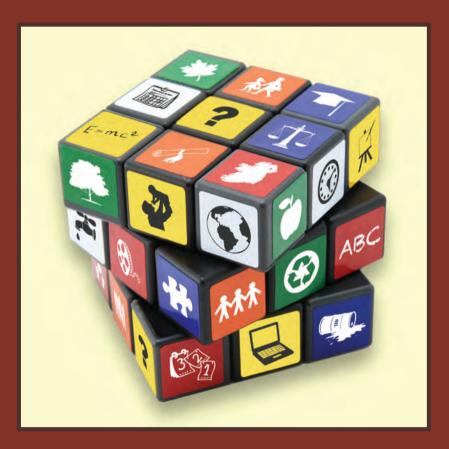Mags Liddy and Marie Parker-Jenkins (eds)

Education that Matters

Teachers, Critical Pedagogy and Development Education at Local and Global Level

RETHINKING EDUCATION

VOLUME 7

Today's learners are faced with an unprecedented set of global and local development challenges, yet so much of the education on offer is based on yesterday's thinkers, yesterday's ideas and yesterday's lessons. A time of change requires new approaches to teaching and learning which have relevance to learners' everyday lives now and in the future. This book argues that Development Education needs to be embedded into the curriculum, where it has the potential to strengthen democracy and create a more egalitarian society. It employs the concept of critical pedagogy as a teaching approach which has the capacity to impact on learners' future decisions.

The book offers a highly accessible and innovative approach to Development Education, challenging teachers to engage with global issues. It demonstrates how knowledge and content, teaching methodologies and global issues can be embedded in education programmes. Drawing on five years of research and practice by leading educators across twelve universities and colleges of education, the book demonstrates the innovative work of the Ubuntu Network project and places it in the international context of rethinking and reorientating education.

Education that Matters is a huge contribution towards the nurturing of the needed communities and cultures we must invent. The editors have searched and found successful case studies of Development Education programmes that both inspire and work. The book has powerful stories that reveal high academic goals and standards, a strong sense of usefulness and the possibility of adaptation and replication.
 — Charles Hopkins, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Chair, York University, Toronto

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PETER LANG

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*To all the researchers and teachers, for their commitment and dedication
to improving education and professional practice
by embedding Development Education.*

Contents

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Whilst a number of people and organisations have been consulted with over
issues contained in the book, the opinions expressed are our own. Likewise
any errors or omissions are the responsibility of the authors.

Disclaimer

The views expressed herein are those of authors and researchers. They can
in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the Ubuntu Network
or Irish Aid.

— MARIE PARKER-JENKINS AND MAGS LIDDY,
University of Limerick, 2012

Foreword

This book arrives at a most opportune time. Not only is the world struggling with the traditional development paradigm, there is no obvious new one in sight. We must learn our way forward but our main guidance system is one of knowing what to move away from. We still struggle with Gauguin's three questions: Where did we come from, what are we and where are we going? Now to these three we must add: Is this where we want to go?

Education that Matters makes an important contribution to help us deal with these questions in an informed manner by posing powerful models and exemplars. I am honoured to be asked to write the Foreword for this book.

In some sense we must learn from the flight recorders of crashed development approaches in the past. We have many examples to learn from. We can pick almost any century and find unsuccessful attempts of sustainable development from Prehistory to the current economic meltdown. While we may take solace in the fact that we have faced these crises in the past and survived, we also know that each cycle gets larger and more and more people suffer. While we seem to learn the same lessons over and over with the rise of each new empire the cost of the societal tuition grows exponentially.

The enormity and complexity also grows with each unsuccessful attempt. We see the urgency in report after report – the Stern Report on the economic cost of climate change, the various International Panel on Climate Change reports, and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment which stated clearly that 'Over the past 50 years, humans have changed ecosystems more rapidly and extensively than in any comparable period of time in human history... This has resulted in a substantial and largely irreversible loss of the diversity of life on Earth'. All of these reports signal the warnings of the failure of our current development paradigm and our current goals and indicators of development become irrelevant.

Unfortunately, these reports seem both overwhelming and abstract. They are aimed at the world's leaders and do little to change our individual

behaviours. In reality however, we must realise that our children will face our unaddressed challenges. They will need to adequately provide for roughly 50 per cent more people on the planet using less water (we are already mining prehistoric rainfall through artesian wells), while having access to less arable lands and far fewer ocean food resources. They will need to quadruple the world's energy supply while moving away from carbon based energy sources. Most importantly they will need to address these issues through global collaborative development which is almost the opposite of the current global competitive development paradigm. They will need to rethink the meaning of 'others'.

