

Crossroads:

The Ties that Bind Intercultural, Anti-Racist and Global Citizenship Education

Michèle Bisson

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ABSTRACT

Crossroads:

The Ties that Bind Intercultural, Anti-Racist and Global Citizenship Education.

Michèle Bisson

Coming to terms with the ethnic diversity of my student population, I find myself arguing for the recognition of the responsibility that befalls on teachers' shoulders of actively and positively exposing their students to issues relating to cultural diversity. Different options are open to those who chose to accept this responsibility: intercultural education, anti-racist education, and global citizenship education. However, which one is the best educational philosophy to apply to teachers' and students' day to day classroom realities? This is what this thesis attempts to discover. For indeed, there is a need to recognize that the ties that bind multiethnic diversity and education in the context of everyday classroom interactions are powerful, and I firmly believe those ties need to be addressed in order to instill in our student population a strong sense of cultural awareness. Ultimately, the objective is to empower students so they can be moved to become influential actors in the creation of an equitable and ethical social order for all citizens. This is an issue that is no longer an educational imperative we teachers can afford to neglect.

Table of Contents

Preface.....	v
Chapter I	Introduction.....1
	Statement of the problematic situation..... 1
	Main research question.....4
Chapter II	Teaching towards cultural recognition; The Multicultural/Intercultural perspective.....6
	Narrative Multiculturalism.....8
	Democratic Multiculturalism.....11
	Intercultural Competence.....18
Chapter III	Teaching towards social justice and equity for all; The Anti-Racist perspective..27
Chapter IV	Teaching towards global conscience; The Global Citizenship perspective.....44
Chapter V	Conclusions.....63
	Teaching towards the ultimate goal; Cultivating student empowerment.....63
	Further research.....74
References.....	76

PREFACE

“There is no better point of entry into critique or reflection than one’s own experience.”

(Himani Bannerji, 1995, p. 55)

The first teaching contract I had as an English second language (ESL) educator was in a Montreal-North primary school. On a lovely September morning I walked into a building that would house, for the following ten months, my students; an assembly of little beings hailing from forty-seven different countries, and claiming as their mother tongue, at the very least, fifteen different languages. I had been dropped on that September morning into the world of multiethnic, underprivileged primary school education, and for the rest of the school year I would learn to fall in love with this sometimes violent, sometimes caring, yet always interesting schooling environment. I did not know it at the time, but that first plunge into the realm of education would set the foundation to my present research interest.

For some unforeseen reason, I had a feeling then that things were not right. I felt I was among a handful of people who truly acknowledged that the teaching task was far more complex than what the official program prescribed. In short, I believed it involved more than simply transmitting to my students a wealth of linguistic knowledge relating to my particular field of expertise. Furthermore, I felt- and still do- that my mandate as an educator encompassed even more because I was being employed in an environment ripe with ethnic diversity. This impression that eventually turned into a deep seated belief started a long time ago, before I was a teacher. Actually, it started when I was a student myself, sitting in classrooms listening to teachers...

When I was in High School, during history classes, I learned about the Underground Railroad. I must say it was with great pride that I took in the entire story about White Canadian men and women who dared to make a difference in Black people's lives by providing them with a new environment, free from slavery, in which to live and thrive. The people of the United-States had slavery, Canada had freedom... Little did I know then, that both my province and my country had a shady past. That the great cities of Montreal and Quebec, and perhaps even others, had been at a point in time playing the dirty game of slaves and masters. I learned, much later of course. I was not told by a teacher, I did not hear it in the news, nor did I read it in a school book. In fact, at university, while doing research for a paper on aboriginal issues in Canada I stumbled, literally stumbled, unto an article that described Canada's past history with slavery. I must say I have long forgotten the title or the name of the author of that article. However, I clearly remember reading about Native American and African people who were forced by White settlers to live as slaves in my country. Then the questions began... Why was I shown only the positive aspect provided by the story of the Underground Railroad? Why was I never made aware of all the historical facts behind the issue of slavery in Canada and in the province of Quebec? For that matter, why did I have to find out unexpectedly, by myself, alone in a library, and not from any of my history teachers? Why, when I was in High School, did I automatically assume that people in my country had never taken part in the enslavement of human beings? How come that during the span of my education, not only at the primary and secondary levels but as well in CEGEP, was I never made aware of this historical fact? Why did I never suspect, not even a little? Why did my Black friends not know about any of this? Why?

I suppose shameful secrets are at ease in little dark corners. I suppose they happily live in shadows, but what happens once they are brought out into the light? The pain, the questions, the

guilt begins. Ultimately thought, with a little luck and a lot of careful, honest digging for understanding, the healing truth may start to shine through as well. At least, that is how I explained it to myself, even though it somehow seemed inadequate. However, digging through books and articles, listening and reading, asking more questions and attempting to answer them, these concrete actions added a bit more meat to the frail skeleton of my understanding. Perhaps even this seemingly insignificant event in my educational path served as a starting block on which my professional and personal beliefs with regards to racism are now built.

Being a woman I can honestly say that I have experienced sexism. I have been on the receiving end of this social plaque more times than I care to remember. Racism, however, has not been part of my personal life per se, at least not on the receiving end. I am white, part of a privileged group, I recognize that now but I am not willing to accept that definition of myself. First, it is grossly incomplete. Second, it implies an aspect of superiority towards others that I am unwilling to acknowledge, not because it does not exist- unfortunately it does- but because it should not exist! Therefore, the only sensible way for me not to accept this membership to the privileged group is to initially understand racism, how it operates, how it develops, and how it perpetuates itself from generation to generation and then, most importantly, to find some way to fight it. The fact that I am a teacher working in a multiethnic schooling environment means I that have a, shall we say luxuriant, battleground. Therefore, I recognize a great need, in fact an obligation, to include in my teaching practice elements of this diversity so representative of the various cultural backgrounds of my students. In turn, slowly, all of my personal experiences as a student and my professional experiences as a teacher have led me to think on how issues of cultural difference and diversity are negotiated by educators and their pupils through the process of learning, more particularly as it happens inside the walls of a classroom, and of a school.

Therefore, I have chosen to investigate the matter further so I can add to my intuitive and professional knowledge a strong theoretical base in order to explain how the ties that bind multiethnic diversity and education operate.

As I have previously stated, I have worked mostly in underprivileged schooling environments in the city of Montreal, so issues regarding ethnicity have been my constant companions. My students are, have been, and most likely will be, hailing from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds and my attempts at coming to terms with the spectrum of their diversity, which I am faced with year after year and everyday in my classrooms, still gives me leave to ponder. Racism, inequality, poverty, rejection, physical and verbal violence, intimidation, and bullying— sadly not a week goes by without having to face the actual threats these words represent, and that is all on top of fulfilling my professional mandate, which is teaching English as a second language. Therefore, I have decided to make sense of those negative occurrences in order to better understand my professional and personal responsibilities as a teacher, and also, conceivably, to make a difference in my students' lives on both an academic and a social level. Small and perhaps even insignificant as it may be, my attempt is not tainted by naiveté but rather informed and supported by the simple brilliance of the words of one particular author.

While doing my bachelor's degree almost a decade ago, I read a book; one of many actually. However, this one stands out because of the first impression it made on me. I still have it lying around on a shelf in my home office, and I flip through it from time to time. Lori Morris (2002) is the author of the book I am referring to, and she brilliantly titled it *Those Who Can, Teach*. The main argument she poses, in my opinion, is summed up by the following quote:

Teachers who have not developed the reflexes necessary for critical thinking, who have not thought long and hard about teaching, learning and education, and who have not developed, a set of professional beliefs about their profession, have not attained true professional status and cannot fulfill their professional mandate. (Morris, 2002, p.2)

As an educator, I always took this bit of professional wisdom to heart and although I have no claim to brilliance I will state that the following exercise in writing is my humble attempt at a critical reflection on my profession, rather I should say on one particular aspect of my profession.

Thus, I have opted to investigate three types of educational philosophies that may provide me with some insight as to how I could effectively tackle issues of diversity in my classrooms. My objective is not to achieve a very concise description of each of these philosophies as they are applied in different parts of the world, in variable social, political, and economic circumstances, but rather to find academic pathways that could provide me with interesting educational options to apply to my classroom practices, to my own professional, day to day, reality. By the same token, it is my hope that perhaps my findings will prove to be of some value to other teachers as well. Without further ado, therefore, let me begin...

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of a problematic situation

The concept of diversity seems to be the obvious starting point when considering education in a multiethnic environment. Indeed, students who have particular national affiliations to different countries carry that part of their cultural and linguistic heritage with them. They of course do not dissociate themselves from their cultural background simply because they walk into a classroom, which implies that my classes are filled with people who have separate, distinct cultural identities. In turn, in my particular context of language education, that leaves me with two pedagogical choices, that of additive or subtractive bilingualism (Lindholm, 1994, p.190). I can either view my teaching effort as one that will give my students the chance to add one more language to their repertoire and give them the chance to benefit on a social as well as a cognitive level, or I can force them to put aside their first language and the wealth of linguistic and cultural knowledge that they already possess to impose a strict learning of the subject matter I teach. However, to put it simply, I have no wish to be a teaching tyrant! Therefore, the option of additive bilingualism suits me perfectly.

Yet, there is more to additive bilingualism than meets the eye because through it a teacher could manage to elevate not only the linguistic competencies of her or his students, but also foster a sense of intercultural awareness, or a need to belong to a global community, or even promote anti-racist ideals. Lindholm (1994) refers to equitable additive bilingual classroom practices, mostly achieved through cooperative learning, which can be shown to have positive impacts on ethnically diverse student populations. For instance she asserts that at the

psychosocial level it could serve to genuinely foster tolerance. This implies that students, through equitable additive bilingual classroom practices, can develop genuine feelings of respect for diversity as opposed to a fear of it. For instance, cooperation activities can give them the chance to create cross-ethnic friendships and “results show that students held very positive attitudes towards other languages, people speaking other language, and other students, regardless of skin or hair color” (Lindholm, 1994, p.203) after having been given the chance to work cooperatively in a diverse learning group context. However, in order to obtain these positive impacts the education field needs to move away from the traditional teacher-led and whole group instruction format (Cummins, 1994, 2000, DeVillar & Faltis, 1994).

The cookie-cutter instructional concept, or if you will, the one size fits all approach, is no longer suitable, if it ever was! Consider for example the case of teaching intercultural awareness. This process is about teaching students to relate to others who have a different cultural baggage from their own. For all intent and purposes the goal is to foster a real sense of openness toward other people of different cultures, those people we perceive to be so different from us (Ermenc, 2005, Starkey, 2007). As I was able to notice, modern metropolitan classrooms in the Montreal area are culturally diverse. Therefore, we as teachers are faced with the need to move past cultural voyeurism (Lindholm, 1994, Ermenc, 2005, Knutson, 2006, Starkey, 2007), go beyond the discourse of *us versus others* (Cummins, 2000) and make our way toward a relational approach to culture learning (Knutson, 2006). No longer is it acceptable to teach the 4F's— food, fashion, folklore and festivals (Banks as cited by Starkey, 2007) — when attempting to teach about cultural diversity, for they only serve to achieve a reductive representation of other cultures (Starkey, 2007). No longer is it acceptable to work with teaching material and pedagogical approaches that support this reductive portrayal of other people and their culture.

Since all of our nation's children experience formal schooling as part of their socialization into adulthood, schools have an extraordinarily significant role to play in leading students to metacultural unity through equitable and socially responsible teaching practices and learning experiences. In so doing, they will have enabled students to internalize through concrete experiences values that promote respect for multicultural understanding. (DeVillar & Faltis, 1994, p. 18)

In the end, I believe which culture to teach about does not appear to be the most relevant factor in so far as the objective of the exercise should rely on the educational context and the diverse human representation that makes up the classroom one teaches to. Essentially, I think what is most definitely relevant is the manner in which one learns about a culture, in fact, any culture. Indeed, a collection of mundane facts about various targeted cultural groups is not what students need to take away from any class or lesson with a cultural awareness perspective. What students need is to know they are offered a safe space for open discussion of their own and other people's cultural identity (Knutson, 2006), so, hopefully, they can learn how to positively and respectfully relate to one another. Essentially, they need to be moved towards a critical understanding of cultural issues in order to become the promoters of ideals of justice and equality for everyone. Ukpokodu (2003), in talking about critical multiculturalism, describes the process in the following terms:

I define teaching from critical multicultural perspective as a teaching-learning paradigm in which teachers and students consciously engage in the construction of knowledge, critique the various forms of inequities and injustices embedded in the educational system, and strive to gain the

empowerment needed to engage in culturally responsive and responsible practice. (p. 19)

Perhaps teachers, in using such a pedagogical stance, will ensure their students will ultimately rise as roaring advocates for social change. Therefore, if we agree that we are in fact dealing with a multiethnic clientele in metropolitan schools, and that the goal is to foster a critical understanding and a genuine acceptance of cultural diversity, I am arguing that the responsibility of exposing students to different cultures and actively promoting understanding, acceptance, and respect of those different cultures befalls mostly on teachers. Thus, given the prevalence of the multicultural teaching conditions in today's school environment, I firmly believe it is vital to address both the positive and negative issues brought on by the multiethnic make up of student populations with which teachers are involved. In essence, asking ourselves which educational philosophy provides the best guidelines to navigate the multicultural and ethnic divide that exists in our modern urban schools.

Main research question

Consequently, shall we educators engage with intercultural/multicultural education, anti-racist education or global citizenship education in the context of our classroom teachings? That, in all its apparent simplicity, is what this thesis attempts to discover. Simple, however, it is not. Indeed, there are underlying economical, political, and social incentives that are bound to surface while attempting to answer this puzzling educational question. Thus, firstly I shall consider different forms of multicultural and intercultural education (Johnson & Johnson, 1994, Torres, 1998, Man Ling Lee, 2005, Knutson, 2006). I will follow with an exploration of a type of education that seems to go a bit further and aims at specifically fostering anti-racist ideals (Dei,

1996, Spencer, 1998, James, 1999, Gaine, 2000). Thirdly, I will examine the educational journey toward global citizenship (Walker & Shuangye, 2007). Finally, I shall attempt to unveil which educational philosophy seems the most adequate to fostering in students, mine and other teachers', the truest sense of social, political, and cultural empowerment. Furthermore, I shall attempt to unveil how one goes about effectively creating a teaching environment and learning activities that specifically foster this true social, political, and cultural sense of empowerment in students without, of course, setting aside essential academic learning goals. In essence, I shall try to firmly sanction the harmony that should always exist between theory and practice. Last, but certainly not least, I will also provide suggestions for further research in this most significant educational area.

