Education, Development and Globalisation

1. Preface

Education and development are two interrelated notions (Lopes Cardozo, 2012a, unpublished work; Klees, 2009; Ginsburg et al., 2010). I begin this essay by highlighting the dominant paradigm in development globally, neoliberalism, and I will try to illustrate its repercussions for educational policies. Within the same framework, I will then explain how processes of globalisation have influenced the work of teachers by means of profound educational reforms and policy measures and I will speculate on how such reforms may affect the quality of education. I will dedicate the last section to explaining how processes of globalisation have influenced the development and spread of alternative approaches to education and development, paying special attention to critical multicultural education.

2. The dominance of neoliberalism in education and development: driving forces and objectives

I consider it appropriate to study the evolution of education within the framework of development discourses. In the 1960s and 1970s the liberal discourse was born, which, like the critical discourse, called for empowerment and participation (Klees, 2009). However, it did not share the critical discourse's transformative stance. The 1980s, characterised as "the lost decade for development and education" (Lopes Cardozo, 2012a, unpublished work), marked the rise of the neoliberal paradigm, which was to dominate thereafter. Neoliberalism's central principles were deregulation, competitiveness and privatisation. The term "Washington Consensus" was coined in 1989 by the economist John Williamson to describe policy prescriptions that were proposed by Washington D.C.-based institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and the US Treasury Department, to aid crisis-hit developing countries (Williamson, 1990). Klees (2009) elaborated on this by suggesting a series of neoliberal components that facilitated the application of neoliberalism to education. These components related to achieving empowerment and participation (taken from the critical discourse but applied in a market-oriented way), promoting partnership (to expand education's scale), establishing conditionalities, policy dialogue and ownership (to soften the harshness of neoliberal interventions), achieving knowledge management (key part of education and development strategies of the World Bank) and promoting economic efficiency. These components manifested
themselves in new forms of partnership, such as sector-wide approaches, a comprehensive development framework and the most recent poverty-reduction strategy process (Klees, 2009).

Within the framework of the incorporation of education in the neoliberal agenda, especially after the Jomtien Conference of 1990, Jones (2007) identified two international relations paradigms that have hitherto influenced the global architecture of education. The first paradigm, idealism, sought to unite diverse nations by putting individual interests aside. The second paradigm, realism, viewed the pursuit of national advantage as the natural basis of international relations. In this context education might become an instrument of class domination and subjugation, following the dictates of human capital theory (King, 2007). The formulation of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000, which introduced a purposive conception of international society based on cooperative values to promote common ends, marked the continuation of the inclusion of education in the international agenda (King, 2007). Since then, new transnational and pluralist patterns of engagement with education and development have emerged. These patterns, contrary to realism's reliance on sovereignty, recognised more diverse foundations of global legitimacy, power and influence (Jones, 2007).

It is within this context that new actors, such as NGOs, civil society and transnational epistemic communities, have emerged and have demonstrated their capability of influencing the educational agenda (Jones, 2007). These new actors have by no means common interests. In the case of UNESCO and UNICEF, for instance, the focus lies on education access, whereas civil society pays special attention to primary education (Lopes Cardozo, 2012b, unpublished work). These new actors are in juxtaposition to the Bretton Woods institutions and the various governments which (unofficially) seek to exercise foreign policy through development assistance (UNESCO, 2011). The World Bank in particular is a powerful actor. Despite changes in global governance, education has not quite realised its transformative goal. The common dilemma is whether donors should now focus on education accessibility/availability or quality. Addressing these issues has become complicated within the context of globalisation, as local conditions have become embedded in global processes. The implications of this for teaching and education quality are analysed in the next section.

3. Globalisation's effects on teaching and the implications of dominant reforms and policy measures for education quality

Paine and Zaichner (2012) detect a recent shift in educational reforms, from focusing on access and curriculum, to improving teachers' skills and teaching methods. Initiatives are "increasingly informed by other countries' ideas and practices" within the context of globalisation, which introduces "economic and market pressures on teaching and teacher education as institutional practices" (Paine & Zeichner, 2012, 570). Verger et al.'s (2012) international political economy (IPE) macro-approach, which analyses globalisation's effects on education from an economic perspective, argues that
countries aspire to become more competitive by turning themselves into knowledge economies. According to IPE approaches, globalisation affects education in a negative way because neoliberal and efficiency-driven reforms marginalise education equity and challenge state independence (and, consequently, education curriculum).

