Article

Pedagogy of hope: global learning and the future of education

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Abstract

Global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate emergency campaigns and the Black Lives Matter movements have recently posed challenges for educationalists about their role, particularly in relation to promoting positive visions of the future. Development education and global learning has a major contribution to make within these agendas, particularly if it brings into its practices the ideas of Paulo Freire and his concept of the pedagogy of hope. Hope can often be considered an idealistic and utopian term, but if it is grounded in real life issues and challenges, then it can provide a valuable approach to learning about global issues. Recent examples in the UK and the initiative by UNESCO on Futures of Education demonstrate ways in which questions can be posed about the future of education that can be empowering to all learners.

Keywords critical pedagogy; development education; education for sustainable development; globalisation; global learning; hope

Introduction

The COVID-19 global pandemic and the ongoing campaigns focused on the climate emergency have raised questions for educationalists about hope and hopelessness, fear of the future and how to promote a narrative that positive change is possible. For proponents of global learning, there has always been a sense of optimism that change is possible based on informed learning that can encourage movements towards a more just world. The global pandemic and fears about the future of the planet have also posed the need for a new narrative around what is the purpose of education; is now the time to reconsider the relationship of learning with the needs of securing a better and sustainable planet? The Black Lives Matter campaigns around the world have also led to questions about the function and role of education. This article aims to address these questions by suggesting that a potential approach can be found in building on the ideas and approaches of the great Brazilian educational thinker, Paulo Freire.

I begin by reviewing the context of education at the start of the third decade of the twenty-first century in the light of the impact on education of the COVID-19 pandemic and debates about climate change. I suggest that these challenges have posed major questions about how educators respond to them. The term *hope* is suggested as an important way to look at these issues. I discuss various approaches as to what is meant by hope, before concluding that the work of Freire and his pedagogy of hope continue to be of relevance.

Building on the ideas of Freire and some of his followers, such as Henry Giroux and Greg Misiaszek, this article outlines the relationship of these critical pedagogical approaches to development education and global learning. Using a pedagogical approach that combines these themes, the article analyses some examples of recent educational initiatives in the UK that suggest that hope poses questions in the light of the climate emergency and the global pandemic as to the purpose of education.

Challenges for education in the 2020s

The third decade of the twenty-first century began with two major global events that have posed fundamental questions about the form and nature of human existence on the planet. The first is the COVID-19 pandemic, which has highlighted the interconnected lives everyone leads, and has had a major impact on human life. No country has been left unscathed by the virus. The constant movement of people around the world, as a direct result of globalisation, meant that a virus outbreak that began in China spread to all continents of the world within two months. While the virus can affect anyone, it has had a disproportionate impact upon the poor and the marginalised (Kharas, 2020). Education in many countries went online, but only those families that could afford good internet access and appropriate digital equipment have been able to support their children to develop their learning (De' et al., 2020).

The second major challenge is climate change. This is now a reality around the world, with significant consequences for economies, lifestyles and, in some places, fear for existence. The responses by thousands of young people to this climate emergency has been heartening and has ensured that the agenda is ever present in the media. A feature of the campaigns around the climate emergency has been the ways in which young people have put education and learning at the forefront of their activities, and have maximised the opportunities that globalisation has provided through social media and instant global communications (UKSCN, 2020a).

What these two challenges have showed is how everyone's lives are globally interconnected today. All aspects of daily lives for millions of people around the world are directly affected by both how economies respond to and address the climate emergency and how they equip communities with vaccines and resources to respond to the global pandemic. These challenges have, in many communities, created a sense of despair and hopelessness (Duarte, 2020; UKCP, 2020).

Alongside these global events, there have also been Black Lives Matter initiatives in many countries, which have resulted in renewed calls to address the content and nature of both the school curriculum and what is taught in further and higher education. While these initiatives have engaged many thousands of young people, they have also highlighted the sense of powerlessness and 'racial trauma' in Black communities (Jaye, 2020).