CHAPTER II

**TEACHING TOWARDS CULTURAL RECOGNITION;
THE MULTICULTURAL/INTERCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE**

“Multiculturalism means different things to different people” (Torres, 1998, p.180).

Torres could have also mentioned interculturalism in that same sentence and it still would have been accurate, for indeed it would be naive to believe the concepts of multiculturalism and interculturalism could be summed up in a few lines to fit all conceivable contexts, considering they have been around for a number of years, and are political, educational, cultural and social phenomena throughout the world. I have come to believe these philosophies have a life of their own. They grow and evolve within different societies, over time, and are fuelled by people’s lives, their struggles to communicate and exist with each other. The proof to this claim lies in my initial book and article search which yielded a multitude of authors who have dared to grapple with the essence of these philosophical ideas from all sides. Some have seen fit to join multiculturalism and interculturalism as one, such as Leeman and Reid (2006) no doubt because it suited their research purposes. Others have chosen to set them apart. Man Ling Lee (2005) confronted the specific issues of intercultural education at the university level, whereas Ghosh (2004) chose to particularly investigate multicultural policies as they are applied in Canada. Yet, other authors have chosen to affix to the concepts of multiculturalism and interculturalism other labels to further the basic understanding of each of these notions. For example, Marri (2003) talks of multicultural democracy, Phillion (2002) refers to narrative multiculturalism and, for their part, Bennett and Salomen (2007) discuss intercultural communication and intercultural competence. In short, the definitions per se of the broad concepts of multiculturalism and

interculturalism are anything but simple. That being said, I will state at this point that I will not palliate to this conundrum. The fact is one could spend a good long while trying to elucidate the subtle differences that characterize multiculturalism and interculturalism both as philosophical and educational concepts. Actually, Bouchard and Taylor (2008) have precisely argued that the concept of interculturalism itself has yet to be formally defined: “In university and other research milieus, it has been the subject of extensive comment but without leading... to a definition that achieves a consensus” (p.129). Thus, I will put the emphasis on addressing more specific understandings of both of types of cultural education as I feel these provide more compelling academic possibilities to apply to my classroom practices. However, let me start with a general overview of multicultural and intercultural education.

In short, multicultural education is an academic effort pivoting around cultural diversity. Its curricular objective aims to foster in students such attitudes as tolerance and respect with regard to people of different cultural backgrounds and their cultural heritage (Knutson, 2006). The ultimate point here is to achieve a balance between knowledge of one’s own cultural and ethnic heritage, and knowledge and appreciation of the cultural and ethnic heritage of others (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). Intercultural education is much the same except that “in teaching [it] is not about covering multiple cultures, rather it is about working through a dialogue between cultures” (Man Ling Lee, 2005, p. 201). In that respect, interculturalism is much more interesting to a teacher such as myself because it can conceivably help in resolving the daily issues of conflict happening between culturally diverse students, owing to the fact that it precisely emphasizes dialogue. However, in an effort at being more precise, here is how Bouchard and Taylor (2008) define the concept in correlation to Quebec’s particular social reality: “In our minds, interculturalism proposes a way of promoting ethnocultural relations characterized by

interaction in a spirit of respect for differences” (p. 118). They recognize structuring elements that emphasize how the principle of interculturalism operates in this province to ensure the preservation of social bonds. They refer to it as a tension in-between the two poles of ethnocultural diversity and the French speaking core community striving to find balance within an ideal of equality among and for all citizens. They also note another virtue of interculturalism: “it is a flexible system that is receptive to negotiation, adaptation and innovation. It thus affords security to Quebecers of French-Canadian origin and to ethnocultural minorities and protects the rights of all in keeping with the liberal tradition” (p. 119). More importantly, within the context of education, they remind us that “Quebec schools are a powerful vector for cohesion” (p.109) in that they can, and surely do, combat social fragmentation, promote cultural harmony and ensure respect for diversity. However, after exploring Quebec’s perspective in correlation to interculturalism, it is important to mention that I am more interested in finding to the point educational avenues in terms of specific activities and lessons or educational techniques and philosophies that refer to cultural diversity within the context of academic understandings of multiculturalism and interculturalism. I am happy to report I stumbled upon such avenues, three of them to be exact.

Narrative multiculturalism

Phillion (2002) had what I colorfully characterize as an “Ah! Ha!” moment, an epiphany if you will, when she sculpted her conceptualization of what she named narrative multiculturalism. Her research journey represents a new way of understanding multicultural education in classrooms, a new way of bridging theoretical and practical knowledge which I find quite interesting since it is one of my own concerns as a teacher. In essence, what Phillion did is

elaborate a narrative approach to understanding multicultural teaching and learning as it happens in classrooms between teachers and students.

In a richly diverse downtown community school in Toronto, Phillion worked with a teacher, Pam, and her grade four/five students to investigate the inner workings of multicultural education. What she unexpectedly discovered is that a researcher's biases and an absolute reliance on theory can prove to be detrimental to understanding classroom life (Phillion 2002a). Courageously, I believe, she let go of her firmly held beliefs about what it means to be a multicultural teacher and to teach in a multicultural manner; what she refers to as "the quest for Ms. Multicultural" (p. 266), to immerse herself in a narrative form of multicultural inquiry. Relying on interaction principles, stories, classroom observations, participation, and focusing on practice, all evolving over a long period of time, she set forth on a new path of understanding. Essentially, her research journey served to humanize and personalize her quest to understand multicultural education.

To Phillion (2002c), narrative multicultural inquiry as a method has three fundamental qualities. First and foremost is the need to think narratively; this quality implies that one needs to move away from viewing theory as abstract, decontextualized and fixed in a particular context whereas experience is seen as fluid and contextualized in time and place. Essentially, thinking narratively is about being in the moment and in a specific environment, for example a classroom, and paying attention to the relationships that are developed and constantly evolving, between students and teacher, and in Phillion's particular case, between researcher and participant. "Until I understood how my biases (together with theory) could be impediments to understanding classroom life, I could not fully experience Pam's classroom life and, therefore, was limited in what I could understand" (p.538).

Secondly, she introduces being in the midst of lives. This quality implies disentangling real everyday life and research. To Phillion (2002c), research cannot happen without a personal involvement from the goings on of the classroom and the school. It is about diving into the research subject, becoming part of it in order to understand it from the inside out, not just from the outside looking in. Finally, the third quality involves making meaning of experience in relationships. This one, a relational process, implies the affirmation of a trusting relationship between researcher and participant, the development of a sense of attachment and belonging to the place of inquiry, and finally the recognition of the empirical value of personal practical multicultural knowledge as demonstrated by different individuals. To Phillion “making meaning of inquiry relationships is at the heart of narrative multiculturalism” (p.539). Consequently, this researcher’s greatest lesson is in knowing that:

Narrative multiculturalism, as a way to think, do research and represent understanding lies in an intellectual landscape between theory and practice that places huge stock in experience and practice, denies theoretical pre-eminence and relies on long periods of time to develop understanding.

(Phillion, 2002b, p.299)

Interestingly enough the end result is a renewed belief in the enquiry process as it provides understandings through the development of a relational and narrative approach to multiculturalism simply because the process is reflective, non-judgmental, compassionate and benevolent.

Parallel to narrative multiculturalism, I believe is the multicultural democracy educational theory. The question is what do these two notions have in common? Aside from the fact that they both deal with the issue of multiculturalism and education they pursue separate

ideals. Phillion's (2002) narrative multiculturalism is concerned with the display, the development and the expression of multiculturalism as it happens in daily classroom life. Marri's (2003, 2009) classroom-based democratic multiculturalism is more concerned with the conceptual development of a democratic educational conscience to be transmitted to the different educational players, teachers and students alike, in order to stimulate active democratic and political participation.

Democratic multiculturalism

Every now and then I stumble upon quotes I find most compelling, seminal even. The following is one of those quotes:

Because democracy is tenuous and unsure, because most democracies are short-lived, because tyrannies and ethnic strife are not uncommon- for these reasons, the cultivation of democrats is not to be wished away as a natural byproduct of attending to other things, such as raising scores in reading and math. (Parker, 2001, p.12)

This barely veiled call to arms against educational objectives that focus on raising the bar solely on academic competencies is still, almost ten years after it was first put to paper, eerily accurate. Of course, it implies the understanding that for some fostering in students, young and old, ideals of democracy, equality, fairness and respect for and acceptance of diversity are merely to be considered, at best, as second rate educational objectives. The imperative here, I believe, is not to disregard formal academic goals but rather to fuse them with other, more social- some would say, moral- educational aims.

It is perhaps quite strange to think about grade-schoolers in terms of them being future political beings, and future active citizens, and yet it is for all intent and purposes a "fait

accompli". We primary school teachers certainly cannot disregard that fact. Our students will grow up and become members of our societies and it is partly up to us, through our teachings, to give them the necessary tools to fulfill their democratic duty. Perhaps, however, we can better ensure they rise up to their full active citizenship potential in following the ideals set forth by the principles of multicultural democracy.

Marri (2003) states the case for a classroom-based approach to multicultural democracy. He argues that, in today's world, most democracies are of the liberal representative kind which implies a few imperfections that could possibly be rectified by the emergence of multicultural democracies. Essentially, he claims that in a democracy of the liberal representative kind, the different types of diversity- social, economic and cultural- are denied. Firstly, they are denied because some citizens are simply not yet integrated into the political entity. They are essentially pushed to its margins; for example citizens such as people of color, the poor, women, immigrants, first nation groups, members of the gay community, etc. Secondly, on top of being pushed aside, these citizens' different heritages are erased under the pretense of neutrality so as to give the illusion of the creation of a unified group governed, so-called equitably, as one. Finally, this same neutrality principle acts as a cover for the maintenance of the status quo. Even though the government claims blindness to difference and diversity it could be perceived as a front that underhandedly recognizes a dominant group, which is, a position of power held by some for the benefit of those of the dominant class. A multicultural democracy, on the other hand, would not shed a blind eye on diversity; it would entirely recognize it, thereby pulling together, under the banner of equity, all citizens' social, economic, cultural and political diversities (Marri, 2003, 2009).

At the start of it all, these two questions are posed: “Who is and is not participating and on whose terms?” and “How wide is the path to participation?” (Parker, 1996b, as cited in Marri, 2003, p.268). The first question closely examines the nature of participation of citizens within their community and their nation, while the second question analyzes the formal and informal social structures that affect that same participation (Marri, 2009). With these two questions and the answers they provide come the three ruling principles of any multicultural democracy: democracy as a path, membership in large and small publics, and diversity as paramount (Marri, 2003). The author further explains that so-called multicultural democracies that would respect these three ruling principles would benefit all citizens because they could potentially greatly diminish the existence of underclasses, this due to the fact that cultural and socio-economic diversity would be enclosed with political diversity. Also, since diversity would be viewed as pivotal, the freedoms and rights of all citizens would stand a better chance of not being curtailed. Essentially, a true multicultural democracy would, in Marri’s (2003) words: “reformulate socio-economic and cultural diversity beyond broad generalizations that essentialize and stereotype all groups” (p.271). However, what does that all mean in terms of education?

In the specific case of classroom-based multicultural democracy education, Marri (2003, 2009) stresses the importance of relying on critical thinking and critical pedagogy, thorough disciplinary content, and the building of a community. He further states that any school which strives to implement these three educational principles will in essence serve as a multicultural democracy. It will exemplify to students, or at the very least it has the potential to exemplify to them, what life ought to be in a truly multicultural democratic society. Looking deeper into the three elements of multicultural democracy in action in the classroom Marri (2003) cites Parker (2001) in describing critical pedagogy: “[it] engages students in social problem solving by

enabling them to think about which problems are worth solving, according to whom, to what ends, and in whose favor” (Marri, 2003, p. 272). Critical pedagogy, therefore, is intended to stimulate students’ critical thinking abilities (DeWitt, 2003). However, I personally prefer McLaren’s (2003) take on the matter:

School should provide students with a language of criticism and a language of hope. These languages should be used in order to prepare students to conceptualize systematically the relationship among their private dreams and desires and the collective dreams of the larger social order. New generations of students must be capable of analyzing the social and material conditions in which dreams are given birth, and are realized, diminished, or destroyed. More importantly, students need to be able to recognize which dreams and which dreamers are dangerous to the larger society, and why this is the case. (pp.178-179)

Prose aside, the above definitions of critical pedagogy speak to the same goal: a reconceptualization of people’s democracies, which would imply that every social, political, economic, and cultural difference be heard, especially those of specific groups, such as the ones I have cited as examples earlier, which have been, throughout history, severely shortchanged.

Where content is concerned, the imperative becomes about going beyond the accepted mainstream academic knowledge usually dispensed to students with regard to all the different mandatory school subjects. Certainly, the need to teach reading, writing, math, second languages, sciences, and so on is absolutely not questioned. However, the manner in which we teach and the specific aspects we teach in terms of values, appropriate and non-appropriate behaviors, and reflected opinions need to be closely monitored. For instance, the hidden curriculum, referred to

by authors such as McLaren (2003) fits in this category. The veiled lessons learned through the hidden curriculum are indeed powerful ones. This is how Jay (2003) describes the process:

If we view schools then as microcosms of society, children (particularly those who belong to the subordinate classes of our society) are taught the values, ideas, objectives, and the cultural and political meanings of the dominant class. Although there is certainly a degree of this instruction going on through the formal curriculum (e.g., government and civics courses), it is widely dispersed through the hidden curriculum. Indeed, the hidden curriculum has its origins in both cultural reproduction and consensus theories of schooling that support the argument that children are subjected to considerable elements of socialization in schools that are not part of the formal curricular content. (p.7)

In order to change this process then, we need a thorough disciplinary content. One that will emphasize transformative academic knowledge (Marri, 2003, 2009) which will serve to expose to students an alternative type of knowledge that itself exposes and critiques the standard norms, concepts, paradigms, viewpoints and values of dominant society.

