

From Miami to Moscow: Critical Dialogue in Global Education

Promoting Critical Dialogue in Global Education

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This edited keynote address was delivered at the Fourth Global Learning Conference at Florida International University, April 4, 2014, by Dr. Toni Fuss Kirkwood-Tucker, retired Associate Professor of Social Studies and Global Education, Florida State University.

When I visited China on a Fulbright in 1985, our group stayed in the dormitories of Beijing Normal University. As we were settling down for the night on a straw-filled bed and a rice-filled pillow, suddenly beautiful voices entered our sparse dormitory, doors flung open and, following the sound, Chinese students and American Fulbrighters hurried down the stairs flocking around the only television in the building. CNN was broadcasting, *We are the World*.

What a momentous time in the history of the world. Some of the West's best musicians had gathered pro bono to appeal to the world to feed hungry African children dying of malnutrition and preventable diseases. Tell me, have the conditions of our world improved since then? Have the prejudices ceased. Do we still believe that hungry people are hungry because they are lazy? Thank you for inviting me to discuss the importance of critical dialogue in global education at this conference. Here, at Florida International University (FIU), you have accomplished a remarkable feat in integrating a global perspective into curriculum and instruction in each college and department during the last four years, ranging from education to business to anthropology to architecture, to the social sciences to engineering, physics and mathematics, health, art, literature, medicine and law. You have established a successful national prototype in the infusion of global teaching and learning in your disciplines in higher education. Congratulations to you on your exemplary vision. However your continued active role in this global initiative is critical. Dewey (1901) said it best:

The teacher is the most important figure in so far as the curriculum is concerned, and there is simply no point in attempting a reform of the curriculum without the active participation of the teacher (n. p.)

Likewise Dr. Edvard Dmitrievich Dneprov, the Russian Minister of Education, appointed by President Yeltsin, had this to say at the opening of Russia's first international education conference at Sochi in 1991 after the fall of the Berlin Wall:

It is education that is to destroy old-fashioned stereotypes and will change the psyche of the nation. It is education as well that is to lead the way in developing people's democratic world outlook, their acquiring new political culture and their economic awareness.

However, there is no room for complacency. An alarming study by the Pew Research Center (2007), *Views of a Changing World*, found that the United States among all wealthy nations has the highest proportion of citizens who believed that "our culture is superior to others." In its 2009 survey, three-quarters of Americans maintained that domestic concerns should take precedence over foreign

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matters. Even more tragic is the fact that the U.S. educational system supports national superiority in its curriculum (Gaudelli, 2007; Tye, 2009).

The need for global education is a critical factor in the education of our youth if we are to promote greater acceptance of diversity and reduce stereotyping and prejudicial assumptions about the *Other* and eliminate xenophobia.

The *Other* Among Us

Who is the *Other* among us? The *Other* comprises those individuals who are in the minority--- the marginalized, the immigrant, the LGTB community, the homeless, the mentally ill, the Vietnam Veteran, the oppressed, the descendants of slavery. Multiculturalist Pang (2011) noted that “critical global education moves to eliminate the marginalization of many underrepresented communities such as the indigenous, people of color, and women” (p. 5). Acceptance of the *Other* is one critical aspect in global education that must be repeatedly stressed by the teacher—as the *Others* are many of the very students who study on our campuses--the very students who are in your classrooms who, with determination, perseverance and sacrifices, study diligently to achieve a college degree. We, teachers, must do everything we can do for our students to accept differences and honor the voices of the *Other*.

Conference of the Association of International Education Administrators

Of great interest to you might be findings presented at the 2014 conference of the Association of International Education Administrators (AIEA) in how to effectively integrate international students on American campuses to maximize the potential for global learning. I suggest that these findings apply just as much on minority-majority campuses as on campuses in which there is a predominance of diversity. Executive director of the AIEA, and expert on intercultural competence, Darla K. Deardorff, stated:

It's not enough to say, look, we have X number of international students on campus. What difference does it make? We must ask: How can we better utilize those resources as well as our international faculty and scholars and--thinking broadly—the international backgrounds of staff on our campuses? (n. p., see Redden, 2014.)

