Creativity and Critical Pedagogy in Initial Teacher Education

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined the work of a feminist teacher who is committed to adopting critical pedagogy in the university based programme for initial teacher training in England. The study revolves around twenty six postgraduate students with subject specialism in Sociology, Psychology and Politics. At the time of this study (2011) trainee teachers required a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) to gain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) in order to teach the 14-19 curriculum in England. The PGCE consisted of a total of twelve weeks on a university based programme and a practicum of twenty four weeks in two different school or college placements. The paper articulates the social agency of the PGCE course leader and her commitment to facilitating a programme of study that encouraged trainee teachers to gain confidence, competence and creativity in their professional practice. As. advocates of active professionalism we see here enactment of pedagogical subject knowledge within curriculum delivery and hear the voices of trainee teachers in being challenged emotionally intellectually and professionally. This ethnographic case study offers three areas for discussion and analysis: Firstly it offers rich ethnographic description of the critical pedagogy being formulated by trainee teachers in developing critical thinking skills for global citizenship. Secondly it presents a vivid account of the use of film in engaging young people with citizenship issues that bear witness to teachers' personal, political and professional positioning in relation to the global state. Finally the study offers critical discourse analysis of how the intersectionality between pedagogy, politics and the creative media industry serve to open up spaces for young peoples' critical engagement with cultural text.

Keywords: Feminist Critical Pedagogy, Pedagogical Subject Knowledge, Global Citizenship, Film Creativity

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Το άρθρο παρουσιάζει μια εθνογραφική μελέτη ενός πανεπιστημιακού προγράμματος και της εξέλιξής του με άξονα την υιοθέτηση της κριτικής παιδαγωγικής στην προοπτική της ανάπτυξης στους φοιτητές/ήτριες, υποψήφιους/ες εκπαιδευτικούς εμπιστοσύνης για την επαγγελματική τους δράσης και

ταυτόχρονα ικανοτήτων και δημιουργικότητας. Συζητά έτσι: α) τον βαθμό στον οποίο οι φοιτητές/ήτριες ανέπτυξαν δεξιότητες κριτικής σκέψης για παγκόσμια πολιτειότητα, β) τον βαθμό στον οποίο αλλά και τον τρόπο με τον οποίο οι κινηματογραφικές ταινίες εμπλέκουν ενεργά και βιωματικά τους/τις φοιτητές/τριες σε σχετικές συζητήσεις και γ) τον βαθμό στον οποίο η διασύνδεση της Παιδαγωγικής με την Πολιτική και την βιομηχανία του θεάματος στις πιο δημιουργικές εκδοχές της ανοίγει στους/στις φοιτητές/ήτριες μια διέξοδο κριτικής ανάγνωσης του πολιτισμικού «κειμένου». Μέσα από την ανάλυση προκύπτει η διαπίστωση ότι η διασύνδεση της τεχνολογίας με την παιδαγωγική μέσα από το πρίσμα της Κριτικής παιδαγωγικής είναι ένα απαιτητικό έργο, που προϋποθέτει μια επινοητική, ενεργό και (ανα)στοχαστική επαγγελματική ταυτότητα. Μια τέτοια παιδαγωγική προοπτική που σημαίνει ισορροπία ανάμεσα σε γεγονότα και συναισθήματα δεν αναζητά βεβαιότητες και αδιαμφισβήτητες αλήθειες. Ένα μόνο θεωρεί βέβαιο: ότι πρόκειται για ένα συναρπαστικό ταξίδι που βοηθά τους εκπαιδευόμενους να αναπτύξουν δεξιότητες δημιουργικότητας και κριτικής ανάγνωσης του κόσμου.

Λέξεις κλειδιά: Κριτική Παιδαγωγική, παγκόσμια πολιτειότητα, δημιουργικότητα με χρήση κινηματογράφου

1. Theoretical Framework

Understanding Creativity in the 21st century has shifted from traditional notions of self-expression and artistic endeavour to more inclusive and accessible versions of intelligence. The National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCE) which has been influential in promoting the creativity agenda in schools has perhaps most usefully described creativity as a universally 'imaginative process that produces something of value' (NACCE, 1998:28) This more inclusive democratic model of creativity allows teachers to view the potential of creativity in new ways. By extending an understanding of 'value' it is possible to see the fundamental links between creative thought and problem solving alongside learners' cognitive development and thinking skills.