Finally, the last principle is about building a community (Marri, 2003, 2009). That is an environment of learning that includes not only all the members of the class and the school at large, such as students, teachers, principals, social workers, etc, but as well goes beyond the walls of the classroom and the school to include, parents, family members, the neighborhood, places of worship, local businesses even. The object of such a community of learning is to ensure an all inclusive political participation of students and people around them, on both a small and large scale, that will ultimately warrant the creation of a public vision of a multicultural

democratic society (DeWitt 2003, Marri, 2003, 2009). However, my question remains: how does one go about creating, in the context of a classroom, active citizens?

Marri (2009) provides an interesting example. His appraisal of a secondary school social studies teacher who makes a point of assisting his racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse class in becoming active political participants in democratic life is compelling. It was actually inspiring for me to read about the lessons provided by the participant teacher who combined formal academic teaching with a democratic and multicultural perspective. Marri's study actually took place in an alternative school that combines formal academic learning with a work study program. At the time of the research, his participant teacher, Mr. Sinclair, was a U.S. history teacher to a group of fifteen high school students. Some of those teenage students were already parents, others lived on their own, and all of them were coming from social and economic challenged backgrounds. Marri went on to analyze Mr. Sinclair's educational unit on the Civil Rights Movement in the United-States to basically find out how a teacher can possibly foster in a group of disenfranchised students a sense of political activism. He essentially discovered that Mr. Sinclair purposefully chose to delve deeper into one particular aspect of the Civil Rights Movement in order to give his students the opportunity to exercise their own critical thinking and judgment skills (Marri, 2003). I believe this teacher gave his students the possibility to have a voice, and more importantly an informed voice. In his concluding remarks Marri (2003) states the following:

This study confirmed that implementing multicultural democratic education is indeed difficult. Mr. Sinclair is a good teacher who uses critical pedagogy, building of community, and transformative disciplinary content and skills to accomplish this goal. However, these goals come at

the expense of mainstream content and skills that are increasingly emphasized on standardized exams under NCLB [the No Child Left Behind act]. (p. 17)

Undoubtedly, fulfilling the job of creating informed future citizens- if that is indeed part of teachers' professional mandate as I believe it is- will not happen in the blink of an eye. Both Marri and Mr. Sinclair seem to know that. I certainly know that. Part of why this is such a problem is best summed up by Jay (2003):

Essentially, I believe that the difficulty lies in the failure to understand that transformative knowledge is dangerous. It threatens those dominant groups in our society who have a vested interest in the perpetuation of the mainstream academic knowledge that supports the maintenance of dominant structures, long-present inequities, and the current power arrangements in the United States that often serve to subordinate racial minorities. Herein lies the heart of the matter—the intertwining of power and race. The teaching of transformative knowledge poses a serious threat to the dominant power structures operating in American society that privileges Whites over all other racial groups. (p. 5)

It is quite clear to me that the words United-States and America could be replaced by the names of other countries, Canada to mention only one. Still, sadly, based on both my academic and professional experiences in the field of education, I concur with Jay's (2003) assessment of the situation. Despite that fact, however, it is important to state that teachers are not without tools to counteract dominant societal structures and to give rise to informed and active future citizens. The following educational avenue, the third and last in this section, is yet another one of those

tools. It represents an educational competence, one that has, perhaps on the surface, less to do with academics and more with social behavior. Indeed, as opposed to the narrative and democratic types of multiculturalism, the notion of intercultural competence calls into play peoples' ability to communicate through, despite, and beyond their differences.

Intercultural competence

Have you ever stood in a room trying to get your eyes to truly recognize the color on the walls? The person next to you might be arguing it's a beautiful, warm, creamy white shade, but you might be tempted to argue it's not quite so, because you would instead perceive a pretty, but colder, pearly white hue. Differences can be subtle, deceiving even, for the sun may be creating a glare effect that could somehow alter the perception of the true pigment. Then again, one person's eyesight may not be quite the same as someone else's. After much reading on the matter I have decided multiculturalism and interculturalism are akin to a shade of color on a wall that different people perceive differently. However, the key to understanding the differences between these two educational philosophies is found, I think, in the perception of their subtleties.

Always keeping in mind my goal of bridging theoretical knowledge and practice, so as to achieve praxis, I have given the mechanics of teaching a lot of thought, considering not only my academic credentials, but also the public with whom I interact. The makeup of my classrooms is ever changing from year to year. We, who are public school educators, are not in control of the cultural diversity of our student population. What we are in control of, if we are perceptive enough, are our own ideas, biases, values, and opinions. That, however, is not the same as being able to put all of those cognitive processes and emotions aside in order to simply teach a school subject to a group of culturally diverse students. Being aware of ourselves as human beings who happen to be teachers and also being aware of our students as human beings with their own ideas

and cultural beliefs is, in my opinion, a huge part of the complexity involved in teaching that is often forgotten, and even disregarded. Therefore, simply putting forward ideals of multicultural education to one's teaching and not taking the time to create constructive and positive interaction patterns between culturally diverse individuals is somehow missing the point. Bennett and Salonen (2007) state it clearly and succinctly: "cultural knowledge does not equal intercultural competence" (p. 46). Being aware of different cultures is not the same as being able to successfully meander through cultural diversity and effectively communicate with cultural "others." Man Ling Lee (2005), for her part, asserts that the imperative is about "going beyond embracing diversity for diversity's sake" (p. 202), which would imply that in terms of the curriculum educators need to foster intercultural thinking as opposed to simply fostering multicultural recognition. Indeed, "diversity in and of itself is of little value unless we can enhance communication among diverse individuals and groups" (p. 202). However, yet again, my question remains: how do teachers manage to apply theoretical prescriptions like fostering intercultural thinking skills in daily classroom life?

Oddly enough, I believe the answer to this question begins with teachers themselves. Putting it simply, if we want to inflame the intercultural thinking muscle of our students, first, we need interculturally competent teachers, and second, we need a relevant intercultural curriculum. In short, we need intercultural education! Because this type of education is supposed to be the one we are doing here in Quebec, I wanted to understand it or at least begin to. For you see, it was news to me. I unfortunately did not know it was part of my professional mandate to teach in an intercultural manner and with intercultural objectives. In my university training, in my teaching internships, and in exchanges I had and have with fellow teachers the notion of multiculturalism was and is entertained at large but of interculturalism, not a word.

The Quebec Ministry of Education, in 1998, published *A School for the Future* which is the policy statement for Educational Integration and Intercultural Education. It essentially calls for a joint effort between the education milieu and society in general to realize Quebec's promise of creating a diversified and inclusive society (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 1998). This proposal claims to sets forth intercultural imperatives in terms of educational ideals, mandates, and objectives. Sadly, I have not been able to find within this document a satisfactory definition or explanation of what intercultural education truly is. I have read elsewhere of the importance of dialogue (Wiesand & al, 2008, Bennett & Salonen, 2007, Man Ling Lee, 2005), and intercultural competence (DeJaeghere & Zhang, 2008) but these important factors are not mentioned in the document. Three intercultural guidelines are given under the heading of "Learning how to live together in a Francophone, democratic and pluralistic society" (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 1998, pp. 21-24). However, these guidelines focus mainly on the imperative of learning French for newly arrived immigrant, future full fledged Quebecers. French, the language of public life as it is called in the document, is stated as being hard to master and therefore must be viewed as an on-going learning process. Furthermore, it is also stated that the necessary link to gaining access to Quebec's values and its cultural and historical heritage can be found, dare I say exclusively, in knowledge of the French language. The intercultural curriculum is described as follows:

It is important for educational institutions to share Québec's heritage, history, values and customs, and its pride in its progress in all domains with all students, but especially with recent immigrants. Recognition of the fact that the host society is a largely French-speaking entity in the North American context should be a major focus of the integration

approach used. It is also necessary, in an inclusive approach, to fully recognize the contributions (in the economic, cultural, artistic, scientific, sports, linguistic and religious fields, and so on) of all members of Québec society, whatever their origin. (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 1998, p. 24).

I believe that within this quote it is apparent that the notion of integration passes ahead of intercultural ideals. In essence, it could be understood in this way: get to know us “de souche” Québécois and our language, our values and our cultural and historical heritage before, and then we will get to know about you newly arrived immigrants. Ghosh (2004) provides a similar understanding when she refers to the policy of intercultural education in this province in the following terms: “Interculturalism means a Quebec that will be pluralistic in outlook, but Francophonic through its reliance on the medium of the French language” (p. 558). She adds that, unfortunately, “although many cultural communities make up Quebec society, their urgent needs have been dealt with only within the context of Quebec nationalism, rather than on their own merit” (pp. 560-561). Perhaps we, here in Quebec, have overlooked the founding principles of intercultural education. Consequently, what exactly are those founding principles?

Parallel to this French Canadian viewpoint, I found a European international report entitled *Sharing Diversity: National Approaches to Intercultural Dialogue in Europe*. Done after an exhaustive study, and published by the European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research, this report states as follows the objectives of intercultural education:

- to teach children and young people how to deal with cultural differences and diversity in society and to give them the necessary skills, knowledge and attitude to acquire this ability (eg. skills in intercultural communication and conflict

solving, insight into the workings of a multicultural society, analysis of one's own cultural values, standards and assumptions);

- to promote tolerance, mutual respect and understanding, openness to individuals and groups with different cultural, ethnic, national, religious background, etc.;
- to combat racism, xenophobia, discrimination, prejudices and stereotypes, etc.;
- and
- to provide teachers with additional professional skills so that they can work effectively in culturally and ethnically mixed classes and schools. (Wiesand *et al.*, 2008, p. 40).

Furthermore, the report puts at the very heart of this type of education the notion of dialogue and the development of competencies and skills within the framework of an intercultural curriculum that encompasses not only content but also attitudes and behaviors:

Under the guise of an "intercultural approach", activities within a *formal setting* are pursued in the class room both in terms of the *content learned* (e.g. revised, culturally sensitive curricula in courses of history, civic education, geography etc.) as well as in the *attitude and behaviour* of teachers as well as students towards "newcomers" with different cultural backgrounds. (p. 40).

The report also informs us that unfortunately, at the time of the study, the recognition of the importance of intercultural education had not been acknowledged by all European countries and that, in addition, the notion of intercultural competence had not been endorsed for younger students, those at the primary and secondary levels. It only seemed to be taken into account at the higher levels of education. If it is agreed upon that intercultural competence is "a skill to be

acquired as part of a life-long learning process” (Wiesand *et al.*, 2008), which is what the report clearly states on several occasions, then is it not a problem if we only start to consider the importance of intercultural competence at the college and university levels? Indeed, such a skill will not magically infuse an individual the moment she or he steps into an institution of higher learning. I believe the seeds need to be planted much earlier. A major part of this problem is found in the issue regarding the content of information provided to younger students via textbooks and school materials. The study unearthed instances of skewed views of history, unequal representations of cultural groups, and examples of stereotyping and discrimination within some textbooks. It is also important to mention the study also discovered measures and steps that had been taken by different ministries of education in order to rectify the problem. Still, with regard to teaching materials, educational objectives and the curriculum in general, this recommendation is made:

The main challenge in this context is to overcome narrow concepts of the curriculum, to avoid early selection and to enable a holistic learning approach as a true-to-life process, supporting the creative talents of each child. In such teaching and learning settings it soon becomes evident that students with a migrant background do not represent a problem but personify manifold resources like languages, literature, art, religion as well as social behaviour patterns which can be useful to reach educational objectives. (p. 41).

I still maintain the way to achieving such a noble goal is through teachers themselves. Yes the curriculum is important, I will not deny that, but the people actively putting it to life everyday in

the classroom are even more so. Then, how do we as professionals in the education field ensure our growing intercultural competence?

DeJaeghere and Zhang (2008) provide an interesting answer to this question. At first recognizing the need to enhance teachers' intercultural competence in order to better captivate their culturally diverse student populations, these two researchers set out to discover the impact professional development programs based on or guided by the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) have on teachers' perceptions of their intercultural competence. The DMIS is used to scale people's portrayal of diversity along a continuous line of six stages; three of them ethnocentric which essentially imply either a denial, a defense towards or a minimization of difference, and the other three ethnorelative where there is the presence of "increasing levels of intercultural sensitivity... described as: acceptance of difference, adaptation to difference, and integration of a bicultural or multicultural world view" (p. 257). Working with 284 in-service teachers and teachers' aides employed in nine different suburban US schools at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, DeJaeghere and Zhang (2008) set out to create group and individual profiles to assess where all stand on the diversity scale with regard to intercultural development and sensitivity. The results were then used to help assess the training needs of specific teachers, of different school as a whole, and also to evaluate the appropriateness of different professional development programs.

In the end, it was revealed that the use of both group and individual profiles were perceived as helpful by teachers in that it gave them a better sense of their intercultural abilities. Second, training programs correlated to the DMIS were unveiled as important factors in teachers' perceived intercultural competence mostly because they promote the understanding of cultural competence as an on-going process. Finally, the most important factor was found to be

the link between teachers' perceived needs with regard to cultural issues in their classroom and school environments, and the professional development programs that cater specifically to those needs. However, what I find most interesting about this study is the chance it gives teachers to take a look at their own notions and beliefs with regard to knowledge about and improvement of their intercultural abilities. Indeed, if we recognize the need to cater to the intercultural needs of students, then we must be able to rely on the intercultural abilities of their teachers, and if those teachers are not given the chance to cater to their own needs of knowledge on intercultural issues, then, we are going nowhere! DeJaeghere and Zhang (2008) say it best: "participation in ongoing and meaningful professional development can have an impact on teachers' perceived intercultural competence" (p.266). The operative words here are meaningful and ongoing. After all, who wakes up one morning and claims to be, once and for all, completely interculturally competent? If only it were that simple. Then again, if it were this writing effort would undoubtedly be futile.