This article suggests that educationalists have a major responsibility to address the impact of the above issues in creating a sense of hopelessness, by encouraging a sense that change and progress are possible through a greater understanding of the issues and having the skills and belief in taking social action. Freire's (2004) approach to learning through his 'pedagogy of hope' can be a valuable tool and approach, if applied in a progressive educational form.

Globalisation and the Sustainable Development Goals

A starting point for the role of education in addressing these challenges is an understanding of the role that globalisation can play. Globalisation can enable, and in many places has enabled, many people and communities to have access to knowledge and perspectives, and to make sense of what is happening around the world. Yet globalisation still seems to be dominated by neoliberal forces where the profit motive and the market come before the needs of people, where education policymakers still seem to be preoccupied with testing, and where education is seen as a commodity – a product to sell (see Ball, 2012; Beck, 2000; Giroux, 2007).

What the global pandemic has shown is that where and when social, political and economic forces around the world support each other, and work together rather than competing with each other, then progress towards eliminating the virus can be made. The same applies to climate change. When governments, as a result of social and economic pressure, sign up to climate change agreements, and then put them into practice, then we will see real movement in the reduction of carbon emissions (Kharas, 2020).

But these initiatives are not enough. People and communities need not only to be kept informed about these global issues, but also to have the opportunities to develop their skills within a framework of a values base built on social justice to ensure that change is long lasting and meaningful. This is why the events and activities in 2019 by young people around the world on the climate emergency were so important. Not only did they raise awareness among policymakers, they also had a broader educative function across society as a whole. These activities were built on a sense of hope that change is possible, and that a more just and sustainable future is a realistic goal for which to work (UKSCN, 2020b; Yeung, 2020).

When they were launched in 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were seen as a way in which countries around the world could work towards common goals to achieve a more just and sustainable world. Yet, despite good intentions, the SDGs have had minimal impact on government policies. They have not addressed the dominance of neoliberal influences on economies around the world and the resultant impacts on societies as a consequence of a blinkered drive towards profit and a mantra of market forces (Fowler and Biekart, 2020; Belda-Miquel et al., 2019). Although there has been some progress on some of the SDGs, there are few examples where national or regional policies have significantly changed as a result of trying to address the goals (United Nations, 2020).

All these activities also pose a wider question about what form of education is needed to equip learners of all ages to address these global challenges. Neoliberalism still dominates much of educational policymaking and practices around the world. The emphasis on market forces and testing, and the lack of recognition of the need to relate learning to real-world issues remain major challenges. In countries such as England, education policymakers have to date resisted calls to give higher prominence in the school curriculum to areas such as climate change or Black Lives Matter.

Educationalists are therefore faced with enormous challenges. For example, how do educators who have to teach about, or work with, painful global issues on a daily basis manage to stay cheerful (Hicks,

2010)? Nevertheless, as this article will now suggest, there is hope if it is framed in a form that is realistic, rooted in societal needs and leads to clear goals and objectives. Hope needs to be much more than dreams or ideals. It needs to drive educational policies and practices.

Warnock (1986) states that, of all the attributes she would like to see in her children or pupils, the attribute of hope would come high, even at the top of her list. She goes on:

> To lose hope is to lose the capacity to want or desire anything; to lose, in fact, the wish to live. Hope is akin to energy, to curiosity, to the belief that things are worth doing. An education which leaves a child without hope is an education that has failed. (Warnock 1986: 182)

All educationalists have to bring hope into their teaching, because the essence of learning is about moving forwards – how it can enrich both the individual and society in general (Smith, 2020). This sense of hope also needs to be grounded in a sense of realism, or what Orr (2009: 185) calls 'Realistic hope', which 'requires us to check our optimism at the door and enter the future without illusions'.

Towards a pedagogy of hope

Halpin (2003: 16) has argued that 'because education is essentially a future-oriented project concerned to bring about improvement, specifically growth in the learner's knowledge and understanding, successful teaching requires its practitioners to teach with hope in mind'. However, as many practising educationalists, particularly schoolteachers, might argue, this optimistic outlook is not always easy. As numerous commentators on hope have stated (for example, Giroux, 2011; Beck, 2000), there needs to be an understanding of why this lack of optimism exists and what can be done to address it. As Halpin (2013: n.p.) notes, often lurking behind a sense of decline and despair is the outline of a 'utopia about teaching and learning; and about how schools should be run and managed', which can be, or can seem to be, far removed from the realities of some teachers' daily lived experience.

