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ZEP : Zeitschrift für internationale Bildungsforschung und Entwicklungspädagogik 28 (2005) 1, S. 29-34

in Kooperation mit / in cooperation with:

ZEP
Zeitschrift für internationale Bildungsforschung
und Entwicklungspädagogik

"Gesellschaft für interkulturelle Bildungsforschung und Entwicklungspädagogik e.V."

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Zeitschrift für internationale Bildungsforschung und Entwicklungspädagogik

Douglas Bourn

'Interconnectedness versus Interdependence'
Reflections in response to David Selby

Zusammenfassung: Der Beitrag ist eine Reaktion auf den Aufsatz von David Selby in der letzten ZEP. Der Autor argumentiert, dass es angesichts der aktuellen Herausforderungen zu einer veränderten Debatte um Lernen, Wissen, Fertigkeiten, Kompetenzen und Werte im Globales Lernen kommen müsse.

Abstract: This article reacts to the essay of David Selby in the last ZEP. Considering the actual challenges the author argues, that a different debate on learning, knowledge, skills, competencies and values of Global Education is necessary.

David Selby has been one of the most influential writers within the English speaking world on global education. His work with Graham Pike, particularly 'Global Teacher, Global Learner' was a seminal text for all interested in global and development education in the 1980s and 90s (Pike/Selby 1988).

His writings alongside Pike, Hicks, Steiner and others have been leading figures within the English speaking world in promoting an approach to 'Global Education' which is about an holistic approach towards education bring development, peace, human rights, environmental and anti-racist education with a ethical basis (Selby 2000; Hicks/Bord 2000; Hicks 2002; 2003; Steiner 1996).

I found reading Selby's latest paper in ZEP, 'The Signature of the Whole: Radical Interconnectedness and its Implications for Global and Environmental Education ' at one level challenging and at another level frustrating. Challenging because I felt he was right to pose the tensions between 'global and environmental education', but perplexing because I kept questioning his emphasis on the individual and the need for a deeper and more spiritual approach these areas of education.

Change, Selby suggests has to be holistic to be effective. He also proposes that to secure meaningful change, 'environmental and global educators need to recognise that they are part of a wider community of counter cultural and liberationist education' .

My immediate response to Selby's challenges is that the issues he raised need to be framed within the new debates about what is seen as 'education for sustainable development.'

Here there are the beginnings of debates and discussions about the relationship between the global and the environment, the individual and the community Scott/Gough 2003; Rost 2004; Sterling 2002).

It is however not my intention to reflect on the detail of Selby's recent article in ZEP, but to consider some of the wider questions about 'global education' and why some of the ideas of people like Selby have had such limited influence within educational theory and practice over the past twenty years. I would like to pose the following:

- They take no account of the impact of globalisation and the literature of the past decade or so on what this means for those who have expounded the principles of 'global education'.
- They are not grounded in clear theoretical framework in terms of approaches towards learning
- There is a perception that somehow there an ideal person called a 'global educator' who exists somewhere but is not related in any way to how education exists. They are in some form, pure souls.
- 'Global education' is a contested one with many differing views as to what it means. The definition of 'global education' outlined by Selby in his earlier ZEP article (Selby 2000) was one that took no account of debates taking place in Europe or Asia.

There are two reasons why these issues are important to debate. Firstly there is a perception in a number of industrialised countries that the whole area of 'global education' is idealistic and marginal. This can be most obviously be demonstrated by noting how funding for global and development education in Europe, North America and Australia has been directly linked to the government of the day. Secondly there is a lack of clarity and rigour as to what is 'global education' which is particularly apparent in the English speaking educational world.

It is to be suggested here that if 'global educators' continue to see themselves as part of a counter culture and remain unclear as to their aims and objectives, then the terrain they wish to engage will, and in some cases is already, being

ZEP

captured by educational perspectives that do not challenge current dominant ideological notions of the role and purpose of learning.[1]

'Global' is here to stay in Education

Through a range of international and national educational policies and programmes, the term' global' is becoming part of the everyday language of educationalists, from policy-makers to practitioners. Globalisation is having an impact upon societies and approaches to learning. A response from many industrialised countries has been to promote the concept of the 'learning society' and to ensure that all its citizens are equipped with the knowledge, skills and qualifications they will need for the new century. Education is seen as key to both economic development and social cohesion (Bourn 2001).

As the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair has stated, „Our young people must develop the competence, confidence and contacts which will secure their place and influence in an increasingly globalised society".

Having the knowledge and skills to understand the 'global society' within which we all live is now accepted as being a necessary part education in many other countries. For example in England there is now an explicit recognition of the need to understand society at local, national and global levels with sustainable development and global citizenship being features of both the aims and purpose of the school curriculum and specific learning themes within a number of subjects.