The question of integrating international and domestic students is “an ongoing issue that has been with us for many years and unfortunately I have not found any institution yet that has found the answer,” stated Deardorff (n. p., see Redden, 2014). Since campuses in recent years have seen huge influxes of international students across the U.S., the issue is how to effectively honor diversity on American campuses to maximize the potential for global learning that has taken on increasing salience.

Even at FIU, located in one of the U.S. most diverse metropolitan cities with a Latin majority, minority students, particularly students of color, often feel alienated in the Hispanic mainstream culture. FIU, like other universities, needs to do much more to bring domestic and international students together in an intentional way as interactions occurring naturally between foreign and domestic students are not sufficient. Your challenge here at FIU is huge in order to instill in our students respect for the *Other* to eradicate xenophobia.

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Researchers at the 2014 AIEA conference, however, also found positive results. Krista Jenkins, director of International Programs, Farleigh Dickinson University, who surveyed college students first as freshmen and then again as sophomores, found that the mere presence of international students does affect domestic student attitudes of entering U.S. college students with high levels of xenophobia as they became much less xenophobic if they had social contact with foreign-born students. She also found freshman and sophomore students on campuses with a higher density of international students were more likely to experience a decrease in globalization anxiety than students on campuses with a lower density of international students (Redden, 2014).

Deardorff, however, warned that it's not sufficient to simply bring people together even in the same classroom; neither does a one-time faculty training on intercultural competence work. Her research is supported by Philip G. Altbach, professor and director of Boston College's Center for International Higher Education, who also emphasized that diverse student intermingling in itself is not sufficient in realizing the broad goal of "universalizing global learning" (Redden, 2014).

Deardorff suggested instead that universities offer faculty numerous symposia with invited outside international speakers and working groups, and the pairing of international and domestic students such as through conversation partners and buddy programs. But importantly, intercultural programs designed to bring diverse students together are only effective when certain conditions are met, such as the existence of a common goal for some greater purpose with students directly interacting and the intentional commitment of faculty to such goals. Successful intercultural interaction, then, can be brought about when students share common goals in arenas like service learning, research, and on sports teams. However, Deardorff is convinced that it is faculty who play the key role in creating a context for effective intercultural experiences leading to intercultural competence.

Robert D. Putnam, Harvard University, observed that simply being in the vicinity of those who are different can sometimes lead to greater *distrust* and more *suspicion* so it is imperative that we are very intentional about how we create the environment for intercultural integration (Redden, 2014). An alarming study published in the *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication* in 2012 found that nearly 40 percent of international students in the U.S. report having no close American friends (Redden, 2014). I admit to my own failings when attempting to create a cross-cultural dialogue between Asian and African- American graduate students during my tenure at Florida State University.

Suggestions for Pedagogy

The following ideas are some suggestions for a pedagogy that can assist you in the process of promoting intercultural communication, cross-national understanding, and respect of the *Other*--- key components for minority/majority student integration on university campuses. In your teaching, you may consider applying the Hanvey (1976) conceptual framework in how to teach from a global perspective.

The Hanvey Conceptual Framework

This classic and oldest framework in the field of global education is the most frequently used framework by teachers in the US to globalize curriculum and instruction. An anthropologist by training, Hanvey (1976) has the distinction of being among the first U.S. global educators in the

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1960s and '70s to propose strategies applicable in the classroom to globalize teaching and learning. The framework consists of five dimensions. You can choose one or two or all five dimensions as you see fit since you are the sole decision-maker in your classroom. Indeed—you are the intellectual shepherd in the vast fields of the universe in the attempt to bring your diverse sheep together into a holistic integrated learning body.