This will not be simple. While we have a general agreement on the goals of a more sustainable future, for example good governance based on the rule of law, environmental protection, the prudent use of resources, overcoming corruption, social and economic development for all, and intergenerational responsibility, however the way forward is not clear. Society generally is still locked into the current paradigm of 'progress' and demands this of our leadership at election time. According to Peter Victor in his book *Managing Without Growth*, progress is an idea and not a foregone conclusion of humanity. He also points out that the idea of progress only became generally accepted by writers in the eighteenth century and is not only about progress in wealth, science and technology but in civilisation, in social organisation, in art and literature and even in human nature. It meant improvement in all facets of individual and social experiences. Unfortunately broader society has been misled to think of development as progress and only of progress in its narrow conception as economic growth. Ronald Wright in his book *A Short History of Progress* calls for a broader and intergenerational perspective:

> *Our greatest experiment – civilization itself – will succeed only if we can live on nature's terms, not man's. To do this we must adopt principles in which the short term is trumped by the long; in which caution prevails over ingenuity; in which the absurd myth of endless growth is replaced by respect for natural limits; in which progress is steered by precautionary wisdom.*

As the book points out, this reorientation of education to move from the current obviously unsustainable development path towards a more

sustainable development paradigm is necessary but complex. Awareness does not always lead to behaviour change. This will take a great concerted effort. That effort begins with education that focuses on the very heart of development issues both at home and abroad.

And hence this need for informed effort is the reason for me mentioning at the outset the timeliness of this book. The editors have searched and found successful case studies of Development Education programmes that both inspire and work. The book has powerful stories that reveal high academic goals and standards, a strong sense of usefulness and the possibility of adaptation and/or replication. To accomplish their goals the editors and authors placed an emphasis on critical pedagogy, as a good approach to translate the theory and content of Development Education into practice, as it highlights the potential of what good education can be. They have used action research work from real teaching situations, acknowledging constraints and barriers across curriculum, education systems and school cultures. Additionally questions on how knowledge is transmitted and where knowledge is formalised in syllabi are addressed, and ways of engaging learners through innovative use of art, ICT and community are featured.

In 1992 at the Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro, the world leaders identified the crucial roles of education and public awareness in reorienting society towards the path of sustainability. Development education has proven to be a lighthouse in the reorientation of the world's education systems towards new goals for mankind that parallel the writings of Lewis Mumford in his book *Faith for Living*:

> *The final test... is not the tons of iron, the tanks of oil, or the miles of textiles a nation produces: the final test lies in its ultimate products – the sort of men and women it nurtures and the order and beauty and sanity of its communities.*

Education that Matters is a huge contribution towards the nurturing of the needed communities and cultures we must invent.

— CHARLES HOPKINS, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Chair, based at York University in Toronto, Canada

MARIE PARKER-JENKINS AND MAGS LIDDY

1   Why This Book?:
     Rationale and Organisation of the Book

In the time taken to prepare this book, a number of events occurred which reinforced our belief in the urgency of young learners receiving an 'Education that Matters', one which develops students' knowledge and understanding of global issues and one which engenders the skills to engage with the impact of these changes and challenges on their lives and communities. The inter-relationship between industrial advancement and environmental destruction was tragically shown at Fukushima as the earthquake and ensuing tsunami triggered nuclear meltdown at two power stations. The destructive power of natural forces was again seen in the eruption of Eyjafjallajökull which caused global disruption to air travel, while the Gulf of Mexico was hugely polluted by the Deepwater Horizon oil spillage. In East Africa, the extent and depth of the famine, born out of complex historical and political events, was exacerbated by violence and war. Economic debt and state bankruptcy has become an issue for many regions, not just a concern for economically developing countries. Yet on the other hand, global activism has signalled the potential for change: the Arab Spring brought years of dictatorship to an end and gave hope to others, while the worldwide 'Occupy Wall Street' movement has mobilised around the viability of free market capitalism.