These contradictions and challenges can be seen in the views of young people about climate change. While many of them have been keen to engage in promoting a positive future, there are at the same time feelings of helplessness or even hopelessness (Nordensvaard, 2014; Ojala, 2017; Tucci et al., 2007). Within the literature on hope, there is a range of viewpoints on the emphasis on psychological versus educational themes. There is also a criticism that the use of the term *hope* can create a sense of illusionment, unrealistic optimism and a feel-good emotion about the future and change (Levitas, 1990; Zaleski, 1994). A different perspective is the view that if hope is combined with passion and enthusiasm, it can be turned into a transformative approach to learning. Lazarus (1991) sees hope as an emotion that is related to a cognitive appraisal of wishing for a desired goal to come true, even though the odds are not greatly in favour of it.

This approach of hope combined with transformative learning can be seen as a way of addressing what could be interpreted as utopian visions of the future. As Bloch (1986), one of the leading theoreticians on hope, has commented, utopian thinking can be anticipatory and not messianic, mobilising rather than therapeutic (Giroux, 2002). Levitas (1990) suggests that key to addressing this sense of utopian hope was education. As Giroux (2002) has posed, to address the dominant influences of neoliberalism within societies and economies, and the resultant consequences of there being no perceived alternative to the domination of market forces, there is a need for a radical vision of hope, not in some ideal form, but grounded in concrete experience and social reality. He goes on: 'Educated hope … combines the pedagogical and the political in ways that stress the contextual nature of learning, emphasising that different contexts give rise to diverse questions, problems and possibilities' (Giroux, 2002: 102). He suggests that educated hope can engage the imagination, and includes a recognition of the importance of civic engagement. This means bringing into all forms of learning a sense of imagining future possibilities.

This sense of agency and motivation has been noted by Snyder (2000), who sees hope as including what we would want to see happen, ways of getting there and the need to motivate oneself. However,

Ojala (2017) has noted that there are dangers that some of these approaches to hope can give too much emphasis to the personal and health needs of the individual, rather than to societal concerns. This area has been addressed in a number of ways with regard to climate change and sustainable development (Hicks, 2014, 2018; Sund and Öhman, 2014; Wals, 2015).

The capacity to think in a forward-looking way is important and relevant here because of what Ojala (2017: 78) calls 'anticipatory thinking'. A crucial role of education should be to encourage engagement in the complexity of issues, and the need to go beyond emotional responses to recognition of forces that affect processes of social change. Hope requires an understanding of ways of dealing with challenging situations and emotional responses, and promoting positive ways forward. This means posing desirable futures. To help to operationalise what hope means in a pedagogical sense, the most relevant person to turn to is Freire.

Freire's ideas and practices

To Freire, all education is political, and to teach how to read becomes meaningful if it involves teaching about how to read the world. His pedagogical approach includes challenging the *banking model* of education and encouraging a constant process of questioning and yet seeking a more humane world. The *banking concept*, as termed by Freire (1972), is essentially an act that hinders the intellectual growth of students by turning them into receivers of information that has no real connection to their lives. Freire saw that only by engaging with the issues of the time, the relationships a learner forges with others and with society as a whole, can change be possible. Freire's approach, outlined in his numerous writings, but perhaps most clearly articulated in *Pedagogy of Hope* (2004), provides a way of addressing current global challenges in a way that is both optimistic and educationally challenging. He perceived hope as an ontological necessity: 'We succumb to fatalism, and then it becomes impossible to muster the strength we absolutely need for a fierce struggle that will re-create the world. I am hopeful, not out of mere stubbornness, but out of an existential concrete imperative' (Freire, 2004: 8).