State of the Planet Awareness

The first dimension of the framework is the *State of the Planet Awareness*. It addresses the importance of possessing knowledge of prevailing world conditions such as population growth, human migrations, economic conditions, diminishing resources, political developments, science and technology, law, health, inter-nation and intra-nation conflicts. In short: students should learn about the latest events and developments occurring in the contemporary world as well as their causes and effects, such as the recent events in the Ukraine, where anti-government demonstrations literally led to the deposition of its president, leading to the resultant Russian annexation of the Crimea. Other examples might be the ongoing civil war in Syria, the tens of thousands of refugees fleeing into Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan and the ramifications of interrupted schooling for tens of thousands of children in the Middle East—or, moving to another continent, Brazil's anxiety in preparation for the World Cup and Summer Olympics, and its concomitant problems of infrastructure needs and removal of the *favelas* to the outskirts of the city, etc. International students could report on the happenings in their own country, which can lead to their own pride as well as to greater awareness among domestic students in changing their attitudes toward international students.

This pedagogy is consistent with Deardorff's suggestion that students work in groups to discuss common goals of some greater purpose so that each gains more understanding of the *Other*. Professors of Geography, in particular, must emphasize geographic concepts that American students have been found to lack in comparison to international students.

Perspective Consciousness

The second dimension proposed by Hanvey for global teaching and learning is *Perspective Consciousness*. It is the recognition on the part of the individual that he or she has a view of the world that is not universally shared, that this view of the world has been and continues to be shaped by influences that often escape conscious detection, and that others have different views of the world that we must respect since in any field of study it is possible to take an international view of that field

What textual, audio-visual or technological materials, then, can we use to demonstrate that individuals, groups and nations have different belief systems on issues that we must respect? That their voices are honored? You can use primary source documents—for the immediacy of the perspectives (slave diaries); role play—for understanding viewpoints and multiple perspectives; humor—political cartoons can be very helpful in this regard; case studies—that put a human face on issues with open-ended questions to promote discussion; the use of art—incorporating the arts from each of the respective groups can be eye-opening and uplifting as each image has a story to tell.

The perspective consciousness or worldview, for example, of Ukrainians and that of the Russians regarding the Russian annexation of the Crimea consists of two diametrically opposed perspectives here. Both parties believe they are right. Should these diverse beliefs not be deeply examined before jumping to conclusions? Research clearly shows that openmindedness toward the *Other* is

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associated with less chauvinistic bias, greater empathy for other cultures, and the expectation of complexity in the world (Kirkwood-Tucker, 2011; 2001; Kolker, Sheina & Ustinova, 2009; Liferov, Kolker, Ustinova, Kriuchkov & Sheina, 2005; Merryfield, 2009).

However, it is important to acknowledge that discussing differences in worldviews is complex. Teachers are cautioned as to the difficulties encountered in the struggle for cross-cultural knowing. Heilman (2009) warned that we will never fully know who the *Other* is. She believes that coming to know across difference is an acutely difficult process when advocating appreciation for multiple perspectives denies or underestimates the discomfort of real difference and active tolerance and cross-cultural knowing and does not require complete and nonjudgmental acceptance (the topic of female circumcision, for example). But it does require respect for differences.

Cross- Cultural Awareness

The third dimension proposed by Hanvey is *Cross-Cultural Awareness*, which constitutes an awareness of the diversity of ideas and practices to be found in human societies around the world, an understanding of how such ideas and practices compare, and a sense of how the ideas and ways of one's own society might be viewed from others' vantage points—leading to *empathy* and *transpection* of the Other. Deardorff proposed that students interact collectively to discuss common goals of some greater purpose. So—you, the teacher, can choose a common goal of significance related to your own discipline that you wish to emphasize such as:

- The immigrant experience
- Business practices in industrialized and non-industrialized nations
- Civil rights challenges
- Family values
- Climate change
- Environmental conservation
- Common humanity
- Nobel Prize winners in your discipline
- Courtship norms; marriage laws
- International designs in architecture
- Child trafficking
- Human rights violations
- Health care
- Infant mortality among cultures