In trying to map the predominant policies, Carnoy (1999) identifies three kinds of government responses in the education and training sectors to changes in the world economy: competitive-driven, finance-driven and equity-driven reforms. Competitive-driven reforms aim to improve economic productivity by improving the quality and the productivity of teachers. Four sub-categories of competitive-driven reforms can be distinguished: decentralisation (to increase control over curriculum and teaching methods of local communities), high learning standard-setting (to raise parent demands and school performance), improved management of educational resources (to increase teacher effort and innovation, to supply teachers with effective teaching alternatives and to produce positive outcomes with the existing resources) and, finally, improved teacher recruitment and training (to deliver high-quality teachers). Finance-driven reforms aim to make countries increasingly aware of the business climate. Such reforms include structural adjustment measures where the IMF plays a central role. Such measures may include shifting public funding from higher to lower levels of education, privatising secondary and higher education and reducing the cost per student at all schooling levels. The third category, equity-driven reforms, aims to increase equality of economic opportunity through equalising access to high-quality education by investing in greater access to education for the most vulnerable categories of children. Equity-driven reforms have been less prominent within the framework of globalisation and neoliberalism.

Evaluating policy implications for education quality is utterly subjective. The linear logic of IFI's clearly values cost reduction more than anything, whereas the civil society and NGO's have long raised issues of quality compromise and education "elitisation", rendering education a tool of status quo reproduction (Davies, 2010; Novelli, 2011). Paine and Zaichner (2012) condemn the levelling effects of globalisation, stressing the need to conserve the local cultural and historical elements in order to avoid a "McDonaldization" of education (Lopes Cardozo, 2012a, unpublished work). In that sense, I believe that the role of teachers, whose voices have been largely suppressed within the context of neoliberal globalisation, is crucial. This suppression has triggered the rise of alternative education movements, which are the subject of the next section.

4. Alternative approaches to education and development within the framework of globalisation: the emergence of critical multicultural education

In the current era of intense globalisation, issues of local agency, citizenship and education have resulted in numerous debates. In an effort to address issues of diversity (Lopes Cardozo, 2012c, unpublished work) and to devise more balanced educational systems that will operate in synergy with
more equitable development paradigms to realise education's transformative potential, the notion of critical multicultural education has emerged (Sutton, 2005). Multicultural education promotes the equality of educational access and the institutionalised recognition of historical inequalities (ibid.). During this process it is important to recognise the importance of contextualising understandings and adapting multicultural education to specific contexts. The notion of social pluralism has been employed to illustrate the complications that may arise while doing so. As Sutton (2005, 100) points out: "each national debate concerning cultural difference and education is embedded in the topography of diversity that is unique to that nation".

Sleeter (1996; in Lopes Cardozo, 2012c, unpublished work) suggests that in order for education to have a transformative effect in the context of globalisation, it may be more useful to imagine multicultural education as a social movement, embedded in other social movements. In that context change in the classroom will occur parallel to the transformation of teachers into activists and agents of wider social change. Nonetheless, the implementation of multicultural education undoubtedly occurs in a global arena where dominant development and education paradigms, power relations and control mechanisms operate, facilitated by globalisation (Lopes Cardozo, 2012c, unpublished work). Leading theorists of critical pedagogy such as Henry Giroux and Michael Apple warn that this trend will undoubtedly be reflected in school curricula, whether these be products of neoliberal expansion or decolonising efforts. A critical attitude is thus required when evaluating the responses to globalisation's effects. Innocent notions such as "diversity", "citizenship", "agency", "dialogue" and "social transformation", the latter three receiving special attention in Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy, may then become highly politicised (Sutton, 2005; Bartlett, 2005).

5. Conclusions
Undoubtedly neoliberalism has largely determined the trajectory of education and development in the last few decades. The facilitating role of globalising Western-inspired forces in this process should not be ignored. Teaching has been profoundly affected by various policies, but the results have not always been in favour of those who may need education the most. The emergence of alternative approaches to education and development, where critical multicultural education possesses a prominent position, represents an effort to bring education back onto the "right" track of serving those in need, regardless of their social position, and of leading to social transformation. Despite this being a noble goal, one should not forget the power relations, which render any effort for change, teaching itself included, a political act. It remains to be seen whether the alternative streams of thought can co-operate with the dominant development and education paradigms. Any profound change will need time to manifest itself.
2. Literature


