. The later one, initially published through DVV, teased out attempts to address poverty and inequality by different strategies: 'top-down' or 'grassroots-driven' (Duke, ed.1985 and 2019, 1990 and 2019). This takes us directly to community-based action for development, or 'grassroots movements', and the more recent emergence of the Community Learning Centre (CLC), now a significant locality-based organisational form, alongside 'learning cities' another UNESCO-supported locality-based development strategy. PASCAL's acronym began with P for Place; locality was emerging as of central importance, though whether as mainly a convenient place for education and training, or as itself a learning organism, remained shadowy. Shrouded by casual drift between learning and education, the same applies to learning city and community.

Another example of *Convergence's* expressing an ICAE policy priority was the expression first credited to Chairman Mao that 'women hold up more than half the sky', reporting the ICAE women's project on the role and status of women and published by Bernard and Gayfer in *Convergence* in 1981. The women's movement has become a very prominent theme of contemporary life in mainstream society culture and narrative at large this century, as well as in ALE as reflected in the *PIMA Bulletin*.

Curiously, the editorial of a *Convergence* issue early this century (Cunningham, 2003) describes that issue as unintentionally primarily on women. Women were playing very active and public roles in the late 20th century, notably in the environment and the peace movement, grounded in local action as well as in writing since Rachel Carson's time (Carson 1962). Their status, roles, and contribution have become a major ALE as well as general societal and media theme, evidenced by the current *PIMA Bulletin* and interwoven with the crisis in global warming.

Women contributors gradually featured more strongly in early issues of *Convergence* and markedly more strongly in the *PIMA Bulletin*: not only as contributors but as an albeit still somewhat shrouded central theme. Following *PIMA Bulletin* No.38 on The SDGs, Climate Justice, No. 39 in November 2021 on the theme of Climate Justice and ALE was almost entirely written by women and brought out their central role especially in this arena. Understandably, climate and global warming featured little in the early days of ICAE compared with their prominence, at times dominance globally in public and political life and the media.

Like the covid pandemic from 2020, the new context of interwoven and interacting crises this decade caused the 'perfect storm'. Doubt or despair at the failure of political leadership to manage it, also brought on a crisis in 'western democracy' as well as weakened consensus over the world governance order heralded in the aftermath of the Second World as the UN system and other intergovernmental arrangements. In this context of unfamiliar turbulence and complexity, 'community' as well as adult and popular ALE acquired new meaning. The birthtime and context of *PIMA* differed utterly from that of ICAE, and with it went a sense of urgency thitherto lacking.

PIMA and its Bulletin - new kid on the block for tricky times

PIMA was the small barely legitimate spin-off from another 21st century international NGO or INGO (see the section above on 'A personal perspective') born in 2015. It was a small protest movement seeking more democratic transparency and more thinking Outside the Box (OTB). It relies entirely on voluntary effort. It has dabbled with the idea of putting a cash value on the considerable volunteered effort but instead is concentrating on widening active effort from the expanding network. Its other

unusual feature is insistence on old-fashioned democracy with regular elections for its small governing and management body (known as EXCO) and co-option to EXCO where there is evident need. In thus attempting to walk the walk as well as talk the talk, its strength and perhaps also weakness is flexibility and fluidity of motion: walking the road as it is built and trying out new ways as a small well-connected network, to share and collaborate, proselytize, and influence.

One fixed point however has been and remains a desire to see the growing world of ALE and lifelong learning (LLL) as an open system looking out to 'real-world' needs and problems rather than inward to lubricate itself as just yet another professional interest group. Seeing connections, joining up the dots, moving across disciplines, diversities, and specialisms: these are seen as necessities if the richly diverse ecosystem of the world and all its life forms, humans included, is to survive and prosper. Opening the many often competitive '-isms' includes working with all 'sectors' and all 'levels', from global to very local, and public, private, civil society, and today's many mixed models for management.

Its core principles and lack of firm 'house rules' gives it freedom to evolve, and the *Bulletin* as a bimonthly publication has evolved without inhibition. However, the underlying participatory and democratic urge means that the power of the local community is treated as central. It attempts to nurture and support grassroots community empowerment, pushing out scope and meaning beyond a convenient and familiar safe-feeling place (a community meeting venue in its diverse and multiple forms) to the far more ambitious notion that as a place of learning and not just instruction – education and training – *the community itself* enhances its collective understanding and capacity to act from its experience, and so to apply what is learned together and maybe to change.

In our wish to reach outward and downward, while not ignoring power and the layers of governance at the top, we in PIMA use the *Bulletin* as a main means to reach out as well as keep in touch among members. With the lifestyle and workstyle changes caused by covid, for example, we now weave together frequent collaboratively mounted webinars with the *Bulletin* and intersperse the bimonthly *Bulletin* with more frequent one-off mailing to members. The webinars are planned and co-hosted with other ALE bodies to increase immediate output and sharing and made available as stand-alone items.