For example, in Florida, the average white infant mortality rate from 2007 to 2009 was 5.5 per 1,000 live births; the African-American infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births was more than double at 12.7 (State Health Facts, 2011). What great discussion should ensue from these findings. You might ask your students: What are the live births in Cuba? Haiti? Mexico? Japan? Zimbabwe? Indonesia? You can identify a local social issue and compare its similarities and differences in the different cultures of the student represented in your classroom. Such discussion can promote cross-cultural understanding leading to empathy and transpection. *Empathy* evokes the deep sadness for the suffering of the *Other*. *Transpection* comprises the highest level of empathy when the individual begins to think and feel like the *Other*. Such changes generally occur when one lives or works in another culture for a long time—like our Peace Corps volunteers.

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Culturally-responsive teaching is critical. My empirical study (Kirkwood-Tucker, 2009) of a large K-12 sample of students in Miami's schools revealed that when students deepened their knowledge and understanding of the Other they demonstrated greater acceptance of diversity and reduced stereotyping and prejudicial assumptions about the Other. Merryfield (2002) found that global education fostered students' compassion for others in the larger world---emotions that pave the way to wanting to understand and help the Other who experience pain just like us.

My ten-year work in the Miami schools brings the following cross-cultural misunderstanding incident to mind: One of our to-be-globally-trained elementary teachers received a student from Ethiopia in her class. The students and teachers were excited---until lunch time. When the children brought their lunch trays to the table, the Ethiopian student asked permission to go to the restroom. The elementary students were half-way through eating when she finally reappeared. The teacher scolded her in front of her peers telling the newcomer that she is now in America and must follow American rules. What was she doing so long in the restroom? With a sea of tears rolling down her cheeks the Ethiopian student sat down, and began to eat with her hands. The classmates and the teacher gasped, rolling their eyes and starting to laugh...Did the teacher not know that there is an elaborate cultural cleansing ritual of hands preceding eating---and that many cultures in the world use one's god-given hands to eat? What does a teacher have to do to avoid such cultural embarrassment? Miami being one of the most diverse cities in the world, let's ensure that such tragedies do not happen in your classrooms.

Knowledge of Global Dynamics

The fourth dimension of Hanvey's conceptual framework, *Knowledge of Global Dynamics*, for global teaching and learning, is defined as some modest comprehension of key traits and mechanisms of the world systems, with emphasis on theories and concepts that may increase intelligent consciousness of global change. In essence, the dimension speaks to the world's increasing globalization and its interconnectedness to the world's nations and people, suggesting that students should possess some modest comprehension of world systems. Can you, in your discipline,

- demonstrate to your students the interconnectedness of the human family that leads to a sense of global belonging with all humanity?
- illustrate how the world is interconnected historically, economically geographically, culturally, technologically, and academically? ---leading your students to move from national independence thinking to international interdependence thinking in your particular discipline? Can you demonstrate to your students
- the linkages or interconnections between, for example, the origin of Math or the origin of writing in the Middle East? which leads to respect *for* the Other and pride *of* the Other. Can you illustrate to your students the global connectivity of goods and services of resources, of ideas, of student and teacher exchanges, of international faculty partnerships? Can you show to students
- how human interrelationships among peoples of the world create a web of cross-cultural interconnectedness? That effective communication among nations can prevent ethnic conflict among groups? That the effects of a breakdown in communication among nations, including the United States, neighboring countries, the people themselves can lead to war?

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Hanvey warned of *unanticipated* consequences of an event. A classic example of unanticipated consequences in interconnectedness is the Nestle baby formula catastrophe where women in non-industrialized nations were suggested to use instant formulas for their newborns so they could be freed from breastfeeding and have the opportunity to work. Nestle, however, failed to think of the contaminated water used with the formula---resulting in permanent physical and mental impairment of thousands of babies in non-industrialized nations. You may ask, “were the Nestle executives aware of this?” A question, in a business class, for example, that would surely lead to heated discussions of business ethics.