In the end, thankfully, the three options I have just reviewed in this chapter in no way cater to futility. On the contrary, they have provided me with possible pathways to a better understanding of my professional responsibilities. Phillion (2002) through her careful elaboration of narrative multiculturalism renewed my belief in the need to create a more intimate link between my multicultural theoretical knowledge and my multicultural practical knowledge as both of these types of know-how, back and forth, influence one another. Furthermore, the recognition of the three qualities of her concept— thinking narratively, being in the midst of lives, and making meaning of experience in relationships— remind us to constantly navigate in-between theory and practice so as to create a bridge of understanding between the two. On the other hand, Marri (2003, 2009) convinced me of the need to instill in my students the conviction

that they can be effective and relevant democratic political players. Essentially, she urges teachers to use critical thinking and critical pedagogy to engage with their students in problem solving and, more importantly, to present them with a thorough disciplinary content that emphasizes transformative knowledge. DeJaeghere and Zhang (2008), for their part, inspired me to take matters in my own hands and truly examine my intercultural abilities as a person and as a teacher in order to constantly reevaluate my needs in terms of on-going professional development. In so doing, such advice gives this cohort of teachers that I am a part of the opportunity to explore an intercultural curriculum where content, attitudes and behaviors are geared toward the development of intercultural competencies and skills. Furthermore, and just as importantly, it provides us with academic tools that enable us to transfer to our students the desire to think and communicate interculturally. Different points of view colored by different perspectives, decisively offering a wealth of information and possibilities. I believe no matter what the color on the wall is- because one person's eyesight is not the same as someone else's for it has been tweaked by life experiences, beliefs, education, stories, living environment, family members and friends, aspirations and dreams- different people will ultimately perceive that color differently. I suppose those different points of view are part of what makes life amongst a culturally diverse population interesting and worthwhile. However, to put it simply, for those moments where this worldwide diversity fact is not seen in such a good light, we need help. I assume this is why the notions of multiculturalism and interculturalism are not the only educational avenues offered to teachers who are interested, like me, in cultural diversity issues as they play out in their classrooms and school environments. Therefore, let us explore the anti-racist perspective.

CHAPTER III

TEACHING TOWARDS SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY FOR ALL; THE ANTI-RACIST PERSPECTIVE

This chapter tackles the issue of racism, primarily its counterpart, anti-racism, as it relates to the education milieu. The imperative being an achievement of a comprehensive perception of issues of justice and equity to be applied to school curriculums and be recognized as an important educational goal. However, before we can even begin to think in those terms we need to understand how racism operates in and out of schools. James (1999) defines it in the following terms:

Simply stated, *racism* is the uncritical acceptance of a negative social definition of a colonized or subordinate group typically identified by physical features (i.e., race- black, brown, yellow, red). These “racialized groups” are believed to lack certain abilities or characteristics, which in turn characterizes them as culturally and biologically inferior. (p.133)

He goes on to add that “a key component of racism is power, not in terms of ‘everyday’ influence one individual might have over another, but in terms of influence that is supported by ideological, economical, political, social and cultural conditions of the society” (p.134). When all is said and done, this aspect of power seems the most important to mention for once this pillar of racism is exposed it then becomes easier to understand how it operates.

Indeed, racism seeps through on different levels: individual or personal, institutional, and structural or, sometimes known as cultural (James, 1999, Gaine, 2000). At the individual level we find the personal negative or derogatory beliefs people hold towards others different from

them. Institutional racism refers to the established structures and policies that systematically devalue some groups of people within society at large, or specifically within the structures of a particular organization. At last, on a structural level racism pertains:

...to the way in which the rooted inequalities of society operate *to justify* the allocation of racial groups to particular categories and class sites. It explains how the ideas of inferiority and superiority, based on socially selected physical characteristics, and which are found in society's norms and values, operate to exclude racial minority group members from accessing and participating in major social and cultural institutions.

(James, 1999, p. 135, emphasis added)

In this sense it is most important to tackle structural racism head on for it is part of the very fabric of society. It infuses different institutions of the state. It shapes individual and collective ideologies, and it insidiously operates on a national level (Gaine, 2000) so that it categorically denies minority groups "access to qualifications, education, and skills necessary for full participation in society" (James, 1999, p. 135). Spencer (1998) states that it is precisely because multicultural education is unable to tackle this aspect of inequality in society that it is inadequate as a form of education towards tolerance, and that we should instead focus on developing anti-racist education programs and policies. He, along with Gay (2004), argues that the simple teaching about different cultures will not breed true respect, care and acceptance of difference and diversity. In fact, the idea that close proximity to cultural difference, as in the context of a multicultural education activity such as, for example, the quintessential ethnic food fair, will, de facto, engender tolerance and acceptance seems to be their greatest criticism of multicultural education as they do not believe that it will. The main argument for specifically establishing an

anti-racist type of education would then be “that multicultural curriculum neither addresses the elimination of racism directly nor provides strategies for empowering diverse groups to counteract racism” (Mattai, 1992, as cited by Spencer, 1998, p. 34). So then, in effect, what is anti-racist education?

In a concise effort to explain what he believes anti-racism education is and what it can do, Dei (1996) defines it as an educational discourse that is “an action-oriented strategy for institutional, systematic change to address racism and the interlocking systems of social oppression” (p. 25). He adds that this academic project “explicitly names the issues of race and social difference as issues of power and equity rather than as matters of cultural and ethnic variety” (p. 25). The goal of this type of education is therefore one of profound change in society. It implies a transformative imperative, a challenge of the status quo, an exploration of power relations, a movement that goes way beyond issues of discrimination and prejudice at the individually level, all in order to recreate society at large along the lines of legitimacy, justice, and equity for everyone.

Most interestingly, Dei (1996) created a list of ten basic principles that characterize anti-racism education which relates specifically to the context of Canadian schooling. He admits his list is open-ended as others may see fit to supplement to it, and he also insists that these different principles play on one another and are therefore interrelated. In my opinion, these ten educational standpoints are essential as they shed light on programs, policies, even belief systems that directly affect what goes on in Canadian classrooms, nine and other teachers’. Therefore, I will take the time to succinctly enumerate them. At first, recognize the social effects and meanings of race, as this notion plays a pivotal role in the advent of social change. Indeed, “some people contest the social meaning of race as part of ongoing political attempts to deny

racism exists as a set of ideological and material practices which serve to differentiate and discriminate among social groups” (p. 27). This means that if we forget to acknowledge race as a political and intellectual concept, then we overlook issues of structural and institutional racism, therefore it becomes impossible, or at least very extremely difficult, to recognize the need for deep societal change and, subsequently, to act to bring about change.

Secondly, it is important to understand the full scope of social oppression. Race represents one possible form of oppression, gender, class, sexuality, disability, are others and these different forms of oppression all intersect within the confines of Human social experiences. Dei (1996) refers to this second principle as “integrative anti-racism” and it implies that if we desire to fully grasp the workings of racism and to act to counter its oppressive effects it is imperative to look at the problem from all possible sides.

Then, Dei (1996) suggests questioning White Male power and privilege. This principle brings up the question of why Whiteness as a social identity is persistently identified with the dominant institutions of society in terms of benefits and privileges. Essentially, the object here is to explore and critique the link between Whiteness and maleness with ultimate power both from contemporary and historical perspectives to grasp how these meanings and understandings are socially constructed and reenacted. This directly leads to Dei’s fourth principle. This one calls for the recognition of the marginalization of some peoples’ voices, those that originate from allegedly subordinate groups. The goal here is to shed light on the devaluing of marginal voices, to expose how knowledge is socially constructed to specifically favor the voices of the dominant group. The following principle suggests that “every form of education must provide for a holistic understanding and appreciation of the human experience” (Dei, 1996, p. 30). It seeks to instill in students knowledge of and belief in their selves to consequently be able to relate to the selves of

others. Dei is convinced this is the starting block on which change can start to make its run. First change yourself, then change others, and finally change the world. Thus, “anti-racism education seeks to draw connections between the individual self and the community in a manner that allows the self to be grounded in a collective consciousness” (p. 31).

The sixth principle deals with identity. Here, Dei implies a complex notion of students’ and teachers’ identities; one that seeks to explore how their personal, individual forms of identity in terms of race, class, gender, in short their innermost self, interplays with the more inclusive group social identities they also identify with, all of which evolving within the specific context of schooling (Dei, 1996). Therefore, there is a need “for schools to develop a more critical understanding of how the varied identities of students and teachers affect the process of schooling and the ways of knowing, teaching, learning and understanding the world” (p. 32).

What follows is the task of facing the issues of difference and diversity in our schools. Dei (1996) views this principle as the representation of a pedagogical need to create inclusive schools that operate as socially responsible working communities where the knowledge, experiences and perspectives of each member is valued and recognized as a benefit to all. Furthermore, this principle also speaks to the inclusion of the members of the community at large, such as parents for example, into the community of the school. However, what is particularly compelling here is the idea of actually turning individual differences into teaching and learning resources.

The eighth principle of anti-racism education “acknowledges the traditional role of the education system in producing and reproducing not only racial, but also gender, sexual and class-based inequalities in society” (Dei, 1996, p. 34). The problem here is not that teachers, as a group of educated professionals, are incapable of admitting to that fact, it is perhaps more a question of

most teachers thinking it is all in the past. In essence, being able to acknowledge that once upon a time schools had a knack for reproducing hierarchical social orders but, however, being convinced that those days have come and gone, and that now all students are treated in an equitable manner. Are they really? That is precisely what Dei's (1996) eighth principle refers to.

The structures of public schooling continually serve to segment the labour force by systematically consigning students certain social categories or classes. ... The resultant inequalities among students, as they negotiate the process of schooling, become constituted in the idea of student "success" or "failure". These inequalities are also consequential in that they offer a supply of workers who are separated hierarchically. This is not necessarily acknowledged in popular discourses constructed around individualized notions of "student success" and "student failures." (Dei, 1996, p. 34)

The ninth principle, calls for the conceptualization of the social, political, and economic structures of society in a way that recognizes how it directly affect students experiencing school problems (Dei, 1996). In fact, Dei argues that their issues with school absolutely cannot be understood separately from the social circumstances that surrounds them. If we take, for example, the prevalent drop out rates, Dei insists that we must ask whose expectations this phenomena is tied to. Here in the province of Quebec, in a March 2000 publication, the ministry of education known as the MELS (Ministère de l'Éducation, des Loisirs et des Sports) issued that the drop out rates— those refer to students who are either physically not in school or did not obtain a diploma— were between 10 and 20% among seventeen year olds. With percentages like these, it then becomes quite reasonable to ask ourselves questions. So, do we take the simple path and argue that these students dropping out are simply irrational and irresponsible, or, on the

contrary, do we take the higher road and recognize that perhaps there are other factors that legitimize their decision to drop out of school? Finally, the last principle explores the notion of blaming the living and family environment of students for their school problems. Dei asserts that “such explanations only serve to divert attention away from a critical analysis of the institutional structures within which the delivery of formal education takes place” (p. 35). Thus, the goal here is essentially to ask ourselves are students failing school, or is it, on the contrary, the schools which are failing students?

What seems to be most important about these teaching principles is what all of them require from educators. Indeed, a simple and basic knowledge of what anti-racism education is represents nothing more than another descriptive educational prescription if we who work in education are not capable of first exploring ourselves and our beliefs as teachers and human beings, and second fully examine and apply to our daily classroom practices this anti-racist educational concept. In short, “recognize what anti-racism is good for, what it can do and any possible limitations of the discourse” (Dei, 1996, p. 36). Therefore, if the prime factor is the issue of difference studied from the perspective of those who hold subordinate places in society, how do we effectively teach about difference in our classrooms? Certainly not by simply resorting to teaching and learning about different cultures from what I basically call a cultural voyeurism standpoint, of which the food fair alluded to earlier is an example. Indeed, Spencer (1998) calls such insignificant attempts “tourist curriculum”. Rather, the answer is found in the exploration of the power relations which shape the construction and broadcast of knowledge. Therefore, “the anti-racism educator must assist students to learn how the dominant culture systematically skews a critical understanding, acknowledgement and appreciation of marginalized groups in the school system” (Dei, 1996, p. 37). Consequently the need is for an

inclusive curriculum; one where different voices could be heard. Essentially, as it is now the situation is akin to a poorly lit theater stage. Only some of the actors are skillfully put in the light, the others are there acting out the words, but virtually no one in the audience sees or hears them. Whereas under the light of a more inclusive curriculum the voices and performances of marginalized groups as well as those of dominant groups could equally be heard and seen. Indeed the skewed points of view Dei (1996) refers to would not come into play or at the very least would be less prevalent, if a more inclusive curriculum was part of the educational landscape.

Representation is therefore one of the primary aspects of an inclusive curriculum (Dei, 1996) but the idea of inclusiveness also pertains to the institution of school itself. So, equity in terms of the just treatment of all members within the school system, and diversity in terms of the socially constructed and hierarchically maintained issue of difference also need to be addressed. In essence then, an inclusive curriculum part of and inclusive schooling environment could be described as follows:

[It] means opening spaces for alternative and, sometimes, oppositional paradigms to flourish in the schools. It means ensuring representation of diverse populations in the schools. It means developing a broad-based curriculum and diverse teaching strategies, and having support systems in the schools that enhance the conditions for success for all students. (Dei, 1996, p. 79)

The starting point of any such attempt at this type of education is always, according to Dei (1996), the deep curriculum. As I understand it, this terminology refers to the official and the hidden curriculum, as well as the context in which schools' rules and regulations dictate the lived

experiences of the students who evolve within this structure. In effect, a recognition of the deep curriculum puts into the foreground the relational issues of power between schools' different players- students, educators, principals, parents, staff members, social workers, psychologists, etc.- that prompt different outcomes, attitudes, behaviors, and values that ultimately "entrench hegemonic ideas and interests of dominant groups" (Dei, 1996, p. 79). So within the confines of the deep curriculum it is possible to fully recognize racism, sexism, and classism, among others, as being a part of our Canadian educational culture. This, subsequently, should lead us to make a potential move towards an effective transformation of our education environment, for let us keep in mind that "it is generally argued that the lack of an inclusive school environment makes it difficult for marginalized minority youth to develop a sense of identification with, and connectedness to, their schools" (pp. 80-81).