This means that if hope is to be seen as an educational approach, it must be grounded in an understanding of the current social and political situation within societies. However, hope also means that change is possible, but that it requires an engagement with the issues, to test out ideas and approaches and to understand the dialectical relationship with hopelessness. For example, if we consider the issue of climate change, then a starting point has to be to understand the threat to the planet it presents, addressing the fears that can result, and showing, through evidence and research, that hope can motivate people to take pro-environmental action.

Freire (2004: 9) observes, 'One of the tasks of the progressive educator is to unveil opportunities for hope, no matter what the obstacles may be.' As Irwin (2012) comments, Freire is not interested in some kind of narcissistic hope or a dream locked to a subjectivist framework. Rather, he sees such hope as connected to a much more organic sense of the relation between subject and world, and thus against those cynics who would claim that the absence of hope is truer to our cynical human natures.

Freire (2004) further suggests that hope is necessary, but that it is not enough. However, without it, the struggle for social change will be that much weaker. Reflecting on his broader writings, Freire said that hope needs practice in order to become concrete. It could be argued that Freire (2004) was not proposing an education for hope, but promoting a kind of education in hope. This sense for a kind of education in hope needs also to be contextualised from Freire's work, because he noted the dangers of hope being caught by neoliberal ideals, of individualism, self-improvement and 'private notions of getting ahead' (Freire and Shor, 1987: 110). As Webb (2010: 7) has commented:

> if the objective of humanisation towards which hope is, or should be, directed is under constant threat from the material and ideological forces of dehumanisation … then who can argue with the role of the directive educator being one of annunciating a utopian 'blueprint' of the humanised world for which we are striving.

As noted earlier in this article, Giroux (2011) uses the term *educated hope*. His view of hope is based on the recognition that it is only through education that human beings can learn the limits of the present and the conditions necessary for them to combine a gritty sense of limits with a lofty vision of possibility (Giroux, 2011: 122). This search for further fulfilment, with education playing a key role, has been noted also by Smyth (2011), who states further that hope needs also to be grounded in realities of life and anchored in practice.

Similar themes of relating hope to praxis can be seen in the writing of hooks (2003), where she sees a successful pedagogy of hope built on students' *and* teachers' interactions in a form that is anti-oppressive and encourages reflexivity, dialogue and criticality (Carolissen et al., 2011).

Misiaszek (2021: 102), who has developed Freire's ideas to address areas of environmental justice, states that: 'Hope is essential for radical praxis for transformative change within normative societal structures, which are often fatalistically taught as unquestionable and unchangeable.' Misiaszek (2021: 102) also suggests 'that students should be taught to freely dream of environmental utopias that counter current social, economic and political structures'. However, he qualifies his utopian sense of hope in stating that it must be grounded in aspects of planetary sustainability and worldwide socio-environmental justice (Misiasek, 2021).

What Freire and his followers demonstrate is that hope must be pedagogically based and grounded in practice. This means, therefore, encouraging an approach to learning that is forward thinking, posing questions and ideas for the future, but at the same time is grounded in real issues of the time.

There are potential limitations with this approach. Le Grange (2011) notes the dangers of hope becoming merely a political slogan that is easy to marketise and with which few could disagree. He notes further that a pedagogy of hope needs to be grounded within the lives of people, and not be part of some corporate or political agenda.

To relate hope to an educational approach that seeks a more just and sustainable world means bringing in a pedagogy that recognises these global challenges. This is where development education and global learning comes in.

The contribution of development education and global learning

Development education and global learning, and its various interpretations such as global education and global citizenship education, have a common conceptual base of global social justice, empowering learners to be active global citizens, and posing a pedagogical approach that is learner centred, participatory and encourages challenging assumptions and dominant societal norms regarding global forces (see Bourn, 2020; Hartmeyer and Wegimont, 2016; Tarozzi and Torres, 2016; Sant et al., 2018).

Freirean themes have been very influential within the field of development education and global learning. Examples include much of the work of Vanessa Andreotti, from her early projects such as Open Spaces for Dialogue and Enquiry and Through Other Eyes (Andreotti and Souza, 2008), to her more recent work on HEADS up and decolonisation (Andreotti et al., 2018). Similar ideas can be seen in the work of Shultz (2018), Kumar (2008), Ramalho (2020) and Moraes and Freire (2020).

