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**Ollscoil na hÉireann, Corcaigh**

**National University of Ireland, Cork**



**UCC**

Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh, Éire  
University College Cork, Ireland

**Global-Local Connections: What educators, who use  
community-linked and multimedia methodologies, can learn  
about critically engaging university students in Development  
Education**

Thesis presented by

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for the degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy**

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Date: 5<sup>th</sup> July 2019

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## ABSTRACT

Development Education (DE) asks educators to empower learners to “analyse, reflect on and challenge at a local and global level, the root causes and consequences of global hunger, poverty, injustice, inequality and climate change; presenting multiple perspectives on global justice issues” (Irish Aid, 2017: 6). However, at higher education level, DE can become removed from communities in our own locality. This thesis asks what educators can learn by integrating Community-Linked Learning (CLL) into DE at third level. Furthermore, we live in a multimedia world yet we seldom critically analyse how we use multimedia and its relationship to global power relations. The thesis asks how integrating multimedia learning (MML), alongside CLL, into DE pedagogy might encourage third level students to engage with DE. It also asks what impact such pedagogical approaches might have on the community partners with whom we work.

The research took place over four years at the School of Education, University College Cork, in partnership with Digital Arts and Humanities. The thesis is grounded in a Critical Pedagogy theoretical framework with a DE lens. It also draws on critical theories relating to the field of CLL, MML and Critical Narrative. The questions are expl

ored using a Critical Ethnographic methodology. Five student groups participated on a voluntary basis. Four ‘key student participants’ and four ‘key community partners’ (in Cork, Lesotho, India, and Iraq ) agreed to participate in the research. The findings are based on the experiences of the eight key participants as they engage in a series of collaborative projects. Research methods include participant observation and narrative analysis based on digital stories, radio, creative arts, assignments and interviews.

For students, linking to the ‘real world’ of communities both at home and abroad helps to develop core DE competencies. They are learning that what matters is the relationship and the process of working closely with communities. They are learning to slow down and reflect and know that it is not always about ‘getting the task done quickly’. Making connections with ‘global’ issues becomes grounded in meaningful relationships. Students move from the personal story, to community activism, to political understandings and actions at national and global levels. Because they learn in a real world and actions are often in public spaces (websites, radio, art gallery, online

educational fora), students take the work very seriously and want to do justice to the communities they serve. Community partners used new media primarily to return to the most ancient of human communication activities, that of storytelling. ‘Telling their story’ was cathartic and transformational at a personal level and part of a wider narrative at a community level. It is both a personal and a political act. The experience of the community and ability to autonomously lead the work is important.

Many ethical and practical considerations arise, but returning to DE roots keeps the educator grounded. The role of the educator changes but has a critical role as facilitator and guide through the body of knowledge that is DE. The educator supports students to make connections between theory and practice and encourages critical reflection and understanding of systems of oppression that impact on people around the world. The findings also challenge the DE educator to consider their responsibility to question neoliberal models of education which serve economics rather than society. As humanity strives for freedom, DE helps us to embrace human interdependence and the power of solidarity, reflection and hope.

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## LIST OF ACCOMPANYING ARTEFACTS

The following artefacts accompany this thesis on the attached DVD. (NOTE: participant names in original artefacts are their real names. Those used in the thesis are for confidentiality purposes).

<p><b>Artefact 1:</b> The website <a href="http://phdthesis.gertrudecotter.info">phdthesis.gertrudecotter.info</a> is submitted as part of this thesis. It links to all of the attachments below. Since the URL may not last the test of time, a screen shot of the home page is on the accompanying DVD entitled <b>Artefact 1.1 - Website Screenshot 1 PhD Thesis Artefacts</b>.</p>
<p><b>Artefact 2 – the website <a href="http://behindthecurtain.info">http://behindthecurtain.info</a></b> is submitted as part of this thesis. ‘Behind the Curtain’ is the website created by students and the Family Carers Group. Since this website may not last the test of time, a screen shot of the home page is on the accompanying DVD entitled:</p> <p><b>Artefact 2.1 - Website Screenshot 2 Behind the Curtain</b></p> <p><b>Artefact 2.2 – Kathleen Digital Story</b></p>
<p><b>Artefact 3 – The Digital Archive - <a href="http://movingonireland.com">http://movingonireland.com</a></b> is submitted as part of this thesis. <i>Moving On Ireland</i> is the story of the move out of residential care of people with disabilities. Since this website may not last the test of time, a screen shot of the home page is on the accompanying DVD entitled: <b>Artefact 3.1: Website Screenshot 3 Behind the Curtain</b></p> <p><b>Artefact 3.2– Vera Digital Story No Looking Back</b> - Digital Story of move out of residential care. Available at <a href="http://movingonireland.com/valerie-browne/">http://movingonireland.com/valerie-browne/</a> at time of print.</p> <p><b>Artefact 3.3 – Vera Radio Interview</b> (on DVD). Available at <a href="http://movingonireland.com/valerie-browne/#radio">http://movingonireland.com/valerie-browne/#radio</a> at time of print.</p>
<p><b>Artefact 4 – Website of Digital Story Workshop</b></p> <p><b>URL: <a href="http://www.gertrudecotter.info/phd.thesis/digital-storytelling-workshop">http://www.gertrudecotter.info/phd.thesis/digital-storytelling-workshop</a></b></p> <p>Since this website may not last the test of time, a screen shot of the home page is on the accompanying DVD entitled: <b>Artefact 4.1: Website Screenshot 4 Digital Storytelling Workshop</b>.</p> <p>The following artefacts are on the attached DVD. <b>Artefact 4.2 – Digital Story “The Doll” Gertrude Cotter.</b> <b>Artefact 4.3 – Digital Story - Obafemi</b> <b>Artefact 4.4 – Digital Story - Claire</b></p>
<p><b>Artefact 5 - <a href="http://www.idestexhibition2018.gertrudecotter.info">http://www.idestexhibition2018.gertrudecotter.info</a>.</b> Exhibition at the Glucksman Art Gallery May 2018. Since this website may not last the test of time, a screen shot of the home page is on the accompanying DVD entitled: <b>Artefact 5.1: Website Screenshot 5.1 Glucksman Exhibition.</b></p> <p><b>Artefact 5.2 – <a href="https://yazidisgenocide.com">https://yazidisgenocide.com</a>.</b> Website created by Digital Arts and Humanities Class 2018 a screen shot of the home page is on the accompanying DVD entitled: <b>Artefact 5.3: Website Screenshot 5.2 Yazidis Genocide</b></p>
<p><b>Artefact 6 - <a href="http://www.gertrudecotter.info/phd.thesis/radio/">http://www.gertrudecotter.info/phd.thesis/radio/</a></b> Since this website may not last the test of time, a screen shot of the home page is on the accompanying DVD entitled: <b>Artefact 6.1: Website Screenshot 6.1 – Student Radio Shows</b> <b>Artefact 6.2 – Radio Introduction to Student Radio Show 1 (USB)</b> <b>Artefact 6.3 – Radio Andy talks about his vox pop (USB)</b> <b>Artefact 6.4– Radio Claire and Finuala (USB)</b> <b>Artefact 6.5 – Radio Andy talks about his motivation to participate in research (USB)</b></p> <p><b>Artefact 6.6</b> Extracts from Mixed Abilities Group Radio Global Hub transcript</p>
<p><b>Artefact 7: <a href="http://www.gertrudecotter.info/phd.thesis/course/01-test-course/">http://www.gertrudecotter.info/phd.thesis/course/01-test-course/</a></b></p> <p><b>Artefact 7.1: Website Screenshot 7.1 – Online Lesotho Course (USB)</b></p>

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

CBL:	Community Based Learning
CE:	Citizenship Education or Critical Ethnography (Depending on context)
CGC:	Critical Global Citizenship
CLL:	Community Linked Learning
CONCORD:	Confederation of European Non-Governmental Organisations for Relief and Development
CPD:	Continuous Professional Development
CSO:	Central Statistics Office
CSOs:	Civic and Civil Society organisations
CSPE:	Civic, Social and Political Education
CT:	Critical Theory
DE:	Development Education
DARE:	Development Awareness-Raising and Education (Forum)
DEAR:	Development Education & Awareness-Raising
DEEEP:	Development Education Exchange in Europe Project
DELG:	Department of Environment, Community and Local Government
DES:	Department of Education and Skills
DFAT:	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DICE:	Development and Intercultural Education
DST:	Digital Storytelling
Dóchas:	Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organisations
EGC:	Education for Global Citizenship
EE:	Environmental Education
ESD:	Education for Sustainable Development
GAD:	Women and Development
GC:	Global Citizenship
GCE:	Global Citizenship Education
EGC:	Education for Global Citizenship
ESD:	Education for Sustainable Development
GC:	Global Citizenship
GE:	Global Education
GENE:	Global Education Network Europe
GL:	Global Learning

GENE:	Global Education Network Europe
IDEA:	Irish Development Education Association
ITE:	Initial Teacher Education
KS:	Key Student
KCP:	Key Community Partner
MNCs:	Multinational Corporations
MM:	Multimedia
MML:	Multimedia Learning
NCCA:	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NGDO:	Non-governmental Development Organisation
NGO:	Non-governmental Organisation
PD:	Post-Development
PME:	Professional Master's in Education
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
SUAS:	NGO, <i>Suas Educational Development</i> – is a strategic partner with Irish Aid for the promotion of (informal) development education <i>in</i> third level colleges in Ireland.
Ubuntu:	Network of Higher Education Institutes involved in post-primary Initial Teacher Education
UN:	United Nations
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WAD:	Women and Development
WWGS:	WorldWide Global Schools

## **A NOTE ON REFERENCING**

Where this study references a website, if no date is recorded on the site, the year when the author accessed the site is used. If no page numbers are recorded, then, for consistency with the study as a whole, page number '1' is used. Where no author is evident, the name of the organisation is used as 'the author', where relevant.

Please also note that for this submission – ring bound version (for Internal and External Examiners), the references to websites created as part of this study are for illustrative purposes for now. Once the examiners have had an opportunity to comment, these can then be transferred to a secure site with suitable long term archiving functionality. I have been advised that this is the best strategy. Any suggestions made by examiners can be incorporated into the final archived version.

## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Terms such as ‘Development Education’, ‘Global Citizenship Education’, ‘Global Education’ and ‘Education for Sustainable Development’ can be confusing. The terms are sometimes used interchangeably and sometimes not. Chapter 5 explores the differences between these terms in detail and makes explicit why a Development Education framework is favoured. This initial set of definitions aims to guide the reader from the outset in relation to key terminology and concepts used in this thesis. Abbreviations used here are also the abbreviations which are used throughout the thesis.

### **Community-Linked-Learning (CLL)**

CLL is commonly called ‘service learning’, ‘community-based education’, ‘community-based learning’ (CBL) or ‘civic and community engagement (CCE)’. ‘CBL’ is perhaps most common in Ireland but the term ‘Community-Linked Learning’ is preferred in this study because not all engagement is ‘*based*’ in the community and there are many variations of CCL. For instance some of the project work in this study takes place online or the community come to the university.

#### *Campus Engage (2019: 1) Definition:*

Community-linked learning (CBL) and teaching are “academic approaches that seek to enhance student-learning outcomes, while working in partnership with civic and civil society organisations (CSOs) to act on local and global societal challenges”.

The *National University of Ireland, Galway* (NUIG, 2019:1) defines ‘Service Learning’ as follows:

Service Learning encourages students to explore societal issues, both inside and outside the classroom. Students learn by actively engaging with communities, and academic staff guide them through this engagement. Communities involved in Service Learning can be charities, non-governmental organisations, statutory bodies, community associations or organisations with a focus on social responsibility.



## **Development Education (DE)**

Having reviewed a wide range of DE definitions Colm Regan (Daly, Tony, Regan, Ciara and Regan, Colm, 2015: 1) (Daly, Tony, Regan, Ciara and Regan, Colm, 2015) describes DE as follows:

- Focuses directly on key development and human rights issues locally and internationally;
- Seeks to stimulate, inform and raise awareness of issues from a justice and/or rights perspective;
- Routinely links local and global issues;
- Explores key dimensions such as individual and public dispositions and values; ideas and understandings, capabilities and skills;
- Critically engages with the causes and effects of poverty and injustice;
- Encourages public enquiry, discussion, debate and judgement of key issues;
- Encourages, supports and informs action-orientated activities and reflection in support of greater justice;
- Takes significant account of educational theory and practice;
- Emphasises critical thinking and self-directed action;
- Seeks to promote experiential learning and participative methodologies;
- Routinely challenges assumptions by engaging with multiple, diverse and contested perspectives.

The Global Education Network Europe (GENE) report acknowledges that Irish Aid and most Irish practitioners use the term DE rather than other terms such as Education for Global Citizenship- EGC (GENE, 2015: 13).

I will argue that, although DE and EGC have a lot in common, particularly the critical traditions of EGC, the two pedagogical frameworks are not the same. It is the case that in many parts of the world the term EGC is used in the same way that the term DE is used in Ireland. Scholarly work needs to avoid lethargy or indeed to use terms because they have been given to us by funders, international institutions or state bodies. We need to closely interrogate language and understand why particular definitions and approaches are being used as opposed to others. This thesis explores concepts, with a view to academic rigour and clarity of meaning but also with a view to maintaining

academic freedom, integrity and autonomy, in the interests of the society we wish to serve. It is important that educators understand which approach to EGC we are using and why. The strands of CEGC which I am interested in engaging with are those that seek to stimulate, inform and raise awareness and seek critical action for change, from a justice and/or rights perspective.

I sometimes used the term DEGC rather than specifically refer to either DE or EGC, when the context favours the inclusion of both terms.

### **Multimedia Learning (MML)**

The use of a variety of artistic, web-based or communicative media in pedagogy.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research study and thesis presentation has spanned four and a half years. It has engaged almost one hundred third level students and community partners. It has crossed three continents. I am very grateful to all of those who volunteered to participate. In particular, I would like to thank the four 'key participants' and four 'key community partners' who were my guides and teachers along the way. For reasons of confidentiality, I cannot state your names but you know who you are. Thank you in particular to all those who shared their personal stories of struggle, resilience and hope.

I would also like to thank my PhD supervisors Dr. Stephen O'Brien, the School of Education UCC and Dr. Orla Murphy, the School of English (Digital Arts and Humanities), University College Cork. It has been a privilege to work with both of you on what has been an incredible journey. Your professionalism, humanity, commitment and care have carried me through the 'ups and downs' of PhD life. You attended to the academic details and walked with the spirit of this work. You understood that this is not just a thesis but a representation of who I am, what I believe in and what we as a 'critical' academic community strive to achieve together. Thank you very much.

This PhD would not have been possible without the support of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and the Irish Research Council. I am very grateful and honoured to have received the 'Irish Research Council National Forum Postgraduate Scholarship for Teaching and Learning at Higher Education' 2014-2018.

I would like to remember a number of people who inspired me to love education in my younger years. In particular, my deceased father John Cotter. I know he would be very proud that I completed my PhD and his spirit lies within. He also taught me to be an independent thinker and to stand up for what I believe in. I remember too some teachers in primary and secondary school along the way. I would also like to thank the supervisor of my first masters, in the late 1980s, Professor Dermot Keogh. He believed in me then and has continued to do so as I have written this PhD. I am grateful too to many academics and mentors I met along the way as I researched this PhD. I am and have always been inspired by Development Education academics and activists. I appreciate the time you gave me and I am grateful for the guidance and literature which helped me to clarify my thoughts.

A number of my extended family passed away during the time I have been carrying out this research. I would like to remember them and their hopes for future generations. I want to especially remember my brother Tim Cotter who died during the first year of this research study. Each person in our lives brings us their unique lessons. Tim reminds me to remember to appreciate and enjoy life. He was a trickster and a rogue...and he had a big heart. I would like to thank Aaron Kohrs for arriving at just the right time. I was very lucky. I would like to remember too other people, such as refugees entering Europe, who have died seeking justice and freedom.

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## **AUTHOR'S DECLARATION**

“This is to certify that the work I am submitting is my own and has not been submitted for another degree, either at University College Cork or elsewhere. All external references and sources are clearly acknowledged and identified within the contents. I have read and understood the regulations of University College Cork concerning plagiarism.”

Signed: 

Dated: 5<sup>th</sup> July 2019



# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 Introduction/Background

“There’s no denying it now”.

This is a quote from Kitty, a key community participant in this study, after she had made a short digital story about how she cared for her now deceased husband. Such was the power of telling her story and her belief that ‘the telling’ of it, in a public way, made it real. It meant that nobody, especially professionals and politicians whom she felt had never listened to her, could not say that it did not happen. They would also now know how much she loved her husband. Kitty added her voice to the stories of other Family Carers, on a website called ‘Behind the Curtain’ (At.1), which was aimed at politicians during the 2015 general election. This was her testimony. The website created a collective narrative and was used as a lobbying tool for the family carers’ election campaign. It was created as part of this PhD research study.

Meanwhile, in a classroom at University College Cork (UCC)<sup>1</sup> a group of student participants in this research were studying the economic implications and impact of the hidden work of women around the world. When Kitty and her colleague came to speak to the class, one student said, “I don’t want to hear their (Cork Carers) voices; I want to hear the voices of the voiceless”. However, Andy, on a work placement as part of this research with the Cork branch of Family Carers Ireland, did not see this Cork based group as ‘local’. He was an international student from the U.S. He welcomed the two women to the classroom. They gave a highly effective talk about ‘hidden’ carer lives. Andy later used an online forum to explore the connections between our class discussion on the hidden work of women around the world, particularly in Mali and the experiences of the women he was working with in Cork. As the educator/researcher, I was at pains to point out that privileging the ‘local’ or the ‘global’ context was missing the point. Could we instead, I asked, explore the underlying structural and global economic, political, social and cultural forces at play in conditions for women in Cork and women in the Global South? The subject I was teaching the students was

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<sup>1</sup> A constituent university of the National University of Ireland, serving the South of Ireland in particular.

Development Education (DE), which is also the lens through which I frame this research, from within a Critical Pedagogy theoretical framework.

This story is one of many that took place in the course of the research for this thesis, which took place from 2014 to 2018. The research involved a series of six collaborative projects between different groups of students at UCC and partner community groups in Cork or online with communities in Lesotho, Kolkata and Northern Iraq. Each student group participated in at least six DE workshops. The purpose of the research was to understand what educators can learn when we bring community-linked learning (CLL) and multimedia pedagogical methodologies to DE learning. In particular, it looks at how these approaches can enhance student engagement with DE and at the impact of this work on community partners.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

DE asks educators to empower learners to “analyse, reflect on and challenge at a local and global level, the root causes and consequences of global hunger, poverty, injustice, inequality and climate change; presenting multiple perspectives on global justice issues” (Irish Aid, 2017: 6). Typically, DE might focus, for example, on how our ‘Global North’ trading regulations impact on other parts of the world, how our carbon footprint or what we buy in a shop in Ireland, might impact adversely on poorer regions of the world. The problem is that DE can become removed from communities in our own locality. Might it help us to understand the experience of ‘other’ parts of the world if we become closer to people experiencing social exclusion, poverty or injustice in our own locality? Should we be asking how understanding the root causes of injustice and inequality in our local communities or in our own country, can teach us about global injustice, inequality and poverty? How then might we join with people in other parts of the world seeking solutions to societal challenges?

DE also encourages the development of values, ideas, understandings, capabilities and skills and “action-orientated activities and reflection in support of greater justice” (Daly, Regan and Regan, 2015:1). The problem here is, where and how can learners develop these competencies, if they are not working in some way with people or organisations who are trying to tackle injustice? Would student engagement not also assist the local community, if more direct contact with the community were incorporated into learning



programmes? Furthermore, students today live in a multimedia world. Web-based tools can bring us to any part of the world, traditional media such as local radio is very accessible in Ireland; and learners are encouraged to develop creativity, sometimes through the creative arts, as part of a mix of ‘valuable’ Twenty First Century skills. It is helpful to know, at a deep level, the impact of multimedia on DE pedagogy, particularly if we are bringing students and communities together. How and why are they using the vast array of media that are now available to them? How can we integrate multimedia learning (MML) into DE pedagogy? Critical analysis of how we use multimedia and its relationship to global power relations is as important as other aspects of learning, yet we seldom reflect on their impact in terms of our DE objectives.

In order to address these problems this study set about finding ways in which students could come together with communities, both locally and globally in order to explore DE concerns and take collaborative action for change. Attention was also given to the multimedia aspects of learning, with a view to exploring how MML can be integrated into DE pedagogy. The research involved setting up work placements and collaborative projects with community partners and classroom learning environments as well as online intercultural exchanges. The research explores the learning and impact of the use of CLL and MML for educators, students and community partners. In this study, CLL refers to partnerships between students at UCC and communities or groups in Cork and online in Lesotho, Northern Iraq and India, acting together on local and global societal challenges.

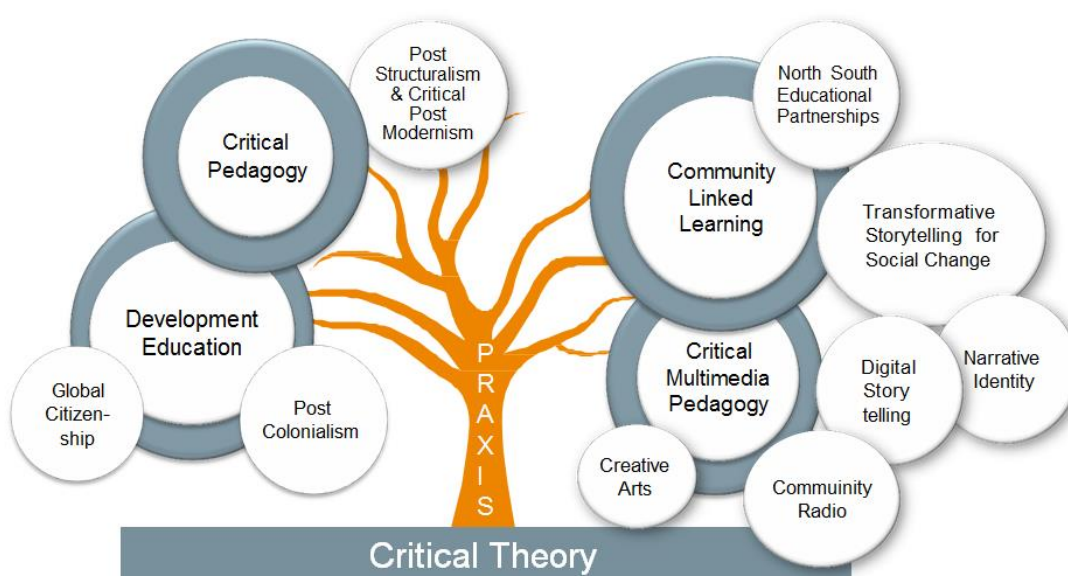
### **1.3 Theoretical Framework**

This thesis is grounded within a Critical Theory (CT) tradition, which, in a very broad sense, aims at decreasing domination and increasing freedom in all their forms (Bohman, 2016: 1). Part one of the literature review looks at the development of CT. This helps to situate the more focused theoretical perspective of the thesis which is that of Critical Pedagogy (CP) with a Development Education (DE) lens. Given the profile of community partners, there is also reference to CT in the fields of disability, ‘race’, multiculturalism and feminism. The third part of the literature review then draws on critical theories relating to the field of CLL, MML, and Critical Narrative (CN). Figure 1 one below shows that there are at least eight theoretical lenses with which to help to create meaning to the methodological and pedagogical approaches used in this thesis.

This study has found that DE pedagogy with a MML and CLL approach, needs to draw upon a range of theoretical perspectives in order to ensure that there is scholarly rigour in relation to all aspects of the learning process. This includes theories which relate to Education and Development but also to the research methodologies and to the communities and partners with whom we work. Indeed this is one of the key implications of the findings of this thesis (see chapter 10).

Figure 1: Theoretical Frameworks Used in this Thesis.

## Theoretical Perspectives & Literature Review



This thesis places Freire’s concept of ‘praxis’ at the centre of the theoretical approach. This is described by Freire as “the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it” (Freire and Macedo, 2001/1968: 79). In essence, Praxis is about informed action for change. Freire argues that is not enough for people to come together in dialogue in order to gain knowledge of their social reality. They must also *act together* upon their environment in order to critically reflect upon their reality and so transform it through further action and critical reflection.

### 1.4 Research Aims and Key Questions

The aim of this research is to explore the question: ‘What can educators learn about engaging university students in Development Education, using Community-Linked

Learning (CLL) and Multimedia Learning Methodologies (MML) *and* what is the impact on community partners’? The research is based at University College Cork (UCC) and in collaboration with community partners in Cork. It also collaborates with community partners online in Lesotho, India and Northern Iraq. The research is a deep and critical investigation into the power of CLL and MML in Irish higher education Development Education pedagogy. It focuses on how a ‘merger’ of these methodologies can enhance DE pedagogy.

As the research unfolded, subsidiary questions revealed themselves as individual storytelling and community narratives found their home in these approaches to learning. The following three subsidiary questions emerged:

1. What impact does storytelling by students and community-partners have on civic engagement and activism relating to DE issues?
2. What impact does storytelling and community-based research/pedagogy have on community partners?
3. How can we move from ‘the story’ and ‘community based learning’ to political conscientisation in DE? In other words, how can students, alongside communities, develop a critical awareness of their social reality through reflection and action? How can they uncover real problems and actual needs and take steps to create new realities (Freire and Macedo, 2001: 73)?

## **1.5 Research Methodology**

The research is located within a qualitative research paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011: 27). This allows the study to take an in-depth approach to the research, rather than coming to generalised conclusions. It places emphasis on the meaning that the participants and myself as researcher take from the experience of participating in or facilitating DE learning. Within this paradigm, the specific methodological approach is that of ‘critical ethnographic’ (CE), which aligns well with the theoretical framework. Thomas’s definition of critical ethnography as “storytelling with a political purpose” (Thomas, 1993: 4.), best explains how CE is used in this study. I argue that the responsibility of the critical ethnographer is to actively participate in the shaping of a more socially just reality. Carspecken (1996: x-xi) considers what he terms “critical

qualitative research” to be a form of social “activism”. In this study, CE allows me to actively participate in the process with a view to actively shaping a more socially just reality.

I was drawn to Kincheloe et al.’s (2001: 679) concept of the critical researcher as a *bricoleur*. The methodological approach was continually negotiated with individual and group participants and the methods used to gather data also changed to respond to the interests of participants and the relevance of the research approach to their learning. One approach was that of *critical participant observation* based on collaborative, development education learning and actions, in the classroom, online and in with community partners. Another was that of *critical narrative construction and analysis* of multimedia pedagogy, such as stories told by participants with web-based technologies, radio and creative arts. In two instances specifically there were also online and face-to-face semi-structured interviews and a focus group discussion.

## **1.6 Research Design**

The research took place over four years 2014-2018. Each year a different group of students took part in at least six DE workshops, covering themes such as ‘development’, human rights, gender, poverty, geopolitics, forced migration and climate injustice. Each student group was linked to a community partner, either locally or in another country and they worked together on an agreed project. The community partners were community groups or individuals coming together from a particularly disenfranchised context such as asylum seekers and refugees, located both in Ireland and in other countries such as Lesotho, India and Northern Iraq. While there were many participants from both the student and the community cohorts, the research focused on the experiences of eight people specifically, four key students (KS) and four key community partners (KCPs). Some of the students participated on a voluntary basis, some were part of an already existing class and others were joining this research as part of their work placements within their individual disciplines. The community partners were all volunteers. Real names of the key participants are not used in the thesis.

Towards the end of year one, I worked with a group of Professional Master’s in Education students (PMEs) who were taking part in a six-hour course *The Global Teacher Award*, led by an Irish-based NGO (*Galway One World Centre*). They

subsequently came together with a group of people seeking asylum or with refugee status, who were living in Cork. All students and partners, including myself as researcher/participant, attended the digital storytelling workshops. We produced stories relating to social justice issues and the asylum system in Ireland. KS from this collaboration was PME student Claire, while the KCP was Obafemi, a Nigerian man living in Direct Provision in Ireland.

In year two students from across campus were invited to participate on a voluntary basis in six DE workshops. This group is called the *Cross Disciplinary Group* (CDG) in this study. These classroom-based workshops formed a hub from which several students took part in work placements (Andy, Finula, Peter). They also worked together on the establishment of a group called *UCC Friends of Refugees* and on the production of two radio shows about the global refugee crisis and the Direct Provision (DP) system in Ireland. Three of the seven students in this cohort were KSs (Finula, Claire, Andy) and one (Obafemi) was a KCP. KS Andy, as part of his work placement, worked along with me on a work placement with the Cork branch of *Family Carers Ireland*. He also worked alongside me at a community radio station where I work as the presenter of a radio show called *The Global Hub*, which addresses development and social justice issues at home and abroad. The key community partner for the Family Carer project was a woman called Kathleen, a local Cork woman in her early 70s who had cared for her husband until his death a number of years prior to this study. Andy assisted me in facilitating the Family Carers to prepare their election campaign for an upcoming General Election in Ireland. Kathleen attended the workshops on campaigning skills along with other carers; we developed a campaigning toolkit; we made digital stories about the lives of the carers; and we created a website to highlight both the stories and issues of concern to family carers. The carers also visited student groups at UCC and came to talk to the group of seven students participating in the cross disciplinary group.

One of the students, Finuala, a first year social science student continued to work with me on her work placement, in year three of this study. This project brought together six UCC students, with six people attached to services for people with intellectual, neurological and physical disabilities. All twelve participated in a six-week DE course. Key student Finuala and key community partner Vera worked closely together. The class made and produced a live radio show and some worked on a digital archive which included stories of two individuals, including Vera, who told her story of moving out of

institutional care after twenty years, into her own home. This group is referred to as the *Mixed Abilities Group* (MAG) in the study.

Finally, in year 4, the PME students that year (2018) were also participating in the GTA. The majority of these student teachers were graduates of a local College of Art. The students created an exhibition at a high profile public art gallery at UCC, based on the work they carried out with their second level students on various DE themes. A total of ten students participated. The key student was Kerry, an Irish woman in her early 50s whose student teacher placement was at a rural school in North Cork. As part of this study Kerry and her class were linked to a Yazidis family living in a displaced persons' camp in Northern Iraq. The second level class made a tent similar in size to that which 'housed' the ten members of the Arba family. The tent featured in the public art exhibition. The students also made a radio programme, in which student teacher Kerry also participated.

Table 1 below outlines the research in table format, in order to present the reader with a clearer picture of how these different projects together informed this study.

**Table 1: Overview of Research Process**

Year	Student Group	Case study: Individual Student	Community-linked Partners	Case study: Community Member or Group	Collaborative Project	Data collection methods
<b>Pilot 1 local</b>	Six Professional Masters in Education students (PME)	.N/A for ethical reasons.	Minority Ethnic Group Cork, Women's Group named only as MEG in this research for confidentiality reasons.	MEG Group as case study	6 workshops on training for transformation community leadership.	Fieldnotes based on participant observation and in-class activities/ drawings.
<b>Pilot 2 Global</b>	12 students in Lesotho, Cork, Canada, France, UK	Work placement student 1 – <b>ANDY</b>	Community Group based in Lesotho.	N/A	Online Inter-cultural Exchange.	Assignments Forum discussion Interviews Evaluation reports Observation & Fieldnotes.
<b>Year 1</b>	6 student teachers.  3 x 2 hour workshops: Global Teacher Award	PME Student – white Irish ethnicity  <b>Claire</b>	6 refugees and asylum-seekers living in Cork.  3 of whom live in the direct provision system. 3 are UCC students.	Man living in Direct Provision system – Nigerian ethnicity  <b>Obafemi</b>	Digital Story-Telling Workshop.	Observation & Fieldnotes  Narrative analysis  Interview
<b>Year 2</b>	6 UCC students  6 community partners. Mixed abilities.  6 x 2 hour workshops on Global Citizenship.	1st year.  Female Social Science Student  Aged 19  <b>Finuala</b>	3 x NGOs supporting people with disabilities, physical and intellectual.  Guest speakers: asylum seeker from cork, development worker Kenya and online to disability group in Calcutta.	Woman who recently moved to own home after 17 years living in residential care in Cork. Age 44.  <b>Vera</b>	Key student work placement.  All students:  Digital story telling  Digital archive  Radio Show.	Observation & Fieldnotes  Blogging  Narrative analysis
<b>Year 3</b>	Cross disciplinary group	<b>Andy</b> <b>Finuala</b> <b>Obafemi</b> <b>Clair</b> see above	Family Carers Cork, Older People's Group. 15 people.	<b>Kathleen</b>  White, female, ex-carer in early 70s.	General election campaign prep. Policy toolkit. Digital story telling. Radio	Observation & Fieldnotes Blogging Interview Narrative analysis
<b>Year 4</b>	10 student teachers: 10 x 2 hour workshops- Global Teacher Award.	PME student.  White, Irish, Female, Age early 50s.  <b>Kate</b>	Yazidis family in refugee camp in Northern Iraq.	Yazidis man, early 20s living in Bersive camp.  <b>Arba</b>	Highlighting Yazidis genocide in 2 <sup>nd</sup> level classroom Multimedia art exhibition & Radio.	Observation & Fieldnotes Interview Narrative analysis

### **1.6.1 Rationale and Context**

This study is undertaken with a deep belief that DE has never been as necessary in contemporary life, education and politics. Complex global economic, social, cultural, environmental and political realities are impacting on human development in a manner that creates increasing inequality within countries and between different regions of the world. DE needs to continue to study ways in which learners can understand how globalisation impacts on human development and how they can be empowered, alongside communities, to create a more just society. Of importance is the impact of Neoliberal policies on human development, including its impact on third level education. DE professionals can play a role in ensuring that third level education seeks human emancipation and not simply a locus of training for companies operating in a globalised marketplace. Moreover, a number of recent high profile reports (see below) indicate that there is a need for increased DE research in Ireland, there is a lack of ethnographic research in particular and there is very little research that links DE to CLL and MML. Finally, the study is set within the context of the importance of instilling hope amongst third level students, by showing them both past successes in addressing global challenges and enabling them to find new pathways to global justice.

### **1.6.2 Human Development Context**

There has been some progress in terms of human development and the world has learnt a lot about development. The U.N.'s report (2015: 3–6) on the impact of the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs) indicates that the number of people living on less than \$1.25 a day has been reduced from 1.9 billion in 1990 to 836 million in 2015, primary school enrolment figures have risen, two-thirds of developing countries have achieved gender parity in primary education, child mortality rate has reduced by more than half over the past 25 years – falling from 90 to 43 deaths per 1,000 live births, the global maternal mortality ratio has fallen by nearly half and some 2.6 billion people have gained access to improved drinking water since 1990.

On the other hand, according to the U.N.'s own analysis of the MDGs (ibid.), about 1 billion people still live on less than \$1.25 a day – the World Bank measure on poverty – and more than 800 million people do not have enough food to eat. Women were still fighting hard for their rights, and millions of women still die in childbirth. The U.N. recognises that the “despite many successes, the poorest and most vulnerable people are



being left behind” and that progress has been uneven across regions and countries, especially the poorest and those disadvantaged because of their sex, age, disability, ethnicity or geographic location (ibid.: 7).