I was fortunate enough to find an article appropriately titled "*There's no racism at my school, it's just joking around*" which illustrates just how pertinent Dei's (1996) theoretical ideas are with regard to the deep curriculum. Its author, Raby (2004), undertook the task of interviewing twelve young women living and going to school in or close to the Toronto area in Canada in order to find out how they perceive and talk about race and racism. The comments of her interviewees enabled this researcher to discern three major patterns with regard to racism. Firstly, when referring to instances of racism at their school the young women either downplayed its effect or categorically denied the event they witnessed or had taken part in as racist. For instance, a lighter skin color was deemed more fashionable and representative of an attractive ideal for women; however, there was no recognition what so ever of the implied racist attitude towards a darker skin color. Secondly, Raby (2004) noticed racism was narrowly conceptualized in that it was perceived to exist only in terms of extreme violence. Or, it seemed only to involve

Blacks and Whites, as other racialized groups were simply not acknowledged. Finally, it was conceived in an individualized sphere, as in one person against another. Sadly, the young women did not seem to notice that racism also operates on deeper conceptual and institutionalized levels. Thirdly, identity was perceived from a White Anglo Canadian perspective, and issues of race and culture were taken up from a non-white perspective as if race and culture only refer to non-white students. Essentially, Whiteness as a cultural heritage went unrecognized by most young women as did the privileges that go along with it. A Canadian identity was recognized but somehow the fact that other cultural traditions, those that do not fall in the typical White Anglo category, were not included and seen as a part of the true Canadian identity. Whiteness was even perceived as a disadvantage, as some students stated that the tides had turned and that somehow racism towards White people now existed.

On one hand, it is most interesting to note that the young students taking part in this study wholeheartedly condemned racism. However, on the other hand, they totally disconnected themselves and their own behavior from instances of racism at their school. Indeed, Raby (2004) notes that:

...comments underscored the respondents' own investments in either being non-racist or at least being perceived to be non-racist. Yet this hostility towards racism also facilitated a muting of any potential instances of racism that the respondents might identify—if racism is so dreadful, how could anyone imagine it really taking place at their schools? Many, in fact, denied that racism exists in their schools at all. Yet often while claiming that their schools were free of racism, ... these young women cited

instances of what I would interpret to be racist behaviour and racist stereotyping. (p.370)

In a parallel form, Raby (2004) ultimately comes to conclusions for anti-racism education in Canada that float along the same lines as Dei's (1996) ten principles. I believe she makes one more contribution in that she implores us to notice it is possible to hold racist and anti-racist beliefs at the same time, implying that there is a plurality factor to racism that can possibly blur our understanding of this complex phenomenon. Essentially, she states that "racism is not always straightforwardly reproduced, rather people can receive and participate in expressions of racism, new racism and anti-racist discourses in diverse ways" (Raby, 2004, p. 380). Therefore she sheds a light on "the deeper complexities, and particularly the pernicious subtleties of racism" (p.380) all the while hoping to open a line of dialogue. Then, a question surfaces: how do we effectively counteract these convoluted aspects of racism out in order to create the possibility of dialogue with students in our schools? Dei's (1996) proposed solution is the development of multi-centric education and curriculum. This proposition goes a bit further with the idea of inclusive teaching. As opposed to simply adding the perspective of subordinate groups' voices to the overrepresented dominant White voices, a multi-centric approach would instead bring unheard voices to the epicenter of the curriculum. He describes this imperative quite beautifully as the effort "to bring all minority students onto the stage of the school drama as major actors, not merely as players supporting an all-White European cast" (p. 83).

The cornerstones of any move towards more inclusive, multi-centric education are, without contest, educators and teachers themselves (Dei, 1996, Gaine, 2000). They, along with their students, are the custodians of the development and the study of curriculum that challenges Eurocentric voices and power relations, and stimulate the emergence of alternative avenues of

knowledge. However, attempts at giving rise to an anti-racism, multi-centric, inclusive curriculum to replace our traditional curriculum will not happen with a snap of our fingers. We need to be prepared for indeed, it is one thing to recognize that teachers represent the starting block of any attempt at anti-racist education, it is quite another to know if they are actually ready and willing to be progressive educators engaged in anti-racism education.

So, first, are we teachers ready? Have we taken the time to investigate our beliefs, our biases, our values on a pedagogical level, certainly, but as well, and perhaps more importantly, on a personal level? For, as Gaine (2000) reminds us “it follows that change for teachers at the level of *personal* racism is crucial, since shared changes in curriculum assumptions would entail individual teachers examining their own frames of reference before anti-racist change could take hold” (p. 71). Countless times I have heard, in staff room conversations, fellow teachers making highly stereotypical remarks that were not only acknowledged, but worse went unchallenged. It appears that sometimes it does not take much to fall into a pattern of personal discourse that is less than laudable even if one is a truly dedicated and caring educator. Racism “is part of our social and cultural system that operates to inform our constructions and naming of others, our beliefs about them, and ultimately our interactions with them” (James, 1999, p.163) so “anti-racism here is a cultural and ideological struggle” (Gaine, 2000, p.71).

Second, are we teachers prepared? Dei (1996) offers additional key understandings which directly refer to teachers and classroom practices. However, I believe it is more pertinent to paraphrase these key understandings in the form of questions, for if we are to truly move towards anti-racism perspectives in Canadian education we need to seriously examine how we, teachers, *do* school. Therefore, I find that examining our own frame of reference, as Gaine (2000) encourages us to do is perhaps more easily done with the help of a few appropriate questions.

Thus, have we teachers and educators, taken the time or have we been given the time, to understand how patriarchal and Eurocentric modes of schooling affect the way we teach? Are we apt to recognize how, to this day, school reproduces inequalities? Are we equipped to instill in all our students the need and desire to work within networks of cooperation? Are we ready to be, in everyday words and actions, living examples of anti-racism principles? Are we prepared to fight for the emergence of unheard voices? Are we willing and able to teach about the achievements of diverse social groups that make up the whole of our society? And finally, are we inclined to involve all educational players in our school system to tackle issues of racism and exclusion?

Indeed, a move towards anti-racism education would involve the transformation of the whole of the conventional. That is, the conventional teachers, the conventional curriculum, the conventional educational structures, the conventional schooling environment. Arguably, no small task! Yet, despite the grandeur of the project, it is still a possibility; if only we dare to answer these questions inspired by Dei's (1996) wisdom and act upon the answers we come up with.

So then, we could ask ourselves if this is all in our near future. If I were to answer such a question by the affirmative, I would be implying that anti-racist ideas and principles are indeed making their way into different spheres of the Canadian education system and, therefore, a desire for changes exists. Perhaps, the fact that I have chosen this particular issue as one of the main topics of this writing effort, in part, proves it. However, I have been a teacher working for a major Canadian school board long enough to know better. Changes take time, collaborative efforts, ideas, meetings, conferences, willingness to change, teacher training sessions, materiel, money and, perhaps even more importantly, a touch of insightful idealism. In all honesty then, I am not ready to categorically answer yes. I am more inclined to answer by the negative due to

the simple fact that there is much more to be done. Take for example this other problem lurking in our schoolyards and corridors: apparently, we now have the shadow of the “new racism” (Short & Carrington, 1996, James, 1999) with which we must cope. According to James, (1999) in Canadian context, this new form of racism seems to stem from the presence of racial minority groups trying to assert their rights in their country of adoption, which is perceived by the dominant majority as a threat to social and national harmony. Here is a conflict of values, attitudes, and ideologies; different and contrasting values, attitudes, and ideologies butting heads on the public stage. Short and Carrington (1996), for their part, explain this new racism in terms of a dominant homogenous culture perceived as the vital center, the heart, of the nation fighting for cohesiveness and protection of its cultural integrity in the midst of an ever increasing presence of culturally different immigrants. In the end, much tension is created between, if you will permit me for a second time the use of a typically Québécois term, “de souche” citizens and immigrant citizens. This, ultimately, can only lead to instances of rejection of these other racial minority groups of immigrants. Consequently, Raby’s (2004) hope of opening dialogue with students in order to shed light on racism’s deeper complexities, and pernicious subtleties has perhaps become more pressing than initially thought.

Short and Carrington’s (1996) study of 128 primary school age British children can serve as case and point. It deals with the impact of the new racism on the way children conceptualize their national identity. Ultimately, it points to a necessary need to engage with this new type of racism since the study revealed that “new racist sentiments were articulated by a few of the 9 year olds, suggesting that the generality of children in the upper reaches of the primary school are able to think in these terms and are thus vulnerable to new racist arguments” (pp. 68-69). In

light of this discovery the authors argue that conventional multicultural education is not adequate:

Evidence that children between the ages of 9 and 11 are able to conceptualise national identity in cultural terms highlights the need for primary and middle schools in particular to re-appraise their policies on 'race' and ethnicity. They must broaden their concerns to include the new racism and consider specifically whether it can be countered effectively by a continuation of what may be called 'conventional multicultural education', focusing on minority lifestyles and the contribution made by ethnic minorities to civilisation. Despite the prima facie relevance of the term, multicultural education, as currently conceived and practised is, in our view, inadequate as a solution. (p. 73)

Much like Spencer (1998) and Gay (2004), Short and Carrington (1996) do not believe familiarity will breed acceptance. On the contrary, they argue it can bring about resentment. Taking as example multi-faith teaching, they assert that this effort to open the eyes of White British children to other people's religious beliefs "does no more than demonstrate just how different and thus un-British they are" (p. 74). The fear is then that multi-faith teachings as part of a multicultural educational curriculum will, instead of fostering tolerance, only incite prejudice. Therefore, their first advice is to emphasize similarities while also taking the time to signal differences so that children have a balanced view of other cultural groups. In essence, it is a matter of offering students the chance to recognize that people are alike and different at the same time.

Secondly, Short and Carrington (1996) argue that, with regard to the issue of the new racism, children, mainly those of the dominant groups, should be given the opportunity to learn that other people's cultural differences are not a threat to an overall national identity.

Put simply, they must learn to distinguish unusual behaviour that is harmful or offensive to the interests of the wider community from that which is not. It follows from this that in addition to learning about cultural differences, children should be given an opportunity to debate openly (but with sensitivity and empathy) the merits of any cultural practice. (p. 76)

With regard to the curriculum, the two authors emphasize that we should be making sure it offers the possibility to explore the many contributions various cultural minorities have made to society at large as opposed to simply silencing their voices or, delegating them to a subordinate and insignificant position in our shared history. Finally, where teachers are concerned, Short and Carrington (1996) probably issue the greatest piece of wisdom of all: "check on what [your] pupils have learnt from a lesson or series of lessons, rather than assume that they have learnt what was intended" (p.77) . I can attest that this is quite valuable advice for I have made the mistake of assuming my students have learned what I intended them to, and been proven wrong, quite a few times. What is important for teachers to remember is that "it is not just a question of engaging with children's misconceptions about different cultures, but of doing so prior to imparting what is intended as new knowledge and understanding" (Short & Carrington, 1996, p.77). For, if we do not, the new knowledge will simply be buried under old stereotypical behaviors and beliefs.

In conclusion, let us remember that ultimately the goal of anti-racism education is to transform society, to challenge the status quo, and to acknowledge the power relations that

constantly recreate a social order where some specific population groups are devalued and unheard whereas others are given prominent status. Therefore, this anti-racist perspective to education that I have endeavored to describe throughout this chapter can be understood as an academic strategy that seeks to recreate society in a more equitable fashion, and thus, anti-racism educators are called upon to give their students the power to transform society and counter hegemonic ideals and interest, so as not to reproduce old social, cultural, and economic patterns of oppression. Dei's (1996) call for a profound change of our society through the adoption of an anti-racism form of education to be applied to our Canadian schooling system is therefore a manifestation of this desire for societal transformation. Indeed, his ten basic principles for anti-racism education that ultimately leads to his call for an inclusive or multi-centric curriculum where the voices of marginalized groups are finally heard, loud and clear, in every classroom seems to be the seminal point. However, I believe the primary goal is to finally understand how our educational process is structured and build to sustain the delivery of knowledge that ultimately seeks to achieve the recreation of old social structures of dominance and oppression. Knowledge and mainstream recognition of this particular educational pattern is undoubtedly the first necessary step towards change. Then, and only then, will it be possible to apply a truly inclusive form of curriculum to our schooling environments. After that, possibly, we may start to consider changing our frame of mind not only at the local and national levels, but as well on a world wide scale. Indeed, once we have begun to acknowledge the need to change our view of our immediate academic surroundings with regard to racism we can only move on outward, towards a world conscience.

CHAPTER IV
TEACHING TOWARDS WORLD CONSCIENCE;
THE GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP PERSPECTIVE

“The most important thing that schools can do is to make people aware that understanding the world is very much part of the requirement of being an educated person...” Fareed Zakaria (Thuermer, 2006, p. 86)

The link between Globalization and education is precisely what this chapter addresses. Indeed, one cannot claim to discuss issues of diversity and not take the time to address the effects Globalization has on our schooling systems for this complex social occurrence has considerable repercussions and, if we are to adequately tackle the spectrum of human cultural diversity represented in today’s classrooms, it is paramount for teachers to understand what truly moves this multifaceted phenomenon. For instance, in the 1980’s, when I was in grade school, as tradition would have it, come September my classmates, my teachers, and I would proudly pose for the official school year picture. Looking back at these photographs I can honestly say that they are fairly different from the ones I now take as a teacher with my own students. Today, students in general are of various religious denominations: Catholics, Jews, Muslims, Protestants, Hindus, Jehovah’s Witnesses to name only a few, and some, copying their parents’ beliefs, are even avowed atheist or agnostics. The color of their skins represents a pallet of different shades that goes from Snow White to Ebony Black, and they hail from every continent around the world. In any event, this simple account of my professional encounters with diversity goes to show that the evolution of student groups in schools has gone from an almost exclusively homogenous cultural, religious, and linguistic context to a fairly heterogeneous one. This leads

me to believe that the complex social movement of populations affecting my province and surely my country is part of a broader social event aptly named Globalization. However there is more than meets the eye, for this phenomenon is much more than just about people innocuously moving from one country to another.