These trends can be most graphically illustrated in the strategy for international education published by the English Ministry for Education in November 2004. It refers to promoting the concept of 'global citizens' and to 'instil a strong global dimension into the learning experience of all children and young people.' But it also talks about 'equipping employers and employees about the skills needed for a global economy' (DfES 2004).

In higher education, either through degree courses or as part of the wider ethos and purposes of universities, globalisation, sustainable development and wider world agendas are increasingly being referred too as integral features of skills people require for the new century. These agenda are probably being reflected in many countries at the present time – but what does it mean in reality?

Is it about promoting within education and learning a more internationalist outlook, one that promotes a more values based perspective with concerns for democracy and quality of life or is it about education for economic effectiveness?

There may be support from many in education that education is essential to a competitive knowledge-based global economy. But this in itself poses major questions:
- How does the global economy work, and what can people do to influence it?
- What is and should be the relationship between global, regional, national and local economies?
- How does the global economy affect the environment and sustainable development?
- How does decision-making affect citizenship? (Alexander 1998).

Education for whatever age group, and wherever in the world, needs to recognise the impact of globalisation and that we now live in a global society. But what form of education are we talking about? Is it one of resistance, of transformation, of accommodation to globalisation or something yet to be defined?

What sort of 'Global for Education?

It is suggested here that the perspective needed to address the challenge of globalisation for education is to develop a clear sense of why we need learning for a global society, what it means and how it can be implemented. But above all there should be some underlying rationale for why it is important. It is suggested that 'learning for a global society' should be based on a number of key concepts and to be effective have a methodology that recognises people's needs and respects social and cultural pluralism. The following points developed by a team of educationalists within lifelong learning within the Development Education Association (DEA) in England are useful. People can:
- understand their own situation in a wider context;
- make connections between local and global events;
- develop skills and knowledge to interpret events affecting their lives;
- understand causes of global inequality, justice and solidarity;
- learn from experiences elsewhere in the world;
- identify common interests and develop solidarity with diverse communities;
- combat racism and xenophobia;
- wider horizons and personal development;
- make a difference to their world by participating in society (DEA 2001).

These perspectives and approaches to education are beginning to be taken up by education policy-makers in a number of industrialised countries. In England the following concepts have been agreed within education as being central to the global dimension within education:

Interdependence - Citizenship and Stewardship-Diversity-Sustainable Development- Social Justice-Values and Perceptions-Human Rights (DFES 2000).

Role of Development in the Debate about 'Global'

If globalisation is a key driver for re-thinking about education in the twenty first century and there is recognition within at least some industrialised countries, this in itself poses questions about the wider purpose and role of education. Education can also not ignore its relationship to the changing agendas in the world.

The consequences of global insecurity and the increased divisions between North and South in the world at a time when the world is coming closer together, necessitate that

ZEP

the 'human development' agenda becomes central to these debates about what form of learning in this global society. As development educationalists in Ireland have commented: 'education for world democracy, human rights and for sustainable human development is no longer an option. Education has a central role to play, especially if we are to build a widespread understanding and ownership of this (development) agenda [...]' (DE Ireland; www.dci.gov.ie).

The movement for development education, I believe provides a valuable context and background for this thinking. Development education aims to raise awareness and understanding of how the global affects the local and how individuals, communities and societies can and do affect the global. It aims to bring global perspectives into all aspects of learning – from the school classroom to universities to local community activities to the media.

A common definition of development education is:
- enabling people to understand the links between their own lives and those of people throughout the world;
- increasing understanding of the global economic, social and political environmental forces which shape our lives;
- developing the skills, attitudes and values which enable people to work together to bring about change and to take control of their own lives;
- working to achieve a more just and sustainable world in which power and resources are equitably shared (DEA 2003).

Development Education, through the work of non-governmental organisations, community groups and educational bodies in many countries has been one of the leading factors in ensuring that the 'global' agenda is now being taken seriously by education policy-makers. Through their practice at a grassroots level and through directly engaging in debates with policy-makers at a national level, in a language that is understandable and relevant to our times, new opportunities have opened up for creative initiatives by teachers and educators to address the challenges that the global society is creating.

Knowledge, Skills and Values

Selby in his writings has emphasised the importance of the 'global educator' about being upfront about their values. He, however, does not put the discussions about values alongside the equally important need to address knowledge and skills. For if 'global education' is to be taken seriously and be seen as key response to the agenda of globalisation, then there needs to be an equal recognition of the importance of knowledge and skills alongside values.

This means going beyond perspectives developed by Selby, which Hicks has articulated as the core elements of 'global education:
- issues dimension
- spatial dimension
- temporal dimension
- process dimension (Hicks 2003).