### **1.6.2.1 Widening Gap Between Rich and Poor**

While economic performance is just one indicator of human development, it is nevertheless important to recognise that there is a widening gap between rich and poor within and between countries of the world. In the US, over the last 30 years the growth in the incomes of the bottom 50% has been zero, whereas incomes of the top 1% have grown 300% (Piketty et al., 2016: 1). In China, according to a study by Peking University, the poorest 25 per cent of Chinese households own just 1 per cent of the country’s total wealth (Mitchell and Wildau, 2016: 1). In October 2018, the IMF’s World Economic Outlook (2018: 1) ranked Ireland as the fifth richest country in the world. At the same time – December 24<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> 2018 – there were 9,753 people homeless across Ireland. In 2017 the independent *Think-tank for Social Change, TASC*, placed Ireland as the most unequal country in the OECD, using Eurostat figures and the GINI Coefficient<sup>2</sup> (Wickham, 2017: 38). Hickel (2016: 1), quoting the Maddison Project<sup>3</sup>, shows that in 1960, at the end of colonialism, people living in the world’s richest countries were 33 times richer than people living in the poorest countries. By 2000, they were 134 times richer. From 1960 to today, the absolute gap between the average incomes of people in the richest and poorest countries has grown by 135%.

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<sup>2</sup> Definition: GINI index measures the extent to which the distribution of income (or, in some cases, consumption expenditure) among individuals or households within an economy deviates from a perfectly equal distribution. A GINI index of 0 represents perfect equality, while an index of 100 implies perfect inequality. (Index Mundi, June 2019: 1). The World Bank considers a coefficient above 0.40 to represent severe income inequality. Among the world’s 25 largest countries by population, only South Africa and Brazil are higher at 0.63 and 0.53, respectively. The figure for the US is 0.41, while Germany is 0.3 (Mitchell and Wildau, 2016).

<sup>3</sup> The Madison Project at the University of Groningen’s Growth and Development Centre – faculty of Economics and Business - looks at real income per capita and has recorded economic performance in the world since the year 730 AD. It was initiated in March 2010 with the aim to support an effective way of cooperation between scholars to measure economic performance for different regions, time periods and subtopics.

(<https://www.rug.nl/ggdc/historicaldevelopment/maddison/>).

Oxfam's (2019: 5) economic briefing paper shows that the growing gap between rich and poor is undermining the fight against poverty, damaging economies and fuelling public anger across the globe. It reveals how governments are exacerbating inequality by underfunding public services, such as healthcare and education, on the one hand, while under taxing corporations and the wealthy, and failing to clamp down on tax dodging, on the other. It also finds that women and girls are hardest hit by rising economic inequality.

#### **1.6.2.2 Globalisation and Neoliberalism**

The world is becoming increasingly interconnected as a result of massively increased trade, communication and cultural exchange. This is leading to increased production of goods and services, a proliferation of big multinational corporations (MNCs) and a greater dependence on the global economy (BBC, 2019). Globalization, as defined by Ritzer (2010: 2), is the:

...transplanetary process or set of processes involving increasing liquidity and the growing multidirectional flows of people, objects, places and information as well as the structures they encounter and create that are barriers to, or expedite those flows.

This definition highlights the idea of greater integration, connectivity and perceived benefits of globalisation, but it also brings attention to the structural barriers created by globalisation. On the one hand, proponents of globalisation claim that it is both 'natural' and an inevitable outcome of technological progress, that MNCs create positive economic and political convergences, bring jobs and skills to local areas and bring wealth and foreign currency to local economies. Increased investment can be spent on education, health and infrastructure (BBC, 2019: 1). Critics argue that globalisation is hegemonic and antagonistic to local and national economies. Guttal (2007: 523) argues that economic globalisation is a form of "capitalist expansion" with local and national economies becoming integrated into a global, unregulated market economy. Politically, she says, it is shaped by interactions between institutions of transnational capital, nation states, and international institutions: "Its main driving forces are institutions of global capitalism – especially transnational corporations – but it also needs the firm hand of states to create enabling environments for it to take root" (ibid.).

This globalisation of the market economy has, according to Kotz (2000: 1), allowed Neoliberal policies to continue to thrive and dominate as Neoliberalism as an economic theory and policy stance

He defines Neoliberalism as follows:

Neoliberalism is both a body of economic theory and a policy stance. Neoliberal theory claims that a largely unregulated capitalist system (a “free market economy”) not only embodies the ideal of free individual choice but also achieves optimum economic performance with respect to efficiency, economic growth, technical progress, and distributional justice. The state is assigned a very limited economic role: defining property rights, enforcing contracts, and regulating the money supply. State intervention to correct market failures is viewed with suspicion, on the ground that such intervention is likely to create more problems than it solves (ibid.).

This increased interaction and integration of people, companies, and governments has been driven by Neoliberal policies that facilitate international trade. Kotz (2000: 1) argues that the continuing dominance of Neoliberalism as an economic theory and policy stance can be explained, at least in part, by changes in the competitive structure of world capitalism, which have resulted in turn from the particular form of global economic integration that has developed in recent decades. The changed competitive structure of capitalism has altered the political posture of big business with regard to economic policy and the role of the state, turning big business from a supporter of state-regulated capitalism into an opponent of it.

Monbiot (2016: 1) points to the impact of Neoliberal policies on human development. He argues that Neoliberalism has become so pervasive that we hardly recognise it as an ideology. “In reality Neoliberalism is a conscious attempt to reshape human life and shift the locus of power” (ibid.).

Neoliberalism, he says:

... sees competition as the defining characteristic of human relations. It redefines citizens as consumers, whose democratic choices are best exercised by buying and selling, a process that rewards merit and punishes inefficiency. It maintains that ‘the market’ delivers benefits that could never be achieved by planning [...] efforts to create a more equal society are both counterproductive and morally corrosive. The market ensures that everyone gets what they deserve (Monbiot, 2016: 1).

Jolly (2003: 1-14), offers an alternative paradigm to neoliberalism by drawing on the work of Amartya Sen's<sup>4</sup> human development (HD) approach. In this approach human rights and freedom have equal value to economic and financial indicators. Tracking of 'human indicators' which respond to human needs would be paramount. Indicators would include nutritional status, reasons for attendance at health clinics, supply to drugs to primary health-care centres, number of students dropping out of education, supply of books and school materials. In order to achieve this, a wider group of government and non-governmental stakeholders needs to be brought in to policy- and decision-making and not just economic and financial players. Other ministries, especially those concerned with nutrition, health and education need to play a full part in the process. Communities also need to be included at local and national levels so as to ensure a human focus and a clear understanding of the options and what was needed to keep human opportunities open. At an international level, countries should be offered more rapid and flexible support, financially, through access to markets and in other forms such as peacekeeping troops. A broad group of international agencies and donors needs to be involved as full partners who could contribute ideas and experience. They would not simply be viewed as extra donors for an already determined programme.

Jolly acknowledges that the HD approach might seem like unrealistic idealism. However, he says, there are already examples of the HD paradigm in practice around the world. For instance the HD paradigm is closely aligned with the human rights commitments that most governments have now adopted, including virtually all of the richer countries. Indeed, the relevant human rights agreements include specific commitments by richer countries to do all within their power to assist poorer countries to carry out their own commitments (ibid.: 14).

The human development paradigm also offers guidelines for policy-making in the industrial countries, providing a more robust frame of analysis and policy-making for

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<sup>4</sup> Amartya Sen's 'Human Capabilities' (2007/1994: 270-295) perspective focused on what people can do or be that as determinants of their well-being. His work was one of a broad school of thought in the 1980s and 1990s, which focused on People- Centred Human development theory. Other human-development theories focused on subjects such as ecology, sustainable development, feminism and welfare economics.

parties and countries wanting to pursue a third way between the old political alignments of left and right. By drawing on the international analysis of the Human Development Reports, concepts of human security and actions to moderate the extremes of international inequality of income, power and human well-being could evolve in a way that will be increasingly necessary in the 21st century (ibid.).

Guttal (2007: 23) argues that Neoliberal policies are “conscious political processes which are “influenced by interactions between institutions of transnational capital, nation states and international institutions”. Hickel (2016: 1) also points out that as long as a few rich countries have the power to set the rules to their own advantage, inequality will continue to grow. The debt system, structural adjustment, free trade agreements, tax evasion, and power asymmetries in the World Bank, the IMF, and the WTO are all major reasons which are deepening rather than improving inequality. It’s time we face up to the imbalances that distort our global economy. There is nothing natural about extreme inequality. It is man-made. It has to do with power and we need to have the courage to say so.

These debates highlight the need for people in all countries to understand and challenge dominant discourse in a way that promotes shifting unequal power dynamics locally and globally. Translating these complex structural dynamics and offering solutions is part of the work of DE.

### **1.6.2.3 Migration, Environment and the ‘Alt-Right’**

There are many global, often inter related, challenges at this time, some of which – such as migration, threats to biodiversity, climate injustice and the rise of the ‘alt-right’ - are of particularly concern.

Of grave concern are the number of displaced people, refugees and asylum seekers in the world due to war, human rights violations, poverty, environment and climate. According to the UNHCR (May 2019: 1) we are now witnessing the highest levels of displacement on record. An unprecedented 68.5 million people around the world have been forced from home. Among them are nearly 25.4 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18 and 3.1 million asylum seekers. There are also an estimated 10 million stateless people who have been denied a nationality and access to basic rights such as education, healthcare, employment and freedom of movement.

Nearly one person is forcibly displaced every two seconds as a result of conflict or persecution. Between 2015 and 2018, 14281 died by sea trying to enter Europe, one death for every 51 arrivals (UNHCR, 2019: 1). One can only conclude that the death of 14281 human beings trying to reach safety in Europe is not ‘inevitable’ and that DE research is more important than ever before. It is important that students understand the root causes and consequences of forced migration and other global challenges. It is important too that this generation of students is challenged to take action. Through education on such matters, society will hopefully be better able to respond and seek solutions, rather than allow such loss of life.

Other major challenges of our times relate to environmental challenges. Clearly environmental concerns are intrinsically part of DE. Environmental concerns such as ecological conservation, climate and threats to biodiversity justice bring to light a new dimension of human interdependence, which is articulated in the concept of ‘sustainability’. In 1987 ‘Our Common Future’, or ‘The Brundtland Report’, defined “sustainable development” as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. One cannot plan for development, which ignores the environment. As Kumar et al (2016: 192) point out “there needs to be a green counterpoint to blue (market, liberal, capitalist) and red (socialist) development strategies (Friberg and Hettne)”, President of Ireland Michael D. Higgins (2019: 1) echoes this sentiment when he describes promoting what he calls a new “ecological-social paradigm” combining ecology, economy, and the ethics of equality — with the State playing a central role — which recognises the limits of the world’s natural resources and the role that “unrestrained greed” has played in the climate crisis. Drawing on the work of Professor Ian Gough of the London School of Economics and Dr Kate Raworth of Oxford University, he criticises the “prevailing neo-liberal economic paradigm” which he said has been with us “like a dark cloud for almost four decades”, and the culture of “short-termism” which he said pervades modern political life.

By way of example a recent landmark report from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES, 2019: 1-39), in May 2019 finds that there is an unprecedented decline in nature globally which is caused by, and threatening, humanity. This report was prepared by 150 leading international experts from 50 countries, balancing representation from the natural and social sciences, with

additional contributions from a further 250 experts, working with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), the Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services will inform better policies and actions in the coming decade. The findings are devastating. A million species are at risk of extinction from climate change, overfishing and pollution. Some animal populations have dropped to the dozens. Three-quarters of the land-based environment and about 66% of the marine environment have been significantly altered by human actions. Negative trends in nature will continue to 2050 and beyond in all of the policy scenarios explored in the Report, except those that include transformative change – due to the projected impacts of increasing land-use change, exploitation of organisms and climate change, although with significant differences between regions. Areas of the world projected to experience significant negative effects from global changes in climate, biodiversity, ecosystem functions and nature's contributions to people are also home to large concentrations of indigenous peoples and many of the world's poorest communities (IPBES:7). Because of their strong dependency on nature and its contributions for subsistence, livelihoods and health, those communities will be disproportionately hard hit by those negative changes. Those negative effects also influence the ability of indigenous peoples and local communities to manage and conserve wild and domesticated biodiversity and nature's contributions to people. Indigenous peoples and local communities have been proactively confronting such challenges in partnership with each other and with an array of other stakeholders, through co-management systems and local and regional monitoring networks and by revitalizing and adapting local management systems. However, regional and global scenarios lack an explicit consideration of the views, perspectives and rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, their knowledge and understanding of large regions and ecosystems and their desired future development pathways (ibid.: 6-7).

Climate change is projected to become increasingly important as a direct driver of changes in nature and its contributions to people in the next decades (ibid.: 7). Even for global warming of 1.5°C to 2°C, the majority of terrestrial species ranges are projected to shrink profoundly. An Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2014: 287 quoted in Mary Robinson Foundation, 2016: 6) states: "The climate threat constrains possible development paths, and sufficiently disruptive climate change could preclude any prospect for a sustainable future". Climate injustice is referred to by the

(Mary Robinson Foundation, 2016, p.6), as the “undermining” of human rights of people closest to the climate crisis and who have contributed least to the causes of climate change. The eradication of extreme poverty and a transition to zero carbon climate resilient development are interlinked. The global response to climate change should ensure access to clean energy for all and facilitate sustainable development for all (ibid.).

In the context of these worrying trends, we need to continue to study ways in which we can support society to value social justice, equality, human rights and intellectual freedom both for people in our own countries and in other countries around the world.

A new set of 17 goals, the sustainable development goals (SDGs) were put in place in 2015 to frame their agendas and political policies until 2030. However, as Daly, Regan and Regan argue (ibid.), the SDG agenda seeks to eradicate extreme poverty (US\$1.25 a day) by 2030, but even with the most optimistic growth rates and existing environmental limits, this target is “well-nigh impossible”. Supporters of the SDGs praise the wide-level consultations involved at the planning stages, they point to the fact that obligations are put on all states and they welcome the central importance of climate change. In the ‘Spotlight on Sustainable Development: Report by the Reflection Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development 2016’ Jens Martens sees the 2030 Agenda as offering:

...the opportunity to challenge the idea that development is a phenomenon that occurs only in countries of the global South while the North is already ‘developed’ (Martens, J., 2016: 11).

Critics look to the fact that funding goals are voluntary for states, data collection is problematic and costly and the SDGs promote inequality and growth-led development. Jason Hickel, anthropologist at the London School of Economics sums this up:

Basically, the SDGs want to reduce inequality by ratcheting the poor up, but while leaving the wealth and power of the global 1 percent intact. They want the best of both worlds. They fail to accept that mass impoverishment is the produce of extreme wealth accumulation and overconsumption by a few, which entails processes of enclosure, extraction, and exploitation along the way. You cannot solve the problem of poverty without challenging the pathologies of accumulation (Hickel, 2015).

Daly, Regan and Regan (2017: 8) do not envisage the ‘trickle down’ economic growth model working over the next 15 years, since it has not worked in the past. “With the



current model of capitalism, it would take 100 years to eradicate extreme poverty and at US\$5 a day, it would take 207 years”.

Another cause of concern at this time is the rise of the ‘Alt-Right’ in countries around the world. Growing support for the far-right is evidenced in countries such as Brazil, Hungary, India, Poland, Thailand, the U.K., Ukraine, and the U.S. In April 2019, the far-right party *Vox* will made its debut in parliament with 24 seats. Professor Richard Youngs (2018: 1) says the role of grassroots movements or ‘civil society’ is changing. Citizens’ groups or organisations tended to be liberal, seeking democratic reform, protection of minority groups and human rights locally and around the world. Today, civil society involves an increasingly diverse mix of people and political goals, with those on the right gaining traction. While, as Youngs says, these groups are not all the same and cannot be considered “as one”, it is of concern that these conservative groups favour values related to national identity, a roll back from gains made over many years by minority groups and protection against immigration. Neither are these groups supported only by an older generation, many also have support from a younger generation.

### **1.6.3 Third Level Education Context**

Third level institutions are not immune from the pressures of the marketization of education. As President (of Ireland) Michael D. Higgins said in 2016, an ever-increasing focus on producing graduates for the market is bringing universities down a “precarious road” at the expense of fostering life-enhancing skills such as critical thinking and creativity. Universities, he says, need to be allowed to flourish as spaces with the intellectual courage to reject dominant ideologies and encourage the seeking of truth based on fact. This is a time of great questioning about the purpose of the university, he says, and is perhaps even “a moment of intellectual crisis” (cited in O'Brien 2016: 1). Universities, he says, have a crucial role to play in enabling citizens to foster independent thought, engaged citizens and skills to address challenges such as global poverty, climate change and sustainability. In agreement with the President, I believe it is crucial for universities to foster:

...the capacity to dissent is another core function of the university. Third-level scholarship has always had, and must retain, a crucial role in creating a society in which the critical exploration of alternatives to any prevailing hegemony is encouraged (ibid.).

### 1.6.4 Hope

In working with third level students, it is important too to offer hope and to discuss how progress can and does happen. There are many movements and momentums that resist injustice and globalisation. In Ireland, we have seen the power of long-term collective action in the 2015 referendum on same sex-marriage when Ireland became the first country in the world to vote for marriage equality. Such changes do not happen overnight and it is important to instil the idea that change can be slow. We can also see how corporate-led globalisation is being challenged and resisted by a growing, worldwide movement whose base is made up of a wide diversity of people, ideas, cultures, languages, ages, professions, and competencies. Guttal (2007: 530) mentions developments such as Bolivia's nationalisation of energy resources, Argentina's unilateral restructuring of debt owed to Northern bond-holders, resistance to the US occupation of Iraq. In recent months (2018-2019) we have been witnessing a global movement on climate change across the world, including in Ireland. It was spearheaded by Greta Thunberg, a fifteen-year-old Swedish girl, who started a school strike for climate outside the Swedish parliament building in August 2018 (Watt, 2019: 1). The impact of the what is being termed the 'Green Wave' was in evidence in the Irish European Parliament and Local (Council) elections in May 2019, which saw a "surge in support for the Green Party" (Irish Times, 2019).

Change can also be achieved across an entire country in a relatively short time. Namibia, for instance, has made significant progress in a number of areas since the country won independence from South Africa in 1990. Primary and secondary education is now free, cases of malaria have been reduced by 97% and inequality is going against global trends. Since 1993, when inequality was one of the highest in the world, Namibia's GINI coefficient has fallen by 15 points, poverty has been halved from 69% to under 30% and extreme poverty (numbers living on less than \$1.90 a day) fell from 53% to 23%. Namibia also has Africa's highest ranking press freedom according to *Reporters without Borders*, well advanced from countries such as the US and other rich economies. The country has also relatively favourable transparency ratings according to *Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index* (Stiglitz, 2016).

Going back in history there many examples of successful activism over the decades: the civil rights movement in the US in the 1960s; the registration of the self-employed

women's association in India in the 1970s; the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa with support from around the world; the Nestle boycott; the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina; in the 1990s the Beijing platform for action at the World Conference on Women; in 2000 the water wars in Bolivia; in 2003 the world-wide marches against the war in Iraq; in 2015 and 2016 the Cork Calais movement and ongoing struggles of indigenous and women's movements around the world challenging land, inheritance laws and customs such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). While these movements are diverse, they are connected by several core DE concepts. (1) DE is about the lived reality of people around the world, how they perceive the world and their place in it and where they see themselves in relation to the fundamentally unjust character of our world; (2) DE is about interconnectivity. Each of these groups have defined themselves and taken action for change based on their relationship with political, economic, social, cultural or environmental power. There is an interconnectivity too in terms of how actions in one part of the world (e.g. European migration policy) impacts on the lives (e.g. death of migrants on open seas) of people from less powerful parts of the globe. (3) Central to DE is 'taking action for change'. Having identified their own power imbalance and needs, having mobilised, having planned strategically, these groups and movements ultimately converge in their common desire to *take action to change* their social, economic, political, environmental or cultural realities. This is one of the most fundamental concepts in DE and reflects Freire's influence and the notion that theory and action lead to freedom but one without the other is meaningless. Hence, in the DE classroom, it is important to stimulate reflection on how change happens and what our roles and duties are in such change processes at personal, professional and political levels.

A key question for this thesis therefore is "how do we encourage and support the current generation of students to engage with social justice issues"? While providing information about injustice is important, equally important is demonstrating how and why success happens. DE is needed now as much as ever and this thesis aims to explore some of the ways in which we can engage students in today's fast-moving, information-loaded, desensitised world. As Daly, Regan and Regan (2017: 9) point out, "Education plays a critical role in interrogating and challenging the effects of extremes in wealth, climate and inequality".

### **1.6.5 Research Context**

There are a number of significant research reports or reviews that point to the need for increased research in the DE field in general. A key recommendation of the Global Education Network Europe (GENE, 2015a.: 15) Report on Global Education in Ireland, is that “support for purposeful further research concerning DE should be considered”. The Irish Development Education Association’s (IDEA, 2015: 5) submission to the GENE Review and Irish Aid’s Development Education Strategy 2015 says:

We lack sufficient depth and breadth of research in Ireland, for example, research which would generate educational theories which in turn could influence practice, research to facilitate the sharing of DE failures as well as highlighting DE successes, etc.

In its influential *Synthesis Paper* (2011: 23-24), Irish Aid presents thematic reviews of DE in a number of sectors and one of its recommendations is that there is a need for DE research. It prioritises research which informs “good practice” in DE and also encourages sectors to work together to share good practice. Irish Aid’s (2017: 13) most recent DE strategy states that:

...there is a need for targeted strategic research to inform and enhance the effective delivery and practice of high-quality development education in Ireland.

There are calls in particular for ethnographic studies to explore the practice of DE, for example classroom observation of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) (Fiedler, Bryan & Bracken, 2011: 73; Mallon, 2018:43). Thirdly, Fiedler et al. note that only “a very small number of studies focus on development education as it relates to third-level educators or to the general student population” (ibid.: 65). They also point to the need to go beyond research on the experiences and attitudes of pre-service teachers. More precisely there is a dearth of research at least in an Irish context, on linking DE to community-linked and multimedia learning (ibid.: 86-112).

## **1.7 Thesis Layout**

Having introduced the study in this chapter, discussions proceed to Chapter Two which is an account of my own journey from childhood to today. Its purpose is to set a clear personal/professional context and establish my own positionality, which is a core tenet of any study in critical ethnography. Chapter Three sets the study within its DE context. It sets DE in a historical context, especially in Ireland and then goes on to discuss

present-day DE policy in an Irish, European and Global context. It pays particular attention to the position of DE in third level education in Ireland and relevant policies which affect DE at third level. The literature review is then presented in three parts, in Chapters Four, Five and Six. Chapter Four looks at CT as a theoretical paradigm, tracing early influences back to very early times and particularly focusing on the trajectory of CT from the mid Twentieth Century to present day Postmodernism. Chapter Five focuses more specifically on CP with a DE lens. The third part of the literature review, Chapter Six, draws on critical theories relating to the field of CLL, MML, and CN as they relate to DE in higher education pedagogy. Chapter Seven focuses on the research methodology, including the methods adopted to carry out the research. It also profiles the eight key participants - four students and four community partners. It addresses the ethical implications of the study and its limitations. The adoption of a thematic analysis approach is also explained in this chapter. I also explain how I used the qualitative data analysis programme NVivo, as a tool for organising my data and coding.

Chapters Eight and Nine present the empirical data which is analysed in relation to the research questions. The findings and analysis in Chapter Eight relate to the four key students, while Chapter Nine discusses the impact of the work on the four key community partners. The analysis is generally presented chronologically to reflect the various stages of the research. The findings are presented on a year-by-year basis but within each year, the data is then presented thematically. While it focuses mainly on the eight key participants, it refers at times to the wider student or community groups where it is deemed they are important to highlight. The empirical data is discussed in relation to both the research questions and to the theoretical frameworks. Finally, Chapter Ten concludes the thesis by summarising the key learning which emerged from the study. It also offers reflections on the implications of the research from theoretical, ethical, practical and policy perspectives. It reflects on the limitations of the study and proposes some key recommendations for future DE research and practice.

## **1.8 Conclusion**

This introduction has endeavoured to lay the foundations for the thesis. It has introduced the research aims and objectives, the problem statement along with key and subsidiary questions. A rationale is given for the research in order to justify it as making

a unique contribution to academic research and discourse in the DE field. The methodology, including methods for data collection and approach to analysis, is also briefly described and justified. This chapter has presented a road map for the researcher of the research design and has outlined for her/him the layout of the thesis. From this foundation, the thesis now proceeds to Chapter Two, which presents the personal/professional context of the researcher from early childhood influences to the present day.

## CHAPTER 2: RESEARCHER HABITUS

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### 2.1 Childhood Encounters with ‘The Other’.

When I was six years old, I met a little girl around my own age<sup>5</sup>. I did not know her name. We played all day around the corner from my aspiring middle-class home in a safe, green-leafy suburb of Cork. Nearby I could see mounds of earth at the construction site of a new Hospital. I enjoyed the day and went home happily only to be told, “...do not play with that girl again!” I was not sure what I had done wrong, but I knew it was not fair. I returned the following day, to see if she was there again and she was. Somehow, we both knew that ‘this’ was not allowed. We stared at one another across the square. She put her doll in the middle of the square, I picked it up, played with it on my side of the square and put it back again in the middle. We sadly went our own ways. As I went home, I realised that she lived in one of the caravans stationed temporarily behind the mounds of earth. I now know she was a member of the Irish travelling community and a ‘persona-non-gratis’ in this green-leafy-suburb<sup>6</sup>. I had had one of my first experiences of ‘the Other’ and one of my first social justice awakenings. The idea of ‘otherness’ is a core consideration in sociological analysis in relation to how majority and minority identities are constructed. Sociologists such as Bauman (1993: 8) argue that rather than being “natural” parts of our personalities, identities are socially constructed. Social identities reflect the way individuals and groups internalise established social categories within their societies, such as their cultural (or ethnic) identities, gender identities or class identities. These social categories shape our ideas

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<sup>5</sup> A film (At.2.1) about this encounter, made during a digital storytelling workshop as part of this research, is included on the website accompanying this thesis at: <http://www.gertrudecotter.info/phd.thesis/digital-storytelling-workshop/>. It is also on the USB

which accompanies this thesis. A visual representation (At.2.2) of the encounter can be found at: <http://www.idestexhibition2018.gertrudecotter.info/other-artefacts/>

This shows eight panels depicting myself and key students and partners in this research project. These were exhibited at the Glucksman Art Gallery, University College Cork in 2018.

<sup>6</sup> Mac Gréil describes Irish discrimination of the ethnic Irish Traveller as “Ireland’s Apartheid” and as having a “lower caste status” (Mac Gréil, 1996: 326). In a survey carried out in 1980, 59% said they would not welcome travellers as next-door neighbours and the hostility towards travellers continues to the present day<sup>6</sup> (Mac Gréil, 1996: 333).

about who we think we are, how we want to be seen by others, and the groups to which we belong.

Bauman (ibid.) writes that the notion of otherness is central to the way in which societies establish identity categories. He argues that identities are set up as dichotomies:

...The second member is but the other of the first, the opposite (degraded, suppressed, exiled) side of the first and its creation. Thus abnormality is the other of the norm...woman the other of the man, stranger is the other of the native, enemy is the other of friend, 'them' the other of 'us' (Bauman, 1993: 8).

The American philosopher, sociologist and psychologist, George Herbert Meade, established that social identities are created through our ongoing social interaction with other people and our subsequent self-reflection about who we think we are according to these social exchanges. Primary socialisation occurs when a child learns the attitudes, values, and actions appropriate to individuals as members of a particular culture.

... For example, if a child saw his/her mother expressing a discriminatory opinion about a minority group, then that child may think this behaviour is acceptable, and could continue to have this opinion about minority groups... (Mead, 2015: 11).

Vygotsky, in his sociocultural theory of human learning argues that individual development cannot be understood without reference to the social and cultural context within which it is embedded. Higher mental processes in the individual have their origin in social processes. Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). Vygotsky assumes cognitive development varies across cultures (Vygotsky, 1978: 57). While I may have been confused about 'the doll' event, what is certain is that, by the age of six, I felt a social pressure and I was quickly learning concepts that were widely held, within my socio-cultural group. Both of us children were constructing an identity within powerful social, economic, political, religious, and cultural contexts.

Of central importance to the notion of 'The Other' is the concept of power, also an important starting point for a discussion on transformative education. Michel Foucault,



the French postmodernist philosopher, historian of ideas, social theorist, and literary critic, connects the concept of 'The Other' to his idea that power is dispersed and pervasive within society. He challenges the idea that power is wielded by people or groups by way of 'episodic' or 'sovereign' acts of domination or coercion, seeing it instead as dispersed and pervasive. In *The Will to Knowledge* he says, "Power is everywhere and comes from everywhere" (Foucault, 1978: 93). It is a kind of "regime of truth" (Foucault, 1976: 13) that pervades society, and which is in constant flux and negotiation.

This form of power that applies itself to immediate everyday life categorises the individual, marks him [sic.] by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him that he must recognize and others have to recognize in him. It is a form power that makes individuals subjects (Foucault, 1978: 93).

Applying it to my own story above, I see it as meaning that when we 'other' another group, we point out their perceived weaknesses to make ourselves look stronger or better. It implies a hierarchy, and it serves to keep power where it already lays, in this case with white, settled, majority-ethnic, middle-class-Irish.

This was the 'regime of truth' within which I was brought up. According to Foucault (1976: 13), each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth, which includes a 'discourse' which it accepts as truth and recognises the 'status' of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. These 'regimes of truth' are reinforced (and redefined) through the education system, the media and the flux of political and economic ideologies. We need to constantly interrogate these 'regimes of truth' and our own positioning, actions and lack of action in relation to established social norms. To challenge power is not a matter of seeking some 'absolute truth' (which is in any case a socially produced power), but "of detaching the power of truth from the forms of hegemony, social, economic, and cultural, within which it operates at the present time" (Rabinow, 1991: 73-75).

Another encounter with 'The Other' took place when I was ten years old. This was another formative childhood experience that happened when I was having an eye

examination. My usual ophthalmologist had been on extended sick leave and had been replaced by a doctor who was of black African descent. The adult who accompanied me was uncomfortable throughout the examination. As we walked out, the absent white doctor arrived back at work and the adult accompanying me asked for a re-examination. I remember staring in embarrassment into the eyes of the black doctor who looked back into my eyes. I wondered how he felt. I may be incorrect but I wonder if we each had the same ‘knowing’ as my earlier story. He looked at me in a way which I strongly recall as embarrassment and I was eager to see if the second eye-test produced the same results as his, which of course it did.

Post-colonial writer, Frantz Fanon (2008: 88–89), speaks about this ‘dehumanisation’ of black people and the psychological impact on both coloniser and colonised of a black person living in a white world. He writes about how, in the white world (he worked in France), his skin colour was more important than his character, education, and achievements. Everyone was watching Dr. Fanon, waiting for him to make a mistake:

What could one expect, after all, from a Negro physician? As long as everything went well, he was praised to the skies, but look out, no nonsense, under any conditions! The black physician can never be sure how close he is to disgrace [...] No exception was made for my refined manners, or my knowledge of literature, or my understanding of the quantum theory (ibid.: 89).

I may not have used the word ‘dehumanised’ at the age of ten, but I did feel ashamed at how this Cork-based black physician was treated. His qualifications and ability did not matter. What mattered was the colour of his skin.

To understand my ‘eye-test incident’ and the “specificity of Irish racism” (Lentin and McVeigh, 2002: 7) we need to explore complex historical contexts. The Irish had framed themselves as victims of colonial exploitation but also created a sustained distance between themselves and others. According to Garner (2004: 138), the relationship of the Irish to the British was cast in terms of slavery until mass immigration to America enabled contact with a society in which the term ‘slavery’ linked that status to another racialised population. The independence movement sought to free Ireland of its colonial status yet intentionally emphasised their whiteness, both as a section of the American working class, and as a nation-in-waiting, by distancing themselves from association with non-white others (ibid.). Here we can think of the works of Marxist philosophers Antonio Gramsci’s (1891-1937) or György Lukács

(1885-1971) on “internalised oppression” (IDS Sussex, 2019: 1), both of whom influenced poststructuralist thinkers such as Michel Foucault. Lukács' *History and Class Consciousness*, Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks*, or Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, each refer to a form of self-oppression as a process of subject-formation, or self-constitution, which is endemic to larger cultural, institutional, and structural power inequalities. Self-oppression occurs when an allegedly inferior group is socialised, into the subservient ideology or disciplinary relations of the dominant group. As such, the self-oppressed often develop a stake in their subordinated identity, which could actually lead them to reproduce this general condition of oppression through their social relations (ibid.). Taking Garner's (2004) analysis, it could be surmised that the Irish internalised an ideology of white supremacy, despite their experience of colonisation and in effect ‘bought into’ the advantages of white privilege. Bell hooks calls this “mental colonialization” (Bell hooks 2003: cited in Pyke, 2010: 556).

My childhood was influenced too by how the history of Irish Nationalism was presented in the education system. Many of my primary school textbooks - for example, the history textbook - were still imbued with anti-English, Irish nationalistic and fiercely pro-Catholic Church sentiment. All three were by this time deeply embedded in notions of Irish identity and many of the teachers had grown up in this post-independence world. The Irish Famine of the 1840s was the fault almost exclusively of the British. As one teacher, a religious sister, said, “those pagans, the English, let a million Irish people starve” and she ensured we knew the words of the song, ‘A Nation Once Again’, a 19th-century Irish nationalist anthem by Thomas Davis:

A Nation once again,  
A Nation once again,  
And Ireland, long a province, be  
A Nation once again! (Thomas Davis, 1840s)

This experience is reflected in research carried out by O’Callaghan on history teaching in Irish secondary schools 1922-1970. By the 1970s, history teaching was beginning to move away from what he refers to as ‘Plato’s cave’ (O’Callaghan, 2011: 12). Nevertheless, the country was only just emerging from that cave and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Irish history was very much a ‘slave of politics’ up to that time. O’Callaghan argues that a particular view of Ireland’s past as Gaelic, Catholic and Nationalistic informed of policy

making in general, including policy in the state education system, particularly in the teaching of history. He concludes that:

... history teaching was used by elite interest groups, namely the State and the Church, in the service of their own interests. It was used to justify the State's existence and employed as an instrument of religious education. History was exploited in the pursuit of the objectives of the cultural revival movement... (O'Callaghan, 2011:12).

1970s Ireland was just beginning to come out of a most repressive period of influence by the Catholic Church on the political landscape of Ireland and the personal lives of Irish people, especially women. At the same time, the strength of the Catholic Church in post-independence Ireland meant that vocations were high and many men and women served as missionaries in the then-called 'Third World'. There were both conservative and radical influences within the missionary movement. My childhood at school was filled with missionary stories from the Sisters of Mercy who taught me. I was fascinated by stories from Africa, the small black 'mission box' for coins for the 'black babies' and the 'Africa' magazine I insisted my mother renewed each year.

According to Fanning, national identity was being constructed as spiritual superiority and this missionary nationalism drew upon colonial ideologies of racial superiority (Fanning, 2002: 16). He quotes Tim Pat Coogan, in *Wherever Green is Worn* (2000: 508):

We were brought up believing that Africans as a class were much in need of the civilising influences of the Irish religions as parched earth was of water. It was an image propagated by missionary magazines with their pictures of a big beaming Irish priest, generally robed in white, surrounded by a group of adoring, chubby little black children... (Fanning, 2002: 16).

