

# Book Reviews

Kirkwood-Tucker, T.F. (ed) (2009) ***Visions in Global Education: The Globalization of Curriculum and Pedagogy in Teacher Education and Schools***. Perspectives from Canada, Russia and the United States. New York: Peter Lang Publishing. ISBN 978-1-4331-0309-4

*Visions in Global Education* is a significant publication in that it brings together the recent academic work of leading figures in global education in the United States of America. Contributors include Kenneth Tye, John Cogan, David Grossman, Merry Merryfield, and the editor herself, Toni Kirkwood-Tucker. It is the first work of this kind to emerge for some time and as such is a useful window on current debates in global education, particularly in the USA. In addition, it notably includes the first reflections that I have read on the development of global education in Russia.

I was intrigued by the subtitle of this book '*The Globalization of Curriculum and Pedagogy*' and what it meant. Did it refer to, for example, an increased homogeneity globally in the approaches of teachers and teacher educators? Certainly, the strong influence described in Chapter 9, of American traditions on the development and implementation of global education in Russia, might indicate this interpretation. Or did it indicate an increased recognition of processes of globalization in the curricula of the three focus countries, USA, Canada and Russia? In this case, such recognition could entail a move towards preparing young people to operate in a global economy; a better understanding of how to take action on global challenges such as climate change and inequality; or learning to see different perspectives and the contingency of knowledge.

The multiple perspectives of the book, from fifteen academics across the contributing countries, means that a single approach to global education is not adopted in the book itself. For example, contextualised in the history of the movement in the US, Kenneth Tye describes global education as being both descriptive (teaching how systems of the world work) and normative (teaching students to analyse issues and problems that involve value positions). Writing from a philosophical standpoint, Hilary Landorf sees global education rather differently, as promoting the idea that processes of globalization should be subject to moral considerations, such as the ethical and legal principles entailed by human rights. This chapter is amongst the

more thought-provoking in the book, making the argument that as global educators we have a responsibility to promote the idea that processes of globalization should be subject to moral considerations. Landorf promotes explicitly basing global education on human rights, and especially on the core human rights concept of moral universalism.

*Visions in Global Education* is described as compiling new scholarship in the field of global education, bringing together a wide ranging collection of current thinking, historical foundations, extant research, and examples of large scale efforts to implement programs of global studies on two continents. Chapters on the history of global education in the USA and global education to build peace are the bookends. In between the reader will find both general chapters on topics such as research and practice in teacher education and characteristics of a globally minded teacher, and specific case studies of schools in Miami-Dade County, Florida, and Russian education reform. These chapters vary in their scale and scope. For example, Chapter 9 (by Lena Lenskaya) describes the historical and sociological context of the development of global education in Russia in broad sweeps, whilst Chapter 6 (by Toni Fuss Kirkwood-Tucker) focuses on the logistics involved in the implementation of global education in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. In Chapter 2, Elizabeth Heilman usefully maps the contested terrains of global and multicultural education in the USA, pointing out that whilst both of these forms of education share concepts and pedagogy to some extent, there are important differences and tensions.

Together, these descriptive chapters form a substantive if varied starting point from which educators in the USA, Canada and Russia can build and shape their demands for public education that is relevant and responsive to the world in which we live. However, as is often the case with edited volumes, the mismatch of contributions is both the book's strength and weakness – a fascinating array of insights at times lacking in coherence. This is in contrast to the engaging personal narrative that Kirkwood-Tucker provides at the start of the book, clearly tracking the events which have helped shape her philosophy of life.

As a student and practitioner in the UK, I was struck by the claim of *Visions in Global Education* to be bringing together scholarship on previously unaddressed issues, including the historical evolution of the global education movement; the development of a foundation for the formation of a philosophy of global education; an analysis of the competing orientations of global education and multicultural education, mentorship in global education pedagogy based on the master apprentice model; and the latest research of the impact of national policies in education on global teacher education practice.