Since 1956, Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning has been a major influence in framing the approach that teachers take to developing thinking skills in learners. Beginning with 'lower order thinking skills' that demand memory, and the application of knowledge and understanding to the 'higher order thinking skills' of analysis, synthesis and evaluation this view of learning has been revised to include creativity as a final category at the higher level, (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001). Although influential, this

hierarchical model of learning belies the intersections, and spirals that characterises learning as a more dynamic process where we might excavate creativity as an element within the acquisition of knowledge and comprehension, its application and analysis and its synthesis alongside the potential to develop the skills of evaluation. There is scope within any area for creativity, but it is dependent on the imagination of teachers and their willingness to take considered risks.

If we consider the equipment available in schools there are a range of digital technologies to support thinking skills in learners. The significant factor in using the equipment creatively and encouraging the development of creativity lies within 'asking questions' in the context of problem-solving. This could be framed as the questions set within learning tasks and assignments, or more creatively encouraging learners to set their own questions in order to become autonomous and independent in their exploration of topics and issues. This is not to advocate an entirely lassez-faire approach, but to frame tasks within a context that Loveless (2007) describes as 'enabling constraints'.

Expanding literacy to a view of what Freire describes as 'reading the world' has great potential for developing multiple viewpoints and indeed literacies as a plural concept. Developing digital literacies is not confined to knowledge-building activities but also includes media literacy, as a process of understanding how issues are framed and presented to the audience, as well as numerical literacy in the ways that statistical knowledge may be constructed and presented to the public. Loveless (2007) calls for teachers to consider the ways that digital technologies may support learning in 'clusters' of purposeful activity, which would include knowledge-building, distributed cognition, community and communication and active engagement. This has implications for the learner taking ownership of their own learning, which is recognised as a key characteristic of creativity.

Tinio (2003) suggests that technology leads to new ways of teaching and learning that are underpinned by constructivist theories on learning. Vygotsky suggests, the 'zone of proximal development' may be inhabited by a range of 'experts' who can facilitate learning. Using digital technology would constitute a shift from teacher centred pedagogy to one that is learner centred and contextualised within a wider concept of what counts as knowledge, which may then be deconstructed in different ways. This has implications for a changing relationship between teacher and learners, where learning outcomes are negotiated and mediated within the constraints of subject specialism. It also offers alternative visions of how teacher professionalism may be articulated and activated.

Articulating more active and creative versions of teacher professionalism and looking more closely at teachers' 'pedagogical subject knowledge' (or more simply, how teachers frame and communicate specialist subject knowledge in their practice) we discover great potential for critical thinking in developing deep thinking around ethical and moral debates. By using the creative industry and practitioners within the field, teachers can draw on a rich vein of creative and affective cultural text that have a built-in capacity to engage young people visually, intellectually and emotively.

In this sense digital technologies can be exploited to 'grab' the students' attention so that they are in a strong position to become involved in more purposeful and structured learning. This has been exemplified in a research project by Hill (2010), where she uses digital media technologies to create 'shock and awe' in the teaching of global citizenship to sixth form students. She uses film to fuel students' imaginative and emotive responses and then moves on to deconstruct the issues from a more factual and theoretical standpoint.

2. Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Case Study

This case study draws on the work of Hill (2010) who used film and other digital technologies to introduce a group of sixth form students to issues surrounding Global Citizenship. She was particularly interested in developing their political literacy through the phenomena of the 'Blockbuster Movie' starring celebrity actors. Her aim was to deconstruct the political, social and economic factors behind the acquisition of 'Blood Diamonds', (so called because the diamond trade was responsible for funding armed conflict and widespread mutilation across Western and Central Africa). She aimed to develop the students' critical thinking skills as 'deep learning' that would affect their understanding of ethical global politics. Hill (2010) clearly states:

> *'The infamous events and little known truth about the worldwide diamond trade brings into focus a series of ethical, and philosophical questions about how we think about the world and what happens if we do not think in human terms. We can use digital technology, moving images and dramatic narratives to find out what is going on in the world. Drawing on the work of creative practitioners who write, produce, direct and place believable 'characters' within a range of cultural text; audiences are able to locate themselves in different landscapes, and other 'spaces'. The concept of 'otherness' is of course philosophically problematic, but in the process of identification with character and plot, teachers and students, are more democratically positioned to respond to film. The effect of examining the 'other' in Africa serves to bring differences and similarities of social, political and economic*

factors into sharper focus. We are able to ask if colonialism and slavery belong to the past. We can challenge the status quo to ask if people can move beyond conflict and violence, in fact the questions are endless and the opportunity to frame and ask those questions is the business of Citizenship teachers. It is their creative engagement with cultural text and their ability to harness digital technology in their pedagogical approaches that establishes their influence and credentials as creative practitioners.'

Teachers' creative achievement can therefore be placed within the 'democratic' definition of creativity put forward by NACCE. Through their pedagogical expertise, their organisation of learning tasks, Teachers are developing 'Imaginative activity so as to produce outcomes that are original and of value.' Considering the diversity of autobiography, skills and talents that young people bring to the classroom, originality and value are likely to be measured in many different ways.

3. Background to the Creativity through Technology event

The creativity through technology event formed part of a sixth form curriculum enrichment programme at a secondary school in a small rural town in England which was predominantly mono-cultural, with little ethnic diversity. It was linked into the National Citizenship curriculum which explored diversity and human rights in the local, national and global context. The Creativity through Technology event helped to address both the development of moral and social responsibilities highlighted in the School Development Plan and further develop the ethical context of global citizenship and political literacy within the school community. The school worked in partnership with a University provider deeply committed to developing creativity through technology during initial teacher education. The Blood Diamond project was conceptualised as the focal point for a 'collapsed' day within the sixth form timetable. It was planned as a collaborative project between a PGCE Course Leader working with thirty associate (trainee) social science teachers and a sixth form of 250 students within a partnership school.

The PGCE tutor was committed to a view that teaching could not always be simply reduced to the acquisition of technical skills. Good teaching depended on the development of teachers' professional identity and integrity. Teachers were encouraged to see themselves as 'change agents' within the social justice agenda and examine the moral and philosophical implication of their own practice. Drawing on the work of Freire, the beginner teachers were encouraged to develop their capacity for 'critical pedagogy'. Put simply, this means that teachers and learners are viewed as co-learners in the

classroom; identifying significant issues for concern, bringing a range of theories and ideas to help learners to deconstruct the problem and finally identifying some form of social action to take place. As Hill (2008) writes in her feminist study of teachers' professional identities,

> *'Critical pedagogy engages feminist educators and teachers in various ways through challenging the content of the curriculum and what counts as knowledge to disrupting teaching and learning processes that may perpetuate divisions along the lines of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, social class and abilities. Its basic premises lay in identifying the problematic of everyday life and its relation to social justice, deconstructing and analysing the constitutive elements and proposing action that may bring about change'.*

(Hill, 2008: 60)

The insertion of 'feminist' before critical pedagogy draws on pedagogical strategy that serves to identify, deconstruct and consider possibilities and courses of action that may be taken to address a range of social justice issues surrounding gender, but also including social class, ethnicity, sexuality, and age. Developing creativity through technology was a central feature of the PGCE and encouraged beginner teachers to develop the potential of 'mosh-pit pedagogy', exploring the potential of 'YouTube' not only as a repository for useful film clips, but also as a way to recognise students' potential to develop their skills as digital natives within and without the boundaries of the classroom.

The clear intention of the Blood Diamond project was about developing an inclusive 'professional' identity in beginner teachers that sought to contest the 'glossification' of global issues, to reduce or eliminate exploitation, inequality and oppression. Accordingly, the development of such an identity is deeply rooted in principles of equity and social justice, and suggests that forms of digital technology has the potential for developing more democratic and inclusive views of learning and teaching.