Awareness of Human Choices

Hanvey’s fifth and final dimension of *Awareness of Human Choices* addresses the problems of choice confronting individuals, nations, and the human species a consciousness and knowledge of global systems expand. This dimension probes the choices made by individuals/ groups/nations on the local, national and international levels. Students are placed in a problem-solving decision-making mode to examine the context within which decisions were made. They are asked to hypothesize alternative solutions, like in the case of Mr. Putin’s decision in the annexation of the Crimea. The teacher may ask:

- What historical/geopolitical reasons did the Russian President have to make this decision?
- What other choices did Mr. Putin have?
- Are our actions important enough to bring about change?

Such a question can lead to individual empowerment and action. Or---the teacher can play the devil’s advocate, stating: This problem is too big for us to address---testing student responses to such a statement. As Merryfield (2009) found, the relationship between efficacy, empowerment, and the ability of an individual clearly makes a difference in global engagements.

Applying the Hanvey Framework to the Classroom

When applying these five dimensions, you might ask: Where in the curriculum is it most effective? Should it be spontaneous in every class or in every Wednesday class only? Only you can make the decision about when it is most appropriate during the instructional process. But surely you can include one or more dimensions in teacher led-discussions in average-sized classes in collaborative groups divided equally among majority and minority students, and in team-based learning groups of 7 or more in your big classes with international and domestic students equally represented in every group. The suggestions above require that *both* teacher and students practice reflexivity---thinking about what works and what does not; active listening to all voices, and, ideally, journaling.

Recommendations

Following are some recommendations for building a more peaceful world: Welcome your students in the languages they represent; learn additional innocuous words like *como esta*, *nihou*, *wie geht es Ihnen*; and complimentary words like *great*, *wonderful*, *please* and *thank you*. In your classes, pair students from different cultures and have them formally introduce each other to the whole class on the first day of the semester. Emphasize the affective domain by opening doors to group work or team-based learning so students are compelled to communicate interculturally. In your small classes, have students ask each other teacher-prepared questions of a common intentional goal. In your large classes, use team-based learning strategies with intentionally intercultural teams. Critical

is that *you* divide the groups to ensure that minority and majority students are equally presented in each group.

Another recommendation I would like to make is simulating the United Nations. It is a wonderful and effective culminating activity at the end of the semester or academic year even though it requires major organizational skills and time to include students in all disciplines. Invite Fulbright Scholars in your disciplines; invite speakers who have lived abroad into your classrooms; engage with the local Visitors' Bureau; promote student and teacher exchanges; engage in faculty partnerships with international scholars; support or build a school in needy neighboring country.

In summary, FIU's Global Initiative provides the ideal framework by which to transform global teaching and learning into global engagement—the willingness to help others. The Global Learning for Global Citizenship component is the optimal goal of global education as we seek to become cosmopolitan citizens who must accept the *Other*, reduce stereotyping and false assumptions, eliminate xenophobia, and take responsibility for solving the problems of Mother Earth. You are representing FIU's multiple disciplines. What great fortune for FIU's students to be exposed to the diversity of cultures, architecture; literature and poetry; dance and theatre; business practices; rules of law; forms of governments, engineering craftsmanship, etc. that exist in other parts of the world where—in many cases—they began. With the world becoming increasingly violent, teaching from a global perspective requires deepening complexity and sophistication if we are to achieve social justice and a more peaceful world for all members of the human family.

Lived Experiences

You might ask why my passion for global teaching and learning is embedded so deeply in my psyche? There are many reasons. I will mention five.

First, because I am a *Teacher*—the noblest of all professions. It is my strong belief that good Teachers, outside the family, have the greatest opportunity to reach our youth.