To put it simply, Globalization perpetually exists as a result of the legacies conceded by dominant industrialized Western countries. The prevalence of economic forces, the flow of technological developments, and the boosted power of international markets seem to be corner stone factors of this ever progressing push towards a global world (Stromquist, 2002). In the end, the combined efforts of these factors create dynamics which result in rich industrialized corporations, big businesses and governments being able to impose their capitalist economic ideologies and systems on smaller and so called developing countries, ultimately, creating huge gaps in wealth (Singh, Kenway & Apple, 2005). I understand globalization as a socio-economic process that amounts to the combined forces of neo-liberal economic laws, international free markets, and capitalist ideals creating wealth on one side of the fence and wreaking social, environmental, political and economic havoc on the other. In an effort at being more positive though, perhaps I should say that it has the potential to create havoc as opposed to assert that it inevitably does. Future events, undoubtedly, will either prove me right or wrong. In the end however, “in examining globalization... it becomes crucial to recognize that its economic dimension is deeply guided by a development model based on the hegemony of the market and the role of the state as a key supporter of the market decisions” (Stromquist, 2002, p. 7).

Furthermore, this well grounded phenomenon is also accompanied by changes in cultural aspects of societies. Stromquist (2002) asserts that:

...with the arrival of greater levels of production and trade, new values have also emerged—values that are making individuals throughout the world much more interested in personal material success than in values that promote sensitivity to the needs of others and the protection of the small planet on which we live. (pp. 5-6)

All of which has an impact on education systems because, due to the fact that they instill knowledge, they can prove to be beneficial to the evolution of the all-encompassing marketplace economy. Indeed, the globalization machine demands technically skilled workers; competent women and men who will produce goods and at the same time will buy into the need to consume. Therefore, education has the potential to serve the needs of the global market in that it can be used— and indeed it is— to promote business oriented values as well as create a skilled and complacent workforce. As Stromquist (2002) notes:

In other words, globalization has multiple dimensions—economic, technological, and political—all of which spill into culture and affect in all-encompassing ways the kinds of knowledge that are created, assigned merit, and distributed. (p. 3)

Consequently, the neo-liberal agenda through its policies that infuse the globalization process seems to dictate, with regard to education, that the desired outcomes of our modern schooling systems should revolve around today's worldwide economic realities. Thus, it emphasizes upon students particular values such as, and among others: efficiency, competition, and availability (Stromquist, 2002, Singh, Kenway & Apple, 2005). It certainly does not promote critical thinking and understanding skills, as those educational goals can and do challenge the outright acceptance of these values (Stromquist, 2000). For that reason, authors like Matthews

and Sidhu (2005), borrowing from Mitchell (2001), ask if the objective is not merely aimed at creating predominantly neo-liberal global subjects (p. 54), as opposed to creating purely global subjects who have the ability to critically reflect on their world and act to transform it when and where the need arises. Indeed, is there a hidden neo-liberal agenda clouding our understanding of our educational objectives? I believe a worthy question to ask, and one that undoubtedly deserves to be explored by teachers and students in classrooms around the world.

Ultimately though, I can argue three things with regard to neo-liberal ideologies and policies. First, they seem to be well rooted in our societies as they permeate our social consciousness. Second, they will not easily go away as there are strong financial incentives behind them. Third, they have the power to shape educational policies to suit their needs as they have ties with governmental systems that oversee issues of education (Stromquist, 2000, 2002). On the opposite end of the spectrum, Bovair and Griffith (2003) borrow Oxfam's definition of the global citizen and assert that it is:

“someone who:

- is aware of the wider world and has a sense of their own role as a world citizen
- respects and values diversity
- is willing to act to make the world a more equitable and sustainable place
- takes responsibility for their actions.” (p. 108)

It would seem that there is a bit of discrepancy between the understandings of the global phenomenon between the neo-liberal ideological pole which believes in the power of the market and the social education pole which acknowledges and respects diversity, strives to create responsible citizens and most of all aims to achieve equality. In the mean time however, where does that leave my colleagues and I as teachers of girls and boys who will inescapably grow up

to be part of this globalized world? What are we to do in order to better prepare hordes of students not only to deal with issues of worldwide inequity and injustice that are and have the potential to be brought on by the globalization process, but also to fight back against these issues in their day to day lives?

Walker and Shuangye (2007) provided us with an interesting concept, which they borrow from Spariosu (2004): global intelligence. I believe it is worthwhile to explore this idea as it can be molded to suit different contexts. Originally the two authors apply it specifically to leadership in intercultural schools, but, I consider that it has the potential to be just as helpful for teachers wishing to explore with their students the effects of globalization. Accordingly, I believe one could argue that achieving global intelligence is akin to developing a social competence that undoubtedly affects how one understands the world. In fact, while emphasizing Spariosu's work, it is defined as follows by Walker and Shuangye (2007):

Global intelligence involves gaining an understanding of the intricacies, influence and place of culture. He [Spariosu] (2004: 38) defines global intelligence as 'the ability to understand, respond to and work toward what is in the best interest of and what will benefit all human beings'. He suggests that this can only emerge from 'continuing intercultural research, dialogue, negotiation and mutual cooperation' (2004: 39). In other words, it is an interactive learning phenomenon which considers global and local notions of cultural difference and identity. (p.191)

Therefore, if we agree that new values are infused and sustained into our social and cultural networks via neo-liberal ideologies and policies, and if we also agree that these new values are transmitted in part through education, then developing global intelligence may be just

what the doctor ordered. We, teachers and students, could then effectively recognize and engage with the negative effects of globalization. For example, let us examine through a global intelligence perspective the belief that a business value, such as competition, has the potential to solve the rampant pressing problem of low quality public schools. At first glance the solution may seem to be suitable, but, if one takes a second look, it may not be quite so.

The logic behind the solving of this educational dilemma seems to be related to thinking that since it works in the business world, why not apply it to the education world. Instead of thoroughly studying the problem to come up with possible, worthwhile solutions, we look outside of the field of education to find answers. Here is one way of understanding the issue: because it is perceived that students coming out of public schools are not properly responding to the demands of the market economy, it is therefore claimed that they are not fully participating in the efforts to make the modern society they are a part of grow. So it would seem there is a need to restructure how public schools dispense knowledge to solve the problem. The deep seated effects of such allegations are two fold. One, they are very effective, on both an intellectual and an emotional level, because, of course, we want young women and men stepping out of schools to fully participate in making their communities, their cities, their countries, prosperous. It touches upon a deep seated commonsense belief and so we agree with the assessment of the situation. However, we need to recognize that while we are busy acknowledging that we indeed want students to participate in the success of the societies they live in, we are not discussing what is in their best social and educational interests; we are first and foremost deciding what is in the best interest of the economy. Second, this discourse is even more effective because it all happens under our eyes.

This state/market formation is extended in ways that induce everyone to play the enterprise game across the full spectrum of educational activities.

The development of this enterprise culture involves the creation of conditions in which individuals see their own interest as being served by the ideological and political projects of neo-liberal globalism. The result is that *they* themselves actively seek the opportunities associated with this culture. (Singh, Kenway & Apple, 2005, p. 16)

In effect, the motivation behind the need to make public school systems better would seem to be borrowed, primarily, from business ideals. If we take that standpoint, it then becomes apparent that schools are perceived by some as the providers of a workforce, and not as places where various types of knowledge are gained and nurtured. This pernicious effect veiled by dominant neo-liberal thinking and sustained by the different processes of Globalization has therefore the potential to be uncovered by teachers and students exploring this problem through a global intelligence lens. Essentially, discovering what is in the best interest of students and not of the global markets through the exploration of the problem of low quality public schooling. In that way the point of view is switched, therefore the economic imperatives behind the proposed solutions are easier to recognize. These solutions such as standardized testing, new curricula, new educational standards, focusing on sharpening students' technical skills, and improving efficiency and quality of schools can then be problematized. So can the resulting belief that competition between schools— which is claimed to be the fastest, most efficient way to achieve results and weed out low quality education— is necessary. Finally, the practice of pitting one education establishment against another to let scores, grades, and percentages decide which one is the best can be exposed for what it truly is: the manifestation of an economic sector deeply

concerned and invested in knowledge transmission and distribution to primarily suit its own financial needs as opposed to giving prevalence to the educational needs of students (Stromquist, 2002).

Is it not essential for all involved in the education of students to remember that they are dealing first and foremost with complex social networks of people, not with a prospective workforce, not with business? Perhaps some would argue with the reasoning I have just offered and state the obvious: teachers— myself included— think and speak like educators and not economist, for indeed they do not view schools and education systems as markets full of future economic potential. On the contrary, they believe schools are there to help students realize their full potential first as human beings and then as members living and working in a community, be it local or global. They also believe they are there to help their students realize their full intellectual and academic potential; not cater to the needs of the global markets, not as being part and parcel of a business. Which, inescapably, leads me to ask what is appropriate for teaching about Globalization under the pressures of a progressively globalized world?

Lapayese (2003) poses a similar question: “In light of the forces and challenges of globalization, how can education, often used to serve the interest of the global corporate agenda, prepare students to become active global citizens?” (p. 494). This question is perhaps more precise than mine in that it introduces the notion of citizenship and participation in society. Indeed, shedding light on both the responsibilities and the benefits of being an active global citizen may be the most effective way to start exploring the effects, positive and negative, of this globalization process we are all a part of. However, what type of education is best suited to achieve this goal: citizenship education, global education, or should we perhaps engage with a combination of the two?

Davies, Evens and Reid (2005) clearly recognize the traditional bond that national identity and citizenship have had, and perhaps still have, with education. Implied in that bond is the understanding that nationhood was traditionally built upon the recognition of a group of people linked together by their sameness or close similarities thereby clearly defining different groups of outsiders. However, the authors urge us to remember that “the establishment of a national structure is not the same as developing an inclusive framework that will promote equality” (p. 68), and so the authors argue that old forms of national citizenship education are ready to be demolished. They are essentially saying that, in light of the advent of globalization, the time has come to rethink our contemporary forms of citizenship education.

The question for education is how to come to grips with the changing nature of citizenship in a globalising world. To what extent do current attempts to address these issues in the school curriculum (i.e., citizenship education and global education) recognise the shifts that are occurring? (p. 72)

Thus, their idea for a conjoined global citizenship education is based on the need to address the multifaceted imperatives now dictated by globalization while still engaging with issues of citizenship.

However, relying on international education programs may perhaps be enough. After all, it provides a chance for people of different cultures to look each other in the eye, as equals. Does it really? Can students, hailing from different countries, and meeting on the common ground of a school establishment, indeed be bound to create complex and positive networks of personal interactions that could potentially lead to the development of sustainable globally oriented subjectivities? Matthews and Sidhu (2005) have argued that it cannot be, at least not completely,

“because international education is as likely to give rise to profoundly conservative ethnocultural affiliations and largely instrumental notions of global citizenship as to generate a collective and compassionate global subject” (p. 50). Here are a few reasons given by the authors that explain why this is most often so. At first they remind us that the movement of people enrolled in international programs is mostly unidirectional. Foreign students come mostly for emerging countries and they go study abroad in mainly English speaking Western industrialized countries such as for example the United States, the U K, Australia, Canada and New Zealand. This fact illustrates the prevalence of the English language, and the importance given to acquiring English speaking skills because it has been awarded prime status as the main language of business and commerce. It finds resonance to this day as “from the perspective of the individual, learning English offers the opportunity for professional, cultural and economic advantage” (Matthews & Sidhu, 2005, p. 56) and success. This fact has historical roots which still have an impact today on scores of international students. According to the authors, the following is what we need to remember:

Early expressions of international education, education aid programmes, were inspired by the rationales of colonialism, which were intended to produce an acculturated, governing elite in the colonies who were anticipated to support Western interests. Imperialism’s influence extended to the post-independent societies, which were steered towards a Westernized template of civicness, towards sameness rather than diversity. These links continue to have implications for the capacity of contemporary expressions of international education... (p. 56)

It would then seem that the economic incentives of global markets, and neo-liberal ideologies and policies also drive international study programs. Consequently, Mathews and Sidhu agree with the assessment that there is the presence of a particular neo-liberal discourse that pushes the understanding of international education in line with the belief that it solely exists to provide global markets with highly skilled workers. Furthermore, one needs to remember that world governments have bought into the neo-liberal ideologies and have therefore cut financial support for public schools which resulted in universities, colleges and state schools having to find new sources of revenue such as in the implementation of international study programs (Matthews & Sidhu, 2005).

The problem is that “the politically neutral language of the market provides little discursive space for understanding these complexities which surround the production and consumption of international education” (Matthews & Sidhu, 2005, p. 57). All the while we are subjected to a strong form of propaganda that insinuates international programs are indeed most beneficial since they promote cultural awareness, stimulate new developments in pedagogical approaches, foster academic excellence, and influence the learning of foreign languages. Finally, it is basically advocated that international students are de facto global citizens, but the hidden neo-liberal agenda at play which, as I have previously stated, emphasizes the dominance of global market economy ideals and policies, is not exposed.

No doubt with hope of unveiling the truth, Matthews and Sidhu’s (2005) research interests involved exploring “the national identity building enterprise of education, including the way racialized and gendered practices establish the boundaries of belonging” (p.58). Their research took place in Australia and the participating international teenage students were mostly from Southern East Asian regions. Through interviews the authors discovered that international

students and local Australian students did not mesh very well. Issues of cultural and linguistic differences appeared to hamper communication and seemed to act as road blocks to student intercultural or transnational connectivity. So did instances of differentiated ethnic naming that created systematic identity slots, where students were deemed to belong either to the “Asian/International” group or to the home-grown “Australian” group. All of which prompted the authors to say that “evidently the close proximity of local and international students does not automatically launch intercultural contact or harmony” (p.60). Thus, it would seem that simply believing in the potential of international education programs to effectively bridge social and cultural gaps between different nations and people is merely a dream, despite the fact that some students, no doubt, do forge lasting friendships across cultural differences. In the end, it is important to remember the concerns of the neo-liberal agenda with regard to education since it highlights the effects we can expect from such international school programs and so the authors state:

There are alternative definitions of international education that recognise the profound interconnectivities and interdependencies that unite ecosystems, cultures, societies and communities. However, these understandings and the rich possibilities they offer teachers and learners have not been embraced by governments and educational institutions. International education’s potential to offer innovative solutions to global issues such as poverty, underdevelopment, conflict, war and environmental degradation is thus severely compromised. (p.6)

Therefore, they conclude that “... it requires teachers to understand international education as something more than the means to competitive advantage in international trade markets”

(Matthews & Sidhu, 2005, p. 63). I would further argue that the heart of the matter is about teachers understanding education in general, not just international education, “as something more than the means to competitive advantage in international trade markets” (Matthews & Sidhu, 2005, p. 63).