The aim of the project was to:
- look at the value(s) surrounding diamonds.
- have an understanding of the humanitarian aspects of the blood diamonds by identifying with humans characters and plot in the film.
- develop an awareness of the social, political and economic context of the diamond trade in Western and central Africa.
- enable students to gain critical insight and raise questions on the issue.

4. Introduction to the Blood Diamond Project

The PGCE tutor with a cohort of Social Science trainee teachers organised a day-long conference entitled 'Blood Diamonds: the bling of global politics'. It involved 240 sixth form students studying a range of academic and vocational course at advanced level. The day began with a one-hour keynote session followed by a range of 14 workshops, which the students were able to select. Each student selected a total of four one hour workshop. The workshops were led by pairs of Associate Teachers; one psychology and one sociology specialist. In the morning the psychologist led the same session twice with the sociology teacher supporting the learning and in the afternoon the arrangements were vice versa. The planning and preparation for two different workshops was collaborative, giving associate teachers the experience of planning with other colleagues as a lead practitioner and working in the classroom as a para-professional/learning Assistant. Should the project be done in-house, training and resources packs could be used to facilitate creative learning projects and focus the intended learning outcomes.

5. Resources and Preparation

- Film 'Blood Diamond' directed by Edward Zwick, starring Leonardo Di Caprio.
- Google video: 'Blood Diamond: the true story'.
- Large meeting space 240 students.
- Workshop advertisements.
- Workshop spaces (some with ICT facilities).
- Workshop Leaders.

Students were prepared for the conference by watching the film Blood Diamond, (2006) directed by Edward Zwick and starring Leonardo Di Caprio, Jennifer Connelly and Djimon Hounsou before the conference began. Facilities were set up at school to have a continual showing of the film, where students could drop-in or drop-out in order to accommodate their other commitments. Many students had personal copies of the film which were circulated informally. Students signed to confirm they had watched the film. Workshop leaders prepared a series of advertisements relating to questions raised in the film. Students signed up for four conference workshops.

As shown in the outline below, Blood Diamond the Movie raises a number of political, economic and humanitarian issues surrounding the diamond trade:

Blood Diamond Synopsis

> Set during the Sierra Leone Civil War in 1999, the film shows a country torn apart by the struggle between government soldiers and rebel forces. The film portrays many of the atrocities of that war, including the rebels' amputation of people's hands to stop them from voting in the upcoming elections.

> The film begins with the capture of Solomon Vandy (Djimon Hounsou), a Mende fisherman, by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels when they invade the small Sierra Leonian village of Shenge. Separated from his family, Solomon is enslaved to work in the diamond fields under the command of Captain Poison (David Harewood) while his son Dia is conscripted into the rebel forces, the brainwashing eventually turning him into a hardened killer. The RUF use the diamonds to fund their war effort, often trading them directly for arms. While working in the RUF diamond fields as a forced labourer, Solomon finds a large diamond of rare pink colouring. Moments before government troops launch an attack, Captain Poison sees Solomon hiding the diamond. Captain Poison is injured in the attack before he can get the stone, and both he and Solomon are taken to prison in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone.

> Danny Archer (Leonardo DiCaprio), an Anglo ex-mercenary from Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), trades arms for diamonds with an RUF commander. He is imprisoned after being caught smuggling the diamonds into neighbouring Liberia, and the diamonds are confiscated. He had been transporting the diamonds to a South African mercenary named Colonel Coetzee (Arnold Vosloo), who is in turn employed by South African diamond company executive Van De Kaap (Marius Weyers) and his deputy Simmons (Michael Sheen). Coetzee is Archer's former commander in 32 Battalion, the most decorated unit of the South African Border War, made up of Angolan and Rhodesian soldiers and white South African officers. Archer is desperate for a way to repay Colonel Coetzee for the diamonds taken from him when he was arrested and thrown in jail, in the same prison as the fisherman. While in prison, he overhears Captain Poison ranting to Solomon about the discovery of the large

diamond and decides to hunt down the stone. He arranges for Solomon's release from prison and offers to help him find his family in exchange for the diamond.