At a personal level, these stories from Africa must have instilled in me a paternalist attitude but I also believe they served to open rather than close my mind. There began a life-long interest in the unequal state of the world and the social injustices which accompany inequality, discrimination and disrespect for human rights. I wanted to know about the wider world and sought out more information to feed my curiosity.

## 2.2 University, Activism and Liberation Theology

At university I was influenced by many aspects of college life, for instance, I saw friends involving themselves in Gay and Lesbian activism and this exposure taught me the importance of collective action education and campaigning. In third year, I was influenced by my history lecturer, now Professor Dermot Keogh, who introduced me to Latin American History and International Relations, which I later taught. Professor Keogh's academic rigour and lectures were of a high quality but for me his stories brought his lectures to life – such as his personal witnessing of shootings at the funeral of the then archbishop, now saint<sup>7</sup>, Oscar Romero in El Salvador and the story of the death of four women who died at the hands of El Salvadoran security forces in December 1980. One, Jean Donovan, had visited Cork the year before and Professor Keogh had known her. He established an annual conference called the Jean Donovan conference for many years after. Perhaps most influential from this time was my introduction to Liberation Theology. *Witness to the Truth*, explains Liberation Theology and the 'options for the poor' in their struggle for social justice:

In new forms of theology in the 'Third World' the relationship between faith and politics is increasingly seen as a matter of spirituality....Latin American liberation theology has become known above all for its stress on political liberation and its stress on the need for an analysis of society – this analysis is usually Marxist (Keogh, 1989: 3).

This appealed to me and to many friends around Ireland some of whom went on 'coffee brigades' to Nicaragua or became involved with solidarity movements such as the El Salvador Support Group. I was beginning to think more politically about social justice.

My political perspective was influenced too by unemployment and the deep economic recession in Ireland in the 1980s. Throughout the 1980s, young people left Ireland in search of work in countries like the UK and the US. I myself worked in London in 1989-1990, the same year 70,600 people (CSO)<sup>8</sup> emigrated from Ireland, the highest number recorded since records began. These experiences led me to a lifelong interest in

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<sup>7</sup> Archbishop Oscar Romero was canonised as a saint in 2018. Professor Keogh speaks to the author about Romero's funeral once again on her Global Hub radio show in 2018 (see: <https://bit.ly/2KWpUVi>)

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.cso.ie/multiquicktables/quickTables.aspx?id=pea15>

the struggles of people ‘in transition’ or without homes, and particularly the lives of refugees.

### **2.3 Finding My Tribe, Freire and Development Education**

My real political awakening did not begin until I returned to Cork and experienced unemployment during the 1990s recession. It was at this time that I found the Cork Branch of Comhlámh, an organisation supporting Irish Development workers. For the first time I did not feel like an outsider but had found people who had, what was at that time, a radical analysis about the world from political, socio-economic, environmental, intercultural and cultural perspectives. I felt that I had met my ‘tribe’; I had discovered ‘Development Education’. It was a very empowering place for a young activist because the organisation did, and still does try to, live by its principles of participation, empowerment and being membership-led.

The work of Comhlámh was influenced by Paulo Freire, as we sought to understand and raise awareness of issues such as social justice, poverty, geopolitics, culture, gender, power, debt, environment, wars and human rights. The *Training for Transformation* handbooks were widely used. These handbooks outline the theory of Paulo Freire on developing critical awareness in an accessible manner. Book 1 begins with the quote: “Development, liberation and transformation are all aspects of the same process. It is not a marginal activity. It is at the core of all creative human living” (Hope and Timmel, 1984: 3).

Some of the key Freirean principles made a strong impact on me. For instance, education is never a neutral process, it is a political process. This political act can never be divorced from pedagogy. Education is specifically designed and taught to serve a political agenda, it is either designed to maintain the *status quo* and the values and culture of the dominant class or it is designed to liberate people, helping them to become critical, creative, free, active and responsible members of society (Freire and Macedo, 2001a: 6). Education should also be relevant to the participants in the ‘now’ and education and community work should start by identifying issues participants wish to change and affecting their lived realities (Hope and Timmel, *ibid.*).

In the mid-1990s, I worked as a ‘Development Worker’ in Bolivia for two years. My job was to write a bi-monthly ‘Bolivia Bulletin’ about indigenous politics and issues in

a country that I little understood. I became acutely aware that I was writing about the world around me from a “white privileged”<sup>9</sup> (McIntosh, P, 1990: 33) perspective and as time went on, I came to more fully understand Freire’s writing on reflexivity. According to Freire, reflection and action are essential, true reflection leads to action but that action will only be a genuine praxis if there is critical reflection on its consequences (Freire and Macedo, 2001: 32). I consider critical reflection to be a vital part too of Development Education research and one that is not perhaps highlighted sufficiently in academic discourse in this field.

## **2.4 Activism, Community Development and Community Education**

When I returned to Ireland in 1996, the country had changed dramatically. Net immigration was nil in 1995 and by 1997 had grown to 20,000 people a year. This had doubled to 40,000 a year by 2002. There were also large increased in the number of asylum seekers coming to Ireland. There was also a shift to EU flows after EU enlargement (2004 to 2007). The high levels of immigration from the new EU Member States brought immigration to unprecedented levels (Quinn, E and Ruhs, M., 2009). Ireland had been transformed into a culturally diverse society. I was actively involved in anti-racism work and was one of the founders of CARASI (Comhlámh Action on Refugees, Asylum-Seekers and Immigrants) and studied for a master’s degree in Development Management which included Development Studies.

I also worked inside disadvantaged communities in Cork. Within communities, theories of power were enabling analysis of negative aspects of power such as the effects of Neoliberalism, but also recognition of the multiple sites through which power operates and the potential for change from below.

..there are opportunities for communities to develop their own narratives of change rather than allowing themselves to become complicit in those dictated by others, and to use new governance

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<sup>9</sup> McIntosh defines “white privilege” as “an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was “meant” to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools, and blank checks. “Unpacking the invisible knapsack” is often used in activities aimed at raising consciousness about white privilege.

spaces that have emerged both to shape and influence the exercise of government and to promote alternative agendas (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2011: 55).

Likewise with theories of State, seminal thinkers such as Habermas and Gramsci, influenced both community and development education. To illustrate, Gramsci focused on the “ideological hegemony” of the capitalist state to describe the influence of the ruling class over what counts as knowledge (Gramsci, 1971: 20). Critical dialogue models were being used in Ireland and around the world to raise the consciousness of the powerless in order to challenge existing hegemonies and forms of systematic power. Gramsci saw change as coming through education, cultural shifts and the formation of social movements. He argued that critical consciousness is developed through praxis and informed dialogue (Mayo, P, 2008: 21), ideas which were later developed by Freire in his ‘critical pedagogy’ approach. Habermas argued for new forms of ‘communicative action’ which can confront the distortion of reality by their powerful and transformative power relationships. ‘Communicative action’ is cooperative action undertaken by individuals based upon mutual deliberation and argumentation. (Habermas, 1984: 14). Communicative action has been critiqued for its ideal of power-free relationships (Frazer, 2013: 259-267, McNeeley 2003: 3, Szczelkun 2015: 1). McNeeley contrasts Habermas' view with Foucault's notion of communication as embodying pre-existing power relationships: "Jürgen Habermas subscribes to an unrealistic ideal of power-free communication...Michel Foucault remedies this idealism by treating knowledge as power; his work is in fact suffused with applications of knowledge for the control of human bodies" (McNeeley 2003: 3).

Another influential thinker in the 90s was Robert Putnam (Putnam, 1995) and his idea of ‘social capital’. He defines these as the “features of social life – network, norms and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue their shared objectives” (Putnam et al., 1994: 664–5). Putnam highlighted the importance of relationships of trust in making democracy work. Siisiainen (2003: 183-204) compares Putnam’s concepts of social capital with that of Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu argues that the class position of social actors is important and that particular actors will succeed in social struggles, depending on their power positions in society. These discussions on power are explored further in Chapter Four below.



In short, I was learning more about how we can look at the world with different lenses, I was deepening my understanding of the complexities of inequality, oppression and injustice and I was beginning to link the root causes of oppression in Ireland with the root causes of regional and global inequalities.

## **2.5 The ‘Other’ comes home to Roost**

For almost a decade in the late 1990s and early 2000s, I worked as the CEO of *Nasc*<sup>10</sup>, the *Irish Immigrant Support Centre* in Cork. Working on a daily basis with refugees, asylum-seekers and immigrants I was constantly reminded of the connections between the ‘local’ and the ‘global’. I was exposed to day-to-day realities of people’s lives, as well as writers, activists and government policies – or lack of policies - in the fields of anti-racism, race and ethnicity, diversity, migration, identity, multiculturalism and intercultural communications.

Some of us activists in the field of DE and refugee, migrant and asylum-seeker support in Cork were influenced at an early stage by effective and powerful workshops in the field of anti-racism, using Development Education methodologies. These were run by highly creative facilitators such as Vicki Donnelly and Sharon Murphy of the Galway One World Centre, whose work is recognised in its own right. Engaging and interactive methodologies were used to explore early messages and influences regarding ‘the other’, concepts of prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination and direct, indirect and subtle expressions of racism at individual and institutional levels. These workshops informed our personal understandings of racism but importantly, they also gave us a collective understanding that strengthened our work. Fortunately, there is an account of these workshops in *Focus Magazine* written by one participant, Dr. Angela Veale, a psychology lecturer at UCC (Veale, 2001: 44–45).<sup>11</sup> The impact of those workshops shows how influential DE methodologies can be. I later used what I had learned at these workshops to run many anti-racism workshops with communities, schools, colleges and statutory agencies. This and other experiences meant I was able to witness the connections and common understandings that unite different liberatory and anti-oppressive educations. In reality most activists were not making clear distinctions

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<sup>10</sup> ‘Nasc’ is the Irish word for ‘Link’.

<sup>11</sup> Similar workshops were run by anti-racism consultant Mariam Tannam, the *Partners Training for Transformation Group* and Trócaire’s Development Education Officer in Cork, Sheila Dillon.

between one kind of methodology and another. Rather, they were using similar approaches and foundational ideas, and applying these to situations as they arose. DE is not necessarily a kind of common methodology or perspective that unites different educational disciplines, but rather it is one of several approaches that add power to and complement one another.

In more recent times (2013) I was reintroduced to intercultural concepts at the Institute of Intercultural Communications Summer School at Portland, Oregon, where I had master classes from academics such as Dr. Kathryn Sorrells. Dr. Sorrells' work (Sorrells, 2013: 17-20) on social justice approaches to intercultural communications has been of particular relevance to me because of its emphasis on her praxis model, a process of critical thinking, reflection to empower people to challenge discrimination and create a more socially just world. She uses six interrelated points of entry into the process of understanding intercultural praxis: (1) 'inquiry' or "means a desire and willingness to know, to ask, to find out and to learn"; (2) 'framing', the ability to access a variety of perspective-taking options. Frames are the lenses or cognitive schema that human beings use to organize and make sense of the world; (3) 'positioning', the notion that individuals' positioning is socially constructed as 'hierarchical categories', such as race, class, gender, and physical ability and that these have real consequences in interactions. The authors explain, "Like the lines of longitude and latitude that divide, map, and position us geographically on the earth, these hierarchical categories position us socially, politically, and materially in relation to each other and in relation to structures and configurations of power" (ibid. 18); (4) 'dialogue', or "communication that stretches across difference and engages actively with other points of view (ibid.: 19). Dialogue is a process that invites us to stretch ourselves—to reach across and to exceed our grasp—to imagine, experience, and engage creatively with points of view, ways of thinking, being and doing, and beliefs different from our own while accepting that we may not fully understand or may not come to a common agreement or position. (ibid.); 'Reflection', the fifth port of entry, is necessary to enter in order to sustain dialogue; it is critical to understanding one's own positioning and frames; and it is

essential to engaging in curious inquiry (ibid.: 20). Reflection is "the capacity to learn from introspection, to observe oneself in relation to others and to alter one's perspectives and actions based on reflection" (ibid.: 19-20). Observation, learning, and change are key parts of this definition. Reflection involves thinking about one's own

positions, observing oneself, learning from observations of self and others, and making changes because of that learning; (5) the final port of entry is ‘action’, which means linking our increased understanding with responsible actions to make a difference in the world, a world which is “more socially just, equitable, and peaceful” (ibid.: 20).

## 2.6 Why ‘Habitus’?

With this trajectory behind me, as I approached my PhD research, I struggled with the ideas of ‘objectivity’ and academic ‘neutrality’; I felt I could achieve neither. I felt uncomfortable too with the idea of ‘observing others’ as though I was an objective bystander and they were my subjects. In grappling with this, I was introduced to Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of ‘Habitus’, which he describes in *The Practical Sense (Le Sens Pratique)* as:

The external definitions which are connected to a particular class of conditions of existence produce hexis (habitus), systems of continuous and transferable predispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, in other words as generative and organizing principles of the practices and reconstructions, which can be adapted objectively to their purpose without aiming consciously at it, and to control explicitly the actions necessary for its achievement (Bourdieu, 2006: 88 cited in Asimaki and Koustourakis, 2014: 125).

These predispositions are “continuous and transferable” and operate across a variety of settings, such as economic, political, social, artistic, religious, cultural or within an Education system. Habitus is both structured and structuring. On the one hand, it is the product of our position in the social structure. On the other hand, it shapes our thoughts and actions ('practice'), which also maintain (reproduce) the social structure. Habitus is therefore, "the product of structure, producer of practice, and the reproducer of structure" (Bourdieu, 1977c: 72).

Elsewhere (1990a: 63), Bourdieu talks about how ‘habitus’ is essentially the way in which the culture of a particular social group is embodied (internalised) in the individual, during the socialisation process beginning in early childhood. This embodied culture provides the basis for a particular set of 'durable dispositions', i.e. ways of acting, seeing and making sense of the world. It is, he says, "society written into the body, into the biological individual" (ibid.). Habitus is not a set of consciously held beliefs or values. Rather, it operates below the level of consciousness as a kind of

second nature, present in our tastes for particular kinds of food or music, as well as in the way we talk, walk, or dress. It operates as a kind of tacit knowledge, enabling us to deal with a wide variety of situations in predictable ways, but without our consciously following a set of rules - rather like the way we carry out our everyday routines (Richardson, 2019: 1).

The literature review explores Bourdieu's writings more deeply but these early understandings helped me to situate my life experiences and understand how objectivism and subjectivism have a "dialectic connection" (Asimaki and Koustourakis, 2014, p.129). In *Homo Academicus* (Bourdieu, 1988:15), Bourdieu says that we need to analyse our own dispositions and interests, and therefore social interests, and exercise 'epistemological vigilance'. Each researcher comes to the research with their individual habitus that will to some extent direct the course of inquiry and the lens in which they look through (determining which theorists they use, methodologies, etc.). Individuals must recognise and transcend their own habitus to ensure the research does not become another social critique as an outsider (Bourdieu, 1992: 135-141).

Thus, armed with as much 'habitus' awareness as I could muster up, I arrived to my PhD with my female, white, educated, curious, able-bodied, Irish, European, activist knapsack<sup>12</sup>. In many ways I can see that my predisposition to question 'the doll' and 'the eye test' incident were still with me. I was hoping to understand more about how I could grow further myself and at the same time bring my passion for development education, experience and academic work, to bear on my work with third level students, whom I have always loved working with.

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<sup>12</sup> This is a reference to McIntosh's (1990: 1) 'invisible knapsack' a metaphor for white privilege as "an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks".

## CHAPTER 3: DE CONTEXT

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### 3.1 Development Education in a Historical Context

In Ireland DE has been shaped by a political and often radical agenda with strong links to the civil society sector. O'Sullivan (2007: 92) traces its growth to the social and political movements, which were emerging in reaction to international developments, such as the war in Vietnam, the student movement of the late 1960s and the anti-apartheid movement. He singled out, in particular, the Nigerian civil war and the public response to the plight of Biafrans.

Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken (2011: 16) find that earlier DE was very much led by missionaries, 'returned development workers', activists, educators and campaigners. The term DE did not come into use until the late 1960s, when aid agencies, churches and the United Nations (UN) identified a need for education programmes that went beyond promotional and development advocacy work (ibid.). Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) came to regard DE as something more than filling an 'information deficit' gap in the 'West' to 'seeing education as the very fuel for the engine of development both in the 'West' and in the 'Third World' (Regan and Sinclair, 2006: 109). DE emerged through direct contact with social movements and solidarity groups around the world, alongside engagement with the work of critical educators such as Paulo Freire.

Fiedler, Bryan and Bracken (ibid.: 12) note that some of the DE practitioners interviewed as part of their mapping DE in Ireland research, knew of missionaries who were influenced by liberation theology and Paulo Freire's radical pedagogical concepts, while others promoted the idea of the 'starving black babies' and what Paulo Freire (Freire, 1974/2005: 12) called an 'assistencialist' mind-set towards poverty. Freire associates 'assistencialism' with colonialism, treating the person as a passive recipient of aid rather than an active transformer of his or her environment (ibid.). There have always been some tensions, within the DE sector, between those whose awareness-raising approaches are framed by a charity perspective and those who espouse a justice or human rights approach.

From the Irish State point of view, Irish Aid was established in 1974 as a division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, with responsibility for overseas development and DE. It is currently working from its third *Strategic Plan 2017-2023*, which is aimed at a wide range of sectors including education, youth and community groups, trade unions, local authorities, corporate organisations, and Non-governmental Development Organisation or ‘NGDOs’ (Irish Aid, 2017: 40).

### **3.2 The European Development Education Context**

At a European level, the Global Education Network Europe (GENE) is a network of 40 ministries, agencies and other national bodies in 25 countries, responsible for support, funding and policy-making in the field of Global Education. The GENE (2015) *Peer Review Process: National Report on Global Education in Ireland* describes DE work in Ireland as “exemplary” especially Irish Aid’s strategic DE partnership<sup>13</sup> (ibid.: 56). In its *The State of Global Education in Europe* (GENE: 2017: 23) report GENE outlines a number of high priority “cross-cutting” issues that are of concern for development educationalists in the twenty-three participating countries. In a political context three issues of major concern to DE are: (1) refugees coming into Europe, primarily from the war in Syria. This is leading to challenges within national education systems in terms of resources and in terms of the needs of children who have experienced recent trauma and/or do not speak the local language; (2) the rise of right-wing political parties, increasing anti-immigration sentiments and rhetoric, ethno-nationalist ideologies and euro-scepticism and anti-elitist, anti-globalisation discourse on the back of rising unemployment and political disenfranchisement; and (3) the rise of radicalisation and terrorism in Europe and the accompanying fear and debate about radicalisation and resilience including how governments are being forced to reconsider how they keep people safe. GENE participants are interested in exploring root causes of radicalisation and possible remedial approaches to addressing these.

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<sup>13</sup> Irish Aid provides multi-annual funding for strategic partnerships in DE to support a number of strategic priority areas such as initial teacher training (DICE – the Development and Intercultural Education Project and Ubuntu, Teacher Education for Sustainable Development – second level education), the 80:20 consortium, including the website [www.developmenteducation.ie](http://www.developmenteducation.ie), SUAS (informal third level education), IDEA the Irish Development Education Association and the WorldWise Global Schools Programme.

At an international level political processes such as the Sustainable Development Goals<sup>14</sup> (SDGs) and agreements such as the Paris Agreement on climate change in 2015<sup>15</sup>, also provide an important context for DE in the European context (GENE, 2017: 58). The GENE report also highlights a need for more conceptual clarity and praises some of the emerging national strategies and policy frameworks (ibid.).

At an NGO level, the *Confederation of European Non-Governmental Organisations for Relief and Development* (CONCORD) has a permanent working group on development education called the DARE Forum (Development Awareness-Raising and Education). Until December 2015, the European Commission funded a project called *Development Education Exchange in Europe Project* (DEEEP) to coordinate and manage the activities of the DARE forum. DEEEP was established as a platform for European civil society actors active in Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) and there were four funded DEEEP projects. By the time the confederation reached DEEEP4 there was a highly ambitious intention to reconceptualise DEAR as Global Citizens Empowerment for Systemic Change. DEEEP4 wanted to radicalise and politicise DEAR and development discourse by reframing this work as an endeavour for system change, radically questioning the dominant economic system and Western culture. It set out to move DEAR out of:

...its nice cosy niche and to build cross-sectoral alliances for citizen empowerment by linking with wider areas of education, activism, social movements and global networks for change.

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<sup>14</sup> A new agenda, entitled "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," was agreed upon by the 193 Member States of the United Nations in September 2015. It includes a set of 17 Global Goals to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. They came into effect in January 2016 as part of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and they will continue to guide UNDP policy and funding until 2030.

<sup>15</sup> The Paris Agreement is a UN agreement dealing with greenhouse-gas-emissions mitigation, adaptation, and finance, signed in 2016 by 196 state parties. As of March 2019, 195 countries have signed the agreement. The Paris Agreement's long-term goal is to keep the increase in global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels; and to limit the increase to 1.5 °C, since this would substantially reduce the risks and effects of climate change. On June 1, 2017, United States President Donald Trump announced that the U.S. would cease all participation in the 2015 Paris Agreement and stated that "The Paris accord will undermine (the U.S.) economy," and "puts (the U.S.) at a permanent disadvantage."

DEEEP got engaged in a process of building a global coalition in the perspective of a world citizens' movement (CONCORD, 2015: 1).

The DEEEP project finished in 2015 and global citizenship and public engagement for global justice are now carried out through a new *CONCORD Strategy – 2018 to 2030* which focuses on sustainable development, financing for development, promoting civil society space, Global Citizen Education and people engagement. The article 'Goodbye DEEEP' explains the paradox which is also at the heart of some academic discourse in Ireland:

The key contradiction built into DEEEP4 was the inherent opposition between its ambition (transformative system change) and its realisation (the fact that it was part of the very system it was criticising and challenging) (CONCORD, 2015: 1).

Joanne Krause in her 'critical friend' final evaluation attributes the end of DEEEP to:

... the gap between the extremely challenging, progressive and radical **discourse** DEEEP generated at European level and the realities of DEAR actors within their rather traditional environment of development NGOs was enormous and often hard to bridge. DEAR actors often work in a context where the majority of people in the society firmly believe in the narrative of Western development, capitalism and economic growth. In such circumstances, engagement for overseas development may already need justification" (Krause, 2015: 20).

Surian (Surian, 2012: 68), writing from an DE activist perspective, analyses how DE is currently defined and positioned in relation to the European Commission and the Member States' policies which he says is a "narrow focus". DE issues need to be approached from a transformative postcolonial learning perspective acknowledging a diversity of resistance practices while promoting consistent alternatives to the growth paradigm. He suggests a radical conception of Citizenship Education, engaging strongly with issues of power (ibid.).

### **3.3 The Irish Development Education Context**

#### **3.3.1 Statutory Framework**

Irish Aid's current strategic plan clearly sets its work within the framework of the SDGs:



The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2015-2030, to which Ireland has committed, provide the first international framework to guide and support active global citizenship at both national and international levels, enabling people to become active global citizens in the creation of a fairer, more just, more secure and more sustainable world for all (Irish Aid, 2017: 4).

The strategy states that the SDGs have radically changed understandings of development, from the idea of ‘developed’ and ‘developing’ to the recognition that all countries are developing and transforming all the time, and are constantly responding to emerging global challenges and seeking more sustainable, interdependent societies and economies to ensure the well-being of their citizens. Referring to Target 4.7<sup>16</sup> of the SDGs it notes that the SDGs acknowledge the important role of EGC including DE in building the conditions for a more peaceful, fair and sustainable world. It is notable that Irish Aid is now using the term Education for Global Citizenship (EGC) as an umbrella terms to include DE *and* Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). There is an emphasis too on interdepartmental cooperation and collaboration with other government strategies currently supporting the principles of global citizenship education. Examples here include initial teacher education, initial youth worker education, promoting youth participation, promoting action for sustainable living and the provision of professional development for teachers, youth workers and adult educators (ibid.: 9-10). Reference is made in particular to the *National Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development 2014-2020* and the *National Youth Strategy 2015-2020* (Irish Aid, 2017: 9). Irish Aid’s strategy states that its long-term goal is to ensure that the people of Ireland are empowered to analyse and challenge the root causes and consequences of global hunger, poverty, inequality, injustice and climate change. It is hoped that DE will encourage people to be active global citizens working towards the creation of a fairer and more sustainable future for all (ibid.: 4).

A significant feature of Irish Aid’s approach in recent years has been the formation of strategic partnerships. There are five strategic multi-annual funding partnerships:

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<sup>16</sup> SDG Target 4.7: “By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development”.

IDEA, the Irish Development Education Association; WorldWise Global Schools (WWGS) which works with post-primary schools; DICE, the Development and Intercultural Education Project which works with primary school student teachers and SUAS which provides DE in the non-formal sphere of Higher Education. The fifth partner is the ‘developmenteducation.ie’ website which maintains a central on-line repository to increase access to and usage of DE resources. In 2015 the Global Education Network Europe (GENE) carried out a peer review of the ‘State of Global Education in Europe’ and used the word “exemplary” to describe Ireland’s partnership approach to DE (GENE, 2015a: 56). Two independent reports at European level commissioned by the European Commission (DE Watch and DEAR study) have also found that Ireland is one of the leading European countries in DE, both in terms of support structures, delivery and the quality of organisations delivering DE programmes (Dóchas, 2015: 3).

### **3.3.2 Civil Society Organisations (CSO)<sup>17</sup>**

CSOs have played a very strong part in the development of DE in Ireland. In 1973 the international development agency of the Catholic Church, Trócaire, was established and funding split three ways – 70% on long-term projects; 10% on emergency relief and 20% on development education. The latter reflects a belief that unless there is public awareness of development and the political will to bring about greater justice, there will be little change in the relationships between rich and poor (Dillon, 2009: 7). In 1975, what were then called ‘returned development workers’, set up Comhlámh, began to co-ordinate longer-term DE activities and established a regional network of DE centres (Fiedler et al., 2011: 81; Dóchas, 2004). The first allocation of state funds for DE was delivered in 1978 and amounted to £33,840.53 in grant aid to a number of NGOs - Concern, CONGOOD, Comhlámh, Christian Aid, Voluntary Service International, Irish Council for Overseas Students, Trócaire – most of which still exist. This funding also included grant aid to the media, for example to Éamonn de Buitléar (Fiedler et al., 2011: 82). In 2004 IDEA, the Irish Development Education Association, emerged as a result

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<sup>17</sup> Civil society refers to the collective body of organisations that belong neither to state (the public sector) or the market (the private sector). The term ‘CSO’ in this thesis is inclusive of NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations), NGDO (Non-Governmental Development Organisations) and other organisations and bodies (e.g. Church bodies, community groups) which fall outside state or market sectors.

of calls from the DE sector for an umbrella body to represent them nationally. It is the national network for DE in Ireland and a leading voice for the sector. Another key stakeholder is Dóchas, the Irish association of Non-Governmental Development. Established in 1974, it provides a forum for consultation and co-operation between its members and helps them speak with a single voice on development issues. Dóchas is an umbrella group of 58 international development, humanitarian and global justice organisations in Ireland, that share a commitment to tackling poverty and inequality in the world. Dóchas provides a sense of coherence and strength to this important network of development organisations. It has a DE Working Group (‘Development Education Group’ or ‘DEG’) which represents and promotes DE both for and amongst Dóchas members.

DEG’s 2015 submission to Irish Aid as part of the consultation process on Irish Aid’s Development Education strategic plan, throws some light on some of the issues which concern the sector at the present time. The Dóchas submission acknowledges that there has been “significant progress” since 2006 in strengthening, in collaboration with the Department of Education, the integration of DE in the school curriculum and practice in the formal education sector. It also welcomes the strategic support to partners, World Wise Global Schools, Ubuntu (working with second-level student teachers) and the Dice project (working with student teachers at primary level). The DEG recommends that similar focus should now be placed on the non-formal arena in order to balance the investment made by Irish Aid. The DEG submission also highlights the importance of the SDGs 2015-2030 in that it offers a “unique opportunity” for DE organisations and practitioners to work with other civil society organisations and with government to support the process and to deliver on the goals and targets by 2030. The DEG sees the impact of climate change on the world’s poorest and most vulnerable people and their habitats as an urgent and important DE priority for everyone. The submission also suggests that the Irish Aid strategy should recognise the increased diversity of communities in Ireland, many from the Global South, and should “enhance dialogue” while strengthening the scope, diversity and quality of DE practice. At a national level the submission sees opportunities to collaborate with new policies and strategies such as the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (2014) and the National Youth Strategy (Dóchas, 2015: 4–5).

The submission does point to some current challenges. The first is the availability of resources for the DE sector. Due to lack of funds, many NGOs have had to cut back, or stop, their DE work (Dóchas, 2015: 5- 6). It highlights, in particular, the growing pressure in recent years to show “results/impact”, and “value for money”. The DEG suggests that consideration be given to researching and developing alternative methodologies that recognise more qualitative aspects of DE although it does not describe what it means by ‘qualitative aspects’. It also recommends that investment in research and knowledge should be made central to the Strategic Plan, that there should be increased advocacy at EU level to ensure an enabling environment for Irish DE sector and that the volunteer sector should be seen as a key driver in the delivery of DE in Ireland. The submission emphasises, in particular, the need for a review of funding modalities. An important point here highlights again the debate mentioned earlier about the role of Irish Aid as the sole funder:

While the DEG recognises the importance of Irish Aid’s support to the Development Education sector, we also recognise that the primary responsibility for the sector should not solely be with Irish Aid. Historically, the Development Education sector was highly supported by other civil society actors. Irish Aid through the new policy should recognise that civil society at large has a responsibility in ensuring that the sector is adequately resourced (Dóchas, 2015: 8).

The DEG calls on Irish Aid to move towards a more mixed, balanced and longer-term funding model and stresses too that a number of current priority areas do not have a strategic partner. Irish Aid should also be clear on how strategic partners are selected; clear criteria should be developed and communicated to the sector. The DEG would also welcome the setting of a funding ceiling set by Irish Aid to ensure no over reliance on Irish Aid funds occurs.

### **3.3.3 Third Level Education**

While there are few courses in the country which are specifically called “Development Education” (or similar) some third level programmes do incorporate an element of DE. For instance, DICE supports the integration of DE into initial teacher education (ITE) at primary level, while Ubuntu promotes ITE DE at post-primary level. The School of Education, University College Cork, is funded by Ubuntu to run the *Id Est Project: Integrating Development Education into Student Teacher Practice*. The project provides extra-curricular workshops on DE and supports student teachers to into their

teaching practice (Ubuntu, 2017: 1). Aspects of DE can be found in teaching, learning and research at most Irish universities particularly in courses and programmes concerned with international development, environment and sustainable development, human rights, migration, health promotion, race and ethnicity and gender studies (IDEA, 2016: 23). In UCC, the Centre for Global Development (CGD) was established in 2011. It is the main vehicle for UCC's global development strategy and is an umbrella forum for the wide range of development work which UCC staff, students and personnel are involved with from across all schools in the university.

There are also opportunities for non-accredited learning in Higher Education in Ireland. One of Irish Aid's strategic partners is SUAS which seeks to support the progressive engagement of third level students with global justice issues, through *Global Campus*, SUAS runs an interactive course one evening a week over a period of seven weeks on six university campuses in Ireland.

While the above gives a flavour of DE or related areas of study which are available, it says nothing about the quality or perspectives of the learning opportunities. This thesis argues that because most of the work in the DE field in Ireland is funded by Irish Aid, it is difficult to ask questions about the quality of DE work or indeed what we mean by quality in the first place. Much of the sector, from formal education, to community and youth sectors, is funded by Irish Aid. This gives Irish Aid great power in how DE is conducted and in how it is defined. This of course raises many challenges and provokes constant critical self-reflection. In the context of third level education one has to ask if educators are 'critically literate' and as Andreotti says, if they are not critically aware, they run the risk of "reproducing the systems of belief and practices that harm those they want to support" (Andreotti, V, 2006: 40–51).

### **3.4 Some Current DE Discourse**

#### **3.4.1 Decolonisation of Higher Education**

Post-colonial theory refers to a set of debates about North-South relations which came about through various de-colonisation struggles, 'movements' and academic disciplines which challenged European domination. Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* (Fanon, 2007/1961) focused on colonisation and the radical dehumanisation of the Other (Black,

colonial slave, non-European, etc.). Said (2003) wrote of the representation of the 'First' and 'Third' worlds in literary and of non-literary texts. More recently, Andreotti (2011: 13-57) presents a practical approach to 'actioning postcolonial theory' in educational research, policy and practice. She proposes using a 'Colonial Discourse Analysis' (CDA) lens, to critique, challenge and engage with educational policy and practice (ibid.: 85-174). She proposes an education of epistemic transformation based on persuasion and not coercion. She argues that postcolonial theory provides directions that point to a move beyond ethnocentrism and its claims of cultural supremacy, towards 'planetary citizenship' based on a deep understanding of interdependence (in 'material' and cultural terms) and causal responsibility towards the South. Postcolonial theory, she says, offers both an outline for an educational agenda and important tools for internal critique of DE. The challenge now, she says,

...is to check if DE (with its multiple contexts and constraints) can create spaces where we, as development educators and our audiences, can make our choices in an informed way and take responsibility for the implications of our decisions (2006: 11).

Khoo (2014, pp.200–220) applies a postcolonial lens to higher education in Ireland. She problematises the 'postcolonial moment' in the context of 'knowledge economies' that place emphasis on transnational mobility and bureaucratic excellence. She asks if global citizens can really be educated in a postcolonial world through the University, since internationalisation practices can reproduce ideals of exceptionalism, entitlement, and (market) expansionism as they de-emphasise issues of global ethics. These shifts complicate the emancipatory projects and intents of postcolonial criticism, education and citizenship, making the task of pulling these three projects together difficult, yet necessary.

### **3.4.2 Neoliberalism and Globalisation and Higher Education**

Khoo, S. and McCloskey (2015: 3) in their ten year review of the Irish DE Journal *Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review* note that a recurring question for the DE sector is: to what extent should learning and action focus on transformative agendas seeking alternatives to the Neoliberal model of economic growth that has created current levels of extreme inequality? Should it seek instead accommodation and traction within existing Neoliberal structures and institutions? They cite Selby and Kagawa (2011) who favour a transformative approach and Bourne (2011) who favours a

‘constructivist’ approach. Bourne (2011: 11) argues that DE should not be regarded as a “monolithic approach” to education but that it is “a pedagogy that opens minds to question, consider, reflect and above all challenge viewpoints about the wider world and to identify different ways to critique them” (ibid.: 26). Selby and Kagawa (2011: 15-31) ask if DE and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) are “striking a Faustian bargain”? (ibid.: 15). Reviewing DE literature, they ask why neo-liberal growth and globalisation are kept in the shadows when so clearly complicit in deepening poverty and injustice and harming the environment. They suggest that institutions should nurture what they call their ‘shadow spaces’, that cut across the formal organisational structures and are concerned with individual and social learning, spaces where experimentation is possible. Transformative educators should think creatively about how to use such spaces and at the same time aim to influence the more formal spaces. They suggest too that transformative educators question power and speak its truth at any opportunity, expose the contradictions in mainstream thinking and ask questions such as ‘why is [economic growth] the single over-riding goal of every government, of every economy, the world over?’ They suggest returning to first principles. What are our motivations for doing this work, what are the core requisite values, skills and dispositions needed to realise the future we want and is anything we are, or are not, saying or doing, compromising our deeply held views?