This engagement with the ideas of Freire is not new. Walkington (2000: 15) made reference to his influence, commenting that 'development education, therefore, is an approach which has the potential to make ideological assumptions explicit through a critical and reflective educational process and to this extent its aims reflect Freirean thinking'. Walkington (2000) went on to note that there was also a similarity between development education practices around group and dialogic methods, and Freirean thinking, where people are encouraged to consider their own role as actors in change.

In her research on the critical global educator, Ellis (2016) interviewed a range of researchers and practitioners from the field of global education, and the influence of Freire could be seen in their observations. A worker for an international non-governmental organisation commented that 'Freire is very much the reference point for everything that I have done' (Ellis, 2016: 162). A teacher educator she

interviewed said similar things, in that Freire's ideas were 'very, very powerful and ha[ve] driven a lot of what I have done' (Ellis, 2016: 143).

What development education and global learning bring to discussions on hope, particularly within the context of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the climate change crisis, is a pedagogical approach that has a clear value base around social justice. The development of skills and knowledge are essential not only to understand the impact of global forces, but also to equip the learner with the means to address them. This approach therefore has as its basis the promotion that change is possible.

One of the pioneers of global education in the UK is Dave Hicks, and much of his more recent work has directly addressed the theme of hope in relation to education for climate change. He has stated that:

There are four essential strands to practical hope that make a real difference for learners:

- Sharing: creating spaces where young people can share their feelings about climate change issues, without feeling they will be criticised or laughed at.
- Listening: really listening to what students wish to say, so they feel appropriately consulted and reassured that what they share is okay.
- Understanding: the nature of climate change – its origins, impacts and consequences as well as the action being taken to help minimise and adapt to this.
- Acting: knowing what needs to be done in the classroom, home and community, as well as who one can work with and who will give ongoing support. (Hicks, 2018: 8)

For Hicks (2016), hope is linked to promoting within education a sense of what the future could entail. He states that a key skill in aiming for a low carbon future is the ability to imagine and envision such futures. He also notes that equally important is the skill 'to help learners develop their own sense of agency so they can contribute to appropriate action for change' (Hicks, 2016: 11). This means that there is a difference between hoping that something might happen and change, and the need to engage in seeking a positive future (Hicks, 2014).

Kool (2017) has also emphasised the importance of futures thinking. He writes about the necessity of 'understanding the past, confronting the present, and envisioning the future', stating that:

Our work as educators is not to lead our students to face the future with despair, nor is it to live in a Panglossian sense of optimism. The future is going to pose serious dangers to our societies and the diversity of life on earth, and we need ways of imagining the future(s) our children will want to live in, grounded in the realities of today. (Kool, 2017: 141)

For development educationalists, this means that a key element of a pedagogy for hope has to be not only imagining the future, but also providing the skills to enable learners to seek social change. While many of these themes are implicit in development education and global learning discourses, there is a need for a pedagogy of hope to be much more explicit.

Themes of hope, seeking a more just and sustainable future world, while at the same time addressing the challenges of inequalities and fears of helplessness, need to be much more at the heart of development education and global learning. This means constructing a pedagogical approach that:

- locates challenges in real-world experiences
- goes beyond superficial and quick-fix solutions to understanding the complexities of global problems
- recognises and directly addresses the relationship between hope and hopelessness and goes beyond emotional responses to issues
- promotes a sense that change is possible – to imagine future scenarios
- engages in an active process to seek change towards a more just and sustainable future.

What this approach suggests is that development education and global learning as an educational field needs to encourage more discussion about what hope means, what sort of future societies we want to live in and what should be the role of education therein (see Halpin, 2003).

Search for a different form of education

These questions and themes have become more evident within numerous debates around education as a result of the COVID-19 global pandemic and the climate emergency. In the UK, for example, these debates have raised questions about the purpose of schooling and what it should aim to achieve. The ways in which teaching in many countries has moved to online learning, and the digital divide that this has created, have posed wider questions about how learners gain their knowledge about issues and subjects, and how educators can ensure that students do not retreat into very individualistic approaches.