Archer and Solomon find their way to Maddy Bowen (Jennifer Connelly), an American journalist, who helps Solomon track down his family. Bowen soon learns that Archer is using Solomon to find his diamond and will eventually steal it for himself, to leave Africa forever. Bowen, a humanitarian, refuses to help Archer unless he can tell her about the diamond market to stop the flow of blood diamonds out of Africa, cutting off funding for Civil War and ending a mass revolution. Archer gives Bowen the information that she wants and gets access to use the press convoy to travel to Kono to find the diamond.

The convoy is attacked and Archer, Solomon and Bowen escape and find their way to the South African mercenary force under Colonel Coetzee. There they learn of the attack force preparing to retake Sierra Leone -- a reference to the actual 1995 hiring of South African security firm Executive Outcomes by the provisional government of Sierra Leone. The two men leave the camp on foot while Bowen boards a plane carrying foreigners out of the conflict zone. After an arduous overnight trek, the men reach the mining camp in a river valley, still under RUF control, where Solomon discovered and buried the large diamond. Here, Solomon is painfully reunited with his son Dia, who refuses to acknowledge him because he has been brainwashed by the rebels. Solomon is also reunited with Captain Poison, who orders him to find the diamond, but the South African mercenary force, also after the diamond, dispatches the RUF rebels in a massive air strike which kills many of the RUF rebels and some of the miners. Amist the chaos, Solomon suffers from temporary insanity and kills Poison with a shovel. Through a deal with Archer, Colonel Coetzee forces Solomon to retrieve the stone. In a desperate battle, Archer kills Coetzee and the other two soldiers with him after realizing that they would have killed both Archer and Solomon upon locating the diamond. At this point Dia holds Archer and Solomon at gunpoint with a pistol, but Solomon manages to convince him to side with them.

As Archer overturns a body to take equipment he realizes he has been shot, but keeps this to himself. Having arranged in advance for a plane to pick him up, he radios to the pilot, Benjamin Kapanay (Basil Wallace), who demands that Archer dump Solomon and Dia. Slowly and painfully the group makes its way from the valley

towards an airstrip atop a nearby ridge. Archer collapses, unable to climb, and Solomon carries him a little ways before Archer has him put him down. He tells Solomon to take Dia home, knowing that he is dying, and gives them the diamond. Archer holds off the soldiers chasing them while Solomon and Dia flee, and then makes a final phone call to Bowen, asking her to help Solomon as a last favour before looking out over the beautiful landscape of Africa once more and dying peacefully.

With the help of Bowen, Solomon trades the diamond to Simmons for a large sum of money and the reunification of his family, making the exchange as Solomon's wife and children deplane from a Lear Jet at a London airport. Bowen, who secretly photographs the deal, later publishes a magazine piece exposing the trade in "conflict" or "blood" diamonds. The film ends with Solomon smiling at the photograph Maddy took of Archer earlier, now published in her magazine along with the complete story of their journey, before addressing a conference on blood diamonds in Kimberley, South Africa, describing his experiences. This refers to an actual meeting that took place in Kimberley in 2000 and led to the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, which seeks to certify the origin of diamonds in order to curb the trade in conflict diamonds.

http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0450259/plotsummary Accessed 16/2/16

6. Blood Diamonds: The Conference approach

The project was presented as a 'conference' to extend students' perceptions of the learning environment. However, the keynote session engaged the students as 'sixth form students' with a variety of inclusive devices; some based on more traditional drama strategies and active learning techniques others on audience participation through technology, using handsets to record audience reaction. On entry to the Conference 'armbands' (displaying the logo and date) were worn at various positions on the arm (in response to the question long or short sleeves?) this was to remind sixth form students about the amputations that featured at the beginning of the film. Sixth form students were also given a flag badge to wear as they were seated. These represented all the African countries and at a strategic point during the keynote session the national flags were identified and pinned onto to a map(s) of Africa, along with a short discussion task. Large 'diamonds' were secreted amongst the seats and sixth form students interrogated to 'hand over' the hidden gems as they took their seats. A graffiti

screen allowed sixth form students to post questions raised by the Blood Diamonds Movie. Each strand of activity was strategically designed to actively engage the sixth form students in experiential learning.