Certainly, these chapters add an informative and significant perspective from the USA. For example, I was particularly interested to compare the challenges facing the integration of global education into teacher education in the USA to those I had

faced myself as a trainee teacher in the UK. I found Lena Lenskaya's description of the role of global education in contributing to a paradigm shift in the early beginnings of the Russian education reform movement fascinating, and the way in which this was foregrounded by the Russian spirit of togetherness (*sobornost*). However, the scholarship described is not uncharted at an international level, but contributes to an existent and growing body of scholarship in these areas. It is a shame that the chapters in this book are not more clearly contextualised, not only in relation to developments in global education in other parts of the world, but also in relation to relevant theoretical reference points. Bodies of literature on cosmopolitanism, global citizenship and multicultural education are cited, with a focus on conceptual and philosophical understandings. However, potentially fascinating links to theories and understandings of learning, such as transformative learning, are hinted at but not developed.

Looking forward, the book suggests several different versions of how to improve and expand the current global education movement: using human rights as a pillar; merging multicultural and global education; emphasising citizenship education; global education to build peace; and globalizing global education through diverse perspectives that reflect the complexity of the planet in the early twenty-first century. As James Becker, Professor Emeritus Indiana University, points out in the foreword to the book, to make major changes, extensive dialogue among the advocates of the three proposals cited above is needed. Perhaps we could also add the need for dialogue between global educators in different parts of the world to support each other in taking their thinking forward.

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McCowan, Tristan (2009) ***Rethinking Citizenship Education: A Curriculum for Participatory Democracy***, Continuum, London, pp.218 ISBN: 978-1-8470-6058-7 (hardback)

Tristan McCowan's '*Rethinking Citizenship Education*' is a well-argued work which explores the processes that take place in education from the construction of aims and curricular programmes through to implementation and effects on students. Focusing on citizenship education, McCowan sets out a framework of 'curricular transposition' and introduces the notion of 'seamless enactment' which he regards as the most effective model for citizenship programmes in schools. He starts by reflexively outlining his own position favouring universal rights and a participatory form of citizenship based on Freirean ideals, then moves swiftly on to a practical context, exploring the different approaches to citizenship or civic education in

England, the USA and finally in three specific political education programmes in Brazil (which he analyses using the curricular transposition framework).

The chapters are beautifully signposted and divided into clear subsections that guide the reader through the argument. In fact, while reading Chapter Five, in which the framework is developed, it is so easy to become engrossed in the simplicity and clarity of the outlined process that it seems a shame to shatter this illusion: McCowan reminds the reader that the stages of the framework are not so clear-cut in real life and that 'it is misleading to view them as discrete' (p.101). However, the illusion must be shattered as the book is clearly aimed at a wide range of people working in real-life contexts, for whom educational processes cannot be boxed and must be explored using real examples, as McCowan successfully does in his analysis of the three case study programmes from Brazil.

It seems likely that people in three particular professions would find this book interesting: education practitioners, academics; and policy-makers/evaluators. From the perspective of practitioners, McCowan's approach to citizenship based on Paulo Freire's 'ethically responsible education for critical consciousness' (p.48) opens up exciting possibilities for citizenship education in schools. Arguing for an increase in democratic participation for pupils, he explores examples of this in practice through interviews and observations within the Brazilian programmes. Opportunities for students to take part in 'real' political activities (rather than simulations or civics lectures) are presented as generally positive experiences, although the description of students from one of the Brazilian schools being arrested by the police at a protest while campaigning for extra teachers might sit uncomfortably in the minds of many educators. Overall, however, the programmes described in the book as most beneficial to students and most in keeping with their ideological roots are inspiring: for example, the '*grêmios*' (pupil, teacher and parent councils) and the work of individual teachers such as 'Glaucó' who uses the classroom as a space to open students' minds to complexities and controversies in the news.