Much of the output however is through other channels altogether, by individual PIMA members acting alone or in consort. A relevant example is the recent IRE paper on Community Learning Centres (CLCs) (Belete, Duke, Hinzen, Owusu-Boampong, Huu, 2022). Three of the five authors are PIMA EXCO members, as are two of the three authors of another recent paper where all three co-authors are PIMA

members (Duke, Hinzen, Sarazin, 2021). The CLCs paper is undoubtedly part of PIMA's effort to understand the potential of the community in ALE and LLL as indeed is the first number of *Convergence* reborn' where the first 7 of its 10 contributors are all PIMA members. This manifests the shared purpose and collaborative spirit which these two outlets share (*Convergence* 43, 1, 2022).

Not all is new and different with ICAE and ALE in the new century. A few key individuals from the early seventies on, and especially a little later, remain familiar today, whether as writing gurus or continuing activists. With that goes continuing commitment to key purposes over several decades. Yet, as a big OECD Education Conference early in the new century was entitled, it was already in 'a world utterly changed'. The 'Millennium bug' had precautionary steps taken, unlike the subsequent unexpected and real global financial crisis (GFC). Terms like perfect storm have become familiar; while 'don't let a good crisis go to waste' has lost resonance other than with those brokers for whom every crisis yields still greater profits. The space between the 'real economies' which made and did things and global financial markets widened; and the gulf between richer and poorest which had reduced in recent decades widened sharply again.

Communities, adult and popular education in the 2020s

I write as CONFINTEA VII opens in Marrakesh. The civil society sector is a lively participatory force, as has increasingly been the case in preparation for this and preceding such events. This time one of its Workshops is on Community Learning Centres or CLCs - preconditions and good practice.

We are often guilty of careless use and lack of discrimination between *individuals'* learning and instruction, education, and training, or even facilitation, of teachers and leaders, who are thereby seen as more capable, informed, and knowledgeable. We need to be alert to this, and to the fact that '*community learning*' is also subject to such different meanings and understandings. We must also ask about precondition *for* good practice; and about who and what is learning – just *individual participants* or also *the community* itself? There has been a whole literature about the *learning organisation* as a dimension of management theory, and not only in the business world (see for example Duke, 1992, 2002). The learning organisation can be an organism which itself learns and changes, as well as facilitating the learning of its members or workforce. The measure would be not the assessed skills and knowledge of individuals in the workforce but how the organisation visibly changes its behaviour (OB).

Terms and meanings familiar in community learning include motivation, empowerment, and ownership. Preconditions include how CLCs are created, managed, governed and led. Are they places where local people decide to put more

convenient arrangements together to make their purposeful meetings and interactions work better? - perhaps as they are closer and easier to get to, comfier and more sheltered from the weather, safe in time of possible unrest, welcoming rather than overly formal and austere? Places to chat and exchange about the things important to them in their lives?

Or are they arrangements made by authorities for the good of local people, so that they can gather and receive instruction, or facilitation, to become more educated, skilled, and useful, maybe also obedient citizens and workers, based on what authorities, usually but not always central government, consider they should receive? If so, and if people taking part are not interested in the subject-matter or attracted by the atmosphere, sense of ownership may be lacking and learning gains paltry.

Who determines curriculum if there are formal courses or sessions, makes the rules, seeks necessary resources, and sets the culture and environment? Among these are preconditions for success, or the source of atrophy. Different venues do matter. They may be shared multipurpose meeting rooms almost anywhere - in libraries or sport centres, workshops or at general and flexible 'polyvalent' locales which serve other purposes like union halls, religious premises, covered markets - anywhere that people find relaxed, accessible, and comfy enough to be at ease and learn.

In this sense the management of the CLC is crucial: trusted and chosen local leaders, respected elders of whichever gender; or authorities coming in from outside not by invitation but to supervise and assess; deciding what is to be done, what facilities and help may be sought. The title of the current IRE paper on CLCs holds a clue: 'development *in and by* communities' (Belete et al 2022). That paper finds 'low levels of participation in general, and more specifically so for vulnerable and excluded groups'.

What now for ALE?

Spontaneous locally created and self-directed local centres are not easily compatible with authoritarian regimes which practise highly centralised management and scrutiny. If they survive, they are prone to tight management surveillance and control. Centres inclined to practise participatory action research are likely to attract hostile attention I have long wondered about grassroots energies in what we now call CLCs, and the character of their identity: this implies close analysis not only of formal CLC governance arrangements but of how positions come to be filled, who sets the character and curriculum, and what this means for effective access and participation of all community interests.

This paper has called attention to clarity of terms. What taken-for-granted assumptions go into their use, such that we scarcely notice them? We may for example say 'ALE and LLL' but there is a world of difference between lifelong and adults, serious thinking is required across the whole lifespan, whether in the use of local centres or in general discourse. It is still uncommon, as is grounded research on how and where adults actually do learn. Still outstanding is the work of Konrad Elsdon, an unusual member of the British Inspectorate (HMI) as an adult education inspector: not just his 2001 NIACE publication (Elsdon et al 2001) but more especially his less well-known study of self-help groups (Elsdon et al 2000) which bears rereading and has new significance today.