These interactive events were important in disrupting students ways of thinking at the beginning of the session, challenging their expectations and ideas about learning. The key-note session also included more conventional presentational techniques using PowerPoint to outline the intended learning outcomes, and handsets to gauge audience response at various stages. Finally the documentary, 'Blood Diamonds: The True Story' was screened and sixth form students were able to gain a more factual back-drop to contextualise Blood Diamond, the movie. This was downloaded from Google Video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eThlmx7w9r0   Accessed 16/2/16

7. Asking Questions

The skill of framing questions was taken to be a significant part of the creative engagement with the blood diamond topic. Drawing on Howard Gardner's notion of developing five 'minds for the future' which would need to be disciplined, able to synthesise, be creative, respectful and ethical, the conference was instrumental in developing a 'community of enquiry'. 'Connecting' with the students and affecting them at an emotive level was an important first step. Encouraging them to think independently and choose what workshops they attended, allowed them a relative degree of autonomy in the learning process.

The films were chosen so that students were not sheltered form difficult issues, but were able to clarify their emotions and values and think for themselves. The questions that students had posted on the graffiti screen arose from their 'reading' of the film and legitimated personal responses to the film as 'lines of enquiry'. These issues were raised in debate and discussion forum within the workshops.

Workshop leaders used a series of leading questions to organise their sessions and then 'invited' students to participate in response to workshop advertisements. Titles like:
'Call of Duty' (relating to child soldiers);' Who Do You Think You Are?' (social constructs of identity); "Push and Pull' factors in the Refugee Experience'; 'What is the Impact of Conflict on Women in Sierra Leone?' and 'What Makes the World a Dangerous Place?'

Digital and conventional posters were useful forms of communication before the conference; attracting learners to the topic and setting clear guidelines for learning opportunities in each workshop. (Sign-up sheets limited numbers and served as registers)

A series of questions were framed as an integral part of the workshop planning, relating to ethics and global politics as the focus for the workshops. The Questions included:

1. How do we begin to think about the world?
2. What happens if we do not think in Human terms?
3. Who do we think we are?
4. How do religious beliefs affect politics?
5. Why do we obey?
6. How do we find out what's going on in the world?
7. Why is movement of people restricted?
8. Why is the world divided territorially?
9. How is the world organized economically?
10. Why are some people better off than others?
11. How does the Nation State work?
12. Do colonialism and slavery belong to the past?
13. How is the world organised economically?
14. Why are some people better off than others?
15. How can we end poverty?
16. Why do some people think they know what is good for others?
17. Why does Politics turn to violence?
18. What makes the world dangerous?
19. What can we do to stop people harming others?
20. Can we move beyond conflict?
and finally,
21. What can we do to change the world?

Edkins, J. & Zehfuss, M. (2009)

These questions were embedded in the textbook 'Global Politics' by Edkins and Zehfuss,(2009) and supported the trainee teachers acting as workshop leaders in understanding the questions and broader

issues. It also gave a number of responses to the questions, which ensured that there was not one definitive answer but range of places where students could position, and justify themselves within a debate. Each workshop used the film as a reference point or conceptual springboard to introduce other ideas, ethical issues, debates or activities. The basic structure was to: highlight the question, give an illustrative example as an initial discussion and then move on to consider broader issues. Finally, each student articulated and justified their responses to the questions raised. Some workshops encouraged students to engage with digital technologies as an end result, others encouraged creative writing, drama improvisation, art work and more formalised debate.