In the UK, a video was produced by a range of organisations towards the end of 2020 which was based on various educators asking questions about what sort of education we should be thinking of post-COVID-19 (Reboot the Future, 2020). This video highlights that the Climate Emergency campaign and the Black Lives Matter movement, along with COVID-19, have brought to centre stage questions and issues about what kind of education is needed for the future – a future which for some feels increasingly uncertain and insecure, and which still divides people based on class, gender and ethnicity. Some of the questions posed and statements made in the video are:

- Who benefits from education?
- What sort of knowledge will we need, and how will we access it?
- How can we ensure schools teach a diverse range of perspectives and histories?
- How can schools promote a fairer society where everyone feels they are valued and belongs?
  We want a future we can believe in. (Reboot the Future, 2020)

The video argues that the COVID-19 pandemic provides an opportunity to reflect on how we could learn differently.

What is valuable about this video is that it poses questions in a positive way, seeking ways forward and yet still asking difficult questions. For example, the reference in a question to everyone feeling valued reflects an approach to learning that has at its heart a belief in humane education. Yet, at the same time, it asks how teaching can reflect a range of voices from all sectors of society.

Similar questions and comments have been noted in a report on *The 'New Normal': The future of education after COVID-19* by the Institute of Public Policy Research, a UK-based think tank (Quilter-Pinner and Ambrose, 2020). This report called for conversations in three key areas:

- the need for our education system to prepare children for life, not just examinations
- where and how learning takes place as well as who is involved in it
- the need to tackle inequalities outside, as well as inside the classroom. (Quilter-Pinner and Ambrose, 2020)

Another example is that produced by a coalition of peace education groups in the UK on Futures of Education:

> The Covid-19 pandemic has raised critical questions about the ability of education systems to withstand crises and prepare young people to succeed in an increasingly complex world. Educators, young people, and school leaders raised concerns that the renewed focus on creativity, wellbeing, and care during the pandemic will not be sustainable in the long-term without adequate resources, time, and space. They worried that the pressure to meet academic targets will continue to undercut schools' capacity to support the 'whole child' intellectually, socially, and civically. Education systems need to become more responsive

and more resilient to crises, both present and future, including against the toxic influence of disinformation, systemic racism, and the neglect of mental health and wellbeing. (Protection Approaches, 2020: 2)

These examples demonstrate that there are calls from various sections of the educational community in the UK to recognise that the COVID-19 global pandemic has created a space and an opportunity to ask fundamental questions about the purpose and role of education. It is within this space that development education and global learning perspectives can play a leading role. It is this pedagogy of hope and global social justice that needs to be part of these debates.

An important opportunity has also arisen from the decision by UNESCO to embark on a major international initiative on the Futures of Education. This initiative uses the concept of futures in the plural in order to recognise that there is a rich diversity of ways of knowing and being around the world. UNESCO deliberately uses the plural form, as it acknowledges that there are multiple dimensions to the future, and that there will likely be various desirable and undesirable futures.

UNESCO's Futures of Education initiative also approaches the future as a space for democratic design that is connected to, but not limited by, past and present. It builds on dedicated evidence-based trend analysis that can help shine light on anticipated challenges and opportunities. This is complemented by participatory mechanisms for envisioning new possible futures of education. Consultations across world regions will bring in the views of a wide range of stakeholders under the understanding that innovation and ownership of the future need to be locally anchored as well as globally discussed (UNESCO, 2020).

So, what particularly should the development education and global learning community be posing within these debates?