When I first worked in university adult education, we were enjoined to study and contribute community-based education and community development, but on no account to practise doing it: such a no-go zone might lead to political entanglement. An influential professor of sociology at that time likened university scholarship to studying the ants in the anthill: on no account get involved with them. Not that there was no domestic or international politics at that time, but the tenets of 'western democracy' were rather taken as given, with an Iron Curtain and shared MAD (mutual assured destruction) to contain the USSR on the other side. Today the Foreign Affairs advice of countries listed unsafe to visit has greatly extended, and with it, countries where bolder meanings of 'CLC' may be silenced.

I ask in my title whether, like the pelican, what goes round comes around, and whether on a rising current. Given the many 2020s 'perfect storms', and talk of a 'new normal', we can look back to the days when ICAE was created out of a global UNESCO adult education congress. Climate catastrophe, breakdown of consensus and performance in global governance, and then the covid pandemic, combine to confirm that the old normal will not return. We can use history to learn from but not to return to, for all that old cultural and political systems like the English strive endlessly to go back to earlier times and relive the War, as in TV dramas. 'Khaki elections' have become more common as culture wars deepen and defeats become famous victories, even in 'safe democratic' places.

This sketch has shown strong continuity of values, sense of mission, and programme purposes, from the early days of ICAE to modern times when the PIMA network emerged, reinforced by the continuing presence of early ICAE champions like Hall and Tandon, OISE and DVV, Tuckett if no longer of NIACE. Sensitivity and aversion of gaze from the harsher world of politics have however also persisted, muting criticism of authoritarian regimes in most continents, to the point where even contact, much less deep collaboration, becomes all but unattainable. Even domestic conversation within democratic systems has suffered as 'cultural wars' deepen. Thus,

real-world crisis crowds in on shared ALE values and space. It feels that the circling pelican may be on a downward spiral, and dangerous land draws nearer.

The loose global ALE and now LLL networked community gathering for CONFINTEA VII, like the younger HE variant, may be at a critical point in terms of a prognosis for 'We are ALE'? The likely outcome will be a yet more lucid call for more resources, laws, and recognition as a key sector within Education; and in the context of the SDGs much higher cross-Goals recognition that ALE and LLL are essential, in themselves and for other Goals to be fully realised.

Every policy sector from 'defence' to 'social welfare' is say the same, but in louder voice. What if faith in the character, integrity, processes and policy outcomes of elected governments has faded too far: armed with 'big data' and other new media tools, where quality audit and assessment (QA) loses out on 'enhancement' (QE) to punitive measurement and control?

Back to 'community' and 'community learning', including CLCs. One lesson of covid lockdown has been the break-up of traditional multigenerational families, if not under the same roof, then in the same locality. Local self-help is replaced by remittance economies between and even within the larger national states. One discovery in countries familiar to me has been deeper understanding of neighbours and neighbourhood. Communities devastated by fire or flood stop waiting for government and do it for themselves. In Victoria Australia extreme wildfire destruction drove residents in one small town first onto the beach and later, to declare the Republic of Mallacoota, an echo of the old British film *Passport to Pimlico* (Ealing Studios, 1949). The Victorian community asserts that they, and not a remote central government, knows what is best done and how, not fly-in distant experts. The same is true for remote First Nation Northern Territory communities.

Back in Victoria, one of the finest examples of a 'learning town' was inspired by the late Ken Thompson. The Hume Global Learning Village (HGLV) in an economically rundown multicultural and immigrant community became a 'Learning City' lighthouse well before that system was created through the UIL UNESCO-led HGLV. It attracted public funds, and when these were withdrawn it all but collapsed before local people pulled together to do it themselves. State support thus led to near-fatal dependency.

Let us see what the outcomes of CONFINTEA VII are. PIMA plans to devote a Special Issue review number soon after, in September. If it is essentially more of the same, albeit spoken louder and clearer, it may also be seeking an 'old normal' that cannot be called back. The pelican may strive to fly higher but the places that it seeks to visit are gone.

In this sense too, our networked communities in the strange new fire, flood and pandemic world of the 2020s may benefit from revisiting the well-known work of Allen Tough (Tough,1991), and the less familiar work of Konrad Elsdon (Eldon, 2000, 2001). and reminding themselves how local communities can and do take charge of their own affairs, below the radar and out of sight of even the most intrusive regimes; looking to their inherited and new gifts, skills and resources rather than to tired perhaps short-lived nation states of disillusionment, with short-cycle closely bounded and limited drip-feeding. Then indeed we will realise that communities can indeed themselves learn; and that a very good crisis will not be going to waste.