Scheunpflug suggests however that a more appropriate approach will be:
- fact dimension: dealing with knowledge and non-knowledge
- temporal dimension: dealing with certainty and uncertainty
- spatial dimension: dealing with local relationships and spacelessness
- social dimension: dealing with familiarity and strangeness.

Scheunpflug goes further and suggests that 'good global education provides knowledge about the global world society, but they also need to know how to deal with contradictions and complexity and the skills to translate this thinking into concrete action (Scheunpflug 2003).

McKenzie in her work with a range of universities in devising a framework for global perspectives within a range of higher education courses provides a valuable approach that takes account of knowledge, skills and values (McKenzie 2003; see fig. 1).

What is a Global Educator?

For many who have been engaged with 'global education' over the past twenty years may agree with the perspective of Selby that a global educator comes with a different mindset, that of connectivity,

Yet this central tent of 'global education' is today becoming accepted as part of mainstream social and political debate. The term 'connectivity' is one that is used by many social commentators. In the UK for example, Geoff Mulgan a former policy advisor to Prime Minister Tony Blair has written a number of key texts on this area (Mulgan 1991; 1998) and in an essay for the foundation, Demos, he has commented 'seeing the connectedness of things is the starting point for understanding a world that otherwise appears baffling' (McCarthy et al 2004). Similar ideas can be seen in the writing of another figure close to Blair, Charles Leadbetter (2002).

The term 'interconnectedness' has also re-emerged in the debates in the USA on the global and international dimension within education. What is noticeable is that there has been a conscious decision to use this term rather than 'interdependence.' This implies a lack of recognition of the importance of the impact of globalisation in terms of what happens in one part of the world has an impact elsewhere (see article of Jackson and Bales in Phi Delta Kappan 2004)

Hicks whilst recognising his debtedness to Selby suggests that 'global education' is needs be both personal and political. He recognisnes the need for critical perspectives that link to holistic experiences but he also suggest that global education needs to be located within political understanding with an emphasis on equality and justice (Hicks 2003).

Audrey Osler's perspective on global education emphasises human rights and social justice and is influenced by definitions developed by the Council of Europe's North-South Centre: 'Global education encompasses the strategies, policies and plans that prepare young people and adults for living together in an interdependent world. It is based on the principles of co-operation, non-violence, respect for human rights,

ZEP

Knowledge and Understanding

Social justice and equity
- Cause and effects of inequalities within and between societies
- Changing perspectives on the process of social change
- Views on eradication of poverty

Diversity
- Values and cultures in specific societies and across global society
- Interaction of different values and beliefs in our lives
- Evolving conceptions of human and planetary rights and freedoms

Globalisation and Interdependence
- Interpretations of the process and effects of globalisation
- Shifting patterns of local-global relationships
- responses to the process of globalisation

Sustainable Development
- Local-global people-environment relationships
- Steps to sustainable development
- Measuring and monitoring sustainability

Cognitive Skills

Critical Thinking
- Detect bias, opinion and stereotypes
- Determine key elements in complex issues
- Identify tensions and consonance in complex issues, problems and questions

Analytical Thinking
- Collect information/data from sources
- Synthesise data/information from sources
- Evaluate data/information from sources

Reflective Thinking
- Review cycles of thought and action
- Critically appraise cycles of thought and action
- Plan new cycles of thought and action based on what has been learnt

Strategic Thinking
- Advance an optimal solution to a particular problem, question or issue
- Propose the means by which a resolution may be attained
- Anticipate likely problems and consider unanticipated outcomes

Values and Attitudes

Individual self-esteem
- Sense of identity and self-worth
- Awareness of pride in individuality
- Open-mindedness and curiosity

Empathy and respect
- Empathy with others views and needs
- Respect for others' views and needs
- Associate perspectives and predicaments

Commitment to social justice and equity
- Sense of fairness
- Concern for justice
- Willingness to speak up for others

Valuing and respecting diversity
- Value difference and diversity
- Welcome opportunities to learn from other cultures and societies
- Respect human rights

Commitment to sustainable development
- concern about over-consumption
- concern for the future of the planet
- commitment to sustainable livelihoods

Commitment to action
- Belief that people can make a difference
- Being prepare to take a stand on important issues
- Being prepare to work for a more equitable world

Social and Practical Skills

Communication
- Listen to and summarise an argument
- Verbally present an argument
- Argue a case through essays and papers

Education and Public Information
- Research the needs and interests of a particular target group
- Develop an information/education programme relevant to a particular target group

Participation
- Participate in decision-making processes
- Act sensitively in decision-making processes
- Involve different actors in the decision-making processes

Leadership
- Manage change with a given group of actors
- Enthuse, involve and support relevant actors
- Make difficult but reasoned decisions

Fig. 1: Knowledge, skills and values of Global Education (McKenzie 2003)

ZEP

cultural diversity, democracy and tolerance. It is characterised by pedagogical approaches based on human rights and a concern for social justice that encourages thinking and responsible participation' (Osler/Vincent 2002).