McCloskey (2017:159) suggests that:

... wider adoption of the radical, participative, empowering and action-oriented DE approach to learning is needed to provide the kind of critical thinking required in today’s world of ‘alternative facts’.

He argues that greater support is needed at local level, for community-based development education particularly in politically disconnected and economically marginalised areas. DE approaches to education, he says, could help to restore hope, confidence and agency to communities that have been seduced by a resurgent political right. He also suggests we also build on resistance movements that are already in existence (ibid.: 165). Gaynor (2016: 1) sees education as being at a critical juncture and is concerned that “talk of civic values, justice, transformation, and flourishing has been replaced with talk of efficiency, performance, competition, and employment”. She maintains that schools and colleges are being influenced by “a range of new forces, influences and technologies” in a way that places it at the service of the global economy

rather than society more broadly. In this context, this study aims to explore some of the ways in which new technologies can be harnessed to support the work of development educators and how DE discourse can be integrated into everyday life in classrooms and wider communities.

### **3.4.3 Mainstreaming, Professionalisation and Deradicalisation**

These debates are also closely linked with another debate regarding the ‘professionalisation’ and ‘deradicalisation’<sup>18</sup> of DE within educational institutions. Waldron (2014:1) asks: “does the policy environment in education, which is seen as increasingly instrumentalist, inevitably compromise DE as a radical, political project? Does dependence on state funding inexorably lead to the individualisation and domestication of the concept of social action in development education contexts? She cites McCloskey (2014: 6) who suggests that while state agencies might envision social action as the desirable outcome of DE, it is likely to be conceptualised as individualised consumer-oriented responses such as fair trade rather than the potentially radical responses envisaged by Freirean pedagogy. Waldron takes the view that Freire’s argument of not giving in to ‘annihilating pessimism’ where contexts are hostile, educators should do ‘what is historically possible’. She cites Bourne as taking a similar view, and argues that development educators should seek to identify and maximise the possibilities for DE in any given learning environment (2014: 61).

Bryan (2011: 1) suggests that Citizenship Education in the Republic of Ireland context functions as a kind of ‘band-aid’ pedagogical response to the problems of global injustice – denying complex political or economic realities in favour of overly-simplistic, easily digestible and ‘regurgitable’ laundry lists of symptoms of global poverty and the promotion of overly-simplistic, quick fix and ultimately ineffectual solutions to global problems. Consistent with the ‘soft’ versions of development education being promoted in textbooks, development activism in schools is often characterised by a ‘three Fs’ approach, which defines development education within

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<sup>18</sup> Deradicalisation: a softening of pedagogical approaches to DE, moving away from radical social-justice oriented educationalists who espoused active, student-centred transformative learning which challenges inequality (Andreotti, 2006; Bourn, 2015).



narrow parameters of *fundraising, fasting and having fun* in aid of specific development causes (Bryan & Bracken, forthcoming).

Khoo (2006: 35) discusses the issue of ‘mainstreaming’ at third level and argues that the increased profile of global development issues coupled with new teaching and learning strategies provide strong opportunities to introduce development education as content and process in a wide variety of disciplines and pathways. Mainstreaming offers greater credibility and resources to teachers and learners, but it will also involve greater commitment, higher expectations and the possibility of being co-opted. Critical and reflective concerns are gradually emerging around the moral, affective, emotional and processual dimensions of development education, and these contrast quite starkly with professionalised, strategically-driven visions of mainstreaming.

All sides of this debate are compelling. It is hard to reconcile DE pedagogy with the marketised model promoted within the third level sector. The impact of one main funder for the entire sector is problematic (Dillon, 2017:11). On the other hand, while it is difficult, spaces do exist within universities. Gaynor (Gaynor, Niamh, 2016, p.3) goes as far as to say that round pegs can indeed fit into square holes, giving the example of eighteenth century woodworkers who employed both to increase the structural integrity of their buildings. What matters she says, is that in driving the pegs through, we take care not to deform or damage them in any way. In other words, in attempting to implement development education in formal contexts, it is imperative that we examine and analyse our approaches and practices in the context of the wider power relations, structural imperatives and institutional structures, discourses and practices with which they interact.

It is also the case that third level education does still offer some hope of independent thought with less restrictions perhaps than in a second level classroom. Students are generally over eighteen and therefore adults who are more at liberty to act on their own opinions. The Universities Act 1997 (A.5a) upholds the principle of academic freedom, there has been significant progress in terms of policies relating to diversity, inclusion, equality, civic engagement, multi-culturalism and anti-racism. Development educationists have a responsibility to “nail our flag to the mast and fly it high” (Cotter, 2018: 127), to be clear about our purpose and to find spaces and opportunities to sail the ship through the murky Neoliberal waters that are third level education at this time.

### 3.4.4 DE and the Global North

In their review of the Irish Journal *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, for its twentieth issue, Khoo and McCloskey (2015: 1–17) note that a recurring theme over the past decade, but particularly in the aftermath of the 2008 international financial crisis, has concerned the role of DE in the global North. DE has always been concerned with poverty and inequality in the global South but the crisis resulted in recession, mass unemployment and cuts to public services in Europe and North America. Khoo and McCloskey (2015: 2) note that while DE has traditionally focused on the Global South (Daly et al., 2017:16), ‘the local’ has generally been included by means of encouraging learners to take local action for global change (e.g. the fair trade movement) or to encourage learners to explore issues in their country with a view to comparing with other parts of the world (e.g. famine and emigration from Ireland). There is now a shift towards focusing on understanding the causes of social and economic inequality, locally and globally, including in the global North.,. Inequality has deepened on a global scale and been attended by an increasing concentration of wealth in fewer hands. Governments and non-governmental development organisations (NGDOs) alike agree that development education should contribute to public debate and understanding of the causes of social and economic inequality, locally and globally. For instance, Irish Aid sees the purpose of DE as “deepening understanding of global poverty and encouraging people towards action for a more just and equal world” (2007: 6). The Development Awareness Raising and Education (DARE) Forum which represents development NGOs across the European Union take a similar approach, although it emphasises the role of the individual rather than collective responses to inequality and injustice suggesting that we:

...move from basic awareness of international development priorities and sustainable human development, through understanding of the causes and effects of global issues to personal involvement and informed actions (DARE, 2004).

Writing in 2012 Ní Chasaide (2012:33-44) took up this theme in relation to the work of the Debt and Development Coalition Ireland (DDCI). The key challenge, she says, is one of maintaining relevance and credibility in Ireland, where people are suffering increased economic hardship, while educating people on the need for economic justice in the global South. “The main opportunity presented by this new context is to engage with this moment in Ireland in a way that succeeds in linking learning and action for greater justice at home and in the wider world” (ibid.: 33). She shows how the DDCI

worked with the development education sector in Ireland with a view to bridging the gap between local and global learning and action. DDCI, along with many organisations formed a new network in Ireland of local and global justice groups called Debt Justice Action (DJA). Working with similar campaigning and education groups in Europe and in the global South, they took action in solidarity with people in Ireland in relation to the Anglo Irish Bank/Irish Nationwide Building Society, as well as carrying out solidarity work against the Anglo debt in Argentina, in the UK, Germany and the USA. This formation of DJA has been one of intensive dialogue between its members which has challenged isolated ways of working and shown that learning from the global South leads to important new working relationships between local and global justice groups, and in concrete education and campaigning actions in Ireland (ibid.: 41).

### **3.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has set this research study in its complex context. It begins with the historical context of DE in Ireland, showing that DE has strong roots in both church and radical activism on the part of ‘returned development workers’ and NDGOs. It discusses the current role of the non-statutory sector in DE in Ireland. It shows how DE developed in Ireland from a statutory perspective and particularly the role of Irish Aid in progressing policy and practice in both formal and informal sectors. It shows how Irish Aid DE policy is now strongly influenced by the SDGs and how collaboration across government departments and strategic partnerships across different sectors, are now the hallmark of Irish Aid policy in this field. It argues that the dependency of the sector on one major funder, that of Irish Aid, is problematic and challenging and acknowledges the limitations of such a model. It also sets DE in Ireland in an European context, outlining a number of cross-cutting concerns for DE stakeholders across twenty-three European countries. It also discusses the third level context in Ireland, detailing both the challenges and the opportunities that exist for DE within third level education. Finally, it discusses some of the current debates that are influencing DE discourse in Ireland. This sets the scene for the next three chapters which together form the literature review for this study. Many of the DE debates in Ireland at this time can be seen too in the rich academic tradition that is Critical Theory (CT) and particularly Critical Pedagogy (CP) over many decades. The literature review is in three parts. Part one (Chapter Four) introduces the broader, overarching theoretical framework for this thesis, which is CT. It traces CT back to its roots in the early Twentieth Century. From

here Part Two (Chapter Five) focuses more specifically in CP and particularly with a DE lens. It discusses some of the key characteristics, components and theoretical underpinnings of CP and DE. Finally, Part Three (Chapter Six) focuses on the theory and practice of community-linked learning (CLL) and multi-media learning (MML) at third level.

## CHAPTER 4: LITERATURE REVIEW PART 1 CRITICAL THEORY

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### 4.1 Literature Review Overview

According to Arlene Fink, the purpose of a literature review is to survey:

...books, scholarly articles, and any other sources relevant to a particular issue, area of research, or theory, and by so doing, provides a description, summary, and critical evaluation of these works in relation to the research problem being investigated. Literature reviews are designed to provide an overview of sources you have explored while researching a particular topic and to demonstrate to your readers how your research fits within a larger field of study (Fink, 2013: 3).

The literature review in this thesis is in three parts. This chapter engages with a synthesis of Critical Theory (CT) literature, which forms the meta-theoretical framework for this study. The second literature review section focuses specifically on critical pedagogy (CP), specifically with a development education (DE) lens. The third literature review section explores the theory and practice of community-linked learning (CLL) and multimedia learning (ML) as particular DE pedagogical approaches in a third level context. Taken as a whole, the literature review also engages with other relevant epistemological traditions in support of Kellner's (2003: 2) view that a reconstruction of education needs to:

...build on and synthesize perspectives of classical philosophy of education, Deweyan radical pragmatism, Freirean critical pedagogy, Poststructuralism, and various critical theories of gender, race, class, and society while criticizing obsolete idealist, elitist and antidemocratic aspects of traditional concepts of education (ibid.).

The literature review traces the trajectory of key theoretical frameworks from seminal writers, to present day studies, analytical interpretations and critique. The literature review locates the research within the context of existing literature. Importantly, as Vinz (2018: 1) points out, a literature review is not simply a list or summary of available data. It provides critical insights, analyses and arguments emerging from existing knowledge and theories, all directly and indirectly related to the topic at hand. At the same time, the literature review identifies gaps in existing research and outlines

how this thesis can contribute to understanding the research problem being studied (Bell 1993: 2).

## **4.2 Introduction to the Theoretical Framework**

Theories are formulated to explain, predict, and understand phenomena and, in many cases, to challenge and extend existing knowledge (Labaree, 2018: 1). Education theory is the theory of the purpose, application and interpretation of education and learning. It is affected by several factors, including theoretical perspective and epistemological position (Teaching and Learning, UCD, 2019: 1). A theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support the theory of the research study. It introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research problem under study exists (Labaree, *ibid.*). It provides a structure for the literature review, the methods and the analysis (Grant and Osanloo, 2014:12). It allows for an intellectual “transition from simply describing a phenomenon you have observed” to “generalizing about various aspects of that phenomenon” (Vinz, 2018: 1). It also helps in identifying the limits to those generalizations. By presenting a set of theoretical approaches, the research is grounded in and informed by intellectual thought that gives it direction, justification and connection to existing knowledge (*ibid.*).

The overarching theoretical framework for this thesis is Critical Theory. The term ‘Critical Theory’ (CT) has both a narrow and broad meanings in social science philosophy and history (Bohman, 2016). In a specific sense, it refers to the approach to social theory, developed by the members of the *Frankfurt Institute for Social Research*, which was founded in 1923 in Frankfurt, Germany. A group of Jewish interdisciplinary German intellectuals, influenced by Marxism, came together to study social and economic issues in contemporary society from a broadly socialist perspective. Known collectively as *The Frankfurt School*, this was a School of Thought rather than an actual place. It is most associated with the work of a first generation of (all male) intellectuals particularly Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse and Fromm and the second generation work of Jürgen Habermas. To these theorists, a ‘critical’ theory is ‘critical’ to the extent that it seeks human “emancipation from slavery”, acts as a “liberating ... influence”, and works “to create a world which satisfies the needs and powers” of human beings (Bohman, 2016: 1 citing Horkheimer 1972: 246 ).

In a wider sense, many critical theories have developed in connection with social movements that have identified dimensions of the domination of human beings in modern societies. These include critical feminist, postcolonial, disability, race, queer, media and world systems theories. In both the broad and narrow senses, a Critical Theory aims to decrease human domination and increase human freedom (Bohman: *ibid.*). CT has been embraced by many academics and activists around the world and much has been written about its relevance today.

### **4.3 Early Influences: Classical Philosophy, the Enlightenment and Karl Marx**

Constructing a Critical Theory of education can be aided by reflecting on earlier classical education from the Greeks to John Dewey (Kellner, 2003: 54). Classical Greek philosophy for instance recognised the importance of dialogue for human interaction and for education. In *The Republic* Plato discusses themes such as soul, dialogue and continuing education (Guilherme, 2017: 3). Aristotle talks about how our thinking and practice as educators must be infused with a clear philosophy of life. There has to be a deep concern for the ethical and the political. We have continually to ask ‘what makes for human flourishing?’ He emphasises the all-around and ‘balanced’ development of body, mind and soul and advocates for education for people at all stages of life. He stresses learning by doing and that such learning should be complemented by reason – and this involves teaching ‘the causes of things’. We can see here a connection with more recent theorists that have emphasized experience, reflection and connecting theory to practice (Infed, 2012a: 1). Finally, as with more recent learning theories, such as situated learning theory based on apprenticeship, Aristotle points out that different forms of knowledge are learnt in different ways (Saugstad, 2002: 373). Clearly we must reject the elitist and oppressive elements of classical pedagogy, such as access to education mostly only of well-off men, but it does provide a good starting point for some of the theoretical leanings of modern education (Kellner, 2003: 4).

The classical ideals also speak to the ethical duty that any citizen has toward its community and notions of political virtue. ‘Proper’ education involved the search for the ‘good’ life and the ‘good’ society (Kellner, 2003: 4). These would later influence Rousseau and Enlightenment thinkers. Rousseau’s *Emile* and *The Social Contract* deals with the relationship between the individual and society, speaking to the ethical duty

any citizen has toward its community and notions of political virtue, which were also classical ideals. As with the Greek philosophers, the issue of autonomy and the transformation of society emerge, and these are of pivotal importance for CP (Guilherme, 2017: 3).

The Enlightenment brought Western society into the so-called Modern era – a movement in society which can be characterised as having three major features – the power of reason over ignorance; the power of order over disorder; and the power of science over superstition (Burke, 2013: 1). Modernity is heralded as ‘revolutionary’ and brings with it capitalism as a new mode of production and a transformation of the social order, epitomised particularly by the French Revolution of 1798 (ibid.). While the later Frankfurt School (see below) is critical of the positivist<sup>19</sup> ideas of what became known as the Enlightenment, MacDonald (2014: 1) notes that Critical Theory can be seen to have its genealogy in developments associated with the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant defines the Enlightenment as a movement that encourages critical engagement in debates without feeling confined by the prevailing ideologies and authorities. Engaging in critique implies engaging with taken-for-granted understandings and practices associated with everyday social and cultural life and being guided instead by human autonomy, reason and a desire for human emancipation. Such Do you mean ‘intellectual’ freedom is a hallmark of forms of Critical Theory (ibid.). Kantian critique requires rigorous reflection on our presuppositions and basic positions and argumentation to support one’s views (Kellner, 1993: 53). Hegel also comments on one-sided positions. Hegelian Dialectic is a more complex dialectic approach than had previously existed. It suggests arriving at a truth through the friction and conflict between one force (the thesis) and its opposite (the antithesis). The thesis and antithesis are reconciled into a synthesis, a new idea combining elements of both. Oppressive and false features of a position are rejected while positive, emancipatory perspectives are appropriated. Critical Theory adopts a Hegelian concept of theory by developing holistic theories that attempt to conceptualise the totality of a given field, but that importantly make connections and articulate contradictions, overcoming idealist or reductive theories of the whole (Kellner, 2003: 53).

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<sup>19</sup> Positivism is a philosophical system founded by Auguste Comte, concerned with positive facts and phenomena, and excluding speculation upon ultimate causes or origins (dictionary.com, 2017).



Critical Theory also draws on the Marxist tradition of questioning power, social inequity, domination and exploitation in wider socio-economic and political systems and structures. Marxism is based on a political and class struggle for a just society and rejection of an ideology that insists that capitalist economic relations are justified. Marx (1818-1883) recognised that economic exploitation was not the only driver behind capitalism, and that the system was reinforced by the pervasive power of ruling class ideology, beliefs and values which led to the reproduction of unequal class relations (Heywood, 1994: 100). This led to Engels' concern that 'false consciousness' would keep the working class from recognising and rejecting their oppression (Heywood, 1994: 85). Following in Marx's critical footsteps, Hungarian György Lukács and Italian Antonio Gramsci developed theories that explored the cultural and ideological sides of power and domination. Both Lukács and Gramsci focused their critique on the social forces that prevent people from seeing and understanding the forms of power and domination that exist in society and affect their lives (ibid.: 100-101).

#### **4.4 The Frankfurt School of Critical Theory**

Critical Theory (CT) in the more 'official'/'institutional' sense was born with the founding of the *Frankfurt Institute* in 1923. Early theorists refined the Marxist project and developed a particular brand of culturally focused neo-Marxist theory that proved seminal for the fields of sociology, cultural studies, and media studies (Cole, 2017: 1). In *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Horkheimer and Adorno argued that Enlightenment Thought had failed to emancipate humanity since technology and science were being used to dominate both nature and humanity. Rather than imagine the world as it might be and take a critical perspective on the status quo, they argue that positivists emphasised the 'quantitative' as the only thing that counts. Knowledge and reason were being used to dominate and manipulate culture and institutional practice, to reproduce reality but not to change it. This subsumes the person who is reaching for difference (Roth, 2017: 1). They use the term "triumphant calamity" (1944/2002: 2, quoted in Roth, 2017: 1), to refer to the triumph of technology, industrial progress and the rise of Nazism. They ask why the masses are attracted to Fascism and Nazism and why the working classes do not rebel against the owners of capital and the persistence of their domination. In other words, "why do we give power to the things that turn us into less free and less capable human beings?" (ibid., 2017). Similar questions are being asked today regarding the growth and election of far-right candidates in Europe and in the

United States (Joffe, 2017, Sheehy, 2017). Today we might look to the ‘triumphant calamity’ of Neoliberalism, global environmental degradation, weapons of mass destruction and powerful global corporations. Finally, they critique the distribution of cultural products such as music, film and art as “mass culture” which results in “a sameness of cultural experience” and an unprecedented mass of passive people becoming intellectually and politically inactive (Horkheimer and Adorno, 2002: 94–130). People allow mass produced ideologies and values to wash over them and infiltrate their consciousness. An important goal of Critical Theory is to enlighten and emancipate human persons from such forces of ideological beliefs or consciousness that are false (Bohman, 2016: 1).

Another influential intellectual associated with the Frankfurt School was Herbert Marcuse. In *The One-Dimensional Man* (2013/1964: 147-173), Marcuse argues that history, thought and society have become ‘one-dimensional’ through its technological rationality and is constantly destroying the possibility for its critique. However, as Kellner (2017: 1) he differed from Adorno (and later Habermas) in two ways. He was committed to social action for change and he did not oppose reason and rationality. Adorno was highly critical of the 1960s student movements, even if many were influenced by his own writings. He feared they might collapse into a kind of left fascism. Marcuse, on the other hand, maintained a theoretical commitment to action for radical social change and took a lead role in student activism (Kellner, *ibid.*). In *Counter-Revolution and Revolt* Marcuse (1972: 131), reminiscent of the ‘informed action’ praxis work of Freire, says, that the:

...rebellion will have become a political force only when it is accompanied and guided by the rebellion of reason” [...] The rebels need to succeed in subjecting their new sensibility to ‘the rigorous discipline of the mind’. [Moreover] The revolution is nothing without its own rationality (*ibid.*: 132).

A second-generation Frankfurt School emerged in the 1960s, particularly with the work of Jürgen Habermas. In his 1968 book *Knowledge and Human Interest* Habermas discusses the idea of emancipation through self-reflection on social context, for instance no longer taking bourgeois rights to be natural or the only ones possible (Habermas, 1972). His 1981 book *The Theory of Communicative Action* introduces the concept of ‘communicative action’, which, broadly defined, is cooperative action between

individuals based upon mutual deliberation and argumentation. He essentially replaces the paradigm of consciousness (ideology) with the paradigm of communication and shifts from struggles with classes to struggles with crises. He combines philosophy and science to steer a middle course between the techno-scientific absolutism of the Enlightenment and the relativism of earlier Critical Theory (Ingram, 1987; Hoffman, 1987, cited in Ewert 1991, 346). While the *Frankfurt School* is critical of the Enlightenment, claiming that it gave rise to new forms of ‘unreason’ and ‘unfreedom’, Habermas revisits the emancipatory aspects of the Enlightenment and attempts to revive it, yet he offers a different idea of rationality. He proposes that communicative reason is embodied in our ordinary language and common ‘lifeworld’. He combines this with the emancipatory focus of the *Frankfurt School* and earlier Marxist theory by embracing the non-techno-scientific context so that actions, especially social and political ones that were neglected by the enlightenment project, are now equally as important (Salleh, 2008: 1).

This then links to Habermas’s fact/value distinction and the idea posited by positivists, that science is value neutral. Scientists should distance themselves from what Habermas calls (Habermas 1988a: 265) the “sewage of emotionality” and, since positivism presupposes itself to be value neutral, it cannot see the possibility that it may in fact be based on a set of values or indeed be “infested with ideology” (ibid.). These values are the values of a particular order, namely a capitalist order, so positivism is in fact ideological and not disinterested. Knowledge is not neutral and those who believe it is, are unable or unwilling to reflect on their own social interest (Thomassen, 2010: 26). The importance for students and communities to be self-reflexive and to be able to take on the difficult task of critically analysing their ‘social interest’ are again core fundamental approaches to pedagogy that underpin this particular thesis.

Kuhn’s (2070/1962) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* also treats the issue of neutrality of scientific knowledge. He argues that values are employed throughout the sciences, and may be employed to evaluate competing theories or paradigms. They do not constitute a “neutral algorithm of theory choice” (ibid.: 200). They do not yield a mechanical decision procedure that will deliver a unique outcome acceptable to all parties. The values may conflict with each other. They may be interpreted in different ways. Scientists who appeal to the same set of values may understand them differently,

and reach conflicting decisions based on the same values. They may even reach the same decision on the basis of differing weightings and interpretations of the values.

In the *Theory of Communicative Action* (discussed in Friesen, 2008: 1), Habermas divides knowledge into three knowledge forms corresponding to human interests that are ‘instrumental’, ‘practical’ and ‘emancipatory’ in nature. *Instrumental knowledge* corresponds to technical human interests that are associated with work, labour, or production and with the natural sciences. *Practical* knowledge refers to interpretive ways of knowing through which every day and social human activities are coordinated and given meaning. *Emancipatory* knowledge is the kind that Critical Theory itself seeks to generate, and it is articulated in terms of power, control and emancipation (Friesen, 2008). By ‘emancipatory’ Habermas means an interest that is so important that we need it in order to survive, to free ourselves from both the distortions of instrumental reason and the distortions of communicative reason.

Habermas’ theory of communicative action also needs to be understood in the context of his discussion on the ‘Public Sphere’ (Habermas, J., 1991) which he describes as a body of “private persons” who assemble to discuss matters of public concerns or common interest. It allows us to maintain the distinctions between the state apparatuses, economic markets and democratic associations, which are essential to democratic theory. He suggests that the Public Sphere demands rational discursive interaction, dialogue and argumentation, as well as accountability. He describes the ‘Public Sphere’ is the set of fora and institutions in which diverse people come together to talk about common concerns. It may include civic associations, editorial pages of newspapers, town meetings, and open access spaces, fora, social media sites etc. on the Internet. The logic of public discourse demands that one gives general reasons and explanations for one’s views – otherwise, they cannot be persuasive. Thus Habermas is in the tradition of those advocating dialogic learning, learning that takes place through dialogue, egalitarian dialogue where people provided arguments based on validity and not just on their position or their power in society. As discussed earlier (Section 2.3) Habermas has been criticised for seeing language as the basis for Critical Theory and

for ignoring the areas of labour and power. In the ‘Public Sphere’ there is of course also always the danger of sophistry or, more recently, the danger of ‘post-truths’<sup>20</sup>.

We might also link this to the ‘new social movements’ theory of Habermas (1981b.:33-37). Agger (1991: 125) argues that Habermas (ibid.) manages to retain the Marxist vision of ‘transformational socio-political action’, while at the same time significantly changing attitudes of traditional Marxists and left-wing orthodoxy, with respect to movements deemed irrelevant by traditional Marxists, especially “movements of people of colour, women, anti-colonialists, anti-nuclearists, environmentalists, etc.” (Agger, ibid.). In so doing, according to Agger, Habermas places sociological concerns in a larger historical-materialist framework, “recouping their most radical insights” (Agger: ibid.). Agger argues that Habermas locates points of resistance against systemic domination that give his overall critical social theory a certain practical intent (ibid.).

As discussed earlier (Section 2.3) Habermas has been criticised for seeing language as the basis for Critical Theory and for ignoring the areas of labour and power, the critical understanding of which is important in the pedagogical approach proposed in this thesis. To begin to explore concepts of power, this discussion turns to the French philosopher, historian and activist Michel Foucault (see below) who comes of age a generation later than Horkheimer and Adorno (Thomassen, 2010: 30).

## **4.5 Poststructuralism and Critical Postmodern Theory**

### **4.5.1 Meanings**

Poststructuralism is an intellectual movement that emerged in France in the 1960s and 70s, as a response to earlier structuralist, deterministic, theories of language (e.g. linguistic theories of Saussure or Althusser and psychoanalysis of Lacan). It is associated with a group of French theorists who come to prominence within the humanities and social sciences. These include Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan, Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes (Hurst, 2017: 1). It reflects a move beyond the earlier structuralist ontologies of the social world that studied the underlying

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<sup>20</sup> Dictionary.com defines ‘post-truths’ as: “relating to or existing in an environment in which facts are viewed as irrelevant, or less important than personal beliefs and opinions, and emotional appeals are used to influence public opinion”.

structures in cultural products (such as texts) and used analytical concepts from linguistics, psychology, anthropology, and other fields to interpret those structures. Structuralism emphasised the logical and scientific nature of its results (Gutting, G., 1998: 1). Fox defines *Poststructuralism* as reflecting:

...a move beyond structuralist ontologies of the social world, including Marxism, structuralist anthropology and psychoanalysis, in which core social, cultural or psychological structures are considered to constrain strongly the possibilities of human action. Post-structuralism retains structuralist concerns with power relations, but emphasises the role of knowledge and textual processes in achieving and sustaining relations of power (Fox, 2014: 1).

It can be difficult to clearly distinguish between Poststructuralism and Postmodernism but what they have in common, in a very general sense, is their criticism of positivist definitions and categories (Agger, 1991:111-112). The terms are often used interchangeably and they are largely overlapping sets of practices, although Fox states that Postmodernism might be thought of as the “political wing” of the poststructuralist perspective:

...in the sense that is suspicious of, and seeks to undermine the grand narratives of modernist social organisation and domination including capitalism, patriarchy, colonialism and heteronormativity. It adopts post-structuralist epistemologies and ontologies in preference to structuralist explanations, to expose the contradictions within these grand narratives of control or domination. In so doing, it also suggests means to resist and refuse domination (Fox, 2014: 1).

Like earlier critical theorists of the Frankfurt School, Postmodernism views the world as socially constructed and rejects worldviews that are held together by absolutes. Where it differs from earlier critical theorists, is its scepticism of metanarratives, be they metanarratives about economics, religion, education, art, medicine, freedom, justice, law or even science. Whereas earlier critical theorists may have wanted to find ways of finding solutions within the existing structures, a cornerstone of Postmodernism is its scepticism about metanarratives<sup>21</sup> in the first place and about replacing one metanarrative with another. The postmodern philosopher, Jean-Francois Lyotard, defines Postmodernism as “incredulity toward metanarratives” (1993:1). There is, he says a “crisis in scientific knowledge” and there can be no universal truth or universal reason (ibid.: 1). This is entirely relevant to the proposition of this thesis that social

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<sup>21</sup> Metanarratives are “story lines that give meaning to our collective being... interpretative frameworks that give meaning to our experiences” (Roth, 2017: 1).

justice education is about critically interrogating metanarratives that create those injustices, for instance those which tell us globalisation and free market trade are the solution, despite evidence to the contrary. Instead, we can explore a multiple of everyday narratives to deconstruct metanarratives and understand the lived realities of peoples' lives. We are, according to Postmodernism, so blind to the impact of metanarratives, that we experience them as real, not as narratives. It is as though these metanarratives are given to us and we feel we have little agency to effect change. By using multiple narratives, we can, as the Derrida proposes, see behind this "veil of the language" we use on daily basis. While we have very limited access to seeing beyond our own language, it does not mean we cannot succeed (Reynolds, 2018: 1).

Critical postmodern theory politicises social problems, which speaks to the view in this thesis that education is political. This is reflected in critiques of colonialism, racism, heteronormativity and patriarchy, where dominant social models are rejected and social problems are situated in political, social, economic, cultural and historical contexts. Indeed the Tamara manifesto<sup>22</sup> (Boje, 2001: 3) describes critical Postmodernism as the:

...play of micro political movements and impulses of ecology, feminism, multiculturalism, and spirituality without any unifying demand for theoretical integration or methodological consistency" (ibid.). Its description of critical Postmodernism as the nexus or "the meeting place for Critical Theory, critical pedagogy, postcolonial, and postmodern theory", is a useful one for this thesis which draws on multiple discourses from these different movements and intellectual positions (Boje, 2001: .3).

#### **4.5.2 Self and Other**

Poststructuralism treats the themes of 'Self' and 'Other', as discussed in the introduction above. The relations between Self and Others is about making the other 'inferior' and thus less threatening, be it male/female, coloniser/colonised, able

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<sup>22</sup> Tamara is the Journal of Critical Postmodern Organization Science. The manifesto is an essay, which combines Critical and Postmodern perspectives in the study of Organization Science. It is written by an interdisciplinary group of critical theorists, critical pedagogues, post colonialists, and postmodernists who voice ethical and economic justice questions and take the lead in their universities in the critique of exploitation and hegemony.

bodied/non able bodied, citizen/asylum seeker and so on. The problem is not necessarily that metanarratives such as colonialism are right or wrong, but that we believe them to be true. In doing so we lose sight of the power relations, they produce. Power is a key postmodern concept. We are so accustomed to power, to ideas of ‘winners and losers’, measuring against a ‘norm’, that itself has become ‘normalised’. It is so pervasive we can hardly see it. For instance if there is a global metanarrative about ideas of ‘progress’ which equates ‘progress’ with a growth in GDP, we can, as John Gray points out (2009: 175), see a country as ‘a problem’, or as ‘under-developed’. In the Neoliberal paradigm, individual freedom is expressed in an instrumental manner, where each is using the other in a commodified society of buying and selling. This is discussed in the educational context of Education by O’Brien (2016:1) who argues that “free-market language, ideas and goods are [...] increasingly shaping our publicly funded education institutions”. A “new market morality” has been naturalised. We need critical voices who can “reimagine another kind of education – one that promotes social, democratic, cultural and civic values” but first we need to reimagining an “other” (non-commodified) kind of freedom. Post modernism is about challenging these kinds of metanarratives, which are so pervasive that we often unable to see them. Too often, as O’Brien (ibid.) says, “practice is overlooked by capricious outside interests. It’s time once more to look *inside* education”.

#### **4.6 Michel Foucault: Power, Discipline and Knowledge**

Michel Foucault’s work on power focuses on how system building happens in politics by the use of power. His work is particularly relevant to this research given his interest in marginalised groups such as those living in institutions like prisons or what used to be called ‘mental asylums’ or ‘mental hospitals’. Participants in this research, especially those in residential care (people with, what society calls, ‘disabilities’) and Direct Provision (for people seeking asylum in Ireland) are a present day manifestation of how power, discipline and even ‘surveillance’ is exercised in society. Participants’ stories show the impact of this ‘disciplinary society’ (1975/1995: 193) which Foucault describes in *Discipline and Punish*. In modern times, Foucault states, our approach is more subtle as discipline becomes a mechanism of power which regulates the thought and behaviour of social actors through subtle means, as opposed to the brute sovereign force exercised by monarchs or lords. Discipline also works by organizing space (e.g. the way a prison or classroom is built), time (e.g. the set times you are expected to be at



work each day), and everyday activities and practices. As in Foucault's description of the 'Panopticon'<sup>23</sup> (ibid.: 201), where prisoners were never sure they were not being watched, and therefore internalised surveillance, we may think we are free agents but we are shaped by constant surveillance – to the point that we become self-surveilling subjects, being disciplined in upholding a norm and not being an 'outlier'. We just do not realise it. Foucault proposes, therefore, the postmodern perspective that power is "dispersed, indeterminate, heteromorphous, subjectless and productive, constituting individuals' bodies and identities" (Best and Kellner, 1991: 48).

Working with students and communities to unravel these complex uses of power in society, is part of the work of this research. As in Foucault's book *Madness and Civilisation* (1988) where he shows how madness has had different meanings in society over time, our work as development educationalists is to unravel the ways in which cultural and intellectual forces operate within our own society and how they subtly control the organisation of society. As with Foucault's ideas on 'madness', how we treat people who are carers or are in care, refugees, disadvantaged communities or people with disabilities, is not a natural, unchanging thing, but rather depends on the society in which it exists and on the various cultural, intellectual and economic structures which determine how different groups are known and experienced within a given society (Foucault, 1988: 123). In this way, society *constructs* its experience of madness, or 'disability' or 'prisoner' or 'asylum-seekers' or 'carer' or 'student'.

Foucault also emphasises the inextricable link between power and knowledge. Institutions such as the asylum, hospital, or prison become laboratories for observation of individuals, spaces of experimentation with correctional techniques and acquisition of knowledge for social control. Power and knowledge cannot exist without one another. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault charts the reorganization of power to punish, and the development of various bodies of knowledge (the human sciences) that reinforce and interact with that power. The modern power to punish is based on the supervision and organization of corporeal bodies in time and space, according to strict technical methods. The modern knowledge that Foucault thus describes is the knowledge that relates to human nature and behaviour, as measured against a 'norm'.

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<sup>23</sup> A 'Panopticon' is a type of institutional building and a system of control designed by the English philosopher and social theorist Jeremy Bentham in the late 18th century.

The power and techniques of punishment depend on the types of knowledge that create and classify individuals, and those knowledge forms derive their authority from certain relationships of power and domination (Best and Kellner, 1991: 48).