References

For an exhaustive list of pertinent references see the seven pages concluding Beleke et al 2002

- Beleke, S, Duke, Hinzen, Owusu-Boampong, Huu, (2022). Community Learning Centres (CLCs) for Adult Learning and Education: development in and by communities. *International view of Education* (2022) 68:259-290.
- Carson, R. (1962) *Silent Spring*. Houghton Mifflin.
- Cunningham P. (2003). Editorial. *Convergence*, XXXVII, 2., pp.3-4.
- Duke, C. (1992). *The Learning University*. SRHE & Open UP.
- Duke, C. (2002). *Managing the Learning University*. SRHE & Open UP.
- Duke, C. (ed.) (2019). *Combatting Poverty Through Adult Education. National Development Strategies*, Routledge. (First published by Croom Helm 1985)
- Duke, C. (ed.) (2019). *Grassroots Approaches to Combatting Poverty through Adult Education*. (First published by DVV 1985)
- Duke, C., Hinzen, H., Sarrazin, R. eds.) (2021) *Financing of popular adult learning and education (ALE). Experience, lessons and recommendations from 14 countries and case studies*. Bonn: DVV International.
- Ealing Studios. (1949). comedy film *Passport to Pimlico*.
- Eldon, K.T. (2000). *Shared Experience, Learning and Living. A Study of Self-help Groups*. Nottingham: Nottingham University.
- Eldon, K.T. (2001). *An Education for the people? A History of HMI and Lifelong Learning 1944-1992*. Leicester: NIACE..
- Gayfer, M. (1983). Convergence Flashback to 1960s and 1970s. *Convergence* XVI, 3.
- Hall, B. et.al. (1992). Rich and Vibrant Colours: 25 Years of Adult Education. *Convergence* XXV 4. pp. 4-16.
- Illich. I. and Verne E. (1971). *Deschooling Society*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Illich, I. and Verne, J. (1981). *Imprisoned in the Global Classroom*. London: Writers & Readers.
- [Tough](#), A.M, (1991). *The Adult's Learning Projects: A Fresh Approach to Theory and Practice in Adult Learning*. Toronto : OISE Press.
- UNESCO. (1972). *Learning to be*. (The Faure Report). Paris: UNESCO.
- Yarmol-Franko, K, (1992) Editorial Introduction. *Convergence* XXVI, 4, p.

Does what goes around comes around? – the late 20th century adult learning and education agenda today

Chris Duke

Abstract

This paper compares agendas for the study, education, and training of adults, as influenced and shaped by the international scholarly, professional and locally community focused movement led by the international network ICAE. The journal *Convergence* was started by Roby Kidd an eminent innovator and leader, at OISE, Toronto, before ICAE was created out of the 3rd periodic UNESCO conferences held in Tokyo in 1972. These UNESCO conferences started in 1949 sought to connect and build on national bodies and 'big-region' associations from 1972, also the brainchild of Roby Kidd. ICAE quickly adopted *Convergence* as its flagship.

We compare the ICAE agenda as reflected in a selection of the what had become the ICAE Journal *Convergence* from its first 30 years, with the agenda, ambitions, and style of the new seven-year-old PIMA Bulletin, more unfettered, and explicitly committed to bringing about change, looking at ALE more from outside rather than as a relatively closed and inward-facing system. Committed to 'thinking outside the box', the Bulletin also looks squarely at the power for good and harm of modern mass and social media, and their ambiguity in terms of democracy and its failures.

Community Learning Centres or CLCs and learning cities emerge as significant developments, but failures of outward facing civil society empowerment mean that post-CONFINTEA VII action is still at most a work-in-progress where 'community learning' still too easily morphs into individual 'education' and 'training'. The analysis and questions are anchored in first-hand experience of the growing global ALE network from the early 1970s, and life and work in the UK and Australia, but also in Europe and North America, Asia and the Pacific, but equally relevant in all continental regions. It suggests using history to learn and do better, but not as a trap.

It explored how civil society movements anchored in ALE built on and were also somewhat framed by UNESCO and other post-World War Two bodies, extending its reach into the 'real world' of perfect storms and culture wars.

Keywords

Journal *Convergence*; adult learning and education; ICAE; CLC (community learning centers); PIMA Bulletin;

Est-ce qu'on récolte ce qu'on sème ? - l'apprentissage des adultes de la fin du 20^e siècle et l'agenda de l'éducation aujourd'hui

Chris Duke

Sommaire

Cet article compare les programmes d'études, d'éducation et de formation des adultes, tels qu'il sont été influencés et façonnés par le mouvement international académique, professionnel et communautaire dirigé par le réseau international CIEA. La revue *Convergence* a été lancée par Roby Kidd, un éminent innovateur et leader, à l'OISE de Toronto, avant que le CIEA ne soit créé à partir de la 3^e conférence périodique de l'UNESCO tenue à Tokyo en 1972. Ces conférences de l'UNESCO, qui ont débuté en 1949, ont cherché à connecter et à construire des organismes nationaux et des associations de "grandes régions" à partir de 1972, également fruit de l'imagination de Roby Kidd. Le CIEA a rapidement fait de *Convergence* son programme phare.