Second, because global education is humanistic, integrative, interdisciplinary, inclusive, generic, and comprises a viable strategy for democratizing education.

Third, my passion for global teaching and learning is embedded deeply in my psyche because my beliefs about the larger world have been shaped by memorable experiences during my travel-study trips to England, Vietnam, Cambodia, Europe and Nepal, Japan, Peru, Israel and Jordan and by international conferences in Russia and Siberia, Korea, South Africa, Zimbabwe, the Caribbean, Canada, and Mexico, as well as two Fulbright Fellowships to China and Russia. These experiences have taught me that the world is filled with kind, caring, talented people—many of whom have been victims of corrupt governments, colonialism, and greed. Their deprivation did not prevent them from moving forward selflessly to improve the lives of others. I believe that all human beings on this earth are born with the innate capacity of goodness.

A fourth reason for my passion for global education is my border-crossing experiences when I left Southern Germany for the Deep South of the United States in the early 1960s. Not only was I traumatized by shotgun houses, rocking chairs on front porches, and 100-degree weather, but by the segregation of African-Americans in daily life such as separate water fountains or being confined to the back of the bus. I was traumatized by the refusal of my mother-in-law's maid, Yvonne, to eat at the same table with me and by her request to drop her off at the corner of the housing-project when

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she finally consented to let me drive her home. I was traumatized by cities burning; demonstrators beaten and killed; unnerving race riots, the discovery in my first year of teaching at the height of integration in Miami's schools that my bussed-in black middle-schoolers from Liberty City had never seen the Atlantic Ocean nor even dipped their toes in the warm waters of the Atlantic Ocean (I took them on this very fieldtrip).

The fifth reason and, perhaps, most passionate reason for my deep belief in the criticality of global education stems from my experiences growing up during the Nazi era. I clearly remember the scene when our village priest entered our classroom one morning, climbed on the teacher's chair behind the desk, removed the hand-carved crucifix from the wall and replaced it with a framed picture of Hitler. This was Catholic Bavaria. The mayor, priest, and teachers were the prominent individuals in the village. The priest stepped down from the chair and told the class: "From now on, when your teacher comes into the room, you will no longer pray. Instead, you stand up, salute Hitler, and shout 'Sieg Heil' three times. Only then are you allowed to sit down. Second, when you greet people in the street you no longer greet them with 'Gruess Gott, Frau Meier, but you raise your arm and say, 'Sieg Heil, Frau Meier.'"

As a first-grader I thought Jesus coming down from the wall was cool. I always felt sorry for him having to hang from a cross. When I informed my Father of this exciting event, he grabbed me by the arms and spoke in no uncertain terms: "I forbid you to salute Hitler in the classroom or in the streets, do you understand? Do not let me catch you." From the next day on, I had to remain one hour longer in school every day cleaning blackboards, floors, and windows until the end of the school year. When the priest came to the house to speak about my disobedience, Papa threw him out of the house, calling him *einen schwarzen Lumpen* —a black-frocked bandit. My family had become the *Other* in the village.

When my little brother was born in our house in 1944, I asked my mother why Dr. Kohlmeier did not deliver him like he did me and my sister, Mama responded that she could not find him. My father, just arriving from Munich where he worked in the Messerschmitt factory after being injured in the war, yelled at my mother, "Tell her the truth. Dr. Kohlmeier is a Jew, and he was taken away. Who knows in which concentration camp he and his family were killed." Mama started moaning, and I begged my father to tell me about the camps. He ranted for hours as he spoke to his seven-year-old first-born child of the horrors of concentration camps... especially in nearby Dachau...

You can understand more fully now, I think, why I see global education not as a choice, but as a vital imperative in education. You now can understand my passion for global education and my belief in its power over time to dispel prejudice, intolerance and marginalization illuminating the way to intercultural understanding and respect for the *Other* that will help us build a more harmonious world. Thank you."

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