Best and Kellner (ibid.: 55) point out that Foucault's position on power as 'omnipresent' is often misinterpreted as 'omnipotent', although, according to O'Brien (2012: 550) this is true more of Foucault's earlier work than the later Foucault. Best and Kellner (ibid.) argue that Foucault's position was that while power is everywhere, there is also resistance to power. Rather than portraying people as helpless and passive victims of power Foucault, in fact, talks about the vulnerability of power. Resistance is never exterior to power, one is always inside power and there is a plurality of resistances, which exist in the field of power relations:

...we can never be ensnared by power: we can always modify its grip in determinate conditions and according to a precise strategy (Foucault 1988d: 123).

O'Brien (2012: 539-562) sets Foucault's 'power-knowledge' (1977) concept within the context of third level education in Ireland. He discusses (ibid.: 505) how corporate culture is regulated within universities, how managerialism, "through multi-layered, overlapping, imitative disciplinary technologies, becomes embodied and eventually harmonises a dominant corporate culture in universities". Corporate culture may appear at times as having unintended consequences. For Foucault powerful social forces 'behind'/'aligned to' particular knowledge claims ultimately shape thought and control behavioural outcomes. In the Irish university context, O'Brien argues (ibid.) the pursuit of power is "implicit in authoritative knowledge claims" even if they are "oft presented as disinterested viewpoints and/or as mere 'commonsense'". He argues that a critical conceptual lens is required in order to "explicate the power effects of corporate culture". This research study is in part about finding spaces for a different kind of culture, one that serves society and social justice, one that takes risks and develops "critical imagination" (O'Brien, ibid.: 557) and one which challenges who we 'do' education 'with', where that education takes place and how we reimagine knowledge, values and skills.

In *The History of Sexuality* (Foucault, 1978: 101-102) Foucault argues that while the discourses of 'perversity' multiply the mechanisms of social control, they also produce a reverse discourse where "homosexuals appropriated them in order to demand their

legitimacy as a group” (e.g. Queer culture, Queer festivals). This offers hope, since for Foucault, power comes from below and discourses can be an effect of power. Discourse, therefore, transmits and produces power, but it also undermines and exposes it. It is this poststructuralist view - power from below – that presents as a force for understanding how we participate in our own oppression and that informs the hopeful work of this study. Students, communities and educators are agents and not merely victims of power and this research is about how we might understand and imagine alternatives to oppressive forms of power.

## **4.7 Bourdieu and Gramsci: Cultural Reproduction and Hegemony**

Most critical educationalists question the broader societal power structures within which education systems function. The work of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (e.g. 1970, 1974, 1976, 1983, 1984, 1986, 1997, 1998) has had an important influence on these discourses, particularly in relation to the mechanisms of domination and cultural reproduction of social hierarchies (Asimaki and Koustourakis, 2014: 121). Bourdieu developed a theory of social reproduction using concepts like ‘habitus’, ‘field’ and ‘cultural capital’ to explain the ways in which relationships of social inequality are reproduced. Cultural capital represents significant symbolic resources such as education, knowledge, skills or family background. It refers to the deeply ingrained habits, skills, and dispositions that we possess due to our life experiences, such as those described in my own life as outlined in Chapter 2. It can exist in three forms, in the embodied state, for instance one’s accent or dialect; in the objectified state, such as books, instruments or cars; and in the institutionalised state, such as qualifications or titles that symbolize cultural competence and authority (Bourdieu, 1986: 243). Since certain forms of cultural capital are valued over others, and can help or hinder one’s social mobility (just as much as income or wealth), cultural capital is a major source of social inequality (ibid.). Knowledge and possession of highly valued culture, for instance a university degree, are unequally distributed in a society which is socially stratified. Educational institutions fulfil an important social function by rewarding the cultural capital associated with dominant class backgrounds and, as a result, preserving social hierarchies and power relations across time and over generations (Bourdieu 1974: 39). ‘Habitus’ then is a form of ‘embodied’, internalised inheritance of this culture,

which is “an integral part of the person” and reflects people’s location in a variety of ‘fields’ such as social class and level/status of education. For dominant class students, the types of cultural capital that are valued by educational institutions come more or less as ‘second nature’, leading to cumulative advantage and greater educational success. What is important about habitus is that it is so ingrained that people often mistake it as natural instead of culturally developed, thus finding a convenient and comfortable justification for social inequality. In essence, some people can be considered naturally disposed to or ‘entitled’ to the finer things in life, while others are not (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977: 204-205). This reproduction of social inequalities is beautifully explained in the poem *Le Capitaine Johnathan* by Desnos at the beginning of Bourdieu’s (1970/2000) book that tells of generations of pelicans laying white eggs and reproducing pelicans which are the same as those that came before. Unless one does something differently, “Si l’on ne fait pas d’omelette avant”, this reproduction of the same could “last a very long time”. To break the specific effect of symbolic relations in the reproduction of power relations, we have to do things differently and this includes challenging the status quo of education systems and institutions in how it includes and excludes certain social groups as it reproduces structures of power relationships within its field (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977: 221-222).

Ideas of cultural dominance can be linked too to Gramsci’s concept of hegemony. Writing in his prison notebooks, Gramsci (1971/1999: 448) describes cultural hegemony as the permeation throughout society of an entire system of values, attitudes, beliefs and morality that has the effect of supporting the status quo in power relations. This prevailing consciousness is internalised by the population and becomes part of what is generally called ‘common sense’ so that the philosophy, culture and morality of the ruling elite come to appear as the so-called ‘natural order of things’ (Boggs, 1976: 39). Organic intellectuals, as opposed to traditional intellectuals, resist hegemony and help nurture with their fellow citizens a sense of historical consciousness of themselves and society (Gramsci, 1971/1999: 132). The role of the critical pedagogue is in part a reflection of Gramsci’s characterisation of the organic intellectual.

## **4.8 Conclusion**

This chapter has reviewed some of the key foundational literature of the academic tradition that is Critical Theory. It has set out some of the key ideas and approaches that, together, constitute the central elements of critical theory. It has illustrated the scope and importance of critical theory, its significance and enduring relevance over time. This is important because it sets the research within an over-arching theoretical position which guides and contextualises both the theoretical and the practical aspects of this study. The chapter has shown how there have been many different interpretations and theorists who have contributed to this rich dialogue. One definition that perhaps best defines CT as it applies to this thesis is that of Horkheimer (1982: 244): “A theory is critical to the extent that it seeks human emancipation, to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them”.

CT has influenced many disciplines, including Education. From here the literature review moves in Chapter Five to the tradition of Critical Pedagogy (CP) which emerged from Critical Theory. It explores the relationship between critical theory and pedagogy, curriculum and educational policy. More specifically it applies a Development Education (DE) lens to CP which more specifically informs the theoretical and practical focus of this study.

## CHAPTER 5: LITERATURE REVIEW PART 2 -CRITICAL PEDAGOGY MEETS DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

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This chapter explores how critical pedagogy (CP) as a philosophy of education and social movement developed within the Critical Theory (CT) tradition. It explains how a CP theoretical framework underpins Development Education (DE) and it reviews the literature within the fields of CP and DE. It supports Kellner's (2003: 1-2) argument that a democratic and multicultural reconstruction of education needs to build on and synthesize perspectives of classical philosophy of education (see section 4.3 above), Deweyan radical pragmatism<sup>24</sup>, Freirean critical pedagogy, Poststructuralism, and various critical theories of gender, race, class, and society while criticising obsolete idealist, elitist and antidemocratic aspects of traditional concepts of education.

### 5.1 Critical Pedagogy – Key Concepts

#### 1.1.1 A Pedagogy of the Oppressed

Brazilian educationalist, Paulo Freire is commonly regarded as the inaugural philosopher of critical pedagogy (McLaren, 2004: 1). Writing from the 1960s onwards and influenced by South American Liberation theology, Freire presented a theory of education in the context of revolutionary struggle. His seminal work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968) discusses the struggle between the 'oppressed' and the 'oppressor' (Freire and Macedo, 2001a:41). He argues that the oppressed, the underclasses, have not equally shared or received the benefits of education; they should not expect it as a 'gift' from the ruling classes, but should educate themselves and develop a 'pedagogy of the oppressed'. This is an approach to education that aims to transform oppressive structures by engaging people who have been marginalized and dehumanized and drawing on what they already know (ibid.: 63). Both the 'oppressed' and the 'oppressor' are diminished in their humanity when their relationship is characterized by oppressive dynamics. "The great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed [is] to

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<sup>24</sup> In the Twentieth Century John Dewey, proposed that education is a process by which all individuals can participate in the social consciousness of the human race. As they share in social consciousness, they naturally adjust their own activities resulting in social reform and progress (Dewey, 1897: 77).

liberate themselves and their oppressors as well” (ibid.: 44). The objective of CP is to empower students and help them help themselves. The role of the educator becomes one of a facilitator of learning.

Joe Kincheloe (2008: 7-8) takes up this theme. The purpose of education, he says, is to alleviate oppression and human suffering. A social and educational vision of justice and equality should be the basis of all education. Critical pedagogy is political and its role is to expose the forces that prevent individuals and groups from making the decisions that will affect their lives. The purpose of Education is to promote freedom and intellectual growth. It requires strong, real strategies that will contribute to ongoing movements and counter-hegemonic struggles already active in education today. Likewise Michael Apple (2012b: 195-196) grounds his scholarship in daily struggles for social justice. Schools, he says, cannot be separated from political and economic life. The entire process of education is political in the way it is funded, its goals and objectives, the manner in which the goals are evaluated, the nature of textbooks, who attends and does not attend and who has the power to make decisions.

### **5.1.1 Praxis – Reflection/Critical Consciousness/Action**

Central to Freire’s pedagogy is the concept of ‘praxis’, which he defines as "reflection and action directed at the structures to be transformed” (Freire and Macedo, 2001a: 51). ‘Praxis’ is at the centre of CP and DE and an objective of this research is to explore how it can underpin a modern third level institution. Participating students are encouraged to develop an ability to reflect and think critically. Freire argues that in the traditional ‘banking system’ (ibid.: 72) model of education the teacher deposits information into the heads of students who become more like “receptacles” of content which the students memorise and repeat. This dehumanises the student since Freire’s notion of ‘humanisation’ seeks to transform human beings from objects to subjects who know and act. In his definition of CP Shor (1992: 129) states that:

...students must go beyond myths, clichés, received wisdom, and mere opinions in order to understand the deep meaning, root causes, social context and personal consequences of any action, event, object, process, organization, experience, text, subject matter, policy, mass media, or discourse.

When the oppressed are convinced that they must fight for their liberation it is a result of their own ‘conscientizagao’ (‘critical consciousness’) not a ‘gift’ from revolutionary

leaders (Freire and Macedo, 2001a: 168). As the oppressed acquire this knowledge of reality through common reflection and action, they discover themselves as its permanent re-creators. In this way, the presence of the oppressed in the struggle for their liberation will be what it should be: not pseudo-participation, but committed involvement. The development of this critical political and social consciousness is an essential part of Freire's model. Furthermore, those who work for liberation must not take advantage of the emotional dependence of the oppressed. Using their dependence to create still greater dependence is an oppressor tactic. They must attempt through reflection and action to transform it into independence.

Shor (1992: 129) describes critical consciousness as the process of coming to understand the relationship between our own individual experiences and the social system. He writes that critical consciousness allows students to understand that "society and history are made by contending forces and interests, that human action makes society, and that society is unfinished and can be transformed".

Freire (Freire and Macedo, 2001a: 43) says that in order to understand and transform reality, the teacher and the student must enter into a dialogue. People do not create themselves in silence, but through words, actions and reflection. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through inquiry with the world and between people. It is not enough for people to come together in dialogue in order to gain knowledge of their social reality. They must act together upon their environment in order to critically reflect upon their reality, uncover their oppression and transform it through further action and critical reflection

Drawing on Freire's struggle for social justice and change and on the personal narratives of Australian activists, Ollis (2014: 517), argues that without purposeful reflection activism can become what Freire termed "naïve activism". Theory and philosophical underpinnings alongside tactics and strategies can create pedagogical praxis and instigate personal and social change. She finds however that the urgency of activism and the desire for more immediate social change can also prevent a critical space for the reflection to occur.

CP is political. Degener (2002: 37) cites critical theorists (Edelsky, 1996; Giroux, 1997; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993; Macedo, 1994) who argue that critical education



must guide students toward becoming political. She describes how different theorists have different names for this process—*emancipatory education*, *liberatory education*, *democratic education*, *transformative education*—but the ultimate aim is to move students beyond learning content and toward taking political action. Echoing the Freirean perspective, Degener says critical education should ensure that marginalized students understand the role that systemic factors play in placing them at a disadvantage. To achieve this, educators should teach in opposition to the inequalities that exist in their students’ lives—racial inequalities, gender inequalities, and socioeconomic inequalities. Educators should help their students understand that trying to work within the institutions that keep them marginalized will not be enough; they may need to change the wider conditions that conspire to prevent their academic and socioeconomic success (ibid.).

Mc Laren and Kincheloe (2007: 21) link critical thinking to concepts of power. Students, he says, must be able to analyse competing power interests between groups and individuals within a society. They must be made aware that privileged groups often have an interest in supporting the status quo to protect their advantages. McLaren (2003: 133) argues that “school knowledge is historically and socially rooted and interest bound,” and “is never neutral but... rooted in the notion of power relations”. Teachers, themselves, have political notions, they bring into the classroom (Kincheloe, 2008: 74). Students must be equipped with the tools necessary to understand that these institutional forces bias their education. A democracy is an institution in which the participants exercise direct or representative control. Therefore, democratic education must be modelled in such a way that students are participants in the process rather than separated from it (Mayo and McLaren, 1999: 402).

As discussed in section 2.4, Sorrells presents a practical *Intercultural Praxis model* (Sorrells, 2012: 15-20) which she describes as, a process of critical, reflective thinking, analysing, and acting in the world (ibid.: 15). Her praxis model offers six interrelated points of entry (inquiry, framing, positioning, dialogue, reflection, and action), as a tool to reflect on Intercultural Communication and Social Justice. The “intercultural praxis uses our multifaceted identity positions and shifting access to privilege and power to develop our consciousness, imagine alternatives, and build alliances in our struggles for social responsibility and social justice” (ibid.). If adapted to a wider critical pedagogy

approach it presents an explicit theoretically informed, inquiry-based model for the third level learning experience. 'Positioning' recognises that socially constructed categories of difference, position us in terms of power and acknowledges that our positioning impacts how we make sense of and act in the world. It encourages us to consider who can speak and who is silenced and whose knowledge is privileged. She describes (ibid.: 17) framing as "different perspective-taking options" that we can learn to make available to ourselves. We need to be aware of frames of reference that include and exclude and learn to shift perspectives between macro, meso and macro frames.

Critical pedagogy goes beyond framing and positioning and proposes that students are actively involved in their own education (Anderson & Irvine, 1993; Macedo, 1994; Shor, 1992/ referenced in Degener, 2002: 34). Students who are active participants are engaged with the teacher and the curriculum. They contribute their own ideas and learn to wrestle with ambiguities and challenge assumptions. Active participation also means that they co-create curricula with the teacher to ensure that their needs and interests are given primary importance. The practice of this dialogic, problem-solving and action-orientated approach to education brings about a change too in the relationship between student and teacher. A deep respect should exist between teacher and student (Freire and Macedo, 2005/1970: 72-75). We should think in terms of teacher-student and student teacher, that is, a teacher who learns and a learner who teaches. Freire suggests that cultural circles (ibid.: 120) are a way to generate critical conversations among "teacher-students" and "student-teachers" and can provide the motivation for critical consciousness and political action. Both teachers and students learn from one another as their democratic dialogue provides a means to name and upend social structures of privilege and oppression.

bell Hooks challenges educators to approach education as an art form (hooks, 2009: 4) and an exercise of free speech (ibid.: 2009:16). An engaged pedagogy is a process of building relationships with others based on respect and equality in order to build a democratic society free from oppression. Kohn (1999: 135) describes the teacher as a "facilitator of learning" who stimulates learning "by making problems more complex, involving and arousing" and challenging the students to create their own knowledge, think more critically, "harder and better".

### 5.1.2 'Naming' the World

Speaking their 'Word' is also part of the student's transformative process. The right to name the world is not the right of just a privileged few; it is a right that belongs to everyone – hence the use of storytelling and narrative in this research. People who have been denied the right to speak their 'Word' must first reclaim their right (Freire and Macedo, 2001a: 87 - 88). In the 'banking system' knowledge is given by people who think they are knowledgeable to people they think know nothing. The solution is not to 'integrate' them into the structure of oppression, but to transform that structure so that they can become "beings for themselves" (ibid.: 80). In this study, students and community partners work together, each finding their own 'Word' and naming their 'World', through the use of a variety of multimedia methodologies and working within or alongside communities of interest.

Freire maintains that each time in history and each local area have their own 'generative' themes; key political themes within the community (ibid.: 96). In his literacy work with the rural poor in Brazil, Freire gathered information in order to build up a picture (codify) around their real situations. This was followed by a process of 'decodification' meaning that a particular community or group became more critically aware of their reality, could reflect upon it, build their understanding and take action to change that reality. It is this praxis model of naming, reflecting, critically analysing and taking action that defines 'pedagogy of the oppressed' (ibid.: 105). 'Naming the World' also raises questions about knowledge production. For instance this thesis asks if multi-media pedagogical approaches can give 'knowledge-power' and agency back to people who are socially excluded and to student allies. Kincheloe (2008b: 3) questions knowledge production and control of knowledge, which perpetuates a neo-colonial, oppressive socio-cultural, political economic and educational system. He argues that the lack of attention to knowledge production in pedagogical institutions undermines the value of education and its role as a force of social justice. He cites the example of the Iraqi War when "a range of lies about Iraq's threat to the world and the necessity of immediate military action" (ibid.). This "knowledge problem of our age" (ibid.), he says, must become a central concern of critical pedagogy. Teachers and students must, as knowledge producers instil anti-oppressive educational and social practices, and learn critical literacies which enable seeing the media, society and the world from diverse perspectives from multiple social locations. Likewise Giroux (1997/in Macedo,

1994:121) links knowledge to ‘critical consciousness’, which, he says, is the ability to understand the dominant forms of knowledge in order to be able to critique them. Students acquire this knowledge in order to understand it, critique it, and incorporate it into their ways of knowing so that they can challenge and transform it.

## **5.2 Poststructuralist Theories**

### **Of Gender, Disability, Critical Race Theory and Multiculturalism**

Kellner stresses that it is important to not neglect the importance of gender, race, sexuality and other dimensions of human life, which can provide tools for a Critical Theory of education in the present age (Kellner, 2003: 1-2). Given that this study is intentionally inclusive of voices of people often excluded, it is important to explore discourse as it relates to the specificity of the participant experience.

In relation to care work for instance, Eva Kittay (1999: 522) focuses on the social construction and division of labour in care and how care is a relationship of power. She also discusses the ethics of care (2011: 49-58), the inevitability of human dependency and the need to incorporate such dependency and dependency work into ethical and political theories. In the context of global justice, she says, a just world needs to take the demands of an ethic of care as an important matter for its political life (113-120). O’Riordan et al., (2010: 82-99) explore the dynamics of family caring, as seen through the opinions and experiences of carers located in and near Cork city. Lynch (2009: 54-77) explores affective equality, the aspect of equality concerned with relationships of love, care and solidarity. She examines the nature of love labouring and explores how it can be distinguished from other forms of care work.

Critical disability theory is rooted too in a critique of socially constructed discourses and assumptions, which serve to oppress persons with disabilities and infringe on their human rights. Aldrecht & Levy (1981: 14) argue that “despite the objective reality, what becomes a disability is determined by the social meaning individuals attach to physical and mental impairments”. Devlin & Pothier (2006: 2) argue that critical disability theory is based on the idea that “disability is not fundamentally a question of

medicine or health, nor is it just an issue of sensitivity and compassion; rather, it is a question of politics and power (lessness), power over, and power to”. Mladenov (2016: 3) focuses on the existential-ontological aspects of disability and what it means to be human. The meaning of one’s being, he says, becomes associated with “disability-related practices” such as assessment of one’s disability, personal assistance, activism, discrimination, media-representation, discourse on sexuality, rights. He argues (ibid.: 4) that restrictions of activity amount to undermining of disabled people’s very existence. Nguyen (2018: .xx) suggests that we look at critical disability studies through the lens of Southern theory. Colonialism continues to make “invisible” people with disabilities in the global South. Debates about access to, participation in and outcomes from education are also pertinent here. While there is some progress in terms of access to education for people with physical and sensory disabilities (Banks et al., 2018: 12–13), only a tiny number of programmes welcome people with intellectual disabilities at third level.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) also offers a conceptual base to aspects this research. Gunaratnam (2003: 4) states that ‘race’ is a political and social construct around which there is a system of socio-economic power, exploitation and exclusion. Critical race theory (CRT) offers a radical lens through which to make sense of, deconstruct and challenge racialised inequality (Rollock and Gillborn 2011: 1). In the field of education CRT literature has been influenced by CRT’s foundational legal scholarship, ethnic studies, as well as to the pioneering work of Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995: 47-68) and Solorzano (1998: 121-136), who introduced the study of CRT to higher education. According to Ledesma and Calderón (2015: 206), recent scholarship in the field of CRT as applied to Education (citing Dixson & Rousseau, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 2005; Tate, 2005) suggests that scholars should be more mindful of grounding their work within CRT’s (legal) roots in Ethnic Studies. To ignore this, is to weaken the potency of CRT’s praxis. In this research, most of the minority ethnic group participants had either no legal right or had not had educational opportunity which allowed them access university education in Ireland. CRT can help to expose the ways in which institutional structures, practices and policies perpetuate racial/ethnic educational inequalities. It can help to emphasise the importance of viewing policies within historical and cultural context and it can highlight how race and racism are interwoven into the structures and practices of policies in a university environment. As Allen (2007: 1) says, “we cannot truly assess,

respond, and promote educational praxis when policy discussions and decision making are debated within an ahistorical and a contextual framework”.

CRT is steeped too in radical activism traditions that seek to explore and challenge the prevalence of racial inequality in society. It is based on the understanding that race and racism are the product of social thought and power relations. It endeavours to expose the way in which racial inequality is maintained through the operation of structures and assumptions that appear normal and unremarkable (ibid.). Particularly helpful is Ladson-Billings (2005: 117) discussion on the “uncritical” use of narrative, or storytelling:

I sometimes worry that scholars who are attracted to CRT focus on storytelling to the exclusion of the central ideas such stories purport to illustrate. Thus I clamour [sic] for richer, more detailed stories that place our stories in more robust and powerful contexts (Ledesma and Calderón, 2015).

While it is important to illuminate the specificity of each of the socially constructed identities above, it is important too to focus on how they intersect. Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989: 1241), intersectionality theory provides a framework for conceptualising a person, group of people, or social problem as affected by a number of discriminations and disadvantages. It asserts that people are often disadvantaged by multiple sources of oppression: their race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and other identity markers. It recognises that identity markers (e.g. “female” and “black”) do not exist independently of each other, and that each informs the others, often creating a complex convergence of oppression. Understanding intersectionality is essential to combatting the interwoven prejudices people face in their daily lives and important in the context of research which explores pedagogy from the perspective of experiences of ‘the other’, ‘identity’, equality and social justice.

### **5.3 Critical Pedagogy and Third Level Education**

There is considerable disquiet within the CP literature regarding the impact of globalisation and neoliberalism on education systems. Arowitz (2001: 39) discusses how higher education is moving towards training students to meet the demands of corporate private interests. He calls for greater civic participation and encourages colleges and universities to engage students in critical conversations about social,

economic and political realities that confront systems of power (ibid.: 126). Chomsky (2001: 1) discusses the privatisation of education as a deliberate and systematic transfer of institutions from the public domain, where the public can have some minor role in determining what it is, into the hands of “private tyrannies” which are unaccountable.

The writings of educational theorist and cultural critic, Ira Shor first brought the theory of critical pedagogy to the third level North American classroom. Shor (1982/87: 48) refers to Freire’s understanding of ‘critical consciousness’ and ‘conscientization’ as denoting both product and process of liberatory learning. He contends that critical pedagogy empowers learners to be their own agents of social change and their own creators of a democratic culture. This notion of the university as a “Site for Transformative Education” is taken up by Lynch and Crean (2011: 51–68). They ask how we can link transformative scholarship, with the everyday realities of oppressed peoples’ lives in a university setting. They explore, using examples from their own work, how the university can be a site of resistance. The Equality Studies Centre at UCD is a scholarly space for equality activists, a centre of research and action that stresses not only poverty and inequality but movements towards equality. It challenges structural inequalities and brings together dialogue discourse; critical thinking discourse and the struggle discourse of activists. This work is difficult given that “dominant groups control the university” (ibid.: 51), the “growth of academic capitalism in recent years” (ibid.: 52) and an “increasingly commercialised high education system” (ibid.: 55). Referring to access to education by people from a working-class background and other groups such as ethnic minorities, carers, mature learners and so on, they discuss both structural and cultural exclusion. They suggest practical approaches for ‘resistance’ for instance: developing alliances between the university and social movements or groups working in wider society; recognising dialogue as the basis for developing transformative knowledge and that social change that is liberatory is not top-down; and “reclaiming those who are formally educated in the universities but who are endangered of becoming domesticated by their professionalism” (ibid.: 56). Moving beyond the boundaries of the academy might help to bridge the divide between experiential and academic knowledge, otherwise knowledge is in danger of being transformative in theory but not in practice. They suggest taking “the outside in” and “putting the inside out” and changing the character of both in the process (ibid.). They challenge structural inequalities and bring together dialogue of discourses; critical thinking discourse and the struggle discourse of activists (ibid.).

O'Brien (2017: 1) discusses this resistance in the context of how educational 'freedom' is framed. Critical analysis, he says, allows us to "re-imagine" an 'other' education, one with social, democratic, cultural and civic values at the centre, as opposed to "learning outcomes or performative 'success' as scripted" (ibid.). Referring to Willis's (2000) idea of imaginative socio-symbolic spaces, he suggests that some spaces of resistance can be found where transformative possibilities can be fostered and nurtured. He cites examples such as "the arts, film, cultural studies, sociology, anthropology, development education, critical pedagogy, critical ethnography, narratives and life history work" (ibid.: 6). He refers to the value of Kincheloe's (2001) idea of *bricolage*, a meeting place of different scholarly traditions working together in a 'reflexive' (quoting Butler, 1997) space. Such convergence might help educators to articulate a collective loss of 'freedom' but this can happen only if they can firstly feel and acknowledge a personal slip in 'freedom'. There is hope too, he says, in the fact that there are many sensitive, caring, critically informed educators who *feel* they want to cultivate a new 'sense and sensibility' and imagine an 'other' kind of education, one with a more "authentic soul", who can come together in a common cultural platform and tell their and their students' more ordinary stories. Hopefully this might lead to the formation of a new "integrity of practice" (ibid.: 7).

## **5.4 Development Education (DE) - Theory**

### **5.4.1 The Concept of DE and related educations**

Within the broader CP paradigm this thesis is framed more specifically with a DE lens. The term DE can be difficult to articulate, not least because it is often used interchangeably with terms such as Education for Global Citizenship (EGC), Global Education (GE) (GENE Report, 2015:13; DICE, 2005: 11). The GENE Report (ibid.) recognises that the term DE is widely accepted in Ireland. Section 3.1 above outlines the development of the term DE in Ireland. This section sets out some of the often used definitions of DE in Ireland and to briefly explain how these sit alongside other so-called 'adjectival' educations such as Global Citizenship Education (GCE) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

Definitions of DE in Ireland can be found in the work of statutory agencies such as Irish Aid, NDGOs such as Trócaire, IDEA or 80:20 and in academic discourse such as xxxx. Irish Aid's (2017: 6) current strategic plan defines DE is as follows:



Development education is a lifelong educational process which aims to increase public awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing, interdependent and unequal world in which we live. By challenging stereotypes and encouraging independent thinking, development education helps people to critically explore how global justice issues interlink with their everyday lives. Informed and engaged citizens are best placed to address complex social, economic and environmental issues linked to development. Development education empowers people to analyse, reflect on and challenge at a local and global level, the root causes and consequences of global hunger, poverty, injustice, inequality and climate change; presenting multiple perspectives on global justice issues”.

In addition, Irish Aid is now using the term Global Citizenship Education (GCE) as an umbrella terms to include DE and ESD (Irish Aid, 2017: 9). The GENE report, perhaps more accurate, uses the term ‘Global Education’ as the umbrella term (GENE, 2015: 13).

Global Education is education that opens people’s eyes and minds to the realities of the world, and awakens them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity and human rights for all. GE is understood to encompass Development Education, Human Rights Education, Education for Sustainability, Education for Peace and Conflict Prevention and Intercultural Education; being the global dimensions of Education for Citizenship (GENE, 2015: 13).

In Ireland, DE is also being increasingly situated within an Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) frame. For instance, Irish Aid’s *DE Strategy 2017-2023* (Irish Aid, 2017: 6) links DE to the Sustainable Education Strategy for Ireland (DES, 2014: 3). It is interesting to note the different emphasis in this definition, from earlier definitions such as in the first Irish Aid (then *Development Cooperation Ireland*) strategic plan (DCI, 2003: 11). The current definition places emphasis on “environmental” and “climate justice”, and the word “political (structures)” has been removed from the earlier 2003 definition.

There is some tension in academic discourse in Ireland regarding retention of the term DE. For instance, Hogan and Tormey (DE 2008: 6) argue that ESD and DE, are similar in terms of content, methodology, ideology and commitment to action for positive change and it is essential that practitioners work together to “share educational expertise, to combine forces and to strategically plan for a future that places DE and ESD at the centre of formal, non-formal and informal education”. Regan (2015: 1), whom this thesis supports, argues that DE has a “unique and specific pedigree” (2015:1) which is “rooted primarily in the lived experiences of aid and development workers and

organisations working in Africa, Latin America and Asia. He notes too that “there is another rich strand emanating from those working with marginalised communities in the ‘developed world’” (ibid.: 1). DE, he says, highlights the condition of the world’s excluded, oppressed, poor and hungry and attempts to mobilise international action. DE is specifically political; something we are in danger of losing as DE becomes institutionalised:

The interests of the poorest must be at the forefront of debates about sustainability, climate change, the SDGs, ethical trade and consumption. The place of DE is alongside the poor and the excluded in the world. It is not in academia and libraries, which are increasingly inaccessible to all but a few. DE is about educational activism; it is about stimulating public debate ... we would do well to reconsider some of our roots and histories and not be swept along, by the latest theory or fashion – our roots are strong, specific and political – we lose them at our peril (Regan., 2015:1).

Having reviewed a wide range of DE definitions Colm Regan, of the organisation 80:20 (Daly et al, 2015: 1) describes DE as follows:

(DE) Focuses directly on key development and human rights issues locally and internationally; seeks to stimulate, inform and raise awareness of issues from a justice and/or rights perspective; routinely links local and global issues; explores key dimensions such as individual and public dispositions and values; ideas and understandings, capabilities and skills; Critically engages with the causes and effects of poverty and injustice; encourages public enquiry, discussion, debate and judgement of key issues; encourages, supports and informs action-orientated activities and reflection in support of greater justice; takes significant account of educational theory and practice; Emphasises critical thinking and self-directed action; Seeks to promote experiential learning and participative methodologies; routinely challenges assumptions by engaging with multiple, diverse and contested perspectives.

Overall, according to Dillon (2018: 60) for IDEA, the Irish Development Education Association, there is a working assumption that the term ‘DE’ is used in the Irish context and that it encompasses ESD, human rights education, intercultural education and education for global citizenship (2016c). Bryan (2014: 2-3) recognises that there are concerns within some in the DE sector who prefer to use the term ‘global citizenship education’ (GCE) rather than DE. They question the appropriateness of the term ‘development education’ as an umbrella for a range of so called adjectival educations, such as human rights education, multicultural education, or global education. Bourn (2014: 1) expresses concern about the conceptual confusion that has arisen from the use of different terms to refer to similar themes, issues and pedagogical approaches (Bourn,

2014). Bryan (ibid.: 2) argues that these different educations are “deeply entangled terms that more or less represent one and the same thing” (2014: 2). She suggests that whether we refer to the pedagogical process as DE or GCE is probably of less significance than the underlying vision and political and ideological interests which shape how educational programmes are designed and enacted.

There is some tension in academic discourse in Ireland regarding retention of the term DE as opposed to the term ‘Education for Sustainable Development’ (ESD). For instance, Hogan and Tormey (DE 2008: 6) argue that ESD and DE, are similar in terms of content, methodology, ideology and commitment to action for positive change and it is essential that practitioners work together to “share educational expertise, to combine forces and to strategically plan for a future that places DE and ESD at the centre of formal, non-formal and informal education”. Regan (2015: 1) while admitting that he finds this debate ‘tiring and unproductive’ - and a distraction from the work itself - contends that the term DE is important and accurate. Regan, whom this thesis supports, argues that DE has a “unique and specific pedigree” which is “rooted primarily in the lived experiences of aid and development workers and organisations working in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Abandoning it, he says, would weaken and dilute the DE agenda, particularly from an NGO perspective. He notes too that “there is another rich strand emanating from those working with marginalised communities in the ‘developed world’” (ibid.: 1). DE, he says, highlights the condition of the world’s excluded, oppressed, poor and hungry and attempts to mobilise international action. DE is specifically political; something we are in danger of losing as DE becomes institutionalised:

The interests of the poorest must be at the forefront of debates about sustainability, climate change, the SDGs, ethical trade and consumption. The place of DE is alongside the poor and the excluded in the world. It is not in academia and libraries, which are increasingly inaccessible to all but a few. DE is about educational activism; it is about stimulating public debate ... we would do well to reconsider some of our roots and histories and not be swept along, by the latest theory or fashion – our roots are strong, specific and political – we lose them at our peril (Regan., 2015:1).

Hogan and Tormey (2008) took a pragmatic view. ESD and DE, they said, are similar in terms of content, methodology, ideology and commitment to action for positive

change and it is essential that practitioners work together to ‘share educational expertise, to combine forces and to strategically plan for a future that places DE and ESD at the centre of formal, non-formal and informal education’ (Hogan and Tormey, 2008: 6).

I disagree with Regan that the debate is unproductive and a distraction from the work. The very essence of DE from a Freirean perspective is critical reflection (Freire and Macedo, 2001). Academics and practitioners must be critically aware of what they are seeking to achieve and rather than ‘distract’, a more informed, well researched and robust analysis is not just essential, but in my view is lacking in the general discourse in Ireland. I agree with Regan that it is vital that we remember the ‘roots of our work’. Of course, as Hogan and Tormey (2008: 1) suggested, we must work with others but we must also hold onto our core aspirations, articulate them, strive to achieve them and understand more clearly who our allies are from all traditions and disciplines. However, ultimately I agree with Regan, the term DE in Ireland has a very specific political, action-orientated and social justice pedigree, and I see ‘sustainable development’ as a vital DE theme, alongside other themes such as human rights, gender equality, migration or trade.

Skinner et al outline how recent theory and practice in the field draws on a range of work by academics and thinkers from a variety of contexts around the world, and there is growing evidence of a diverse range of perspectives on development education deriving from a plethora of organisations (e.g. NGOs, government initiatives) anchored in particular national contexts (see Dudková, 2008; Helin, 2009; Ishii, 2003; Knutsson, 2011; Rasaren, 2009; Reagan, 2006). (Skinner et al., 2013).