But how much awareness of these global events filters into children's education and classrooms? Where and when do they get the chance to learn about these issues, the causes and the possible solutions, or the chance to discuss the implications for their own futures? When do they have the opportunity to develop 'forward-thinking', to evaluate what their lives and their communities could be like, and what role they play in creating that vision? This book provides that opportunity and is about enhancing skills for teachers and learners in 'Development Education' *at both local*

and global level, using a critical pedagogy approach. *Education that Matters* aims to explore the relationship between knowledge and power, challenging the view that education is neutral. We believe that Development Education should be an integral part of schooling to ensure children and young people are informed and educated about the critical issues that impact on their future. Whilst all education can be valuable for learners, we argue that certain skills and knowledge should be prioritised. Thus this book is about creating and supporting an education system that prepares learners to engage with development and sustainability issues. At a time in which education systems are increasingly characterised by performance, outcomes and accountability, it is essential that we ensure Development Education does not fall off the agenda. The purpose of the discussion is to provide teachers, education students and other education providers with the pedagogical tools to incorporate 'Education that Matters' into their curriculum, not as an added-on extra, but as an approach embedded throughout their school and which encourages exploration of the key issues of development and sustainability. This is not to dilute the education of a young person, but to ensure it is relevant, applicable and empowering.

Given the profusion of interchangeable and overlapping terms concerned with the field of Development Education, we define at the outset the central concepts used in this publication. The focus of this book is Development Education at the local and global level. Closely related to Development Education are education for sustainable development, environmental studies and citizenship education, with content overlap between all areas. In addition, each area supports active and participatory learning methods as the means by which students learn the skills and insights necessary to take responsibility for the choices they make and the consequences these choices have on others. Thus whilst there is some commonality within these terms, we favour the term 'Development Education' because its broader reach of content highlights the similarities between concerns *at the local and global level*, as well as the differences. 'Local' and 'global' are not in opposition or dichotomised; rather we see the two as interlinked and believe learners need to have the opportunity to see the significance at the local context as well as the global. For the purpose of this book, we define Development Education as

> *education that engages learners in participatory and empowering learning processes and critical analysis of the social, cultural, political and economic structures which define our lives and communities in a globalised and interconnected world.* (Irish Aid 2006, n.p)

Development education began as an awareness activity to strengthen public understanding of the problems in the developing world, but the concept has evolved towards including principles of human rights and solidarity with others, and recognising global responsibility and lack of global justice in political and economic policies (Regan and Sinclair 1986; Bourn 2003). In this way, learning from Development Education is not only applicable to low income countries and the developing world context, it also applies to the developed world as the interdependence of global systems is highlighted. Furthermore, Development Education is an education which builds capacity and efficacy by fostering values and behaviours necessary for global social justice. Understanding the links between the local and the global is essential to this form of education as our decisions and actions impact on us as well as the rest of the world.

The concept of '*Development*' itself has evolved from the predominately economic focus of the 1950s, exemplified in modernisation theory and progression through economic stages (Kingsbury, Remenyi, McKay and Hunt 2004). Although this approach can still be seen in some global economic institutions, the focus has shifted to political aspects of development such as good governance and human rights, whilst recognising that the specific socio-cultural context of each country's development must be addressed. This has given rise to a range of people-centred development policies and approaches, centring on empowerment of all stakeholders and participation in democratic decision-making. The focus on the global south and least developed countries continues; however we believe that the same opportunities for empowerment and participation are necessary in the developed world, where much disillusionment with politics and social exclusion exists.

Education that Matters places the emphasis on providing individuals with the tools to improve their lives and to strengthen democracy, to create a more egalitarian and just society, and to engage in social change. This leads us to the second aspect of our approach, namely *critical pedagogy*.

Paulo Freire is often cited by both Development Education practitioners and critical pedagogues. In his writings, he encourages the learner to 'recognise connections between their individual problems and experiences and the social contexts in which they are embedded' (1970: 36). This highlights the political nature of education and argues that critique of political, economic and social structures should be at the heart of a 'pedagogy for freedom' (*ibid.*). For the purpose of our discussion we use the concept as defined by McLaren:

> *critical pedagogy provides historical, cultural, political and ethical direction for those in education who still dare to hope.* (1988: 186)

The belief in education as transformative and as a source of empowerment is an appealing feature of critical pedagogy. This belief also reflects the hope and optimism that change is possible within the economic and political structures which currently maintain privilege for some and inequality for others. As Freire wrote:

> *Hope is a natural, possible and necessary impetus in our human, historical experience. Without it, instead of history we would have pure determinism.* (1998: 96)

Linking the two key concepts of Development Education and critical pedagogy, Bourn (2012) identifies four key area of overlap:

- the theme of interdependence and interconnections across global communities,
- the inclusion of developing world perspectives which may differ from dominant Western views,
- the promotion of social justice values such as fairness and equality,
- and the desire for social change.