Nous comparons l'agenda du CIEA, tel qu'il est reflété dans une sélection de ce qui était devenu le *Journal du CIEA Convergence* au cours de ses 30 premières années, avec l'agenda, les ambitions et le style du nouveau *Bulletin PIMA*, créé il y a sept ans, plus libre et explicitement engagé dans le changement, considérant la formation professionnelle de l'extérieur plutôt que comme un système relativement fermé et tourné vers l'intérieur. S'engageant à « sortir des sentiers battus », le *Bulletin* examine également le pouvoir positif et négatif des médias de masse et sociaux modernes, ainsi que leur ambiguïté en termes de démocratie et de ses défaillances. Les centres d'apprentissage de proximité (CLC) et les villes apprenantes apparaissent comme des développements significatifs, mais les échecs de l'autonomisation de la société civile tournée vers l'extérieur signifient que l'action post-CONFINTEA VII est encore tout au plus un travail en cours où « l'apprentissage communautaire » se transforme encore trop facilement en « éducation » et « formation » individuelles.

L'analyse et les questions sont ancrées dans l'expérience de première main du réseau mondial ALE en pleine expansion depuis le début des années 1970, et dans la vie et le travail au Royaume-Uni et en Australie, mais aussi en Europe et en Amérique du Nord, en Asie et dans le Pacifique, mais tout aussi pertinentes dans toutes les régions continentales. Elle suggère d'utiliser l'histoire pour apprendre et faire mieux, mais pas comme un piège. Elle étudie la manière dont les mouvements de la société civile ancrés dans l'apprentissage et l'éducation des adultes s'appuient sur l'UNESCO et d'autres organismes de l'après-guerre et sont quelque peu encadrés par eux, étendant ainsi sa portée au « monde réel » des tempêtes parfaites et des guerres culturelles.

Mots-clés

Journal Convergence ; apprentissage et éducation des adultes ; ICAE ; CLC (centres d'apprentissage communautaires) ; *Bulletin PIMA*.

¿Dónde las dan, las toman? - La agenda actual de aprendizaje y educación de adultos de finales del siglo XX

Chris Duke

Resumen

Este documento compara las agendas para el estudio, la educación y la formación de adultos, influenciadas y moldeadas por el movimiento internacional académico, profesional y centrado en la comunidad local liderado por la red internacional ICAE. La revista *Convergence* fue iniciada por Roby Kidd, un eminente innovador y líder, en OISE, Toronto, antes de que se creara el ICAE a partir de la tercera conferencia periódica de la UNESCO celebrada en Tokio en 1972. Estas conferencias de la UNESCO que comenzaron en 1949 buscaban conectar y desarrollar organismos nacionales y asociaciones de 'grandes regiones' de 1972, también una creación de Roby Kidd. ICAE adoptó rápidamente *Convergence* como su buque insignia.

Comparamos la agenda del ICAE tal como se refleja en una selección de lo que se había convertido en el *Journal Convergence* del ICAE durante sus primeros 30 años, con la agenda, las ambiciones y el estilo del nuevo Boletín PIMA de siete años, más libre y explícitamente comprometido con la realización del cambio, considerando el ALE más desde afuera que como un sistema relativamente cerrado y orientado hacia adentro. Comprometido con "pensar fuera de lo normal", el Boletín también analiza directamente el poder para bien y para mal de las redes sociales y de masas modernas, y su ambigüedad en términos de democracia y sus fallas. Los Centros Comunitarios de Aprendizaje o CLC y las ciudades del aprendizaje emergen como desarrollos significativos, pero las fallas en el empoderamiento de la sociedad civil hacia el exterior significan que la acción posterior a CONFINTEA VII todavía es, como máximo, un trabajo en progreso donde el "aprendizaje comunitario" todavía se transforma con demasiada facilidad en "educación" y "capacitación" individual.

El análisis y las preguntas se basan en la experiencia de primera mano de la creciente red global ALE desde principios de la década de 1970, y la vida y el trabajo en el Reino Unido y Australia, pero también en Europa y América del Norte, Asia y el Pacífico, pero igualmente relevantes en todas las regiones continentales. Sugiere usar la historia para aprender y hacerlo mejor, pero no como una trampa. Explora cómo los movimientos de la sociedad civil anclados en el ALE se basan en la UNESCO y otros organismos posteriores a la Segunda Guerra Mundial y también están enmarcados por ellos, extendiendo su alcance al "mundo real" de tormentas perfectas y guerras culturales.

Palabras clave

Revista *Convergence*; aprendizaje y educación de adultos; ICAE; CLC (centros de aprendizaje comunitarios); Boletín PIMA.

Remembering Jane Mace (1943 -2022)

Ursula Howard

A pioneering and widely-respected adult educator with a lifelong commitment to adult literacy, Jane Mace has sadly died aged 79, following a stroke. Jane tirelessly practised her beliefs in equality of access to learning for all, especially for women, in social justice, democracy and peace. She promoted participative group teaching and learning, developed innovative curricula for adults and invented a new field of research. To capture it all, she wrote and published. All this was done with a blend of the local and international, engaging with everyday lives lived all across the world. She wrote prodigiously and leaves a powerful legacy through countless newspaper and journal articles; and several books. Her first, *Working with Words*, was published in 1979, followed by book after book on literacy and motherhood, literacy in community writing and publishing and the role of scribes past and present - and in the literary imagination.