One example that has been promoted by a number of UK-based civil society organisations is promoting and advocating for the themes from UN SDG 4.7. These have become well known as important 'pegs' on which to encourage learning that addresses global social justice and sustainable development, and the desire for a more peaceful and humane world. This initiative, called Our Shared World, builds on similar initiatives such as the European Commission-funded Bridge 47 project (Bridge 47, 2020) and sees its focus as being on advocating for a different form of education that has SDG 4.7 as its underlying goal. It is a coalition of over a hundred civil society organisations in England who seek the successful implementation of this goal across all aspects of education in England by 2030. Our Shared World aims to bring together research, policy and practice within the environmental, global, human rights, culture and peace domains of education to create a more sustainable, fairer, peaceful and resilient world. This initiative sees SDG 4.7 as an opportunity to advocate for a different approach to education than is dominant in most societies. It sees SDG 4.7 as a goal that demonstrates the interconnected nature of people's lives, the connections between local and global issues, and between issues such as the climate emergency and poverty and girls' education.

Another example of posing a different form of education and learning is the range of initiatives specifically around the climate emergency. There have been a number of important messages related to a pedagogy of hope from the wealth of initiatives by young people.

Numerous civil society organisations, and bodies such as UNICEF, have recognised that they need to rethink how they engage with young people, acknowledging that campaigns and initiatives need to have more than a token involvement of young people; rather, they should be recognised as being at the forefront of any campaigns. What they have also shown is that effective advocacy and campaigning work must have an educational basis – too often, there has been a mechanistic approach – and that from awareness raising comes behaviour change and action (Walker, 2017).

While social media has played an important role in galvanising thousands of young people, much of the success it has had has been because there have been excellent educational resources produced that not only provide evidence of the impact of climate change, but also demonstrate ways in which young people can become more actively involved (Centre for Alternative Technology, 2020; British Youth Council, 2020).

One example that shows this well is UNICEF UK's initiative called OutRight. What is distinctive about their approach is the use of pedagogical approaches that resonate closely with those of Freire. They have encouraged a more enquiry-led approach, offering suggestions and posing questions, such as: What changes would you like to see made? (UNICEF UK, 2020a).

Alongside this, UNICEF has developed a more generic Youth Advocacy Toolkit which is about 'supporting children and young people to speak up and helping them actively take part in the decisions that affect them' (UNICEF UK, 2020b: 3). This toolkit has the following pedagogical approach:

- Explore: Identify the problem in terms of what needs to change. Outline your vision and research and analyse the issue.
- Think: What steps need to be taken to progress the issue and identify who has the power and who can make a difference.
- Act: What do you need to do and what do you need to say and devise an advocacy plan.
- Evaluate: What were the lessons from the actions? (UNICEF UK, 2020b: 3)

Similar approaches can also be seen in UNICEF UK's work on the Rights Respecting School Award, which has engaged several thousand schools. The evidence from this programme shows the impact of empowering children and young people to take action for social change based on a social justice approach (UNICEF, 2020c).

A further example is connected to the Black Lives Matter movement, within which there have been numerous initiatives within both school- and university-based education for decolonising the curriculum. This, like the climate emergency, has taken many forms, and it has resulted in a wide range of initiatives from primetime television dramas in the UK such as *Small Axe* (McQueen, 2020) to thousands of sportspeople around the world 'taking the knee' as a mark of their opposition to racism and discrimination. There have been numerous moves to challenge the symbols of racism, slavery and imperialism through the dismantling of statues and other symbols of oppression, alongside initiatives to rethink both school and higher education curricula. One example that has gone beyond this in higher education in the UK is Keele University Students Union et al. (2018: n.p.), where a manifesto produced by staff and students for decolonising the curriculum states:

> Decolonisation involves identifying colonial systems, structures and relationships, and working to challenge those systems, It is not 'integration' or simply the token inclusion of the intellectual achievement of non-white cultures. Rather it involves a paradigm shift from a culture of exclusion and denial to the making of space for other political philosophies and knowledge systems. It's a culture shift to think more widely about why common knowledge is what it is, and in so doing adjusting cultural perceptions and power relations in real and significant ways.

Many of the questions posed within the Keele manifesto will be familiar to many development educationalists, such as acknowledging that knowledge is not owned by anyone, but that it is marked by power relations. What the manifesto also encourages us all to consider is that decolonising the curriculum is much more than bringing in minority ethnic voices. The manifesto states that decolonising has to be concerned with 'not only what is taught and how it is critiqued, but how it is taught, which gives rise to an understanding of decolonisation that addresses how academic literacies are experienced' (Keele University Students Union et al., 2018: n.p.). Some of these themes can be seen in the writings of Andreotti (2014), Stein (2020) and Pashby (2018) on global citizenship education.