Another useful feature of critical pedagogy is the emphasis on power and privilege, providing a theoretical lens to examine social, political and economic structures, and their interconnections (Huckle 2010: 1996). Transformative education or 'Education that Matters' requires learners to ask profound questions about the organisation of our world and our

behaviours. This can be unsettling and challenging as it calls into question our experiences and beliefs, but to be effective it also requires educators to contest aspects of education policy. Kincheloe (2008) argues that critical pedagogy is a way of thinking about schools and classrooms, raising critical questions about knowledge, social control, sociocultural effects and power dynamics. Huckle (2010) argues that learners need to critically seek, reflect on and enact forms of political economy, democracy and citizenship that enable change. These are the questions explored in our book. We use critical pedagogy as a permeating theme throughout, viewing it as an ideal approach to help translate the theory of Development Education into practice, and the central aim of *Education that Matters* is to help improve social life at both a local and global level.

Organisation of the Book

Individual and group research projects conducted in teacher education in the Republic of Ireland form the basis of discussion for the book, illustrating the use of inquiry to enable change in teaching methodologies and content. These projects were supported by the Ubuntu Network, an ongoing research programme dating from 2005, based at the University of Limerick and funded by Irish Aid. The studies drew on an action research technique of engaging in professional enquiry to inform future practice. Each chapter focuses on a particular theme in Development Education and demonstrates how a teacher can utilise that approach in their teaching.

Firstly, we provide an introduction to the book, explaining our use of the term Development Education in more detail and investigating ways of embedding it into existing curriculum and pedagogies. The subsequent three chapters explore philosophical and theoretical questions about Development Education, providing a base for 'Education that Matters'. Mags Liddy and Roland Tormey present an analysis of knowledge required for Development Education and demonstrate how this knowledge can be shared using integrated curriculum and team teaching approaches.

In Chapter 4, Martin Fitzgerald considers the moral challenge his student teachers face when teaching an unusual combination of subjects, Business and Religion. These two subjects may appear to be in opposition and at times contain contradictory values, and this chapter shows how the dichotomy can be usefully explored. Moving on from this topic, Audrey Bryan highlights how 'soft' forms of Development Education can close off consideration of the ways in which we are implicated in global inequality and prevent us from seeing how we may be part of the problem as well as part of the solution. She makes the case for the use of 'documentary' as a pedagogical tool for developing understanding and challenging learners.

More practical chapters are provided in the second part of the book, giving clear advice on how to embed Development Education into education systems. In Chapter 6, Michael Ryan examines how Development Education is particularly effective when it starts at the local level and initially engages students in a deeply affective exploration of their connection with their own community. Chapter 7 explores the further possibilities of creativity and 'futures thinking', as Fiona King shares some of her work with student art teachers based on the themes of similarity, difference and environmental sustainability. These themes are used to explore the use of 'issue-based art' to learn about social concerns and challenges. Her chapter is followed by the work of Charlotte Holland and Carmel Mulcahy, who explain how to use information communication technology (ICT) for Development Education, providing pertinent examples of online activities to complement learning. In their chapter they also address the challenges facing teachers who wish to integrate ICT into their teaching, including 'the digital divide' between practitioners who are comfortable with technology and those who are far from convinced of the efficacy of ICT as a pedagogical tool.

In the penultimate chapter, Elaine Nevin addresses 'whole school approaches', describing how the school community can implement the values associated with Development Education and global justice in all activities. This includes issues beyond changes to curricula and the teaching-learning process, including the administration and management of the entire school. Importantly, the voice of the student learner as well as the agency of the professional is highlighted in the process of developing this whole school approach. We conclude the book with our final thoughts on 'Education that Matters'.

Although a range of perspectives are included in the book, each chapter incorporates similar elements to ensure consistency in presentation. These are as follows:

- Professional reflection boxes, providing the opportunity for readers to reflect on their learning and identify ways to enhance their teaching.
- Practical suggestions for the classroom and professional contexts.
- Useful resources, websites, further reading and guides.

Summary

In this discussion we have outlined the rationale and purpose of the book. Key concepts concerning our theoretical approach to Development Education through a critical pedagogical lens have been defined, as have the range of topics contained in the book. Having explained the rationale and organisation of the book, we turn now to the introductory chapter, exploring in more detail the philosophical and theoretical context of 'Education that Matters'.

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