Jane brought her deep insights from literacy practices to the Quaker beliefs she embraced in later life. Ground-breaking books were the outcome: *'God and Decision-Making: a Quaker Approach'* (2012) and *'Passions and Partings: the dying sayings of early Quakers'* (2020). In all she did, as readers will already have gathered, words mattered to Jane - spoken as well as written - and she used words to tackle prejudice and indifference with friendly openness and respect, even at times when she spoke out against, and to, power. She loved to play with words, poetry as well as prose. Her success as a writer of how adults best learn was fuelled by her curiosity, listening to and hearing from other people with a sometimes impish smile that made people - interviewees or friends - want to be part of her world. One friend called her direct way of questioning 'intellectually tough, but emotionally tender'.

Growing up with three siblings in a middle-class family in Bristol - her mother, Mary active in the community, her father, William a solicitor - Jane Sommerville went on to study modern languages at Oxford in the 1960s. Her talents as an actor shone, including performing in the influential musical revue

which campaigned against capital punishment '*Hang Down Your Head and Die*' – a show which started the careers of several actors and comedians. Jane moved to London and lived there for 35 years. She married Rodney Mace in 1967; they divorced in 1999. Later, she met John Geale through Quakers, and they married in 2017. My memories of Jane's children, Jessica and Joe, as they grew up in 1970s Camberwell, exemplify the spirit of those times. Jane was working full-time, juggling motherhood, communist politics and work. I lived round the corner, a single parent with two children. They all went to school together, and each week for two years, my children would play at Jane's and sleep over. Two days later, Jess and Joe came to us. She took us on outings and holidays in her old London taxi-cab. Jane's feminism was about reaching out, extending family life into the community and challenging norms for women and families.

Jane came to adult literacy learning through a classic route. Volunteering as an adult literacy tutor, in south London, she quickly became Director of the Cambridge House Literacy Scheme, an innovative project founded in the 1960s. Adult literacy work was hardly born, but a national campaign in the early 70s, launched by the British Association of Settlements, resulted in the BBC launching a TV series to raise awareness. An influential independent inquiry into reading, chaired by Alan Bullock, '*A Language for Life*', published in 1975, included adults in its remit. Deep-seated educational problems across the lifespan were laid bare. Cambridge House, led by Jane, found itself at the forefront of a high-profile national campaign...or movement, as Jane and colleagues preferred to call it. Literacy for Jane was about addressing the issue of inequality, newly rediscovered. Poverty, poor housing and educational disadvantage were tied to social class and the legacy of colonialism which had brought many immigrant families to Britain from the Caribbean and elsewhere: needed for their labour but neglected in their own and their children's schooling. A campaign simply to improve technical reading skills was not the answer. A movement to radicalise adult learning was needed. So in literacy work, writing became key: the active literacy which gave voice to the voiceless and fostered human agency. Jane, with others, founded a national magazine, *Write First Time*, which published literacy students' writing, which in turn became reading material, at a time when adults' only texts were children's readers. Pamphlets proliferated across the country. Adult literacy learners spoke out about the system, and this proved too much for many policy makers and funders. After ten years, in a draconian political climate and cuts to education, the magazine was shut down.

Jane's work in community publishing grew from literacy. She was a co-founder of the Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers (FWWCP) in the early 1970s. Ken Worpole, a fellow founder spoke of Jane as someone who

was 'formidably efficient as Chair of the FWWCP during its most dynamic years and should be remembered for that alone, though it was just one of her many endeavours'. She moved next to Goldsmiths College, as head of their community-based Lee Centre in the 1980s and 1990s, and became senior lecturer in adult literacy education at South Bank University in the late 1990s-2000s. She was a visiting lecturer at Lancaster University's Literacy Research Centre, co-founding the journal *Research and Practice in Adult Literacy* in the 1980s. Research and practice were always interwoven in Jane's educational philosophy. The utilitarian terminology of Basic Skills, which came to dominate policy discourse, was alien to Jane.

Jane never sought status or acclaim. She lived democracy at work, and in relationships. At Cambridge House, she abolished hierarchies in our five-strong team and made all roles equal, including my own as a clerical worker. There was no vertical division of labour. As a stubbornly principled democrat, she considered diplomacy in her external facing roles as not her priority. She clashed with funders if she thought learners were not at the centre of a research and development project, publishing what learners wrote rather than what funders wanted to hear. She had an ear for what she saw as phoney and, in the 2000s, ticked me off gently for inviting literacy learners to speak at a big policy and research conference in a way that she felt exposed them to condescension. Soon afterwards, we ran a literacy students' writing project together and the publication was, happily, launched by Tony Benn.