At last it seems, once again, that part of the burden falls on teachers’ shoulders. However, recognizing that it is indeed the responsibility of teachers and educators to engage with the issues that pertain to Globalization and further, to engage students in an exploration that goes beyond neo-liberal ideological boundaries, does not specifically address what the academic and pedagogical needs of teachers and students actually are.

Davies, Evens and Reid (2005) issue a warning, one that needs to be remembered and taken seriously, which points to the incredible complexities involved in effectively engaging in global citizenship education: “...resist simplistic notions that may suggest that educational responses to globalisation can be achieved merely by adding international content or token global education type activities to citizenship education programmes” (p. 85). Effectively then, global citizenship education needs to be recognized as an academic subject on its own. Not simply as an extra chapter to be added to an already existing school program. Therefore, the actual academic and pedagogical needs of teachers and students have to be carefully investigated and then met if we are to avoid such issues of simplistic juxtaposition of a global citizenship unit to the official school curriculum.

Also, it is imperative to acknowledge that teachers’ needs will not necessarily be met once and for all. Indeed, teacher training with regard to global citizenship education is not a one shot deal. Tuomi (2004) ascertains, and rightly so I believe, that skillful teachers have to be capable to adapt to societal transitions that inevitably affect their teaching environments. If we

acknowledge that changes, brought on by the globalization process, continually affect teachers' professional realities—be it in terms of pedagogy, student diversity, world events, educational policies, technologies, and others—we then need to recognize that teachers need lifelong career learning to properly deal with those changes.

Furthermore, we should not be afraid to admit that for some teachers engaging with Globalization in the classroom can prove to be a daunting task. Some may find that preparing learning activities for students that have as a backdrop, for example, the recent election of Barack Obama as president of the United-States far easier than engaging with them on topics such as the present wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, which can be perceived as more violent in essence. However, let us remember that through the exploration of the election on the first Black U.S. president some teachers may be led to engage with the topic of the civil rights movement which has violence of its own. Indeed, in trying to escape from addressing issues of violence in the classroom, perhaps in order to spare students from feeling uncomfortable, teachers need to remember that issues of violence can nonetheless find their way into their day to day teaching realities. Interestingly enough, I discovered Yamashita's (2006) research paper that precisely speaks to this situation. In exploring how teachers and students engage with global issues of war and conflict in the confines of the classroom, she found that on the one hand students were deeply interested in knowing what was truly going on, while on the other hand, teachers were fairly apprehensive about tackling such a sensitive subject. However, she argues that there is indeed a professional responsibility on the part of teachers to engage properly with the topic by creating an environment where students feel relaxed and safe so they can learn and express their opinion:

What is apparent is that teaching and learning about war needs to move on from the old history curriculum and its emphasis on battles, victories and defeats, to a far more sophisticated treatment of conflict, and the recognition that even young children can and need to understand the causes and effects of global conflict. (pp. 31-32)

She also makes an interesting point about teaching without using graphically violent images, rather using stories of children who have lived through situations of war and conflict as pedagogical tools and finding ways to establish links between the issue and students' day to day realities (Yamashita, 2006). She adds that if it is deemed unavoidable to show violent images of war to students, it should be recognized that it is most certainly appropriate to give them the chance to decide for themselves if they want to see them or not.

Furthermore, it is quite interesting to note the discrepancy that seems to exist between the desire of children to know and the hesitation of teachers to teach. To explain this scenario Yamashita (2006) refers to the existence of "haunted stories" that teachers tell each other in an urban legend type warning. Essentially, giving account of what went wrong during a lesson on a particularly sensitive issue as an offering of professional wisdom to fellow teachers who might dare to take on war in their classrooms. However, "the interesting thing was that even though several teachers told... these 'haunted' stories, many did not know what the real problems were exactly, how those problems were solved in the end, and what should be done in the future" (Yamashita, 2006, p. 34). What I feel is essential to remember, and this is based on what my experiences in the classroom have thought me, is that a majority of children already know about sensitive issues, whether it is about war or any other topic. However, what they know is often clouded by distorted understandings and it is, in part, up to their teachers to clarify and mitigate

those understandings. For instance, using Yamashita's (2006) study as evidence, we can claim that children understand conflict in much more complex terms than we may expect them to. They are capable of recognizing hypocrisy, they have an awareness of the biased quality of the information they receive, and they can ask poignant questions and make pertinent comments about peace and about war. Therefore, in terms of teaching practice, Yamashita (2006) concludes with the following recommendation:

...when teaching about controversial issues, it is important to create spaces for students to explore and think about the issue by themselves and listen to what others think... This seemed to work particularly well when teachers were ready to learn with students, rather than presenting already selected 'facts' to students. (p. 35)

This quote evidently points to the new types of educational charges teachers are entrusted with. Undeniably, a simple retelling of facts to our students is not what is expected of us anymore. However, in examining the implementation of a global citizenship education program it is most pertinent to ask ourselves if teachers are actually given the space to effectively meet the challenges such a teaching task implies. I believe I have found one possible teacher training alternative that has the potential to create that space.

Schweisfurth (2006), involved in a small-scale research, attempted to discover what motivated a group of six exceptional Ontario teachers to address global citizenship issues despite the growing restrictions of curricular programs; in effect questioning teacher agency. Five out of the six teachers who were selected to be a part of his study were graduates of a "Community and Global Connections" module of the high school teacher training program at the University of Toronto. What makes this particular program innovative is the opportunity it give

in-service teachers to acquire skills that enable them to directly address world issues within the confines of the existing Ontario curriculum all the while, without feeling they are letting the official academic prescriptions slip through the cracks of a so-called GCE (Global Citizenship Education) agenda. In essence, giving those teachers insight into possible areas of the curriculum where issues of global concerns could be adequately taken up “even where the official curriculum ignored or obscured the issues” (p. 45). In my opinion, this illustrates a possible incentive to develop a form of teaching competence that directly targets the desire and the ability to include global issues in one’s teaching practice. Essentially, giving teachers the space to take on the challenges involved in thoroughly implementing a global citizenship education program, or at the very least giving them the tools necessary to design various learning situations so as to push the global citizenship education agenda in any subject area. However, in his concluding remarks, the author reveals that even though there have been significant advances in the development of global perspectives in education in Ontario “the overall message to teachers across subject areas is [still] about academic standards and curricular standardization” (Schweisfurth, 2006, p. 49). Furthermore, the six teachers appear to be a few in a group of many as their way of engaging with global citizenship education does not seem to have caught on to reach the entire cohort of teaching professionals.

Lapayese (2003), for her part, believes the success of any global type educational endeavor that seeks to challenge power relations and promote change has to be grounded in critical pedagogy, as opposed to conventional or conservative pedagogy. Furthermore, it has to have integral components such as empowerment and emancipation. She calls for a more collaborative and fluid model of global citizenship education, not a rigid universal one, to take into account diverse lived experiences. She implores students and teachers “to make those

connections between the local and the global, [so] the classroom becomes a space to develop awareness of oppression and to act accordingly” (Lapayese, 2003, p. 501). In this way students and teachers get the change to really understand the power relations and structures that effect not only the world they live in but also their day to day experiences. Basically, this is what global citizenship education has to battle:

...the knowledge of citizenship and its political identity [that] are still for some, if not many, echoes of yesteryear’s imperialism, the romanticism of classic notions of preserving local or national interests, a ‘bounded’ notion of identity, and furthering national pride and patriotism; or else it is a means of identifying and categorising those who do and do not belong.

(Golmohamad, 2004, p. 131)

Everyone belongs! Equally! That is the ultimate lesson every student needs to intrinsically learn from a globally minded education program. Golmohamad (2004) warns us that this can and will only come to be when a fusion between our self consciousness and our consciousness of the world community occurs. However, this best sums it up: “A human aspiration for unity, supported by an educational aim of an integrated self, may help project into the future active world citizens... able to extend allegiance outwardly from the local sphere, to the rest of the world” (p. 147). Now, that is what I call a worthy, empowering, and globally minded educational goal!

Therefore, if a decision is made to move towards the adoption of educational objectives that seek to create future globally minded citizens who have the desire and the necessary tools to act on the world to transform it for the better when and where it needs to be, we would be advised to remember Walker and Shuangye’s (2007) notion of global intelligence. Indeed, this

competence discussed at the start of this fourth chapter could be an interesting one to add on to our educational objectives for it can potentially get students to investigate different points of views, different ideals and values and enable them to recognize the neo-liberal agenda at play in the different spheres of their lives, which would ultimately imply that their teachers would have given them the means to no longer be pawns in the neo-liberal game. Furthermore, we should also be ready to carefully explore the extent of students' and teachers' academic needs with regard to both the development and the pedagogical use of global citizenship programs so as not to fall into the trap of simply adding global citizenship units to the already existing curricula. Thus, judicious and on-going planning of teacher training programs needs to be undertaken. Also, teachers should not be afraid to recognize it will possibly be, at times, difficult to engage with sensitive topics that pertain to globalization, such as war, death, and extreme poverty. However, Lapayese's (2003) call to rely on critical pedagogy may prove to be of some help in the matter. Finally, as Schweisfurth (2006) believes, it should be acknowledged that every teacher's agency is undoubtedly a life-long learning process and it therefore needs to constantly be reinforced, supported and inspired by access to various training programs.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Teaching towards the ultimate goal; Cultivating student empowerment

Throughout this writing project I have sought to ask myself what philosophical and educational ideology is best suited to deal with issues of diversity as they unfold between teachers and students in the context of classroom teaching. Arguing that the responsibility of exposing students to different cultures and actively promoting understanding, acceptance, and respect of those different cultures befalls mostly on teachers, I have taken on the task of describing, albeit in a succinct fashion, three separate concepts— intercultural/multicultural education, anti-racist education and global citizenship education— hoping to discover which is best suited to the task of fostering in students a true sense of understanding of social, political, and cultural diversity phenomena. However, I ultimately uncovered that those concepts, attached to different schools of thought, ideological frameworks, and separate academic notions, despite the need of properly labeling and describing them individually, can be found to be intimately linked. Indeed, all three of my research avenues have been ideologically defined and linked to specific educational concepts and their authors and yet I find them in some way or another to be intrinsically similar. For instance, the need to delve, back and forth, in-between theory and practice in order to better understand both the complexities of classroom life and the process of learning finds echoes in them all. However, what ultimately remains is a stepping stone impression. Personally it was as if, from one theory to the other, I recognized a momentum of understanding slowly building: theories of multiculturalism and interculturalism somehow lead me to explore theories of antiracism and then, those lead me to probe into the theory of global

citizenship. The outcome of this research was to uncover which educational theory would prove the most adequate; instead I uncovered a stairway of understanding.

I have grown to deeply respect the moral grounds intercultural, anti-racist and global citizenship education are founded upon, and I am certainly better aware of the imperatives such as poverty, cultural inequity, oppression, and societal power relations, that motivated and continue to motivate authors to further the separate theoretical development of these educational philosophies. However, I have come to believe that in order to properly deal with issues of diversity, teachers need to be aware not only of themselves and their beliefs but also, and perhaps more importantly, be cognizant of the incredible wealth of theoretical notions available to them. Essentially, enabling teachers to recognize that different educational theories with regard to diversity issues cannot necessarily be divided along strict lines, but that instead they can be found to be linked is, in my opinion, a seminal point. In so doing, I believe it would allow teachers to better understand and to adequately manipulate different theoretical notions thereby giving them a greater sense of agency to positively take on the challenges of diversity in their classrooms. Yet, this can pose a problem because educational actors can sometimes get lost in the need to abide by one particular educational creed and forget their ultimate goal, which is the empowerment of their students. Indeed, the need to lead students towards knowledge by questioning any topic from a problematic perspective, in order to not only understand the issues at hand but as well be able to act upon them to generate change, is of vital importance and I perceive this to be a most significant educational objective. In Peter McLaren's (2003) words:

Empowerment is gained from knowledge and social relations that dignify one's own history, language, and cultural traditions. But empowerment means more than self-confirmation. It also refers to the process by which

students learn to question and selectively appropriate those aspects of the dominant culture that will provide them with the basis for defining and transforming, rather than merely serving, the wider social order.

(McLarren, 2003, p. 89)

This, in turn, begs the following question: how does one go about effectively creating a teaching environment and learning activities that foster the true social, political, and cultural empowerment of students without setting aside essential academic learning goals?

Accordingly, I thought that one of the three aforementioned educational perspectives would yield the answer. It would either be anti-racist, intercultural, or global citizenship education that would prevail and lead the way to the empowerment of my students.

Unfortunately, I now believe the answer lies elsewhere. Indeed, it is not so much a question of which educational concept is applied and used within the context of a classroom but rather a matter of how the educational process is carried through by a dedicated and enlightened teacher. Actually, the educational philosophy used in the classroom with regard to diversity and cultural difference may have little impact compared to how an empowered educator goes about teaching issues related to those particular topics. Strict allegiance to a particular educational philosophy such as anti-racism, multiculturalism, interculturalism, or global citizenship education may not necessarily be the imperative since all of them basically share ideals of equity, respect, acceptance, recognition and justice for all.