A recent UK example is the book on *Decolonising the History Curriculum* by Moncrieffe (2020). Moncrieffe shows the limitations of the history curriculum for primary school children in England, but also the challenges of promoting a more decolonising approach through a predominantly White teaching profession. He notes the value of educational initiatives such as Black History Month, but often these are tokenistic and are counter to a dominant narrative of teaching history that is based on nation-building

from the Anglo-Saxons and the Vikings onwards. For example, little mention is made in the primary history curriculum of the impact of more recent migration to England, such as the Windrush generation in the 1950s. Another practice-focused publication is that by Charles and Boyle (2020) on *Decolonising the Curriculum Through Theory and Practice*. This weaves together themes of mathematics, use of artefacts and an understanding of imperialism through an Afro-centred pedagogical approach in a practical way for teachers.

A criticism often made of some of the postcolonial critiques of development education and global learning is that they can easily impart in the learner a 'guilt mentality', which can lead to a sense of hopelessness and disempowerment. Therefore, what needs to be included is, rightly, critiques of dominant ideological forces, but also a way forward that shows that change is possible, and that gives some indications as to what can be achieved. This means praxis in Freirean terms, of providing pathways not only for tackling postcolonial critiques, but also for bringing into the learning a sense of moving forward, of social justice and of hope.

What these examples demonstrate is that a pedagogy for hope has to be located within the social issues of the day: it needs not only to pose different approaches and voices to that which are dominant through the education system, but also to suggest that they need to be giving perspectives for the future, a sense that hope and social change is possible. This is why and where Freire's ideas are still so relevant and appropriate.

Development education and global learning through the examples addressed in this article can help with this process. However, in moving forward, they need to be framed more directly within the legacy and influence of Freire and his pedagogical principles. What this means is:

- Greater focus and emphasis within all aspects of teaching and learning on promoting positive alternatives to the future of societies, showing that change is possible, but that this requires understanding of the issues, engagement in society and forms of social action.
- Hope is not some idealistic dream, but is located in an understanding and analysis of the current situation in the world. Hope has to be seen alongside why there can be an element of hopelessness in many societies – a sense of gloom and despondency.
- The role of educators is crucial within this pedagogy of hope. They have a key role to play as motivators for engaging learners in social change, and in promoting scenarios for the future that can lead to a more just and sustainable world.
- Increased emphasis on posing the linkages between the aims of development education and global learning and the purposes of education.

The Black Lives Matter movement and various campaigns around the climate emergency have been built on generations of forms of social action, of educational initiatives that have endeavoured to challenge dominant colonial views of the world and the shortcomings of a narrow neoliberalist and technocratic response to the crisis of the future of the planet.

These principles and approaches also suggest something broader: the purpose of education in general. The global COVID-19 pandemic and the threat to the future of the planet as a result of the climate emergency have resulted in many educationalists around the world asking questions about what education is for, how it can be more relevant to the needs of societies today, and how it can help to empower learners to believe in a sense of hope – that change is possible, but that it requires action and engagement, and a deepening understanding of the shortcomings of many existing societies and economies. This article has argued that the development education and global learning traditions have made, and continue to make, an important contribution to these debates. Learning about global issues by its very nature poses questions about addressing the needs of future generations. As this article has shown, by reviewing examples of educational practice in the UK, there are organisations which are making connections with the themes from the SDGs. However, to ensure this sense of optimism, and that change is possible, development education and global learning practice needs to give more emphasis

to considering the importance of hope within its practices, and to locate this sense of hope within real-world scenarios and options for the future of the planet. As Freire (2004: 9) himself said, there is a 'need for a kind of education in hope'.

Declarations and conflicts of interest

Conflicts of interest statement

The author is a member of the editorial board for this journal. All efforts to sufficiently blind the author during peer review of this article have been made. The author declares no further conflicts with this article.

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