Drawing on these experiences of theory and practice Skinner et al set out a useful set of principles of development education theory and practice. They suggest that there is an emerging consensus amongst NGOs and academics regarding the main constituents of this body of practice. They summarise this as follows:

**TABLE 2: SKINNER'S PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION THEORY AND PRACTICE**

Developing an understanding of the globalised world	Developing an understanding of links between our own lives and those of people throughout the world, local-global interdependencies and power relations, global and local development and environmental challenges, and issues of identity and diversity in multicultural contexts
This understanding is developed through:	
A values based approach to learning	A learning approach based on values of justice, equality, inclusion, human rights, solidarity, and respect for others and for the environment.
Participatory and transformative learning process	Methodologies are active and learner-centred, participatory and reflective, experiential, and involve multiple perspectives and aim to empower the learner
Developing competencies of critical (self) reflection	A learning process relevant to development in a globalised world develops the skills to evaluate and reflect on the learner's place, role and responsibility in their community and the wider world, to change perspectives and critically scrutinise their own attitudes, stereotypes and points of view, to form their own opinion, to make autonomous and responsible choices, to participate in decision-making processes, and to learn how to learn.
Supporting active engagement	This work implicitly and explicitly addresses and investigates attitudes and behaviours (of ourselves, and of others), particularly those that encourage and discourage responsible and informed action and engagement in a more just and sustainable world
The development of the above mentioned skills, values, attitudes and processes of engagement aims to:	
Active local and global citizenship	Empower people to participate in public affairs, strengthen civil society and foster a living democracy, enhance citizens' active involvement and engagement for social change within their local communities, and promote a sense of global citizenship and of co-responsibility at the global level

*Skinner has adapted this from Rajacic et al., 2010, 118.*

This is useful because it situates the concept of “Local and Global Citizenship” within a Development Education framework. Essentially it frames the citizenship aspects within what has traditionally been termed the “action” part of the development education paradigm. Citizenship is about enhancing citizens' active involvement and engagement for social change. Again Skinner draws on a range of theorists and practitioners from

around the world (Andreotti, 2011; Bourn, 2008; Cronkhite, 2000), including, significantly, a number of thinkers from the Global South, such as Paulo Freire (Brazil), Ajay Kumar (India), and Catherine Odora Hoppers (South Africa).

In Ireland, this thesis argues, we should, as an academic and activist community, continue to use the term DE. However, terminology varies across the world and/or by different academics or activists. Some use the term GE when referring to what in Ireland we might refer to as DE. Others might use GE as a kind of intercultural, global business or international education, which builds ‘skills for living in a globalise world’, without referring at all to issues such as global inequalities, social injustice, structural power imbalances and themes associated with DE. That is not to suggest that intercultural business skills are not important, they are, but they are not DE. The point is that it is important to be clear about how we define our discipline.

What can be confusing is that some will use the term global education, or other terminology, to define exactly what we mean by the term DE. What matters is the meaning given to a term in a particular place, but the meaning matters. What is important to state is that, whichever terminology is used, the theory and practice which informs work in this space is based on traditions which have strong social justice underpinnings. Activist, academic and state stakeholders in DE have fought hard to develop an action-orientated, development-focused, human rights-based agenda which works on global themes and in solidarity with the poor and marginalised of societies around the world, including Ireland.

Ultimately, this thesis agrees with Douglas Bourn (2014a) that DE is a pedagogy for global social justice, although I would include the word ‘action’. Development Education is pedagogy of action for global social justice. Let us not allow this hard-won tradition to be diluted or swayed from its radical roots. Let us take control of our own terminology and definitions and let us not be led by current funding or political agendas, international and regional bodies, or any other players away from our goal.

#### **5.4.2 DE and Purpose**

Definitions such as those above describe the components - skills, knowledge, values - of DE. They describe the pedagogical methodology, for instance DE uses participatory and transformative learning processes. They describe characteristics of DE. For

instance, DE is action-orientated; it focuses on local-global interdependencies and power relations, global and local development and environmental challenges, and issues of identity and diversity in multicultural contexts. They also describe the educational purpose of DE as being to increase public awareness, create informed and engaged citizens, develop an ability to critically analyse, reflect and challenge root causes of global hunger, poverty, injustice, take action for social change, and promote a sense of global citizenship and of co-responsibility at the global level. What is perhaps not as strongly addressed is the question of ‘why’ DE wants to do all of this and what kind of a society, locally or globally, DE is trying to achieve. What the concept of ‘Development’ means is not addressed in the above definitions and the kind of societal change envisaged is vague and aspirational. The definitions talk about addressing the root causes and consequences of global hunger, poverty, injustice, inequality and climate change and complex social, economic and environmental issues linked to development. However, they did not offer clearly defined alternatives to the current models they seek to change. The ‘development’ aspects are defined in aspirational terms e.g. “greater justice, equity and human rights for all” (GENE, 2015: 13) or to “to stimulate, inform and raise awareness of issues from a justice and/or rights perspective” (Daly et al, 2015: 1).

This is why it is important for educators to understand and situate themselves within the discourses of ‘Global Development’. In his chapter “Towards a Theory of Development Education”, Bourne (2015: 71) sets DE within the critical pedagogy educational framework (ibid.: 90-93), but also within a “critiquing development” (ibid.: 75) framework. He says (ibid.) that “the evolution of DE cannot be divorced from an understanding of views about development”. This thesis argues that we cannot talk about the ‘purpose’ of DE without positioning ourselves in relation to theories of global development. The educator is not neutral and does take a position, not just in terms of educational outcomes, but ultimately in terms of outcomes for our communities at local and global levels, human wellbeing and planetary harmony. Bourne says that one of DE’s greatest difficulties has been “its failure to address and critique the assumption of development as just being about economic and social progress [...] any review of theories and practices of DE needs to take account of critiques of, and methodologies for assessing, concepts of development (ibid.)”.

The positionality of this thesis is one which sides with people, countries and a planet in distress. It rejects neoliberalism and it proposes that current global growth models be replaced by Human and Sustainable Development paradigms, Feminist, Human Rights, Diversity and Equality frameworks. As discussed earlier President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins (2019: 1), suggests that this requires a ‘rethinking of the role of the State’ so that the State plays a central role in “ecological-social paradigm” combining ecology, economy, and the ethics of equality, one which recognises the limits of the world’s natural resources and the role that “unrestrained greed” has played in the climate crisis. The next section details some of the more important theories and approaches to ‘Global Development’ which have influenced DE, and attempts to explain why this thesis aligns with Human Development discourses and not growth-led models of “unrestrained greed”.

### **5.4.3 Development Education within ‘Global Development’ Discourse.**

CP and DE share most of the characteristics and approaches to education as discussed above. However, DE also includes a second core discourse, that of ‘Development’ itself. There are multiple (often contested) conceptions of the term ‘Development’, ranging from capitalist, neoliberal ideas to people-centred, feminist, human rights and ecological perspectives and definitions. The perspective of indigenous leader Senator Patrick Dodson of the Yawuru people of Broome in Western Australia, is perhaps a good place to start, since it brings us back to the spirit of why many of us do this work. Dodson (cited in Daly, Regan, Regan, 2018: 6) describes his (Yawuru) community’s way of knowing and understanding:

Mabu ngarrung: a strong community where people matter and are valued.

Mabu buru: a strong place, a good country where use of resources is balanced and sacredness is embedded in the landscape.

Mabu liyan: a healthy spirit, a good state of being for individuals, families and community. Its essence arises from our encounter with the land and people.

Dodson says that this conceptualisation of being in the world came from what the Yawuru people call *Bugarrigarra*, “a time before time, well before Western philosophy, religion and laws existed or travelled to our lands”. It seems almost idealistic to imagine policy-makers, governments and multinationals - who have been exercised for



decades with the idea of ‘Development’ - using this as their guiding definition. There is no mention of ‘profit’, ‘border walls’, ‘progress’, ‘competition’ or even ‘development’. However, as an approach to Development, the planet and its people might be best served, not by going forward in the name of ‘progress’, but by going back to *Bugarrigarra*. Nevertheless, as Bourne ( 2014: 26) says, any review of DE theory and practice needs to take account of critiques of, and methodologies for assessing, development thinking. Therefore, while it would be impossible to chart a full account of development thinking in the space available, it is important to situate DE within discourses about ‘development’.

#### **5.4.3.1 Modernisation, Dependency and ‘World Systems’ Theories of Development**

After World War II there were two dominant theories of development, known as modernisation theory and dependency theory. The term “underdevelopment” for the first time by President Truman (Regan, 2006: 31) in his inaugural address to the newly establish United Nations. He promised that the “benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress would be made available for the improvement and growth of “underdeveloped areas”. The term ‘underdevelopment’ became synonymous with ‘economically backward’ (ibid.). Development was defined in economic terms and policy emphasised investment, industrialisation and increased powers for the IMF and World Bank. The World Bank measured ‘development’ in terms of gross domestic product (GDP) and gross national product (GNP) expressed in per capita terms. As McCann and McCloskey (2009: 3) point out, this does not tell us how national wealth is distributed within a society both among the citizens and to social institutions to maximise societal well-being. This view of ‘development’ as ‘modernisation’ became popular in the 1960s and was particularly influenced by the work of Rostow (1960) (Regan, 2006: 34), whose ‘stages’ approach saw development as a path of progress from ‘tradition to modernity’, with the West’s role being one of assistance through aid and technical assistance. At the core of Modernisation theory are the assumptions that scientific progress, technological development and rationality, mobility, and economic growth are good things and are to be constantly aimed for.

Dependency theory emerged in the 1950s, not as one unified theory of dependency but as a school of thought. Dependency theorists critiqued modernisation theory as seeking

a “westernisation” (McCann and McCloskey 2009:3) of the world rather than development per se as appropriate to different parts of the world. In general terms the theories emphasised unequal power relations between rich and poor economies with resources flowing from a ‘periphery’ of underdeveloped states to a ‘core’ of wealthy states. Development was a perpetuation of such relations for the benefit of the powerful (Daly et al., 2016: 39-41). Relations between dominant and dependent states are dynamic, they tend to not only reinforce but also intensify the unequal patterns. Moreover, dependency is a very deep-seated historical process, rooted in the internationalisation of capitalism (Ferraro, 2008: 58-64). Daly et al., (ibid.: 39), point out that development was now something one agent could “do to another” whereas underdevelopment was “apparently a cause-less state”. This, they argue, obscured historical context which led to development and underdevelopment.

Dependency Theory was popular with Latin American intellectuals and North American Marxists. It progressed in the 1950s under the guidance of the Director of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America, Raul Prebisch, a structuralist economist. As an approach to development structuralists highlighted the structural bias in the global economy against growth and industrialisation in developing countries. They favoured strong public action in the form of national controls on economic flows (investment, trade) and international regulation to change international commodity markets, technology transfer, etc. (Hanlin and Brown, 2013: 35–36).

In June 1964 the Group of 77 (G-77) of seventy-seven developing countries signed the "Joint Declaration of the Seventy-Seven Countries" at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Geneva. This demanded “a fairer ‘New International Economic Order’ (NIEO), a more equal international trade organisation and better terms on the funding of development, through loan grants and an increase in the volume and quality of Official Development Aid (ODA).

While sitting broadly under ‘dependency theory’, a world-systems theory emerged in the late 1970s arguing that both dependency and modernisation theory continue to base their assumptions and results on the nation-state. Wallerstein (1979: 22) argued that one must look at the world system as a whole. Global Corporations, and global capital, transcend national boundaries, and nation states (even wealthy ones) are relatively powerless to control them. In order to understand why countries are rich or poor, we

should be looking at global economic institutions and corporations rather than countries. Three ways of extracting profit from poor countries are unfair trade rules, western corporations negotiating tax deals in the developing world and land grabs.

Skinner et al. (2013: 1) refer to the 'missing links' between DE and Development discourse. However, DE has in a sense been 'growing up' alongside Development discourse post WW2. Development educationalists were influenced by dependency theory as a social paradigm. DE emerged alongside anti-colonialist, anti-imperialist movements which were emerging worldwide after 1945. Revello (2011: 4-5) discusses how 'a critical and solidarity-based Development Education', emerged at the end of the 60's on a different world-stage: anticolonial and national liberation movements, growing international activism, the anti-Vietnam War movement. DE was also influenced by events such as the Cuban Revolution, the Second Vatican Council, the Episcopalian Conference of Medellín (CELAM), dictatorships in Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Argentina and Bolivia and Liberation Theology had also influenced such movements.

German-American economic historian and sociologist Andre Gunder Frank promoted a more radical dependency theory arguing that persistent poverty as a consequence of capitalist exploitation. By the 1970s he was arguing that development itself was being replaced by "only economic or debt crisis management" and the return of "efficiency before equity" in theory and policy (ibid.). Guyanese history and activist, Walter Rodney's book *How Europe Underdeveloped Europe* (1972), challenged the dominant view that under-development was somehow a 'natural' state as though there were no historical processes creating different 'levels' of 'development' and 'underdevelopment'.

Revello (ibid.) discusses how DE was also strongly influenced by Dependency theory in the 1970s,. DE was taking a more critical approach in the South and there was more awareness of historical (post-colonial) responsibilities in the North. At the same time the international political arena was for the first time beginning to address issues such as population growth, poverty, migration, major problems of food/energy supply and environmental destruction reveal the regional and intercontinental 'sense of interdependence' that has big influence on the analysis of development. While the

development model of the richest societies was being challenged in the political arena, educational curricula were opening up to 'world problems'. In Europe DE was taking a more critical approach in the South and more awareness of historical responsibilities in the North. An ecological wave or 'eco-developmental' vision of education was also emerging. DE was also closely associated with terms like 'human rights', 'peace' and 'environment' (ibid.: 5).

#### **5.4.3.2 Neoliberal Approaches to Development**

The 1980s saw the rise of Neoliberalism as an approach to Development. Brown and Hanlin (2013: 34) discuss how apparent failures of government-led modernisation investments, the debt crisis of the 1970s and subsequent fiscal crises in developing countries, led, in the 1980s and 1990s, to Neoliberal views coming to dominate much development thinking and practice. While associated with Reaganism and Thatcherism in the USA and UK, many governments (North and South) and organisations like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, introduced policies which emphasised the importance of free markets (national and international) and the unrestricted activity of buying and selling, as the best means of providing development. Neoliberals distrusted the state and pointed to multiple weaknesses in governments. The role of the State was to uphold the conditions needed for markets to work, such as enforcing the law, upholding contracts and providing a stable currency. The belief was that private individuals and companies would bring the best results for economic efficiency. As the economy would grow the benefits would 'trickle down' eventually to the poorest in society (ibid.).

Development educationalists were deeply critical of Neoliberalism which emerged in the 1980s, in response to failed modernisation policies. Neoliberal policies led to uncontrolled growth in external debt in poor countries, severe structural adjustment programmes and appalling international response to famines such as that in sub-Saharan Africa (Revello, 2011: 5-6). Even senior IMF economists published a paper questioning the benefits of neoliberalism (Ostry, J et al., 2016). Albeit a gentle critique, they do discuss how deregulation was enforced on economies around the world, how national markets to trade and capital were forced open, and how neoliberalism demanded that governments shrink themselves via austerity or privatisation. They

provide statistical evidence for the spread of neoliberal policies since 1980, and they show how this is associated with stunted growth, boom-and-bust cycles and inequality.

#### **5.4.3.1 Basic Needs and Human Development Theories**

The impact of neoliberal policies on the poor put in question the meaning of the word 'development'. Theories of Human and Sustainable Development began to grow in influence, particularly in NGOs in the 1980s and 1990s and such approaches were reflected too in DE discourse (Revello, 2011: 6). Human development theory is a broad school of thought with different origins, such as ecology, sustainable development, feminism and welfare economics.

In 1976 the International Labour Organization's World Employment Conference introduced the 'basic needs' approach which proposed the satisfaction of basic human needs as the overriding objective of national and international development policy (Jolly, 1976, 31-44). The approach became one of the major approaches to the measurement of absolute poverty in developing countries. It attempted to define the absolute minimum resources necessary for long-term physical well-being, usually in terms of consumption goods. The poverty line is then defined as the amount of income required to satisfy those needs. These Basic Needs included the essentials of physical survival such as adequate food, shelter and clothing, as well as certain household equipment and furniture. They also included to access to services, employment and decision- making to provide a real basis for participation (ibid.). Hoadley (1981: 149) argues that the implementation of Basic Needs approaches was slow and uneven. In the late 1970s attention shifted away from basic needs to building the New International Economic Order. Hoadley also reviews and tries to account for this rise and fall, then speculates about fashion cycles in aid and development concepts. Nevertheless, the basic needs approach to development was endorsed by governments and workers' and employers' organizations from all over the world. It influenced the programmes and policies of major multilateral and bilateral development agencies, and was the precursor to the human development approach.

In the 1990s Indian economist Amartya Sen's 'Human Capabilities' (2007/1994: 270-295) perspective focused on what people can do or be that as determinants of their well-

being. Traditional welfare economics focused on the income or goods that people receive (as in the Basic Needs approach) whereas the capabilities approach recognised that poverty involves a wider range of deprivations in health, education and living standards which were not captured by income alone. Sen's work led to introduction of the UN Human Development Index, and subsequently the Multidimensional Poverty Index, both of which aim to measure development in this broader sense (Barder, 2012: 1). Sen later (1999) put forward the theory of that freedoms "constitute not only the means but the ends in development" (ibid.). Thus, according to Sen, development must be judged not just by income but by its impact on peoples' choices, capabilities and freedoms.

Nussbaum's, "Human Capabilities, Female Human Beings," (Nussbaum and Glover, 1995) builds on the capabilities approach, arguing that we can say a great deal about what is needed for a good human life (which she lists), that this account is substantially independent of cultural variations (that is, human beings have the same capabilities for functioning in a wide variety of social and cultural settings). She argues that this list can serve as both a guide and a critical standard for development policy. "The basic claim I wish to make . . . is that the central goal of public planning should be the capabilities of citizens to perform various important functions" (Nussbaum and Glover: 87). This argument has been constructively critiqued by Wolf on a number of grounds, including the argument that Nussbaum's one-humanity-fits-all claim does not capture the historical and cultural contingency and inevitability of gender differentiation (Wolf, 1995: 105-116).

#### **5.4.3.2 Environmental and Feminist Perspectives (1970s and 80s)**

In the 1980s environmental and ecological perspectives - always part of the 'development story' – became more intrinsically central to it and vice versa (Daly et al., 2017: 58). Development educationalists generally welcomed the 'Brundtland Report' ('Our Common Future') and the oft-quoted definition of Sustainable Development as defined in the report:

...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland Section 3.27).

Development educationalists were generally supportive of Brundtland's contention that there is a need for global equality and that it is aware of environmental, economic and social needs (Revello, 2011: 5-6). Finally, and importantly, in 1987 'Our Common Future', or 'The Brundtland Report', first used the term "sustainable development" and defined it as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Environmental and ecological perspectives were always part of the 'development story' but, as Daly et al., point out, in recent decades it has become intrinsically central to it and vice versa. They quote Indian activist Vandana Shiva's (1989) work which states that "as GNP rises, it does not necessarily mean that either wealth or welfare increase proportionally... In actual fact, there is less water, less fertile soil, less genetic wealth as a result of the development process". Shiva also points to the hidden and heavier costs of ecological destruction on women. The "Brundtland Report" submitted by the United Nations in 1986 reveals the fact that the industrial development reached by the richest countries of the world not only has negative repercussions for the development and environmental protection of the South, but also of the entire planet. The tension between pollution and ecological conservation in the discussion of development brings to light an important new dimension of human interdependence which becomes articulated in the concept of 'sustainability'.

Since 2000, much of the debate on development has been dominated by firstly the millennium development goals (MDGs) and currently the sustainable development goals. The MDGs targeted eight key areas – poverty, education, gender equality, child mortality, maternal health, disease, the environment and global partnership. Each goal was supported by 21 specific targets and more than 60 indicators. While these are not theories of development they have drawn on previous understandings and discourse (Daly: 43).

There has been some progress and the world has learnt a lot about development. For instance, following the MDGs the number of people living on less than \$1.25 <sup>25</sup>a day was reduced from 1.9 billion in 1990 to 836 million in 2015, primary school enrolment figures had risen, two-thirds of developing countries have had achieved gender parity in

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<sup>25</sup> Although one can also argue that living on \$1.25 a day is such a low threshold in the first place, that rising above it does not necessarily indicate an 'eradication of poverty'.

primary education, child mortality rate had been reduced by more than half over 25 years – falling from 90 to 43 deaths per 1,000 live births, the global maternal mortality ratio has fallen by nearly half and some 2.6 billion people have gained access to improved drinking water since 1990 (U.N., 2015, p: 3–6). On the other hand, according to the U.N.’s own analysis of the MDGs (ibid.), about 1 billion people still live on less than \$1.25 a day – the World Bank measure on poverty – and more than 800 million people do not have enough food to eat. Women were still fighting hard for their rights, and millions of women still die in childbirth. The U.N. recognises that the “despite many successes, the poorest and most vulnerable people are being left behind” and that progress has been uneven across regions and countries, especially the poorest and those disadvantaged because of their sex, age, disability, ethnicity or geographic location. (U.N., 2015:7).

At the UN Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015, the MDGs were replaced by a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and tackle climate change by 2030. Sustainable development and DE is discussed further in section 5.4.2.4 below.

Feminist perspectives on Development and DE were coming to the fore in the 1970s and 1980s (Struckman 2017: 18-22). These grew in strength after the UN reviewed the results of the First Development Decade of the 1960s and found that the industrialization strategies of the 1960s had worsened the lives of women in poorer countries. 1976 to 1985 was designated the *UN Decade for women*. In 1985, the third *World Conference on Women*, held to review and appraise the achievements of the *UN Decade for Women* adopted the ‘Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women’. In several international meetings that followed, gender aspects of and women’s role in development were recognized. Duffy (2012: 162-163) explains that the effectiveness or otherwise of such strategies is part of the story of DE. The *Gender and Development* (GAD) approach emerged in the 1980s and drew on the lessons learned from the *Women in Development* of the early 70s and the *Women and Development* of the late 70s. GAD focused on the social or gender relations (i.e. division of labour) between men and women in society and emphasised the productive and reproductive roles of women. It goes beyond seeing development as mainly economic well-being, but also the social and mental well-being of the individual (ibid.).



#### **5.4.3.3 DE Links to 'other' movements and educational approaches since 1980s**

Revello (ibid.: 6) points to several other factors which were influencing DE in the 1980s. Firstly, DE practitioners in Europe were taking a peace education and human rights perspective as a result of disarmament negotiations and the decline in several armed conflicts such as those in Afghanistan, Angola Mozambique, the Middle East and Central America. Secondly, growing economic interdependence between producers and consumers across the world brought strong criticism of mass culture and excessive consumption. DE practitioners began to promote humane and fair international trade and an understanding of the dependence between conscious consumption in the North and labour exploitation in the South. Thirdly, an increase in intercontinental migration at the end of the 80s created a new multicultural societies and problems of acceptance, inequality, social inclusion and racism. This brings a focus on 'intercultural education' with a view to promoting exchange and human enrichment.

#### **5.4.3.4 Post-Development Theory**

Another school of thought that emerged in the 1980s and 1990s was that of 'Post Development' (PD) theory. For many critics, development has reached an impasse. PD is fundamentally critical of the very idea of 'development' and promotes alternative ways of thinking and acting beyond this idea. Ziai (2012: 1) says that PD was inspired by Ivan Illich and is usually linked to the works of writers such as Gustavo Esteva (1987), Wolfgang Sachs (1992), Arturo Escobar (1995) and Majid Rahnema (1997). Matthews (2010:1) explains that the critique offered by post development thinkers went beyond other critical engagements with development theory, in that it sought to reject, rather than reform, development. It critiqued the very idea of development. The critique was strongly informed by concerns about Westernisation and by an associated desire to validate, protect, and revive non-Western ways of life.

In *Encountering Development* (1995) Columbian writer Arturo Escobar said: "...development was shown to be a pervasive cultural discourse with profound consequences for the production of social reality in the so-called Third World." (Batterbury, S.P.J and Fernando, JL, 2004: 113). For Escobar, development amounted to little more than the West's convenient "discovery" of poverty in the third world for

the purposes of reasserting its moral and cultural superiority in supposedly post-colonial times (Reid-Henry, 2012: 1). In his later work, Escobar began to look beyond the failures and limitations of state, market and international aid, to a form of social change led by new social movements and progressive non-governmental organizations (ibid.). He is critical of globalisation and interested instead in local culture and knowledge, a critical view against established sciences and the promotion of local grassroots movements. He argues for structural change in order to reach solidarity, reciprocity, and a larger involvement of traditional knowledge (Matthews: ibid.). Reid-Henry (ibid.) shows how Escobar brings us back full circle to the work of Foucault and Said. Influenced by Foucault, Escobar came to the conclusion that development planning was not only a problem to the extent that it failed; it was a problem even when it succeeded, because it so strongly set the terms for how people in poor countries could live. Development was just a modern way of re-enacting Said's Orientalism and was ultimately a way for the west to manage the rest for their own gain, only ever allowing poor people a future that the rich could imagine for them.

Reid-Henry argues that Escobar's thinking is more sophisticated than it has been given credit. It is not "a back-to-the-soil populism" but about creating space – intellectual first and foremost – for "local agency" to assert itself. This means encouraging local communities to address their own problems and criticising any existing economic or political distortions that limit peoples' ability to develop. Escobar has therefore been highly critical of free trade zones, such as the *maquiladoras* in Mexico, or what is happening on a vaster scale in parts of China. Instead, he points to a politics of "degrowth" as a way of addressing some of these distortions. However, Reid-Henry argues, an excessive localism may end up as no less essentialising than an all-out universalism: little more than a romanticism of the poor (ibid.). Ziai (ibid.) agrees. The academic debates which sharply criticise PD (e.g. Kiely 1999, Corbridge 1998, Nanda 1999, Nederveen Pieterse 2000) are also concerned with the romanticisation of local communities and cultural traditions. They claim that PD engages in dichotomies ignoring the positive aspects of modernity, legitimise oppression through cultural relativism and yet again prescribe ways of living to the people in the global south. Yet, Ziai argues, none but the most ardent critics would deny that PD has undoubtedly shown that the concept of 'development' is Eurocentric and legitimises relations of domination between 'developers' (be it the typical white male or other versions) and

those 'to be developed', and that PD paved the way not only for more nuanced critiques of 'development' discourse, but also for alternative conceptions of human societies.

Matthews (ibid.) points out that PD critics have been particularly concerned about postdevelopment theorists' reluctance or inability to move beyond critique in order to clearly outline possible alternatives to development. She does note that some of the recent work of postdevelopment writers has begun to take on a more constructive character. She concludes that post-development theory is relevant not only to those interested in development theory, but also to all those interested in thinking of alternatives to the capitalist, industrialized way of life that has for so long been held up as an ideal toward which all should strive.

#### **5.4.3.5 Current policy framing of Development Education - SDGs**

At the UN Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015, the MDGs were replaced by a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and tackle climate change by 2030. In Ireland, a national Sustainable Development Strategy 'Our Sustainable Future' – the Framework for Sustainable Development in Ireland' (Department of Environment, Community and Local Government - DELG, 2012) was published on 6th June 2012 and was followed by a Sustainable Education Strategy in July 2014 which aimed to provide 'a framework to support the contribution that the education sector is making and will continue to make towards a more sustainable future at a number of levels: individual, community, local, national and international' (DELG, 2014: 3).

A new set of 17 goals, the sustainable development goals (SDGs) were put in place in 2015 to frame their agendas and political policies until 2030. However, as Daly et al. (Daly, Regan and Regan, 2016: 44) argue the SDG agenda seeks to eradicate extreme poverty (US\$1.25 a day) by 2030, but even with the most optimistic growth rates and existing environmental limits, this target is "well-nigh impossible". Supporters of the SDGs praise the wide-level consultations involved at the planning stages, they point to the fact that are put on all states and they welcome the central importance of climate change. In the 'Spotlight on Sustainable Development: Report by the Reflection Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development 2016' Jens Martens sees the 2030 Agenda as offering "the opportunity to challenge the idea that development is a

phenomenon that occurs only in countries of the global South while the North is already ‘developed’”(Martens, 2016, :11).

Critics look to the fact that funding goals are voluntary for states, data collection is problematic and costly and the SDGs promote inequality and growth-led development.

Hickel, anthropologist at the London School of Economics sums this up:

Basically, the SDGs want to reduce inequality by ratcheting the poor up, but while leaving the wealth and power of the global 1 percent intact. They want the best of both worlds. They fail to accept that mass impoverishment is the produce of extreme wealth accumulation and overconsumption by a few, which entails processes of enclosure, extraction, and exploitation along the way. You can’t solve the problem of poverty without challenging the pathologies of accumulation (Hickel, 2015: 1).

Daly et al., do not envisage the “trickle down” economic growth model working over the next 15 years, since it has not worked in the past. “With the current model of capitalism, it would take 100 years to eradicate extreme poverty and at US\$5 a day, it would take 207 years” (Daly et al., 2016: 48).

#### **5.4.1 Global South perspectives on DE**

Bourne (2014: 1) gives an overview of three traditions from the Global South, which he identifies as having a connection to or using the term development education. As examples of the first tradition he cites the work of Freire as discussed earlier. As a more specific example, Khoo and Walsh (2016: 10-34) discuss initiatives by the Zapatistas in Mexico to create alternative educational spaces. The Zapatistas re-envision local development using education as an enabling force to create space for a plurality of human concerns and ways of being. Khoo and Walsh explore the potential of such autonomous educational niches, as well as their limitations from a rights-based perspective. O’Connell (2016: 35-58) points to the case of Ecuador’s Yasuní-ITT as an example of the potential of Freirean pedagogy to construct civil society responses. The Yasuní-ITT Initiative (ITT stands for Ishpingo Tambococha Tiputini) was one of the world’s most innovative global environmental governance mechanisms, which was leaving nearly 900 million barrels of oil underground in an effort of co-responsibility

with the world to combat climate change. The initiative emerged from civil society and was seen as a possible model of ‘post-oil’ development. When it was closed down by President Correa there was widespread opposition from local civil society and calls for a referendum. At the forefront of the resistance was a new generation of activists styling themselves *Yasunidos* (United for Yasuní). The article contends that given the complex balance of forces in many countries, Freirean critical pedagogy is fundamental to the survival of social movements and, consequently, for the generation of new paradigms of development. O’Connell’s study of the *Mi Futuro Yasuní* schools’ programme shows the influence of Freirean education on the emergence of the *Yasunidos* collective. O’Connell contends that this surprising outcome can only be understood by reference to the development education (DE) programme organised by environmental non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

A second tradition, discussed by Bourne (ibid.) has been strongly influenced by Catherine Odora Hoppers from South Africa, who raises the important question of the privileging of certain knowledges at the expense of others. In particular, she emphasises the importance of valuing a variety of knowledges, particularly indigenous knowledge systems and, in doing so, explicitly engaging with the multiplicity of worlds and forms of life (Odora Hoppers, 2008 and 2010). She further argues that the focus of development education should be not on learners’ competency to adapt to the current state of globalization, but the destabilization of the homogenization of diverse forms of knowledge (Skinner et al.: 15).

A third tradition has its origins in India, and brings together notions of human development with concepts of dialogical learning and critical humanism, merging, as Kumar (2008: 41) explains, the influence of Freire and Gandhi. Favouring McKay and Romm’s (1992) “critical humanist” approach to education, rather than a structuralist approach, Kumar says development education must be concerned with:

How learning, knowledge and education can be used to assist individuals and groups to overcome educational disadvantage, combat social exclusion and discrimination, and challenge economic and political inequalities - with a view to securing their own emancipation and promoting progressive social change (Kumar, 2008: 41).

He goes on to suggest that development education is a kind of “emancipatory and dialogical learning based on critical humanist pedagogy” (ibid.). Dialogic education, he suggests, is where learners together pose problems, enquire and seek solutions. It builds on Freire’s notions of teachers and students being co-investigators in an open and ongoing enquiry, combined with Gandhian notions of an education that liberates us from servitude and builds mutual respect and trust. He emphasises that education is not a neutral space and is not separate from the practices and thought processes of society in general. Education systems have themselves been transformed by the present era of globalisation and Neoliberalism, he says (ibid.: 37). It is time, he believes, to bring back the ideas of people like Dewey, Gandhi, Habermas and Freire, to bring back democratic and moral accountability, critical thinking and critical learning spaces in education.

These perspectives are often at variance with the dominant messages in the Global South about education and development, where the focus has been more on access to education than on quality and pedagogy. Bourne notes Liddy’s (2013) discussion that pressure in many countries means that the focus is on skills development rather than themes such as gender, conflict, the environment and other global issues which require an understanding of different perspectives and critical reflection (Bourne, ibid.: 18).

### 5.4.1 Post-colonial theory

An important theoretical perspective in the study of DE is post-colonial theory, which introduces a critical lens for analysing and explaining the effects that colonisation, imperialism or the extension of power into ‘other’ (non-Western countries) parts of the world, have on people and countries. Colonialism is a powerful metanarrative which allows for the belief that Western society is at the height of civilisation and it is the job of the West to civilise the primitive non-Western people.

A comprehensive description of "postcolonial" is provided by Chatterji (2000, 2000: 42 cited in Boje et al., 2001: 3).

Post colonialism -- The diverse field of thinking, resistance, and action, within the Academy and sites of activism in the North and the South, defined through a critical relationship to colonised/neocolonised history, imagination, society, politics, economics, culture, aesthetics, the relations of race, class, gender, through a critique of the impact of European and other Northern cultures on the Global South and other areas of internal colonisation.

She says that post colonialism “relanguages the present” so that those who are “subaltern” are given a voice and are heard.

Tuck and Yang (2012: 1) point out that we need to remember that ‘decolonization’ is not a metaphor. Because the term is now often used to describe many types of activism or social movements related to anti-oppressive education, the term can become a metaphor for educational advocacy that is “critically conscious of racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, and xenophobia” (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Decolonization brings about the repatriation of Indigenous land and life; it is not a metaphor for other things we want to do to improve our societies and schools.

Chapter 2 above touches on Franz Fanon book the *Wretched of the Earth* (1961) in which he provides a psychological analysis of the dehumanizing effects (ibid.: 2) of colonization on individuals and on nations. In his earlier (1952) book *Black Skins, White Masks* he raised the problem of internalising European perspectives and values by colonised elites. He described (1952 / 1986: 210) the contradictions of his own social group, the colonised intellectuals, who under the prevailing power structures had to wear "white masks" in to achieve recognition from the outside and even to respect themselves. He was anticipating later post-colonial writers of the 1980s and 1990s,

such as Edward Said's book *Orientalism* (1978). Said shows how academia in the West has constructed an object of study of the Orient that has very little to do with the East (which is East of course, only in relationship to the West, a binary relationship in which one terms has more value than the other) (Said, 2003/1978: 49). During the research process for this project, working together with people in or from the Global South, who did not have the same opportunities as the mainstream Irish students, brought a very real appreciation and awareness of the privilege attached to being white, Irish, European and from the Global North.