8. **Evaluating the impact of the Blood Diamond project**

Evaluating the impact of the Blood Diamond project is a challenging task; identifying cause and effect, and trying to measure 'impact' is not an exact science. Perhaps metaphors from food science are more relevant; maybe, the Blood Diamond project was a 'marinade', allowing students to absorb ideas in different ways over time?

Subsequent events in the Hague war crimes tribunal (August 2010) saw Blood Diamonds prominently feature in the News headlines (Guardian, August 2010). As 'supermodel' Naomi Campbell's was asked to give testimony at the trial of the former Liberian President Charles Taylor, who is accused of trading in 'blood diamonds to fund a brutal and bloody war in Liberia's neighbouring Sierra Leone.

It would be useful to contact the sixth form school leavers and compare them with a control group of sixth formers who did not attend the conference, in order to ascertain the effects of the blood diamond project on their contribution to discussion and debate on the topic. However, this is unlikely to happen, and we are left to trust in the national curriculum guidance on teaching Citizenship; this suggests young people are mentored towards a critical understanding of controversial and ethical issues so that they are more able to become part of developing political and moral discourses. What we do know from a survey undertaken by the Department for International Development (2006) with 3,500 young people aged between eleven to seventeen years of age is that of those polled: 79% wanted to know more about developing countries, 54% thought that school should be the place to learn about international development and that 65% were concerned with global poverty. This would imply that the majority of students were interested in aspects of global development, but perhaps the most startling statistic was that 89% of young people gained information about global issues from Television News programmes, which would suggest that the biggest challenge for teachers is

developing literacies in digital and media technologies, alongside more traditional literacies in deconstructing text, statistics and scientific claims.

Evaluating creative approaches to the teaching of global citizenship through the Blood Diamond Project can be fundamentally embedded in three important questions:

- How independent and critical can students' thinking skills develop within existing power relationships in schools?
- What are the effects of framing global issues in economic terms?
- Are there dangers in setting global issues in terms of 'over there'?

9. Mediating Power relations in the workshops

To begin with, teaching citizenship is affected by the structure of the school and the inherent unequal power relationships found in schools, this means meaningful participation and free enquiry can be limited. By setting the conference outside the routine with unfamiliar workshop leaders we hoped to address some of these issues. Although Marks (2001) argues that "citizenship education through participation is inevitably doomed and fundamentally at odds with the school system in England, where school promotes the idea that teachers are always right and pupils are never quite ready" (in Garratt and Piper, 2008). The Creativity through Technology event did not adopt this philosophy. It structured the opportunities for teachers and learners to ask their own questions. Even though, Kiwan (2008) states that "(t)he importance of recognising asymmetric power relations is necessary for a 'critical' curriculum" perhaps sharing emotive cultural text through technology helps to re-balance power relations as 'shared space" in which a critical curriculum can be explored.

It should be recognised that sixth form students have little control over their lives, (although post-16, dress codes may be changed, most of the other school rules remain in place). Therefore it is understandable when they young people are confronted with issues such as wars in far off countries they feel that there is little they can do to enact change. However, one workshop leader writes:

> *'We need to recognise the ability of "pedagogical power as concerned with developing the capacities of students to act autonomously in the future" (Pykett, 2009). Rather than viewing the school as the space within which the teacher wields power over students, the school space can allow power to flow (in*

a Foucauldian sense) and be harnessed by either students or teachers. To view the pedagogy around citizenship in this way is to optimistically posit the teacher as a transmitter of power through which ideas can be passed on to students to believe they can bring about transformative changes in the wider world. (Varsani 2011)

The teacher enables transformative change through acknowledging the significance and validity that may be given to cultural text, in this case film, as a credible source of 'knowledge'. By making spaces within the curriculum to challenge the status quo and interrogate taken-for-granted assumptions learners are enabled to believe they can bring about transformative change.

Students are enabled to be relatively independent and critical in developing thinking skills when teachers are aware of the dynamics of micro-politics and committed to democracy in the classroom. Evidence of a PGCE tutor, engaging with school practitioners and a generation of beginner teachers (workshop leaders) committed to creative transformation through technology is an optimistic contribution to such an endeavour.