When Jane joined the Society of Friends, her commitment to action was ambitious: on local, national and international issues. Living in Stroud, she ran a successful fundraising campaign for the Women's Refuge, wrote and spoke about conscientious objectors, learned to play the cornet; visited sick Friends and campaigned for refugees. She dedicated time and love to her grandchildren. She worked in Palestine and Israel as part of the Quakers' Ecumenical Accompanier Programme (EAPPI) - and wrote extensively about it. Jane could be conflicted and despondent. She was never complacent, always loving and determined to move forward positively. Her humane inquisitiveness, activism for change and loving ways will be much missed by colleagues, F/friends and family.

María Alicia Rueda, *The Educational Philosophy of Luis Emilio Recabarren. Pioneering Working-Class Education in Latin America.*

Routledge, New York, 2021, pp. 135. ISBN13: 978-0367861193

Pablo Toro-Blanco

Luis Emilio Recabarren (1876-1924), the founder of the Chilean Communist Party, is an unavoidable figure in the constellation of Chilean political and social history. However, it is not usual to find studies on his educational thought (under the premise that he had one based on original ideas) and his efforts to foster education for exploited workers in Chile. Maria Alicia Rueda tackles this dimension of the legendary working-class leader in a book halfway between history and philosophy of education, according to her statement. Regarding the former, Rueda builds a work over different soil. The book testifies to how historical research expands the capacity to analyse our time and circumstances through comparisons and gives place to empathy and acknowledgement to those who fought for the adults' education a century ago. Rueda's raw analysis is informed by the 'underdevelopment' perspective, which is rare in contemporary literature. Although, the literature she uses to draw a Chilean general historical context is outdated, Rueda mentions more updated studies as she presents Recabarren's biography. On the latter, the author displays an engaging analysis of different aspects of Recabarren's ideas. This is the most essential and original part of the book and shows how the researcher navigated through a vast sea of dispersed documents and dealt with them successfully. Chapter 5 deserves special recognition as Rueda offers an excellent general overview of the crucial relationship between workers' press and education, even though the author tackles this issue with a limited bibliography.

The Educational Philosophy of Luis Emilio Recabarren is a book written kindly, far away from excessive academicism, devoted to a general audience and seeking to declare that the Chilean revolutionary leader was "the most notable Latin

American Marxist thinker of the early 20th century". That statement is difficult to demonstrate because Recabarren's thought is unavailable as an organized collection of books with a logical or evolutive sequence. On the contrary, it is accessible as an archipelago of articles, manifestos and pamphlets, which is hard to navigate. Besides, it is hard to say that Recabarren devoted himself to education as the main issue among the uncountable organizational, political and journalistic work he made throughout his life. As Rueda develops her analysis, it becomes clear that the most effective educational labour that Recabarren did was through his commitment to the workers' press. In her final remarks, the author identifies working-class organizations and newspapers as Recabarren's ultimate educational legacy. Therefore, it might not be entirely accurate to state that he had an educational philosophy (if we understand it as an articulated and systematic body of ideas).

Rueda disclaims that she does not study Recabarren as a "great man" and prefers thinking of him as an "organic intellectual" of the working class. Nevertheless, the author's enthusiasm for Recabarren's heroic image may lead her to underline his ideas without a balance with their actual impact in his historical context. In any case, the analysis of Recabarren's educational doctrine carried out by the author is of great value to understand a facet of the social movement at the beginning of the 20th century that is usually undervalued in favour of its political aspects.

After presenting the historical context and the biography of Recabarren, Rueda proposes an evaluation of his pedagogical ideas. She frames them in a civilizing process of a liberal matrix from which Recabarren would emancipate himself by delving into the liberating character of socialism. From this philosophical and political definition, the labour leader would underline the importance of the education of workers and, therefore, would constitute a crucial milestone in adult education.

In sum, the book partially opens the door to historic knowledge about marginalized groups. Given its biographic, intellectual and ideological focus, there is brief direct evidence or testimonies of men and women who were part of the labour movement in Chile. The general public, scholars and students might be interested in this book as it joins and analyses testimonies of Recabarren's ideas and practices as a revolutionary social leader who realized the role of education in the emancipation of workers.

CONVERGENCE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Articles are accepted in English, French and Spanish.

General Directions

CONVERGENCE. AN INTERNATIONAL ADULT EDUCATION JOURNAL is a biannual journal published in open access by the UNESCO Chair in Global Adult Education, Faculty of Education, in collaboration with the International Council for Adult Education, aimed at an international readership.

Because of our international distribution, we attempt to select articles of interest to a broad audience of practitioners, field-workers, planners, trainers, teachers, researchers and administrators.

In addressing issues, practices and developments in adult education, *CONVERGENCE* provides a forum for a discussion and exchange of experiences and ideas. Articles are accepted in English, French and Spanish.