In his analysis and conclusion, McCowan emphasises the importance of 'teacher enactment', or teacher 'buy-in', as crucial for the successful implementation of a citizenship education project in schools. He writes: 'In an area as contested as citizenship education, teachers can transmit values that are not their own in only a very superficial manner' (p.186). This is an important message for school leaders and NGO workers aiming to invest in political programmes and implies that the best way forward in such contexts is to build the projects themselves 'from the ground up', with significant input from students and teachers in the development of the aims, values and programme of study as well as the methods of implementation. McCowan considers this a form of democratic education that will help teachers and school leaders to construct a 'prefigurative school', or one which embodies or models the ideal society it wishes to create. He is optimistic that even where such

ideals are not yet possible, schools can be an important site for citizenship learning, alongside 'social movements, community groups and campaigns', since 'classroom-based activities represent an important opportunity for collective reflection' (p.193). Academics are likely to find three strands of McCowan's argument particularly stimulating. Firstly, he rejects the notion that citizenship education can be properly taught with a 'fixed and rigid conception of citizenship' in mind (pp.192-193), if democratic education is the fundamental aim. Thus his initial framework focuses not on the 'ends' of citizenship education but on its 'means'. The development of this descriptive/analytical framework of curricular transposition is intended to provide readers with 'a lens through which to better understand' the 'complex processes of bringing about... forms of citizenship through education' (pp.16, 103). Secondly, McCowan argues that more empirical research is needed to understand such processes and that academic and policy-based discussions of citizenship education need to identify more clearly 'whether they are debating conceptions of citizenship, or models of education for citizenship' (p.200). However, one difficulty encountered by McCowan in implementing the framework is that of analysing the effects of the programmes on students: he rightly defends the use of qualitative rather than quantitative research methods by outlining the significant difficulties in measuring citizenship and political participation, but the discussion of effects on students still seems a little lightweight in comparison to the more substantial sections on transpositions between aims, curricular programmes and curriculum implementation. This area would also benefit from an exploration of broader literature on curriculum research and development including works by Michael Fullan and Lawrence Stenhouse. Finally, the concept of 'seamless enactment' is introduced, which provides an original normative framework aiming to respond to 'the difficulties of curriculum design and implementation' (p.44) identified by the use of the framework of curricular transposition. Through this suggested method, 'educational processes and aims become a single instance of preparation and realization' (p.189), and it therefore provides an interesting measure through which to analyse projects of democratic citizenship.

Several elements of *Rethinking Citizenship Education* are likely to make policy-makers and evaluators feel uneasy. The book is convincing in its claim that the capricious nature of human agency is likely to cause significant 'disjunctures' between the aims, means and effects of citizenship education programmes. This, McCowan argues, will result in inefficient design and implementation of curricula, unless a form of seamless enactment is used to merge the aims and the means of the programme, as described above. The problem for policy-makers is that seamless enactment requires a more bottom-up approach in which the separate roles of educational planners and practitioners are dissolved and become one, so that teachers and students become deeply involved in designing educational aims and the curriculum as well as implementing it. As McCowan suggests, this may also

require 'a linking of arenas, with political learning occurring seamlessly inside and outside school' (p.185), and that the aims of citizenship education align with the democratic aims of the community, which, since the latter are often more complex and uncertain than the former, is a daunting prospect for policy-makers and a potentially uncomfortable proposition for governments reluctant to construct a genuinely democratic or critical form of citizenship education. In addition, even where a seamless enactment approach has been possible, perhaps most likely in small-scale, local contexts, McCowan argues that any evaluation methods focused on effectiveness and dependent upon empirical evidence can only ever form a minor part in judging a citizenship education initiative: 'seamless enactment cannot rest on a pragmatic justification' (p.186). In our outcomes-based society, this is a fairly radical departure from the norm and would need a significant amount of courage to be promoted within a governmental sphere.

Despite these potential drawbacks for those wishing to promote McCowan's vision for democratic citizenship education as part of a broader, nationwide programme, his book does have a very positive message to send to those involved in smaller-scale projects. The implications of curricular transposition and the advantages of a seamless enactment approach are presented in a clear and personable style and make important contributions to the field of citizenship education as well as more broadly, particularly in other areas of the curriculum where outcomes are less product-oriented. I would therefore highly recommend this book, as an empowering conception of the possibilities in education for democratic citizenship.

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