10. Framing global issues in economic terms

As Workshop leaders, trainee teachers were mindful that technology itself is not a neutral tool and neither is teaching a neutral activity. Teachers shape some of the values and virtues that their pupils learn in school, often the dominance of the economic agenda (to apparently equip young people and adults for life in a global society and work in a global economy). However, the assumptions of the global economic system can be interrogated by the teacher and students, for example one workshop was concerned to make connections between resource wars in the Congo and mobile phones in England, to bring 'over there' and 'over here' closer together.

Varsani (2011) recognises the perils of framing global issues in economic terms and understands the difficulties in challenging students' sense of privilege and superiority. She writes in a commentary about her workshop:

'A problem with challenging dominant discourses such as consumerism is that they have become internalised. Miller argues that people "establish identities as consumers" (cited in Gilbert, 1997) and consumption "establishes a private sphere in which people find solace and satisfaction in getting and spending" (Gilbert, 1997). To create global

connections to the underbelly of globalisation is to bring to light oppressive practices which students may not want to discuss as it challenges and undermines their raison d'être. This is where it is necessary to bring to light pedagogical practices that can create empathy. Furthermore it is also difficult to show "the world as a single system in which changes in one part have important and concrete effects on others" (Gilbert, 1997). Blarney (2002) states that students can only understand social injustice by being disempowered and "their sense of interpretive privilege and cultural superiority" (in Marshall, 2009) needs to be challenged. Herein lays the controversy: How to challenge this sense of privilege without alienating the class and reinforcing existing stereotypes. Spivak argues that a problem with global-citizenship education discourse is that it reinforces: *"eurocentrism and triumphalism as people are encouraged to think that they live in the centre of the world, that they have a responsibility to 'help the rest', and that 'people from other parts of the world are not fully global"* (1990, in Leonard, 2007).

11. The dangers in setting global issues in terms of 'over there'

In the creativity through technology event the Blood Diamonds Project, was in danger of reinforcing images of Africa as a 'chaotic, war torn continent'. Selecting the topic of Blood Diamonds inevitably included the teaching of controversial issues. This could be defined as the teaching of topics which 'have a political, social or personal impact which arouse feelings and deal with questions of values and beliefs' (Oxfam 2006).

> *'There are many controversial and ethical issues inherent in the teaching of global citizenship such as power relations in the classroom which negate free inquiry, political bias of the teacher, and reinforcement of existing stereotypes of the 'west and the rest'. It is only as teachers by allowing students to make connections between practices that happen 'over there' and what we do 'over here', in effect drawing lines of global relationships can students challenge for themselves dominant discourses and create narratives and practices that they feel comfortable with in their own citizenship identity and as active 'global citizens' in their own right'.*

12. Conclusions

The Blood Diamond project has been used to exemplify the potential for using film technology to address controversial issues in the learning and teaching of global citizenship. I have proposed that teachers' creative engagement with technology can be as simple as 'showing a video', however, in the planning and structuring of learning in this illustrative example, we can recognise creative pedagogy as

an 'imaginative process that produces something of value'. But there is nothing 'simple' in developing pedagogical creativity through technology. It is a demanding project, and it does rely on a more intuitive, active professional identity. It calls for the messy intersections between emotions and facts and it does not promise the certainty of uncovering 'truth' and 'facts' as uncontestable absolutes.

The potential for developing creativity through technology within a collapsed timetable or within standardised schemes of work is an exciting proposition. The 'workshop' spaces can be structured in a range of ways to enhance students' creative and critical thinking skills. Harnessing the skills of learners who are digital natives and including those who have less access or inclination in their application of technologies is challenging. Issues around equality, the inclusivity agenda and the social justice are precarious as teachers walk the tight rope between emancipatory practice and implementing policy. It has been the intention to show that there is scope within any area for teaching creatively and encouraging the development of learners' criticality and creativity. This can be supported by building on the strength of teachers' pedagogical subject knowledge (teachers 'professional' imagination) and their confidence in taking considered risks. It also offers alternative visions of how teacher professionalism may be articulated and activated in the future.

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