Andreotti's influential article *Soft Versus Critical Education for Global Citizenship* (2006b) sets out soft and critical frameworks in terms of basic assumptions and implications for citizenship education. A 'critical global citizenship education' is a "complex web of cultural and material local/global processes and contexts which needs to be examined and unpacked" (2006b:40). Soft versions of development education include those that fail to acknowledge the role of colonialism in the creation of wealth in the Global North or to problematise the power inequalities inherent in North-South relationships. This ideology produces the discourse of 'development' and policies of structural adjustment and free trade which prompt Third World countries to buy (culturally, ideologically, socially and structurally) from the 'First' a "self-contained version of the West", ignoring both its complicity with and production by the 'imperialist project' (citing Spivak, 1988). Also within this framework, Andreotti argues, poverty is constructed as a lack of resources, services and markets, and of education (as the right subjectivity to participate in the global market), rather than a lack of control over the production of resources (citing Biccum, 2005: 1017) or enforced disempowerment. Humanitarian engagement is promoted as *the* most appropriate response to global inequality. This places the responsibility for poverty upon the poor themselves and justifies the project of development of the 'Other' as a 'civilising mission' (2006b: 44-45). Development Education, on the other hand, is an education process that engages learners with the ideologies, political-economic systems and other structures that create and maintain exploitation, and the ways in which human beings, often through their ordinary actions—are implicated in the suffering of distant others. Critical development education involves disrupting learners' deeply entrenched, often-tacit understanding of how the world works, to produce alternative ways of seeing, hearing and reading the world. Soft education is 'dangerous' as it encourages people to



believe that they can change the world simply by caring enough. DE must address the “the economic and cultural roots of the inequalities in power and wealth/labour distribution in a global complex and uncertain system” (Andreotti, 2006: 41).

In an Irish educational context, Audrey Bryan (2011) applies Andreotti’s ‘critical’ and ‘soft’ conceptual framework to research by drawing on two separate, but related pieces of research which critically explores how development issues are represented in different educative domains. The research study focused on the ways in which international development is represented in the formal and informal curriculum in post-primary schools in Ireland. It finds (2011: 14) that the status of DE within schools is marginal and falls mostly on the shoulders of individual teachers with a personal and passionate commitment to social and global justice. The exam-driven focus of the system is a major obstacle to meaningful inclusion and in-depth exploration of global justice themes in the classroom. The discourse of development within state-sanctioned curriculum materials is not uniform, coherent, or consistent, either within or across texts; exceptions, inconsistencies and contradictions are evident within the same texts. The second research study (Bryan, 2013 : 5–29) draws on a case study of the 'new' development advocacy, i.e. government, philanthropic, and celebrity humanitarian engagement with international development and statutory efforts to deepen understanding of international development among citizens in the global North. It highlights the function played by remembering instances of historical trauma and suffering - and of forgetting or ignoring Ireland's role in the history of imperialism - in shaping and constituting the nation through orthodox development discourses. The paper stresses the need for alternative development discourses that open up – rather than close down – possibilities for a deeper engagement with difficult questions of individual and collective responsibility, and with what it means to 'take action' in response to global problems or to engage with the suffering of others.

In her 2014 UNIDEV Keynote address (July 8<sup>th</sup> 2014), drawing on this research, Bryan concludes that educators have a much greater political and pedagogical responsibility, one that includes, but also goes beyond, the responsibility to raise awareness, or talk about difficult development themes or issues, such as genocide, extreme violence, or global poverty. To be true to its goals and radical roots, Bryan argues, it must throw light on the causes of poverty, inequality and injustice in the global North as well as the

global South. It must focus on global actors, institutions and ideologies which perpetuate injustice. For DE to be a meaningful encounter for learners, it must be engaged with the local and rooted in people's own experiences and situated lives. This means making explicit local-global linkages, whether in terms of highlighting the connection between the global consequences of local everyday choices, actions or behaviours or drawing parallels between local and global experiences and manifestations of oppression or indeed of highlighting the ways in which international political-economic arrangements and issues are intertwined with people's lived realities in different contexts. It also means drawing upon local as well as global illustrations of the extent to which dominant political-economic arrangements have resulted in the extraction of wealth from those who can least afford it, and being more honest about the limitations of the proposed mechanisms and frameworks, such as the Millenium Development Goals, which, in effect, serve what Klees (2008) calls a 'compensatory legitimization' function for states and agencies who are deeply implicated in the perpetuation of global poverty, enabling them to restore some of their legitimacy through playing a 'good cop' role (Bryan, 2014: 10).

#### **5.4.1 Global Citizenship (GC)**

There is a vast literature in the field of GC and the term GC has many overlapping and contested meanings emerging from political, social and legal ideas of 'citizenship' at a national level (Andreotti, 2006; Andreotti & De Souza, 2012; Dower and Williams, 2002; Gaventa, 2006; Gaudelli, 2016; Jefferess, 2008; Noddings, 2005; Shultz, 2007; 2011; Sterri, 2014, Tully, 2014). At its most basic, according to Gaventa and Tandon (2006:6), GC can be defined as challenging "the conventional meaning of citizenship as exclusive membership and participation within a domestic political community". UNESCO describes GC as:

...a sense of belonging to a broader community and common humanity, promoting a 'global gaze' that links the local to the global and the national to the international. It is also a way of understanding, acting and relating oneself to others and the environment in space and in time, based on universal values, through respect for diversity and pluralism. In this context, each individual's life has implications in day-to-day decisions that connect the global with the local, and vice versa (2014:14).

Shultz (2007) outlines three different approaches to global citizenship: the neo-liberal global citizen, whose primary aim is to increase transnational mobility of knowledge

and skills; the radical global citizen, whose goal is to disrupt the structures that hold the dominant global capitalist system in place; and the transformationalist citizen, who engages in social justice work to eradicate poverty, oppression and marginalization. DE aligns itself with the radical and the transformationalist approaches to GC and vice versa. A more detailed typology is provided by Oxley and Morris (2013: 306).

**TABLE 3: TYPOLOGY OF GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP – OXLEY AND MORRIS (2013: 306)**

Conception	Key theorists (contemporary proponents)	Focus, <i>key concepts</i>
<b>Cosmopolitan types</b>		
Political global citizenship	Kant; Rawls (Held; McGrew; Linklater; Carter; Archibugi; Wendt)	A focus on the relationships of the individual to the state and other polities, particularly in the form of <i>cosmopolitan democracy</i>
Moral global citizenship	Stoics; Kant; Sen; Nussbaum (Osler and Starkey; Veugelers; Cabrera)	A focus on the ethical positioning of individuals and groups to each other, most often featuring ideas of <i>human rights</i>
Economic global citizenship	Hayek; Friedman; Smith; Quesnay; Bowen (Carroll and Shabana; Waddock and Smith; Logsdon and Wood)	A focus on the interplay between power, forms of capital, labour, resources and the human condition, often presented as <i>international development</i>
Cultural global citizenship	J. S. Mill; Nietzsche ( <i>übermensch</i> ) (He; Brimm; De Ruyter and Spiecker)	A focus on the symbols that unite and divide members of societies, with particular emphasis on <i>globalisation of arts, media, languages, sciences and technologies</i>
<b>Advocacy types</b>		
Social global citizenship	Habermas (communicative rationality) (Falk; Cogan and Derricott)	A focus on the interconnections between individuals and groups and their advocacy of the ‘people’s’ voice, often referred to as <i>global civil society</i>
Critical global citizenship	Escobar; Said; Gramsci; Marx; critical pedagogy (for example, Freire) (Andreotti; Tully; Shultz)	A focus on the challenges arising from inequalities and oppression, using critique of social norms to advocate action to improve the lives of dispossessed/subaltern populations, particularly through a <i>post-colonial agenda</i>
Environmental global citizenship	Enviro-scientific research (Dobson; Richardson; Jelin)	A focus on advocating changes in the actions of humans in relation to the natural environment, generally called the <i>sustainable development agenda</i>
Spiritual global citizenship	Danesh; religious texts (Noddings; Golmohamad; Lindner)	A focus on the non-scientific and immeasurable aspects of human relations, advocating commitment to axioms relating to <i>caring, loving, spiritual and emotional connections</i>

This is useful in that it helps to situate the relationship between GC and DE in this thesis. This research is aligned most closely with critical global citizenship, especially with the Freirean critical pedagogy traditions and with post-colonialist approaches like that of Andreotti.

This thesis considers GC as a vital component of DE paradigm. Indeed, GC is at the heart of this research which agrees with (Skinner, Blum and Bourn, 2013: 11) positioning of GC as aiming to:

Empower people to participate in public affairs, strengthen civil society and foster a living democracy, enhance citizens' active involvement and engagement for social change within their local communities, and promote a sense of global citizenship and of co-responsibility at the global level.

Mansouri et al., (2017:9) expand on this idea. They maintain that ‘citizenship’, at whatever level, national, international or global, is a reflection of status, feelings and practices that are intrinsically interlinked. Formal, legal status gives people a sense of belonging to a political community within a nation-state. ‘Critical global citizenship’ (CGC) asks people to extend such affinities beyond these boundaries and to critically and ethically consider their relationship with people at local, national and global levels, with people who are different from themselves. CGC also means recognising material inequalities that affect the most vulnerable (i.e. migrants, asylum seekers, those experiencing poverty, etc.) and to realise that cultivating global citizenship orientations are not enacted on an even playing field and requires addressing social injustice. As such, a critical global citizenship approach must be a “performative citizenship”, that is democratic and ethical, aiming at achieving social peace and sustainable justice “but which is also affected by material conditions of inequality that require political solutions and commitment from individuals, states, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society organisations” (ibid.). In other words, as Rai (2017: 25) says, CGC is performed and reconstituted, through action, popular struggles and social movements, at local and global levels, as well as through changes in national and international law.

The aspirations of a global citizenship are articulated in normative theory but even more in the everyday politics of concern—for those in unjust wars across the world, for those living in grinding poverty in a world of plenty and for those who are abused and excluded from their

rights to freedom. And yet, such wider citizenship concerns are limited by not only state bounded discourses of exclusion, but also exclusions in the name of cultural and social cohesion.

How this can translate into the everyday life of the third level classroom and it's surrounding local, national and global contexts, is at the core of this research. In order to understand what CGC could mean in higher education, this thesis set about exploring the impact of active citizenship, along with multimedia, in a deep exploration of the experiences of both students and community – local and international – partners. For this reason, the third part of this thesis considers in more detail the relevant discourse in the field of community linked and multimedia learning.

## **5.5 Development Education (DE) – Practice**

For the purposes of clarity, Table 4 below - adapted from Skinner et al. (2013: 1); IDEA (2015: 9); and WorldWise Schools (2019:1) - shows in schematic form, how DE is generally described. The 'practice' of DE of course includes theoretical analysis, as described above and the use of 'participatory and transformative methodologies' which 'promote action and support active engagement'. Since these are core to this research study, the methodology and 'active engagement' aspects are explored in Chapter 6 below. Chapter 6 includes emphasis on DE 'skills', particularly on skills relating to DE as learning through MML and CLL.

This section discusses the 'knowledge' and 'values' dimensions of DE, with a view to explaining what these mean in everyday practice, particularly in the third level context.

**TABLE 4: PRINCIPLES, COMPONENTS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF DE THEORY AND PRACTICE**

Adapted from Skinner et al. (2013: 1); IDEA (2015: 9) and WorldWise Schools (2019:1)

### Developing an understanding of the globalised world:

Developing an understanding of links between our own lives and those of people throughout the world, local-global interdependencies and power relations, global and local development and environmental challenges, and issues of identity and diversity in multicultural contexts.

### This understanding is developed through:

Critically engaging with **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING**: exploring cultural, environmental, political, economic and social relationships and challenges at local and global levels, power inequalities, including those caused by patterns of production, distribution and consumption.

Developing a **VALUES** based approach to learning based on: values and attitudes which seek to bring about positive change, informed by values of justice, equality, inclusion, diversity, solidarity, resilience, sustainability, democracy, human rights and responsibilities and respect for self, others and the environment. Developing a sense of social responsibility, connectivity and belonging. A commitment to learning, taking action for change and a belief that you can make a difference.

Developing **SKILLS** competencies of critical (self) reflection, critical thinking, critical media analysis, political engagement and critical engagement with links between local and global issues. Developing 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as communication, critical analysis, creativity, connectivity, co-creation and collaboration, with a social justice intent.

Promoting **ACTION** and supporting **active engagement**: This work implicitly and explicitly addresses and investigates attitudes and behaviours (of ourselves, and of others), particularly those that encourage and discourage responsible and informed action and engagement in a more just and sustainable world. DE empowers people to make a positive difference in the world.

### Using Participatory and Transformative Methodologies:

DE is a **PROCESS** of learning which encourages **PARTICIPATORY** and **TRANSFORMATIVE** learning **METHODOLOGIES**: methodologies are active and learner-centred, reflective, experiential and involving seeing the world from multiple perspectives. They aim to empower the learner and change the role of the educator to one of facilitator of learning, entering into a mutually respectful relationship with learners.

### Based on strong theoretical underpinnings:

DE is underpinned by strong **theoretical** positionality: From a 'development' perspective DE is influenced by theoretical positions such as post-colonialism, social justice, engaged citizenship, intersectionality, sustainability, feminism and human rights. From an 'education' perspective DE comes from a Critical Pedagogy position, which aims to transform oppressive power structures, alleviate human suffering, promote student empowerment. CP is not neutral, it is political. It has a social and educational vision of justice and equality based on concepts such as dialogue and Praxis – reflection, critical consciousness and action..

### With the aim of promoting active local and global citizenship and a just world.

Empower people to participate in public affairs, strengthen civil society and foster a living democracy, enhance citizens' active involvement and engagement for social change within their local communities, and promote a sense of global citizenship and of co-responsibility at the global level

#### **5.5.1.1 Knowledge and Understanding**

Twenty five years of experience with DE has led this researcher to understand the complexity within DE discourse of the terms ‘knowledge’ and ‘understanding’. The ‘content’ side of DE in particular, is often contested with emphasis being placed on process rather than knowledge as content. While it is not a popular perspective, and sometimes misunderstood in DE discussions, this thesis is of the view that this is not a competition between process and content. Process is vital in any DE pedagogical experience, but the ‘content’, the themes, concepts and theories of DE do need to be named, understood and engaged with critically. Examples of the kind of themes typically covered in a DE classroom are outlined in table 4 below. Many of these themes were those which were covered in the courses and workshops attended by participants in this research study. DE does ‘take a stand’ on these issues and the DE student or educator needs to have ‘content’, actual information, in order to find their voice and articulate a DE perspective. This is not the same as ‘learning facts and figures for the sake of learning facts and figures’. Indeed it can be a very complex process at personal, classroom, community, national or international levels, to know how best to position oneself in support of development, human rights, equality and diversity when all of these concepts are contested in the first place and when as a one also wants to be inclusive of as many different ‘voices’ as possible. Walking this minefield (Andreotti and de Souza, 2008b: 23) requires critical reflexivity, self-reflection and many other skills such as mediation, negotiation and dialogue. Often there are no easy answers. However, as Bourn (2005 quoted in Andreotti, 2008b: 33) says, “if development education and global learning are to become a power house of ideas, creativity and new thinking on how to create a world with fewer inequalities the importance of dissenting voices needs to be recognised.

**Table 4: Examples of DE Themes**

Collated primarily from 80:20 Development in an Unequal World (Daly, Regan and Regan, 2016, Chapters 1-15)

<p>Core concepts &amp; theories e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Development’</li> <li>• Development Education</li> <li>• Critical pedagogy</li> <li>• Social Justice</li> <li>• Sustainable Development</li> <li>• Global Citizenship Education</li> <li>• Colonialism</li> </ul>	<p>The State of Human Development e.g. –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inequality</li> <li>• Life expectancy</li> <li>• Child mortality</li> <li>• Access to quality education, health, housing, food security</li> <li>• Measuring Development</li> </ul>	<p>Basic Needs, Human Rights and Responsibilities e.g. –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water &amp; Food security</li> <li>• Shelter, sanitation</li> <li>• Civil and political rights</li> <li>• Freedom of speech</li> <li>• Equality based on gender, sexual identity, ethnicity, religion, ability, colour</li> </ul>
<p>Sustainable Development e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment,</li> <li>• Climate Change</li> <li>• Climate Justice</li> <li>• Biodiversity</li> <li>• SDGs</li> <li>• Ethical Production and Consumption.</li> </ul>	<p>Population and Migration e.g. –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forced Migration</li> <li>• Refugee and Asylum Seeker Rights</li> <li>• Rise in anti-immigrant sentiment around world</li> <li>• Globalisation</li> </ul>	<p>Intercultural and Anti-Racism learning e.g. –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intercultural Communications</li> <li>• ‘Race’</li> <li>• Ethnicity</li> <li>• Interdependence</li> </ul>
<p>Financial and Trade Justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unequal financial flows</li> <li>• Illicit trade</li> <li>• Debt repayments</li> <li>• Tax evasion</li> <li>• Brain drain</li> </ul>	<p>Aid e.g. –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Humanitarian and emergency aid</li> <li>• Multilateral</li> <li>• Bilateral aid</li> <li>• NGO aid</li> <li>• Impact of aid</li> </ul>	<p>Politics and Geopolitics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Justice is political</li> <li>• International systems</li> <li>• Multinationals</li> <li>• Globalisation</li> <li>• Conflict, war</li> <li>• Peace, Stability</li> </ul>
<p>Analysis/Action – Local</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>POWER</b></li> <li>• Empowerment</li> <li>• Participation</li> <li>• How change happens</li> <li>• Social movements</li> <li>• Activism</li> </ul>	<p>Analysis/Action – National</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>POWER</b></li> <li>• Empowerment</li> <li>• Participation</li> <li>• How change happens</li> <li>• Social movements</li> <li>• Activism</li> </ul>	<p>Analysis/Action – Global</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>POWER</b></li> <li>• Empowerment</li> <li>• Participation</li> <li>• How change happens</li> <li>• Social movements</li> <li>• Activism</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

Andreotti and de Souza (2008b: 23) recognising that educators are encouraged to ‘bring the world into their classrooms’ by addressing global issues outlined above. However, they point out that research in this field, (referencing Foubert, 1986; Pardíñaz-Solís, 2006; Andreotti, 2006; Biccum, 2005; Development Education Association, 2001; McCollum, 1996), indicates that educational approaches tend to address the agenda for international development in a manner that leaves assumptions unexamined and ignores



how the agenda itself is re-interpreted in other contexts. These different interpretations must be addressed since they can result in the uncritical reinforcement of notions of the supremacy and universality of ‘our’ (Western) ways of seeing and knowing. This can undervalue other knowledge systems and reinforce unequal relations of dialogue and power. This brings us back to some core CP concepts discussed earlier. Freire’s (1970/2000) emphasis for instance on reflection, questioning of knowledge and dominant orthodoxies and empowerment and social change is relevant to this discussion. Giroux’s (2005) discussion on CP needing to create new forms of knowledge and break down disciplinary boundaries also contributes to this debate. Shor’s (1992) questioning of dominant myths and ideas, to go beneath the surface and look at root causes and social context lies at the heart of DE and CP. At the core of these debates, as discussed above (Mc Laren and Kincheloe 2007: 21) students, must be able to analyse competing power interests between groups and individuals within a society. “school knowledge is historically and socially rooted and interest bound,” and “is never neutral but... rooted in the notion of power relations”. As McLaren (2003: 133) argues that teachers, themselves, have political notions, they bring into the classroom (Kincheloe, 2008: 74). Students must be equipped with the tools necessary to understand that these institutional forces bias their education.

Andreotti’s influential projects, ‘Open Space for Dialogue and Enquiry’ (OSDE, 2006) and ‘Through Other Eyes’ (OSDE, 2008), have encouraged an approach to learning that questions assumptions about development, seeing the issues through a range of world viewpoints and recognising the value of dialogue, reflection and critical enquiry (Andreotti and de Souza, 2008). In relation to knowledge construction, they suggest (ibid.: 33-34) that professional learning should focus on the connections between language, knowledge and power and the construction of meaning and representations (i.e. critical literacy). It should develop educators’ awareness of how different social/cultural groups interpret reality in different ways, emphasise the partial nature of these perspectives and prompt a critical examination of the implications of these differences in different contexts. This kind of learning should develop a self-reflexive attitude that would help educators situate their own perspective in social-historical contexts. It should also increase their capacity to relate to ‘difference’ in an ethical way, to include dissenting voices in the learning process and to negotiate imbalances of power relations in the communities where they operate. Ultimately Andreotti and de

Souza encourage a more rigorous and theoretical approach, rooted in social theories and post colonialism so that DE critically engages with knowledge and understanding.

#### **5.5.1.2 Values and Attitudes**

A key observation (see Chapter 8 below) of this research process has been how strong an impact early family values and attitude had on individual participants. They were able to identify values they acquired in early life which now brought them on their DE journeys. The value sets were not all the same, one student was influenced strongly by a culture of care within her family, another by his Christian faith and another by strong feelings within her family about people living in institutional care of all kinds. There was, however, a very strong sense that their values underpinned their reasons for engaging with DE work. As a researcher I was conscious too of my own value system and reflect upon them in Chapter 2 above. It struck me that in practice in the DE classroom we discuss the themes (the thing we want to change) and the skills (we need to make that change), and do not reflect perhaps as much on the ‘values’ component of DE. Therefore this section reflects upon ‘values’ and asks what are some of the key values at the heart of DE, who’s values matter and how are values transmitted or negotiated in the third level classroom.

DE reports and writers (e.g. Skinner et al., 2013: 1, IDEA, 2015: 9, and WorldWise Schools (2019:1) will generally point to DE as a value-based approach to learning and tend to name values such as being engaged citizens and taking action for positive change; being informed by values of justice, equality, inclusion, diversity, solidarity, resilience, sustainability, democracy, human rights and responsibilities and respect for self, others and the environment. Developing a sense of social responsibility, connectivity and belonging and having a commitment to learning, taking action for change and a belief that you can make a difference. Educators may need to emphasise some values more than others in a given educational setting depending on the context. For instance, in this study there was a particular focus on social responsibility, solidarity, dialogue, moral outrage, proactive and participatory community membership. These values are emphasised too by the website WorldWise Schools (2019:1) which a description of some of the core DE values. It highlights the importance of a “disposition to” social responsibility and belonging, without shying away from a critical examination of power relationships, privilege and traditions. Such a disposition to

social responsibility should also entail a commitment to social justice and the sustainable use of the environment, where everyone collectively feels part of “a global enterprise as a result of common purpose, rather than personal self-interest”.

WorldWise Schools (ibid.) emphasises values of human rights and respect for self and others. Their website recognises for instances the difference between empathy and sympathy and the difference between solidarity and charity. It encourages ‘standing with’ people as fellow human beings with whom we can collaborate and not as ‘charity cases’ and resorting to fundraising as the only action to ‘help’. It also emphasises values which promote understanding of interdependence and respect for a diversity of people and cultures, which allows us to live and work in the realities of the world of today – and the future. It discusses values such as an open disposition to learning, making new connections and meanings and a willingness to adopt a critical stance towards information. The website helps too to articulate how one might negotiate ‘facts’ and ‘knowledge’ in an educational context, emphasising values which show:

A willingness to give reasons why one holds a view or acts in a certain way and to expect similar reasons from others, respect for evidence in holding and forming opinions; willingness to be open to the possibility of changing one’s own attitudes and values in the light of the evidence.

Finally, it emphasises the value of a belief that you can make a difference and effect change. It is important to instil a sense of hope in students, and to show how their efforts can and do make a difference. There is no room for apathy and complacency in DE.

Any discussion on values in a DE context, raises the question of ‘whose values’? This question is addressed by Meade Hatley (2018: 2-3) in the context of her PhD discussion on the values which underpin UNESCO’s approach to global citizenship which promotes the idea of ‘Universal Values’ said to apply to all people everywhere on the basis of a common humanity. Meade Hatley adopts the position that values act as motivators of action and that values also enable evaluation of which actions are deemed desirable and worthwhile. Therefore, which values are promoted can motivate action in directions which may serve some agendas over others. She critiques UNESCO’s set of ‘universal values’ which, she argues, furthers the dominance of western powers, and serves the powerful. She argues that UNESCO exhibits a “controlled narrative around

values and have defined the ‘appropriate’ global citizen. She argues that UNESCO’s values are abstract and divorced from social contexts. This denies recognition of alternative values and ways of doing global citizenship more suited to local contexts potentially engendering greater participation as global citizens. Drawing on Fraser’s concept of justice as Participatory Parity, she argues that UNESCO’s misrecognition of these alternatives is unjust and concludes that UNESCO must afford recognition to alternative values and ways of doing global citizenship such that global citizenship education becomes more socially just.

Andreotti and de Souza (2008: 23-36) also addresses this question, referring to the “problem of culturalism” (ibid.: 23). They reiterate the arguments of several postcolonial and indigenous writers on the tendency in Western thought to project its values as universal values. For instance the Canadian indigenous theorist Battiste (2004) defines culturalism as an academic and pedagogical posture inherited from colonialism based on the assumption that mainstream (i.e. ‘Western’, ‘colonial’, ‘Eurocentric’) culture and knowledges are the global and universal norm from which indigenous, local knowledges and cultures deviate. A culturalist perspective, according to Battiste, homogenises both Western and indigenous knowledges and defines indigenous cultures as deficient and lacking. Andreotti and de Souza (ibid.: 36) suggest that

Several chapters in Abdi, Shultz and Pillay (2015: 1) explore what is involved in ‘Decolonising Global Citizenship Education’. For instance, in Chapter 2, Abdi discusses the needed deployment of local cultures, knowledges and cultural practice to counterweigh the colonising nature of current global citizenship education. This is:

“particularly important in the continued contexts of western, affluent researchers choosing to research in locations that are continuously in an anticolonial struggle and efforts to live viable, sustainable lives that should not be categorized or fixed by external actors who cannot fully understand them” (Abdi, Shultz and Pillay, 2015: 5)

This ‘decolonisation’ of global citizenship education, applies to all aspects of DE including knowledge and value systems. Taking this approach is “challenging” (Abdi, Shultz and Pillay, 2015: 1) and it demands “both understanding of the interconnectedness of life on a finite planet while at the same time accepting that

this interconnection cannot be based on a universalism that denies and denigrates difference” (ibid.). Perhaps most importantly Andreotti (Abdi, Shultz and Pillay, 2015: 221-223) leaves us with a number of questions that should illustrate each person’s complicity in a system that perpetuates injustice and the reproduction of harm, and thereby indicate a pedagogical urgency to think educationally about forms of global citizenship education that can help us to imagine otherwise.

## **5.6 Conclusion**

This chapter is essentially the meeting place between CP and DE. It illustrates that CP is at the heart of DE, it inhabits DE as a way of teaching, learning and being in the world and in the classroom. DE offers a window inwards to the self and outwards to local and global perspectives. CP and DE have strong Freirean roots which open doors for learners and educators to theoretical perspectives, knowledge, skills and values which are political, complex and transformative. At the heart is critical reflection, ‘conscientisation’ and caring, active citizenship, where co-creation and individual autonomy are equally nurtured. The next chapter reviews the more specific literature relating to *how* learners and educators can realise Freire’s idea of ‘praxis’ by coming together in dialogue with communities, gaining knowledge of their social reality and taking individual and collaborative action, using multimedia methodologies, to actively engage with social change.

## **CHAPTER 6: LITERATURE REVIEW PART 3 – COMMUNITY AND MULTIMEDIA – LINKED LEARNING**

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### **6.1 Introduction**

This section of the literature review focuses on the two approaches to learning which are at the heart of this study. It begins with a short introduction to Community-Linked Learning (CLL). The terms ‘Community-Based Learning’ (CBL) or sometimes ‘Service Learning’ are more commonly used in the literature. The term CLL is favoured in this thesis because not all the case studies are based *in* a community. Sometimes the community comes to the university and sometimes the research takes place online. This chapter defines CLL and discusses what it means in the context of higher of higher education. Recognising that definitions of DE normally include the concept of ‘action’, this Chapter discusses what is meant by ‘action’ at ‘local’ and ‘global’ levels and what the literature can tell us about the meanings and understandings we place on such ‘actions’. The community partners in this study are located both locally (in Cork) and globally in Lesotho, Northern Iraq and Kolkata, therefore CLL is defined broadly to include both. The Chapter also looks at examples of the use of Multimedia Learning (MML) and at what DE educators can learn about the use of MML with community partners.

### **6.2 Community-Linked Learning (CLL) and DE in Higher Education**

#### **6.2.1 Characteristics of Community-Linked Learning**

McIllrath and McDonnell (2016: 1) use the term ‘Service Learning’. They define it as promoting:

...student attainment of knowledge, values, skills and attitudes associated with civic engagement through a structured academic experience within the community. It aims to bring reciprocal benefits to both the students and the community partners, and the sharing of knowledge across community university boundaries (McIllrath and McDonnell, Claire, 2016: 1).

The emphasis here is on the students *and* the community. The partnership approach is beneficial for both the learners and the community as they exchange knowledge and resources. Bravo's (1992: 2 cited in Newcastle, 2009: 6) definition of university/community engagement aligns with the CP and DE approach since it emphasises 'critical engagement'. Bravo states that the engagement is (1) characterised by joint continuous, planned university/community interaction and governance; (2) its objective is to enrich societal development and feed this back into university practice; (3) that the aim for the university is to form a tranformatory societal coalition based on reflective principles; (4) for society, there is active participation in developing activities and driving change and (5) typical approaches are participatory social change in social/economic/environmental fields. This is well aligned with the purpose of CLL in this research, since it implies the integration of theory and practice, with a critical lens. It places emphasis on participation, reflective action and partnership with the purpose of effecting transformative societal change.

As the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification (Gleeson and Quillinan, 2017) states, the benefit for learners is increased civic, personal and academic capacity with a deeper sense of their role as active and critically engaged citizens both personally and professionally. For the university there is "enriched scholarship, research and creative activity; enhanced curriculum, teaching and learning". For society CLL strengthens democratic values and civic responsibility. For communities, critical societal issues can be addressed with the support and resources of the university.

The range of ways in which CLL can take place is evident in the list of eighty-three examples provided on the Campus Engage<sup>26</sup> website (June 2019). Many projects and faculties are featured but none of these mentions global connections. Newcastle University's (2009: 6) comprehensive literature review presents a typology on modes of university engagement with wider society.

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<sup>26</sup> The Campus Engage National Network is led by the seven Irish Universities and Dublin Institute of Technology. It promotes civic and community engagement as a core function of Higher Education in Ireland.

**TABLE 5: DIFFERENT KINDS OF UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY.**

*Adapted from Table 4 A typology of different kinds of university engagement activity (Newcastle University: 6). Report Characterising modes of university engagement with wider society - A literature review and survey of best practice.*

- Internship, practicum, or field experience: Students are placed in selected service sites where they work individually. They apply their knowledge and skills to complete their hours of service.
- Research: Collaborative research projects; Research projects involving co-creation; Research commissioned by hard-to-reach groups; Research on these groups then fed back.
- Knowledge Sharing: Consultancy for hard-to-reach group as a client; Public funded knowledge exchange projects; Capacity building between hard-to-reach groups; Knowledge sharing through student ‘consultancy’; Promoting public dialogue & media.
- Service: Making university assets & services accessible; Encouraging hard-to-reach groups to use assets Making an intellectual contribution as ‘expert’ Contributing to the civic life of the region
- Teaching: Teaching Appropriate Engagement Practices; Practical education for citizenship; Public lectures and seminar series; CPD for hard-to-reach groups; Adult and lifelong learning

As evidenced by the Campus Engage statistics above, there are increased levels of engagement with CLL at Higher Level Education in Ireland and this is endorsed in the Irish *National Strategy for Higher Education 2030* (2011: 77) of the renewal of the civic mission of higher education. This strategy identifies engagement as one of the three core roles of higher education, alongside teaching and research. UCC’s *Civic Engagement Plan 2017–2022* also reflects a growing interest in community engagement at an institutional level. This strategy does have one reference to “global” dimensions (UCC, 2017: 10); stating that one objective of the university is to:

...deepen our presence in community, emphasising strengths, reciprocity and mutuality with a view to “widening participation, bringing the University to the community, emphasising community education, regional and global development, arts/culture and Irish language; building strong links with civil society and marginalised urban and rural communities”. Furthermore, a recent (November 2018: 3-39) UCC research report on student volunteering at UCC, shows high levels of interest in community engagement amongst UCC students.

It is important for academics wishing to take a CLL approach to pedagogy, to have their work endorsed by the policies of the university. It is also important that there is critical reflection on what these policies mean in practice so that such policies are not merely



lip-service. The table below outlines some characteristic and principles associated with CLL.

**TABLE 6: PRINCIPLES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF CLL**

**CHARACTERISTICS - Source: Campus Engage: (2019: 1)**

- Academic theory is viewed in a real world context and practice is set in a theoretical context;
- Issues vital to social, civic, cultural, economic and political society may be explored;
- Experiential learning techniques and opportunities are promoted;
- Reflection strategies underpin the learning and assessment process.
- It is strongly encouraged that the community experience is linked directly to the student's academic discipline and that learners work on needs or projects identified by the community;
- The aspiration is that mutually beneficial relationships and partnerships develop between the community and those within the higher education institution;
- Community-linked learningshould encourage students to explore issues that are vital to society and community through a mix of methods that could include interviews, surveys and sampling as well as analysis, active participation in the work of the group, readings, discussion and reflection.

### **6.2.2 'Local Action' and 'Global Action' in DE Practice in Higher Education**

Section 3.42 above discusses the wider debate about whether DE learning and 'actions' should focus on transformative agendas or seek traction within existing Neoliberal structures and institutions. This section focuses more specifically on the extent to which DE engages with 'local' (Irish) issues as a means of understanding global issues.

There is a certain separation in the literature, theory and practice of CLL relating to the 'local' and that of engagement with 'global' issues, particularly in third level education (see for instance Daly, Regan, Regan, 2017: 274-303). This thesis seeks to understand how third level institutions might bridge that gap, agreeing with Fialová (2016: 224) who argues that one of the ways in which peoples' apathy and uncertainty about their own ability to change anything can be overcome is through, community initiatives. She gives the example of work carried out with Roma communities. Experience shows, she says, that community development is an excellent tool for 'training civic muscles'. It teaches people to organise, communicate and spend real time together.

As discussed earlier, in this study CLL is situated within the 'active citizenship' component of Skinner et al.'s (2013:1) concept of DE. The development of DE skills,

values, attitudes, knowledge and processes of engagement aims, through active local and global citizenship, to empower people to:

... participate in public affairs, strengthen civil society and foster a living democracy, enhance citizens' active involvement and engagement for social change within their *local communities*, and promote a sense of global citizenship *and of co-responsibility at the global level* (italics have been added).

How that “action” is defined varies significantly, depending largely on the interests, ability, political positioning and resources of learners. This is evident from the wide range of resources which are featured for instance on the website *developmenteducation.ie* website, a ‘one-stop-shop’ for DE resources and case studies in Ireland. It features a myriad of examples of how people take ‘action for change’ on global development and human rights issues, in many different contexts, including at higher level education.

DE case studies, such as those featured in *developmenteducation.ie* and in Daly et al. (2017: 274-303) are generally in the context of common ‘global’ DE themes such as those outlined on p. 125 above. Where there is a ‘local’ aspect, this generally means either (1) what we do locally impacts other people in the world e.g. trade or carbon emissions; (2) we have a responsibility as global citizens to take action in solidarity with our fellow human beings, who are struggling in different ways, both of which are extremely important in the DE context. While it is by no means the ‘full picture’ on DE pedagogy in Ireland, the audit of *Development Education Resources in Ireland 2013-2016* (Daly, Regan, Regan, 2017) does give some indication of the lack of attention to local issues in DE, particularly at third level. For instance the audit (ibid.: 24) shows that there are no DE resources at Higher Education level which refer to ‘local (Irish) issues’. More significantly, the audit (ibid.: 26) finds that the only Journal dealing specifically with DE in Ireland - *Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review* - has “very little reference” to ‘local Irish issues’. This audit is of course a crude way of analysing the position of ‘local issues’ in DE, but it does provide a snapshot of where interests lie for DE educators at third level. This is indicative perhaps of the nature of the Higher Education system which separates disciplines – for instance Community and Youth Work, Development Studies or Sustainable Development - which in fact have much in common.

