

Global Learning and Postcolonial Teaching Alternative Critical Pedagogies

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Abstract

Which kind of pedagogies are adequate responses to 21st century challenges? What are the advantages of developing such pedagogies in a joint effort of scholars from both sides of the Atlantic Ocean?

What are those challenges? Two such challenges will be addressed: First, globalization processes - with global trade and monetary flows, global migration, dramatic changes in modes of communication and not the least global warming with many foreseeable but also not predictable impacts - call for answers from people who are conscious and informed about global connections and fit for planetary communication. Second, efforts so far are not very successful in making the world a place more just and more secure for everyone. Power plays, consciously, but also unconsciously reminiscent of colonialist attitudes dominate international discourses.

Post-colonial theory has challenged the self-evidence of such research, teaching and politics. Critical approaches such as post- and de-colonial theory, with concepts such as "Orientalism" or "Coloniality", propositions for "Provincializing Europe", "Interculturalidad" and more in general, a stronger reliance on "Southern Theory" are providing a rich toolbox for critical analysis and alternative reconstruction. Furthermore, some of claims of these approaches radically challenge the ways we were used to think about "realities" and ways of knowing. New theoretical approaches such as socio-material learning might offer insight.

If any of these approaches should bring forth new kinds of understanding, they must be connected with things happening in our everyday environment and the everyday environment of our students. So, to conclude the argument, I will use examples from teaching geography to illustrate how we might be able to open up horizons and reach beyond common stereotypes when we explore the world. It seems only logical that the exploration of a globalized world must be a joint venture with all stakeholders equally involved to ask the critical questions, to debate and to share.

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