Points to Remember

- We prefer to receive a letter of enquiry describing the content of the proposed article, its treatment and why you believe it is suitable for *CONVERGENCE*. Our experience has been that those who read the journal regularly are more likely to have a good sense of an appropriate article. The enquiry letter also helps us to judge if a similar subject or the same region has appeared in a recent issue – we attempt to maintain a balance among subject matter and regions of the world.
- An article may be about a particular country, programme or activity, but the interpretation, description and analysis should be of interest and generally applicable to the work of colleagues in other countries. Papers written for another purpose (e.g., a local audience, a course of study, part of a thesis) are usually unsuitable.
- Put yourself in the position of a colleague in another part of the world and ask: Does this article include what I would wish to know about another country or programme? Is the context clear? Have unfamiliar abbreviations, references or concepts been used?
- Heavily statistical research reports are not accepted. Interpret data, results and conclusions in terms of practical application and lessons learned.
- Since *CONVERGENCE* is open access, no payment is made to authors of articles or book reviews. Reviewers may keep the book that they review.

Style and Presentation

CONVERGENCE follows The Chicago Manual of Style (latest editions) for formatting references and notes; consult the most recent issue if you do not have access to this manual.

Writing should be informal, without jargon or convoluted sentences.

Keep footnotes and references to a minimum. Tables and graphs are considered only when they depict essential information that cannot be described adequately in the text. US and UK spelling accepted for texts in English. Numbers ten and under are spelt out; 11 and over use numerals.

Review Process and Response from the Editor: Articles are sent out to international reviewers; please expect a delay of three to six months for a response. Requirements Submission: Authors are asked to transmit their articles in ASCII format via e-mail attachment. Length: Feature articles should be no longer than 5000 words; information reports up to 800 words; book reviews, 600–1000 words. Abstract: Upon acceptance, an abstract of 150–200 words is requested for translation into other languages. It should summarise clearly the points of the article. Book reviews, conference reports, other reviews and obituaries do not require an abstract. Author's information: Include the title, position, place of work and a background explaining your affiliation with the subject or country you are writing about. Include your address, fax and telephone numbers and e-mail address. For more information, contact: *CONVERGENCE* Editor, Dr. Peter Mayo, Professor, UNESCO Chair in Global Adult Education, Department of Arts, Open Communities & Adult Education, Faculty of Education, University of Malta, Msida MSD2080, Malta. Tel. (prefix 356) 99845476, peter.mayo@um.edu.mt

CONVERGENCE BOOK REVIEW GUIDELINES

General Directions

Book reviews are an important source of information for adult educators in that they provide a valuable synopsis and summary of important recent texts in the field. Book reviews must provide a concise summary of the contents of the book and must address whether or not the book is a valuable contribution to the field. As such, reviews should evaluate the usefulness of the book and mention who would find the book useful.

We strongly recommend the review is introduced by a brief introduction to the text, with reference to its stated objectives, layout and chapter structure, etc. It is also recommended that reviews discuss the extent to which the text:

- a) Is comparable (or not) to other works in the genre, with examples on where this is particularly evident;
- b) Testifies to efforts that positively exploit and disseminate the state-of-art; primary / secondary research findings etc.; give voice / opportunity to 'silenced' / 'marginalised' authors, etc.

- c) Resonates with the work programme / agenda of our journal *Convergence: An International Journal of Adult Education*? More info on this is available in the editorial of the first issue of the relaunched version of the journal, also summarised below:

"articles... should help lift spirits in a disturbing time. Readers need little reminding that we face multipolar imperialisms bringing us potentially close to a Third World War. We are still reeling from a global pandemic and witnessing wider environmental degradation. Climate change is wreaking and will continue to wreak havoc especially in the Geographical Global South leading to constant mass migration flows. It is against this ominous global scenario that this journal is being resuscitated. The call for socially engaged adult educators strikes me as being ever so urgent" (Mayo, 2022, p. 3);

and

- d) What would be the specific research interests of readers / adult education specialists / practitioners that the text can support? (e.g., 3-4 examples of specific research interests and/or specific nomenclatures / levels of scholars / specialists / practitioners that the text can support).

The timeline for completion of a review will be negotiated between the book review editor and the reviewer. While most book reviews are solicited by the editor, *CONVERGENCE* does accept unsolicited book reviews. The editor reserves the right to reject reviews.

Style

Reviews should be written in a manner that is accessible to a general readership rather than to an academic audience. Footnotes and references must be kept to a minimum. For writing in English, *CONVERGENCE* accepts UK and US spellings. Numbers ten and under are spelt out; 11 and over use numerals. Include the title, author, place of publication, publisher, number of pages, ISBN in the title space of your review.

Requirements

Length: Reviews should not be longer than 600–1000 words (about two to four pages).

Submission: Emailed submission is preferred (maria.brown@um.edu.mt), however, one copy may be mailed if email is not possible. The review should be typed double-spaced. MS Word format is preferred.

Author's Information: Include your institutional affiliation and its national location with the review. Also include your address, fax and telephone numbers, and your email address (if one is available).

For more information, contact: **CONVERGENCE Book Review Editor**, Dr. Maria Brown, Department of Arts, Open Communities & Adult Education, Faculty of Education, University of Malta, Msida MSD 2080, Malta E Mail: maria.brown@um.edu.mt