There are many other definitions of global education. Some international development NGOs argue that it is development education in the era of globalisation, others that it is the global dimension to the adjectival educations (Bourn 2003). In the USA, it has been reduced to 'efforts to bring about changes in the content, in the methods, and in the social context of education in order to prepare students for citizenship in a global age' (www.globaled.org).

Global Educator and Education for Social Change

If global and development education have models of learning at their core, then they need to be models which are not only participatory and transformative, they need to recognise the ideological constructions within which learning takes place.

Learning is generally been understood to be the process through which individuals go in acquiring their knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, beliefs, emotions, sense' (Jarvis 2003). However Jarvis goes on to suggest that 'human learning occurs when individuals are consciously aware of a situation and respond, or try to respond, meaningfully to what they experience and then seek to reproduce or transform it and integrate the outcome into their own biographies. In this instance, biography is the totality of our experience, which is an integrated'.

Learning therefore by its very nature implies change. The Campaign for Learning stated in 1998 that : ' Learning is a process of active engagement with experience. It is what people do to make sense of the world. It may involve an increase in skills, knowledge or understanding, a deepening of values or the capacity to reflect. Effective learning needs to change, development and a desire to learn more' (quoted in Dillon 2003).

As Dillon suggests learning is not about transmission of knowledge and skills in a passive manner. Rather we build (construct) knowledge through social interaction (Dillon 2003). Beck has suggested the need to address the rapidly changing society, the need for learning to be not about 'facts' and 'knowledge' to seeking to understand and be critically aware of the things to be studied. This he suggests is so central to learning within a global society (Beck 2000).

Therefore debates about the relationship of global education to social change, need to be located within discussions about the role and purpose of education in a society, what is it there for and what is it trying to achieve. Key indicators on these debates in a number of countries have been around citizenship education and sustainable development. These initiatives pose how does education relate to achieving a more socially aware and politically engaged citizenry and how can education relate to creating an understanding of the need for improving people's quality of life.

The role of education in response to the agendas of a glo-bal society can also been seen from material produced in the USA from some right-wing educationalists on 'The World in Our Classroom' which has been a direct response to impact of September 11th. It even goes on to talk about promoting a stronger values base within schools. But, and this is the big, but – whose values? It suggests that what is needed is a greater understanding of the importance and central need for American values to be taken up elsewhere in the world- so good global citizens are American citizens? (ASCD 2002).

There are of course counter debates going on as well. Stephen Sterling suggests that education for sustainable development inevitably leads on to transforming the vision and purpose of education (Sterling 2001).

Conclusion

Selby has, as has been indicated in this article, made an important contribution in the past to thinking about global education, but there is a need now to move on, to recognise the new political and educational context and above all a need for greater clarity and rigour about what we mean by the terms we have been using for many years.

We need also to pro-actively engage nationally and internationally in the debates about the future role of education. Whilst debates may vary according to different countries and cultures, four underlying opportunities are emerging within which we all need to be engaged:

1. Learning and skills for the era of globalisation, the global economy and global society;

2. Learning for a sustainable future in the context of the decade for Education for Sustainable Development

3. Learning and understanding within societies which are undergoing major changes as a result of migration, increased cultural diversity and threats of insecurity

4. Skills and competences required to be an active and caring citizen (Bourn 2003).

As Scheunpflug (2003) has commented, ' global education offers not only skills to live in a globalised world but also to transform our global world into a world of justice and sustainability.' In a number of countries in Europe and elsewhere in the world there are growing debates about the role of education in the era of globalisation and what are the skills and knowledge required for people to effectively engage in the global society of the twenty first century. It is therefore not enough as Selby suggests to talk about connections and to propose a more holistic approach. To me a holistic approach has to be located within societal change and not just personal change. Moreover, the term 'Interdependence' has to be the term to underpin global perspectives within education.

There is a need to directly engage and relate the principles and practices behind what has been defined as global education into mainstream debates about education and learning. If those who are supporters of global education do not, the space will be filled by educationalists who either reduce the 'global' to economic competiveness or promoting a values base which propagates one view of the world.

Annotations

1 See especially some of the articles in Educational Leadership: Vol.60,no.2, October 2002 – special issue on 'The World in the Classroom - journal of ASCD in USA.

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