In an effort of substantiating my claim, let me give you a more concrete example of what the joining of multiple educational theories that speak to diversity can truly accomplish in a classroom. I stumbled upon the story of Michalove (1999), a grade four teacher in the United-States who dared to engage her students in a process of self and social change. In her own words,

her goal was to bring her “4th graders to see they could act on some aspect of social concern” (Michalove, 1999, p. 22) and to ultimately make them realize they have the power to make a difference, even though they are young. Her group of 25 pupils comprised of, among others, two students with hearing impairments, four with behavioral issues, and six more identified as being gifted. Most of her pupils were African American and Mexican American, and a minority was White. In short, a group with its load of cultural diversity, creative talents and learning difficulties; one could call this group the all inclusive package! Michalove’s first observations, unfortunately, were about exclusion, taunting, putdowns and outright discrimination by some students towards other members of the class. There was no sense of community in her classroom, and she felt it was her duty to help create a caring environment where all felt respected and valued before any hope of acting on aspects of greater social concern could be tackled. At this point, a parallel can be made with Phillion’s (2002) narrative multiculturalism theory. Indeed, one could definitely argue that Michalove (1999) was able to think narratively by paying attention to the relationships that were and were not developing between her students in order to create a portrait of the personal interactions going on in her classroom. This essentially enabled her to create a plan of action.

Teaching tolerance was Michalove’s (1999) starting point. Her own introspections, her memories of being subjected to discrimination because of being Jewish, reading up on issues of difference, all led her to create a framework specific to her class where the objective was addressing prejudice, and promoting understanding, tolerance and respect. Here, it could be said that once again this teacher echoes Phillion’s (2002) theory in that she makes meaning of her own multicultural experiences and through the recognition of the empirical value of her personal, practical, and professional multicultural knowledge she applies her understandings to her

classroom life for the benefit of her students. As opposed to Phillion's "making meaning of experience in relationships" (p. 538), Michalove called this process "circling in" (p.25) and she represented it with a drawing of a series of "concentric circles of understanding" (p.25) with, at its middle point, the members of the class, her students and herself, and at the outer rims the population of the entire United States.

With her class Michalove (1999) then delved into the live histories of different prominent Americans who struggled to fit in because of their cultural heritage. The door was therefore open for her group to create a shared base of knowledge that had both academic and social learning objectives. This educational approach was her first step in insuring her students could, as a united group, recognize, explain, and exchange on cultural difference, on intolerance and also on the triumph of the human spirit. This process could be linked to Marri's (2003) democratic multiculturalism in that Michalove (1999) endeavors to bring her students to recognize the nature of participation of citizens in American society. Basically, asking "Who is and is not participating and on whose terms?" (Parker, 1996b, as cited in Marri, 2003, p. 268). By the same token, she introduces her students to the concept of what McLaren (2003, p.178) calls a language of criticism. Essentially at this point, throughout this historical exploration of diversity in American culture, it can be argued that she tries to create what Marri (2003, 2009) refers to as the building of a community which is an environment of learning that goes beyond the walls of the school, hoping to ultimately achieve what Johnson and Johnson (1994) refer to as a balance between knowledge of their own cultural and ethnic heritage, and knowledge and appreciation of the cultural and ethnic heritage of others.

However, this first step did not go far enough: "...the students were quick to recognize the injustice they found in these biographical and fictionalized life stories, and to share their

feelings of outrage. But the challenge remained... to bring this awareness into the everyday interactions of our classroom lives” (Michalove, 1999, p. 26). Her second phase was then designed around building a common language. Now that her students were familiar with the life histories of people who had experienced and fought against prejudice, she introduced a list of potent words that refer to the matter. She found her students to be thoroughly engaged in the process of discussing these words of discrimination to the point that some would even bring newspaper articles that depicted prejudice or, on the opposite end, that portrayed tolerance. Here we have the very beginnings of the development of an intercultural competence (Man Ling Lee, 2005, Bennet & Salonen, 2007) in that students display an actual engagement in the process of understanding prejudice and discrimination through dialogue and discussion.

Michalove (1999) also made use of a video documentary, *A Shadow of Hate: A History of Intolerance in America*. The important point to make here is that for the first time, with the use of this documentary, she introduces the notion of the relational aspect that develops between prejudice, wealth and social power. This particular aspect connects to Dei’s (1996) ultimate goals of anti-racist education in that it is an effort to explore power relations and go beyond issues of individual prejudice and discrimination.

Still, Michalove (1999) noticed that “it was easier for the kids to address prejudice in other people” (p. 28) and not quite so in themselves, so phase three was introduced. The goal was to interview family members to see if they had ever been discriminated against and to write about these experiences. Once again, a tie can be made to Dei’s (1996) anti-racist education, this time with his ten basic principles. Each child received a notebook where they could document the stories of the adults of their families. According to Michalove (1999), the process proved to be cathartic in that it gave all the students of the class the chance to notice that injustice has

many faces. The stories were about women and men, old and young, they took place in the home or at work, they were far away in the past or had happened the day before, it involved small and big families, it had to do with the richer and poorer strata of society, in short their contexts were incredibly vast. Essentially, their stories depicted discrimination in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, and physical disability. We could then argue that this activity can be tied to four of Dei's anti-racism education principles. First of all, Michalove gave her students the possibility to gain an understanding of the marginalization of some groups of people, which is tied to the fourth principle. Furthermore, since it enabled the students to realize the full scope of social oppression this activity can also be tied to the second anti-racist principle. Then, since her students also got the opportunity to recognize the complex nature of identity a link can be made with the sixth principle. Finally, and perhaps more importantly, it provided them with the opportunity to gain a holistic understanding of Human experiences, which is in tune with Dei's fifth principle of anti-racist education. Ultimately, however, this writing exercise acted like a great big mirror in which everyone could look in and see another family's story but also a part of themselves, a part of their own family's story. Paraphrasing Michalove (1999), I can say that the students truly began to realize their own individuality and their own heritage but also the common threads of humanity behind the differences. This speaks to Dei's (1996) sixth principle which implies recognition of the complex nature of identity but also to Short and Carrington's (1996) advice to promote students' understanding of diversity not only in terms of differences but as well in terms of similarities.

The final phase of Michalove (1999) teaching project called on her students to share their personal stories and experiences. The notable aspect of this learning activity was that none of the participants were under the obligation to write in their notebooks, it was left as an optional task.

As could be predicted, some students did not write about their experiences with prejudice. The ones that wrote though did so from an outside perspective. Michalove (1999) noted that none of the kids' stories had to do with the instances of prejudice that went on in class which was not what she had hoped for. To palliate to this, she read a particular book, *Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman, the action of which takes place in a specific classroom, in a school and obviously deals with discrimination. Her objective was to bring forth a communicative space where the occurrences of prejudice and discrimination in her grade 4 classroom could be safely and honestly discussed, and it was. Ultimately, the entire class came up with a list to refer to in times of crisis, a charter if you will, of positive actions that focus on tolerance, respect and kindness. For this final project, drawing from Man Ling Lee's (2005) and Bennet and Salonen's (2007) conclusions on intercultural competence, one could argue that Michalove (1999) bestowed upon her students a desire to think in an intercultural manner and not to simply recognize cultural difference.

Ultimately, it seemed that the academic learning road that led to describing and understanding tolerance also led to friendship. Apparently, by the end of the school year, the ambiance in Michalove's (1999) classroom had become more harmonious. It is not to say that all was picture perfect, but the teacher, her students, and even the parents noticed a marked difference in how the inhabitants of the class treated one another; a community had finally been created. Marri (2003, 2009) believes that in order to show students what a multicultural democracy looks like they need to engage in problem solving and to endeavor to create a community where every difference has its place. It seems to me that is exactly what Michalove (1999) did.

I will not lie and say I merely think this professional story is interesting, I actually think it is quite powerful. First and foremost, it is not a purely academic depiction of the positive aspects of a particular educational philosophy. It is not either an attempt to sell a one size fits all instructional teaching manual. It is an inspirational, true to life classroom chronicle. It is the narrative of a personal educational philosophy in action. It is an exemplification of educational praxis; theory carried out in classroom practice. It is the written imagery of one teacher's critical reflection on her profession, her classroom, her students, her goals and hopes as an educator. It is a vision of what was, with its qualities and faults, and that is why it is so powerful.

Michalove (1999) in no way tries to link "circling in" to a particular educational philosophy and yet everything she does has a valid academic purpose for her theme of tolerance is imbedded everywhere in the learning process of her students. It is an integral part of every subject she teaches and that, throughout the entire school year. Furthermore, battling prejudice and discrimination is the prime aspect of this critical reflection on her profession. It is informed by her previous experiences as a person and as a teacher, and it is centered on the needs of her classroom community. This woman took the high road and settled on utilizing an educational perspective to push her own version of an anti-racist and intercultural/multicultural educational agenda. However, another teacher could do a similar type of educational work, in a different classroom setting, and yet push for a combination of a global perspective and an intercultural one for example. However what remains the ultimate goal, as Michalove (1999) demonstrated, is the creation of an understanding and caring community of learning. Indeed, throughout day to day learning activities in the classroom, different authors (Cummins, 1994, Johnson & Johnson, 1994, Michalove, 1999) promote the use of cooperative and communicative leaning groups to establish such a community of learning. It basically calls for the development of positive social

interactions between culturally diverse students. Spencer (1998) calls such activities “intergroup dialogues”. Compared to individual or competitive learning, this particular educational technique that seeks to build efficient working relationships has been claimed to increase the reasoning ability of students and also their capacity to transfer the knowledge they have learnt to different situations (Johnson & Johnson, 1994, p. 67). Along with, evidently, more social benefits such as establishing lasting friendship, challenging stereotypes, and promoting acceptance of diversity (Johnson & Johnson, 1994, Spencer, 1998).

Only through knowing, working with, and interacting personally with members of diverse groups can students really learn to value diversity, use it for creative problem solving, and develop an ability to work effectively with diverse peers. While information alone helps, it is only through direct and personal interaction among diverse individuals who develop personal as well as professional relationships with each other that such outcomes are realized. (Johnson & Johnson, 1994, p. 72)

In this way Arvizu (1994) argues that learning about one’s self and becoming conscious of one’s culture is interconnected with learning about others and their cultures which is an important step to “overcoming ethnocentrism (the belief to one’s culture is superior to others’) and the development of a culturally relative perspective” (p.85-86).

In the end, however, the lasting positive aspect we can all hope to achieve from the use of cooperative learning in classrooms is the development of cross-cultural leadership (Arvizu, 1994). This competence “is defined as action influencing others to spread cross-cultural understanding, behavior respectful of cultural diversity, and relevant cultural change in environments and organizations” (Arvizu, 1994, p.89). I consider this particularly relevant in

school contexts as students who learn to positively relate to other students from diverse communities can undoubtedly act as powerful agents of change and promoters of universal values of equity and justice. We can further argue that this competence learned in early school years can, hopefully, have a lasting impact for students all the way into their adult years as it may empower them to become pluralistic community builders (Arvizu, 1994). Essentially, individuals who believe and have “consideration for more than one way of life” and strive to apply the conceptualization of this belief to the institutions of the societies and the world they are a part of (Arvizu, 1994, p.78).

In terms of what this all implies for teachers, Cummins (1994) says it best: “When educators adopt role definitions that challenge coercive relations of power, then their interactions with culturally diverse students will reflect a vision of society that strives to establish collaborative and equitable relations of power among groups” (p.364). Teachers who make use of cooperative team learning and strive to develop intercultural competence and cross-cultural leadership abilities in their classrooms will surely reinforce such a vision of our societies. As I have said it many times before, it falls on teachers’ shoulders this great responsibility to instill in children the belief they can be agents of change and to give them the tools necessary to act accordingly. Therefore, as teachers no matter which educational perspective we choose—intercultural, multicultural, anti-racist or global—our first concern should be to make sure we are actively engaging and promoting our students’ understanding and respect of diversity. In a way it is all about inspiring them to create a better world, one where every single individual has a voice that is heard. Maxine Green (2003) is surely more eloquent than I am, so I will most respectfully borrow her words to drive this final point home:

“... it is only through the projection of a better social order that we can perceive the gaps in what exists and try to transform and repair. I would like to think this can happen in classrooms, in corridors, in schoolyards, in the streets around.

I would like to think of teachers moving the young into their own interpretation of their lives and their lived worlds, opening wider and wider perspectives as they do so...

In “the shadow of silent majorities,” then, as teachers learning along with those we try to provoke to learn, we may be able to inspire hitherto unheard voices.” (Green, 2003, p. 111)

Essentially, we may be able to recognize that our wisdom builds and grows upon others’ wisdom. Therefore, perhaps once and for all, we will recognize that we can only stand to benefit greatly from listening and learning from different voices, from different sources of knowledge. Indeed, whether it is intercultural education, anti-racist education, global citizenship education, or a combination of the three we teachers specifically chose to engage in with our students it does not much matter, so long as we inspire and empower our pupils to dream and ultimately act on creating a better world for themselves and everyone else with whom they share this planet.

Further Avenues of Research

In essence, this research paper has been a first step, serving to partially disentangle some ideological factors which relate to issues of diversity within the field of education in order to possibly give way to further research, to further insight. However, many more aspects still need to be considered and studied. The following are some possible avenues to probe into.

The ethnic diversity of student populations in schools is no longer a disputed fact and the possible effects of this diversity need to be closely monitored. My research has led me to believe in a connection between intercultural, multicultural, anti-racist and global citizenship education in that these philosophies are committed to instill in students ideals of equity and justice for all, knowledge of and respect for diversity, and also the need and desire to transform society for the better. However, I will not claim to hold the absolute truth. Since my work has taken on a more qualitative flavor, a careful quantitative investigation of the question is perhaps in order, the object being to discover in terms of statistics and numbers if indeed these different educational philosophies are connected and hold the same weight. Therefore, additional research is certainly needed to further investigate my claim. Furthermore, as I have spoken in my capacity as a primary school teacher, specifically delving into the world of high school and higher learning institutions to investigate the same question would certainly provide a clearer portrait of the situation with regard to diversity issues in various Quebec schooling milieus. Similarly, considering another element, the economic situations prevalent in those schooling environments, would add even more clarity to the picture. Another important avenue involves teachers. Indeed, examining teacher's responses to the challenges of teaching about diversity is essential. Are teachers personally and professionally ready and do they have the necessary tools to teach from a critical pedagogical perspective? Lastly, I believe it would be quite pertinent to inspect the new Ethics and Religious Culture program of the MELS to ascertain how its everyday usage in primary and secondary classrooms around the province affects the lived experiences of our ethnically diverse student population.

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