In the formal education setting, it is difficult to find research on “active involvement and engagement for social change” in any DE module in formal higher education in Ireland. This is in part because there are very few DE modules in the formal education space. The work of the *Ubuntu* Network (2019: 1) does provide some insight. The Network actively promotes that DE be embedded into post-primary Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Ireland. Only one university has a DE elective, and most colleges try to integrate DE into an already very busy PME schedule. The student teachers’ ‘action’ tend to be in their school-placement classrooms. Ubuntu’s 2015-2016 impact report (2016: 68-73) throws light on student teacher practice. Most of the colleges encourage students to integrate DE into their practice and this is later evidenced in their portfolios of learning. Organising a Development Education ‘Week’ or ‘Day’ is also popular and these provide opportunities to link with the wider sector NGOs. Across eight colleges 78.3%, had incorporated DE into their teaching. Some of the themes undertaken by students included ethnic cookery; writings from Chinua Achebe; migration; comparing the experience of the migrant with emigration of the Irish people Famine; fair trade; global ‘needs and wants’; human rights; gender equality; consumerism and children’s rights. A minority of students stated that they would not engage with DE further, citing “curriculum emphasis on examination success” as the main challenge, with one saying “I think you couldn’t do this part of the curriculum in the school the way it is at the moment”. One student feared the reaction of parents, for instance, if she was teaching political songs in her music class.

There are of course many globally-linked courses and projects across all disciplines (IDEA, 2016: 23) in the higher education sector in Ireland. Some have an activist or civic engagement and global justice perspective such as the ‘Nursing in the Developed and Developing Worlds’ module in the NUIG School of Nursing and Midwifery or Dublin Institute of Technology’s Computer Science (International) BSc programme which includes a Global Citizenship Module, enabling computing students to think about their role as global citizens at personal, societal and professional levels. DE has been brought into Business Departments at Higher Education institutions via the *Proudly Made in Africa Business and Development Fellowship*, housed at the UCD School of Business. This supports business lecturers at third level institutions in Ireland to integrate topics such as sustainable business with Africa into their course work, so as “to better inform business students’ perceptions of Africa as a place to do business in

and with, and promote the role of business in poverty reduction on a sustainable basis”. UCC’s Centre for Global Development - CGD (2019: 1) has associated staff from faculties and schools of Education, Environment/Climate/Energy, Food/Hunger, Gender Studies/Human Rights, Health, Politics/Economy, Society and Culture. The mission of the CGD is “to support, enhance and promote UCC's commitment to addressing the challenges of sustainable global development (CGD, 2019: 1).

The connection between ‘local issues’ and DE is more apparent in academic discourse in other countries. For instance, in an Australian context, the JCU (James Cook University, Australia) uses a pedagogical model they term ‘Service Learning and Global Citizenship’ (SLGC) (Bamber & Pike et al.’s 2012: 1). They set out the different approaches to ‘engaged citizenship’ from citizens who ‘do their civic duty’, to the other end of the continuum – more akin to the DE model – whereby a citizen is critically engaged, seeking justice and challenging the status quo. They place the academic “content and positioning of the service learning experience” within the global citizenship framework, but with a clear understanding of where a particular experience or approach to citizenship is situated on the continuum. The model then links academic content with experiential learning, critical reflection and sense making with the provision of ‘service’ to the identified priorities of the community. The meaning making connects to both the ‘local’ and the ‘global’ concept of citizenship. This positionality is vital, in order to distinguish CEGC from other educational agendas:

It is important to be explicit about the theoretical and philosophical framework informing service learning. Tensions exist between educational agendas which promote Neoliberalism and the production of entrepreneurial global citizens and the democratic cosmopolitan, based on principles of social justice and deliberative democracy (JCU 2015/Rizvi, 2009; Camicia & Franklin, 2011).

In terms of planning such an approach in an Irish context McCloskey (2016:110) makes a valuable point. He argues that the ‘action’ component of DE is not adequately incorporated into the planning and delivery of projects, courses and workshops, across the sector, including in Higher Education. It tends to be either a ‘soft, transactional-based’ approach or a theoretical rather than practice-based approach (ibid.). When it *is* factored into planning, it is “often short-term, activity oriented, rather than long-term, systemically oriented” (ibid.). He argues that this, in part at least, is due to failings within the development sector itself as well as the education sectors in which the sectors

operate. Challenges he identifies include: the level of recognition offered by teacher training programmes to DE; the duration and quality of access to the learner which might be just a one-off workshop; the institutional approach to learning; the level of community engagement in the learning experience; the connections made between the local and the global (ibid.). He suggests that if NGOs fail to address the structural causes of global inequality as part of their activities then they cannot expect to engage learners and stakeholders in actions that will reduce poverty. He therefore calls for greater clarity and openness with learners in terms of the kind of change that the sector wants to achieve. Mc Closkey (2016: 126) also attributes the weakness of the “action component” at least in part to the “depoliticisation of the NGO sector which has resulted in transactional and superficial forms of citizen engagement”.

### **6.3 Multimedia Learning and ‘Transformative Storytelling for Social Change’.**

From a pedagogical perspective, this research study sought initially to understand how web-based technologies can empower students and communities in their collaborative social justice journeys and to make local-global links. Over the course of the research, some students were more drawn to the use of creative arts and to radio, which are therefore also included as part of a broad understanding of ‘Multimedia’.

With a vast range of web-based and creative methodologies available for collaborative learning and research, it soon became evident that participants were naturally drawn to narrative and storytelling. This is a reflection of Bruner’s (1987: 132) point that since ancient times, stories, lived and told, have depicted experience and endeavours of human lives in thinking, perceiving, imagining and moral choice taking. Gottschall’s (2013: title) contention that we humans are “storytelling animals” and that we use stories to help us navigate life’s complex social problems came to strongly inform this research (ibid.: 198). In particular, the literature relating to ‘transformative storytelling for social change’ (TSTSC) is helpful in situating this thesis and is the term which perhaps best captures the objectives of this research. The working definition of TSTSC used by the organisation *Transformative Storytelling for Social Change* (T.S.T.S.C., 2019:1) is that it combines:

...a participatory, collaborative methodology with the creative use of technology to generate stories aimed at catalysing action on pressing social issues. They are important, as they contain all these elements, to help us respond to key political, technological and cultural trends in our societies.

From an educational perspective, participants and educator are involved in co-creating content and form. They are learning about the issues of concern to the community, critically reflecting on them and taking action. The artefacts themselves are shaped by the different perspectives and the deep, meaningful, collaborative process results in a powerful story. The story is central; the production is driven by the articulation of the story (as opposed to just the production of beautiful or compelling images). In other words it is narrative-led. They also incorporate different creative forms of communication and expression, including drama, photography, film, drawing, design, creative writing, and music. What matters is that the process, content and purpose are led by and meaningful to the storyteller. They are motivated by a transformational agenda grounded in critical social learning and they emerge from a tradition of action-research that links ‘critical social learning’ to a transformational agenda in terms of social justice. Processes are driven by a desire to see social change or transformation. They are therefore not solely about reflecting an aesthetic sensibility, but also about the embodied articulation of how change can happen. Finally they can form the basis for citizen action and advocacy. TSTSC is about reflecting different social realities and projecting them into spaces where they are not often acknowledged or heard, and about creating opportunities within this process itself for dialogue.

This thesis asks ‘what really happens for communities and for students when they use technology or other creative methods, to generate stories of this kind’? To what extent can Foucault’s (Foucault, 1980: 242) dominant ‘regimes of truth’, for example be challenged and subverted in this process?

### **6.3.1 The Pedagogical Purpose of TSTSC**

There are several pedagogical reasons for using TSTSC in this research. Firstly, as with DE pedagogy in general, there is a political purpose. The participants are seeking to transform their own lives and the lives of others, through a collective collaborative approach to learning. T.S.T.S.C. (ibid.) cites Arundhati Roy (2003: 112): “our strategy should be not only to confront the empire but to mock it...with our art...our

stubbornness, our joy, our brilliance, our sheer relentlessness”. This is a very fitting starting point when considering the purpose of TSTSC. It brings us immediately to the political purpose of storytelling in this research. T.S.T.S.C. recognises the distance that exists in many parts of the world between citizens and their governments. On the one hand, there is increasing apathy, alienation and hostility between the state and its citizens (T.S.T.S.C.: 1). At the same time, there is also a growing acceptance of the importance of citizen participation in shaping policies and forms of governance (ibid.). Citing some of the biggest political upheavals such as the Arab Spring, the Occupy movement, Greek riots over austerity measures, food riots in Mozambique, Haiti and India, demonstrations in Brazil over the World Cup and Olympics, T.S.T.S.C. notes that creative storytelling approaches can provide insight into politics and also converge with emerging forms of activism and expression—allowing people to tell stories that challenge the status quo. Storytelling can give life to political truths (ibid.). Furthermore, first person stories are very powerful, particularly when they offer us a view on the world that we have not encountered previously. Because there are so few authentic indigenous voices in mainstream media, alternative approaches to storytelling, provide us with genuine, non-stereotypical and often unexpected representations of people, gender roles and relationships. In this research study participants also had a political reason for participating and wanted to have their voices heard for different reasons. Each of the participating groups wanted to highlight stories about their lives as carers, refugees or people with disabilities moving out of institutional care. They were actively seeking policy change and wishing to raise awareness amongst professionals, students, policy-makers and politicians.

Secondly, there is a critical and DE pedagogical purpose. Abrahamson (Abrahamson, 1998: 446) discusses how storytelling in higher education enhances students' opportunities to engage in cooperative inquiry. Citing Cooper (1994), he says that a positive impact of storytelling is the ability to build connections with personal experience, thus enhancing the facilitation of inquiry into the educational content of the course itself. Critical reflection of storytelling begins with the stories relating directly to course content, thus permitting a critique and inner-personal dialogue within the student's own values and life experiences. As Abrahamson (1998: 446) says, people use storytelling on a day-to-day basis and educators using story-telling are appealing to their students as ‘homo narrans’, storytelling and story-listening creatures, and tapping quests

for meaning and values in extremely powerful ways. It would be possible too for educators to re-think and restructure their actions (ibid.). Quoting Willis (1992) he says:

... storytelling should be used to challenge instructors to use the power of the story in a focused, strategic manner. By engaging in storytelling in this manner, instructors can encourage students to think critically, understand facts, distinguish valid and invalid generalizations, and focus on principles and actual consequences, both morally and from an existentialist standpoint (Willis, 1992, in Abrahamson, 1998: 446).

Thirdly, storytelling facilitates educational inclusion to all participants of all ages, gender, nationality, legal status, ability or experience. As the research progressed, I was both inspired by the desire of participants to tell their stories and by the ability of all those involved to do so. Barthes's (1977: 79) description of narratives continued to ring true:

... [storytelling] is transnational, transhistorical, transcultural: it is simply there, like life itself.

Finally, pedagogy is set within its historical context and the social, cultural and political context of Ireland at this time made these stories possible. Michel Foucault says that 'Western man has become a confessing animal' (Foucault, 1978: 59). However, there are many socio-economic, political and cultural contexts in an individual or group's ability to "confess" or just "tell a private story". Just twenty years ago in Ireland it would have been unimaginable that some of the participants in this project could have told their story in this way. Many contexts, histories and developments bring about the public telling of very private stories. For example, in Ireland attitudes towards Family Carers has been changing and the Family Carers Association are a strong lobbying organisation, the stigma attached to disability is completely different that it was in the past and asylum-seekers lingering for years in Direct Provision Centres, are so desperate that past fears of speaking out are decreasing. As Goodson (2013: 93) explains our life stories are 'cultural storylines'. Our stories, he says (ibid.: 6) and storylines need to be understood, not just as personal constructions but as expressions of particular historical and cultural contexts.



### **6.3.2 Participants and Protagonists**

There are several layers and players in the storytelling process in this research. There are the individual storytellers, their broader ‘group’ or ‘community of identity’ and the collective narratives they tell. There are also the third level students, the researcher or educator and, importantly, there are audiences and perceived audiences. The organisation T.S.T.S.C (2019: 1), point out that story can be transforming for the storytellers, as well as their audience. Drawing on the work of Wheeler (2014:1) which provides a deeply feminist framing, T.S.T.S.C (2009. 1) reminds us that in this approach the “personal is also political”, and that stories can show us this. Perhaps we should add that the political is also personal’. Personal stories open a personal connection between different people. The audience can respond with empathy because the storytellers openly share their emotions. When these stories concern issues of injustice, exclusion, democracy and human rights, different insights are generated – much more powerfully than when the same questions are presented in the abstract. The audience can feel the different dimensions of the issue ‘through the head and heart’ of another person, and put themselves in their position, at least for a moment. Creative forms of expression too, can help illuminate deeper democratic truths (see Chapters 8 and 9). This can be extremely useful in policy-making processes where decision-makers are far removed from the realities they seek to address, and where the perspectives of ordinary citizens are often ‘drowned out’.

A sense of recognition and empowerment is part of what makes someone a citizen who is able to act on his or her own behalf. Personal storytelling can help to build these capacities. However, the transition to shared narratives requires something else: a way of connecting personal stories to collective issues that are political, in the sense that they address relations of power. When people connect to these political issues through personal stories, they see them in a different way. They do not just see democracy in the abstract; they see ‘my democracy’ – ‘what it means for me, in my life, and in the lives of others who I know.’ This therefore is an ideal pedagogical approach for education which seeks to transform both participants and the society they collectively inhabit. It is a powerful way of ‘being’ with ‘the other’. As the personal and collective story unfolds, there is opportunity for ‘praxis’ in the Freirean sense of reflection, dialogue, and action aimed at transforming structures.

### **6.3.3 Narrative identity**

Narrative identity is an important consideration in the construction of story. As discussed earlier, discourse on ‘identity’ and ‘the other’ form part of the theoretical framing of this thesis. McAdams (2008: 242–243) discusses “narrative identity” as “an individual’s internalised, evolving and integrative story of the self”. Further, narrative identity involves:

... the stories we construct to make sense of our lives about our struggle to reconcile who we imagine we were, are, and might be, in our heads and bodies, with who we were, are and might be in the social contexts of family, community, the workplace, ethnicity, religion, gender, social class, and culture writ large. The self comes to terms with society through narrative identity (ibid.).

Some analysts make a distinction between narrative and story and in the context of this research, doing so is useful. Riessman (2008) notes, that narrative has a ‘robust life’ beyond the individual. As people construct stories of experience, so too do identity groups, communities, nations, governments and organisations construct preferred narratives about themselves (Riessman, 2008: 7). There are individual stories in this research project. They are short, non-fictional, autobiographical stories of people who have experienced social injustice or who want to learn about ‘social injustice’. However, together they also form narratives of identity groups, communities and organisations as well as a larger narrative of “social injustice”. Ricoeur (1993: 111) discusses how a community, through imaginative work, can frame a story of itself which will reflect and sustain its own projects in the world. Stories, poems and other kinds of fiction, he says, go beyond factual descriptions because they get to the essence of action. Through the use of techniques established and appreciated in a community of hearers they can achieve ‘iconic increase’ – a remaking of reality in a richer vein. In their telling and retelling, says Ricoeur (ibid.), stories have the capacity to reflect, unite, and mobilise a community.

### **6.3.4 Storytelling and DE**

Storytelling is particularly suitable for DE in that it can support many of its pedagogical aims such as the emphasis on process, reflection, dialogue, critical thinking and encouraging active citizenship. Mc Drury and Alterio (2003: 2000-2001) focus on the value of reflective storytelling. They cite Reason and Hawkins (1988) who contend that

dialogue is the moment where humans meet to reflect on their reality as they make it and remake it. This, they suggest, links us to the thinking of Shor and Freire (1987: 98-99) as dialogue is the quintessential human act, the social moment when we establish ties and where we have authentic recognition of the other. “When we tell stories and process them, using reflective dialogue, we create the possibility for changes in ourselves and others”. Our capacity to express ourselves through narrative forms not only enable us to reshape, reassess and reconstruct particular events, it allows us to learn from discussing our experiences with individuals who may raise alternative views, suggest imaginative possibilities and ask stimulating and critical questions.

Drury and Alterio (2003: 2000-2001) go on to present a model of reflective learning through storytelling that represents how individuals identify, tell and build on a story through collaborative processes. They explain how storytelling can be mapped to the different stages and depth of learning. Storytelling has five stages: story finding, telling, expanding, processing and reconstructing (ibid.). In their view, where stories are being located, told, expanded, processed and reconstructed, story-tellers go through a progression of change-from noticing, making sense, making meaning, working with meaning, to transformative learning. At the various stages, the story-telling encounters between participants can be predetermined or spontaneous, individualized or for a group or, formal or informal. All the encounters, regardless of any forms, should bring about cathartic release and discourse that, in theory, contribute to various types or levels of reflection and consequently transformation (Yeong / Kember et al., 1999; Mezirow, 1991).

I wanted to explore Riessman and Quinney’s point that in narrative analysis the “how and why events are storied is important, not simply the content” (Riessman and Quinney, 2005: 394). While the content of the stories can be analysed in order to understand social injustice, the storytelling approach also aims to bring students and partners together to form a relationship, to create dialogue and gain knowledge of their social realities. I wanted to explore how this might shape a critical pedagogy approach by encouraging joint action for social change. The purpose was to see if storytelling would help participants to, as Freire proposes (e.g. (Freire and Macedo, 2001), critically reflect upon their reality and so transform it through further action and critical reflection.

## **6.4 Methods and Process of Learning**

The collaborative learning processes and methods used in this research happened in different ways, depending on the needs and interests of the participants, the story they wished to tell, who they wanted to tell it to and why. The method most commonly used in the research was digital storytelling and radio production but one project also focused on the use of the creative arts.

### **6.4.1 Multimedia - Introduction**

The term Multimedia (MM) is ubiquitous in our daily lives and therefore it is important to provide clarity on what is meant by Multimedia Learning (MML) in the context of this thesis. The thesis is taking the liberty of combining the meaning of the term ‘Multimedia’ in its digital sense and in its meaning in the creative arts. MM art includes every form of visual art, other “arts” such as dance and music, and other non-visual elements (Lake Erie Artists, 2019: 1). The term MM is also used to describe artworks made from a range of materials and include an electronic element such as audio or video (Tate, 2019: 1). From a digital perspective, multimedia is the field concerned with the computer-controlled integration of text, graphics, drawings, still and moving images (video), animation, audio, and any other media where every type of information can be represented, stored, transmitted and processed digitally. Perhaps the simplest definition is that MM is “the use of a variety of artistic or communicative media” (dictionary.com).

This section begins with an overview of some current thinking on MM and pedagogy. It then discusses the use of Digital Storytelling (DST) before turning to the Creative Arts and Radio. It discusses the idea of ‘Transmedia Storytelling’ suggesting this is perhaps a possible meeting place of the choice of media, virtual or not, chosen by storytellers when they need to tell a story. Cope and Kalantzis (2015: 375, 2019: 1) argue that technology does not necessarily change education. They give several examples of how we can build conventional relationships with technology that change nothing about traditional didactic pedagogy. For example instead of the lecturer standing at the front of the room and telling student things, we might put that on a video. Instead of doing a test in the classroom, the students might do an online quiz. Nothing is changing with the relationship with knowledge. The 2019 Coursera course

‘e-Learning Ecologies: Innovative Approaches to Teaching and Learning for the Digital Age’, proposes the word ‘affordances’ to describe what's possible with new technologies that is different. The course identifies seven ‘affordances’ which could make a difference in pedagogy. We did not do them in the past because they were difficult to do. The seven ‘affordances’ are described below:

**TABLE 7: COPE AND KALANTZIS’ SEVEN AFFORDANCES**

<p><b>1. Ubiquitous learning.</b></p> <p>Ubiquitous learning makes it easier for learners to access content from any computer or mobile device, online or offline, anywhere and anytime. Historically, knowledge and information has been restricted by class and privilege, but creating a networked learning environment opens up access to validated knowledge and a plethora of facts.</p> <p><b>2. Active knowledge making.</b></p> <p>Making new connections between pieces of information in order to create new meanings is part of the learning process. Learners build upon existing knowledge and/or on what they already know, so it helps if there are a variety of activities that are both process and product orientated.</p> <p><b>3. Multimodal meaning.</b></p> <p>Text, media, sound, and data resources are easier to create more than ever. Multimodal resources add interest and break up the style of learning. If the content is presented in multiple ways it ensures that you not only can choose your preferred medium, but also have concepts reinforced along the way.</p> <p><b>4. Recursive feedback.</b></p> <p>Recursive feedback is an important way for learners to check their progress. Receiving timely and relevant feedback has always been part of any course but now most obviously received as part of an online activity. It helps you think about what you are doing, your successes and failures, and how you can improve.</p> <p><b>5. Collaborative intelligence.</b></p> <p>Whether it's to participate in a forum or to collaborate on a resource together, online social activities provide support and teamwork opportunities. Working with others in a collaboration space also stimulates more food for thought.</p> <p><b>6. Metacognition.</b></p> <p>Thinking about thinking is a valuable activity for online learners. It helps you reflect on what you have learned and where you are going. It helps you determine areas of weakness as well as strengths and it helps you think about what questions to ask.</p> <p><b>7. Differentiated learning.</b></p> <p>Differentiated learning is also more possible now than ever before. It refers to personalizing learning experiences or tailoring a course to a learner’s needs and interests. Not everyone learns in the same way</p> <p>Ref: Coursera eLearning Ecology course, 2019.</p>
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Turning to the Creative Arts, Simon and Hicks (2006: 77-90) explore how using the creative arts in teaching in higher education can engage and empower individuals who learn in different ways. Drawing on an evaluation of a creative arts module in higher education, which used drama, movement, music, and visual art as teaching methods, the article outlines a case for the kind of learning it is possible to engender through the creative arts. Their study focuses more on the pedagogical process than the content of the module. Creative Arts, they argue, create new possibilities for learning that the current education climate does not encourage. The current emphasis on targets, standards, predetermined objectives and outcomes, favours a cognitive, rational style of learning, more dependent upon linguistic or logical-mathematical intelligences rather than, for example, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, intrapersonal or inter-personal intelligences (quoting Gardner, 1999). This is disempowering for those whose intelligence stems from a different motivation or is manifest in a different way. but the arts being ‘universally human’ are now being used by many communities. There is a continual but ever changing relationship between culture, artistic activity and social development. The creative arts, they find, give people power to trust their inner intelligence and imagination and enhance opportunities for learning. It helps them to access emotions and feelings and to integrate these with intellect. They find too that the creative arts help students to build trust and confidence and value difference and visualise future options. They note that given the current emphasis on inclusive education, an opportunity exists to use the creative arts as a bridge to facilitate inclusion and open doors to those previously disenfranchised in the education system.

The recent (2019) Coursera MOOC<sup>27</sup> ‘Transmedia Storytelling: Narrative worlds, emerging technologies, and global audiences’, introduces the idea of ‘transmedia’. This is relevant to this thesis, in that some of the stories told here, include more than one delivery platform. For instance, they include face-to-face storytelling circles, video, digital archiving, public art, woodwork and web curation. ‘Transmedia’ is a useful concept for bringing the different forms of multimedia together to recount individual and collective stories. Jenkins (2019: 1) describes ‘Transmedia Storytelling’ as:

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<sup>27</sup> MOOC: A massive open online course is an online course aimed at unlimited participation and open access via the web.

...the art of designing, sharing, and experiencing a cohesive story experience across multiple traditional and digital delivery platforms - for entertainment, marketing, or social change. A transmedia story is one in which separate story elements of a larger narrative can be experienced by many different audiences, via a range of technology platforms.

It is useful to distinguish between ‘the story’, a singular tale where certain events occur and a storyworld, the larger framework in which individual stories can exist. For instance, the story of an identity group such as the Family Carers, people with disabilities or refugees in this study, have individual stories but together their stories form a storyworld. The storyworld contains a set of ‘rules’ for the world that defines common connection points or defining characteristics between individual stories. The storyworld is the spine from which infinite new stories or aspects of the main narrative can be created, shared and added to. All separate complete stories in themselves, but all following the same rules of reality that make them clearly belong to a larger, more complex, common central world. Each story can reveal different aspects of the storyworld so the audience can piece together a rich image or understanding the more stories they engage with. Different technologies are used in transmedia storytelling to disseminate the story to a range of audiences around the world, tell the story in different ways, engage audiences in the act of storytelling and creation. Every story needs someone to hear it, see it, experience it, evolve it, share and perpetuate it. Audiences of transmedia stories have many different entry points into a larger storyworld, such as books, movies, games, websites, etc. A person can choose the complexity and depth of their engagement depending upon how much effort and time they wish to spend exploring different transmedia story elements. One audience member may experience a completely different aspect of a storyworld than another – their standalone experience is a complete story in itself, but it may also draw them into exploring other related story elements via different technological platforms. Transmedia audiences are often active in sharing or even creating different aspects or stories within the larger storyworld.

The sections below discuss some of the web-based and non-web-based methods used in this research study, namely digital storytelling, community radio, online educational partnerships and the creative arts.

### 6.4.2 Digital Storytelling (DST)

Meadows (StoryCentre<sup>28</sup>: 1) defines digital stories as “short, personal multimedia tales told from the heart.” The beauty of this form of digital expression, he maintains, is that these stories can be created by people everywhere, on any subject, and shared electronically all over the world. Meadows adds that digital stories are “multimedia sonnets from the people” in which:

...photographs discover the talkies, and the stories told assemble in the ether as pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, a gaggle of invisible histories which, when viewed together, tell the bigger story of our time, the story that defines who we are” (Meadows, StoryCentre: 1).

They are personal stories and at the same time they are a shared learning, creating and sharing experience, supported by technology, allowing participants to share aspects of their life story through the creation of their own short digital media production. As Alexandra (2014:101) says:

...the process of creating a digital story offers points of departure for critical reflection, creative self-expression, collaboration and dialogue around issues that are often silenced and marginalised.

Digital narratives centre the voice of the storyteller and utilise both moving and still images to visually accompany the spoken word. Individually selecting a story and collaboratively producing the audio-visual expression of that tale presents new possibilities concerning the politics and ethics of storytelling.

Lambert (2017: 26-29) identifies eight “threshold concepts<sup>29</sup>” in DST which are worth noting: digital story telling creates an intimacy and safety to inform narrative; collaboration enhances communication and communion between participants; DST is a form of critical literacy, something often not seen in the final product which leads to assumptions that this is a functional media literacy; constraint of space – usually around 250 to 375 words – foster creative breakthrough; multimodal composition is a cognitive

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<sup>28</sup> StoryCentre is a leading NGO in the field of DST. Based in California, it supports individuals and organizations in using storytelling and participatory media for reflection, education, and social change

<sup>29</sup> ‘Threshold concepts’ are fundamental understandings that sit at the heart of a body of knowledge. The most salient principles and practices concern the underlying “storywork” of digital storytelling (Lambert, 2017: 26).



activity; choices in design aesthetics inform and are informed by literacies, culture and ideology; listening is an ethic and a craft. The most foundational and radical concept, they argue, is that every story matters.

There are many case study examples in the literature and those chosen here are studies that have some similarities with the studies in this study. Alexandra (2014: i-iii) takes an ethnographic approach with a group of Asylum-Seekers living in the Direct Provision centres in Dublin. Using DST, she worked with seven women and six men from African, Asian, Eastern European and Middle Eastern nations – and investigated their daily circumstances of negotiating migration policy. Her work reveals the ‘structural violence’ of asylum and migrant labour regimes. It explores the challenges of literally and figuratively visualising voice. She calls the framework she uses to theorise the challenges ‘encounters of political listening’ (citing Bickford, 1996; Dreher 2009). The ‘encounters’ are key moments of listening and being heard, struggles over ‘veracity’ and ‘evidence,’ and the power relations that exist in the production of media about lives which are often invisible or inaudible (ibid.: iii). Within this community of practice, she says (citing Lave & Wenger 1991; Wenger 1999), participants produce their own media to explore and document their lives as workers, parents, ‘cultural citizens’ (citing Coll 2010; El Haj 2009; Rosaldo 1994), and as artists adapting to and transforming a new environment. By putting participants from diasporic communities at the centre, as the primary authors and co-producers of their own audio-visual narratives, the research sought to extend and deepen the public discourse of migration in Ireland. The research shows that the method presented exciting opportunities for engaged inquiry into asylum and migrant labour regimes, such as the recognition of storytellers and stories, and sustained encounters of ‘narrative exchange’ (citing Couldry, 2010). However, the process did raise complex questions about the politics of listening and being heard, such as the power relations inherent in the production of media about lives that are most often rendered invisible and inaudible.

The organisation *StoryCenter* (2006:1) captures some examples of the many case studies from higher education across the United States and around the world, which are increasingly embracing models for CLL, as a way of connecting students with local communities and needs. For example, *StoryCenter* led a series of digital storytelling trainings for staff and faculty at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County which resulted in a collaborative CLL experience – involving students and staff - using DST

with residents of the *Charlestown Retirement Community* in Maryland. The Maryland students supported residents over several weeks on each aspect of story development and production and they used 'the story circle' to share personal and intimate stories. The students did not contribute stories of their own but participated in the circle as listeners and then were actively engaged in the conversation. Seventeen stories were created and shared via a national television station, *Retirement Living Television*. They were also filmed in the local community, and on a DVD that was distributed to residents and the larger community. Students and storytellers were then asked to reflect on their experiences in a documentary produced as part of the project.

Shewbridge (2007: 1-19) discusses the key learnings from the Maryland University project. Used in intergenerational settings, he says, digital storytelling provides opportunities for collaboration, personal reflection and the sharing of experiences and memories. DST helps to capture and communicate the life experiences of older people living at the centre. The Maryland project was, he says, enhanced by broadcasting the stories on a national television network. As the digital stories were constructed, they were transformed from a 'one-to-one' oral experience into a 'one-to-many' fixed-format that is shared beyond the personal interaction of the production team. One research question was how the experience impacted for the listener and the teller as stories moved from being a personal interaction to being a 'product'? Shewbridge (ibid. 1) notes that as students and residents made the stories, they also created relationships, and the sharing of personal experiences went well beyond the digital stories themselves. Yet the stories did retain elements of intimacy and personal connection as they made their way through the workshop process to a finished product. Central to digital storytelling is the idea that the storyteller's sense of individuality and ownership is enhanced when participants are allowed to tell their own story in their own voice. In the Maryland project, maintaining a sense of ownership needed to be balanced with the challenges of creating a 'team' product. The storytellers thus made compromises. By allowing their stories to be visually interpreted in part or in whole by other team members, the seniors in a sense ceded partial ownership of their story to others.

Shewbridge (2007: 1-19) outlines a number of further findings. The project challenged attitudes, built relationships and forged intergenerational connections. Common themes which emerged include: the value of process of making the stories as well as the final products; the importance of the relationships that were formed and the impact the

experience had on attitudes towards aging; the older people commented on the experience of sharing their ideas within the group and how important this interaction was in developing their stories. Many of the participants commented on the impact that hearing the stories of others had on their own work. One resident noted the sense of this type of work with students as a “return to an earlier, simpler way of communicating”. Students and residents alike commented on how much they found in common as they compared life experiences (ibid.: 12).

While producing digital stories for broadcast is not the typical goal of workshops such as this, the concept is not unique. Hundreds of stories were collected for broadcast and web viewing as part of the seminal BBC *Capture Wales* project. Creator of the project, Daniel Meadows (2019: 1) argues the value of digital stories as a collective whole, claiming they represent a “jigsaw that is the bigger story of our time and our country, the bigger story that gives another perspective on who we are is revealed. Light shines on an invisible nation”.

Bliss (2017: 321–334) describes the development of a collaborative digital storytelling research project for exploring the lives of people with disabilities. She uses literature on the ‘geographies of emotion and affect’ to guide her work and to analyse vignettes of three workshop participants who co-created digital stories. She finds that digital storytelling workshops are important collaborative research spaces for conceptualising the lived experiences of disability. Attention to digital storytelling workshops as performance spaces of empathy and care illustrates the ways in which emotion and affect shape understandings of disability. In Bliss’s (2017) research, workshop participants’ embodied performances created an emotional and affective atmosphere of care and empathy where alternative understandings of disability were constructed. This collaborative research project upset the traditional gap between researchers, community practitioners and people with disabilities by acknowledging knowledge creation and expertise as collective achievements.

The projects above offer useful learning for this research study. What is lacking perhaps is a stronger political/social justice intent. The purpose of the DST work in this study does have political intent. It seeks to understand how, from an educator’s perspective, the collective telling of a story, is also an empowering process. It asks how the collaborative process of DST enables students, community and educators to take action

for solving their own problems and communicating this to decision-makers, their communities and the wider public (StoryCentre, 2019: 1). It seeks also to understand how the educator can combine and reconcile the ‘political intent’ of DE with her or his role as an educator. As discussed earlier (e.g. McLaren 2003: 133), this thesis sees education as having a political intent. Education is never neutral but is, as McLaren (ibid.) says, “... rooted in the notion of power relations”. Educators themselves, as Kincheloe (2008: 74) points out, come to the classroom with their own political notions. Both students and educators must be equipped to understand the institutional forces which bias their education, therefore critical reflexivity is an important skill for both student and educator. Students and educators are participants in their educational experience. They are not separated from it (Mayo and McLaren, 1999: 402).

### **6.4.3 COMMUNITY RADIO**

Most of the participants in this research also took part in radio programmes which were aired on a local community radio station where this researcher presents a show called *The Global Hub*. The radio shows made by community-partners and students were again both individual and collective approaches and were used as a form of ‘public pedagogy’ (Darder, 2011: 696). Gaynor and O’Brien’s (2011: 23-28) research paper about four community radio stations in Ireland draws on a framework from the work of Habermas (1962/1989) and associated deliberative, social and media theorists. Drawing on the experience of four community stations in Ireland, it identifies elements of community radio that contribute towards a ‘defeudalisation’ of the public sphere, as well as highlighting challenges in this regard. With progressive state policies and regulation of community radio in Ireland, they find hope in the potential of community radio to counteract the prevailing apathy and ‘feudal’ mainstream media and public life. There is potential, they claim, to broaden the debate from the interests, concerns and analyses of the market to those of communities and at the same time, as advocated by Habermas (1989), ‘socially taming’ of both the state and the market. The challenge to community radio activists, both in Ireland and elsewhere, is to seize this opportunity, “to reinvigorate and recharge our public spheres”, and thereby reanimating and “defeudalising public life” (Gaynor and O’Brien, 2011: 36).

Day (2003: vii) refers to the core aims of community radio stations in Ireland, namely that (1) they broadcast to build the communities which they serve and (2) participation

by the people of the community is central to their success. The key finding from her study of six Irish community radio stations is that it is the facilitation of participation by members of the community, which enables community radio stations to successfully implement their core aims. Irish community radio stations seek to build their communities. Many of them adopt a community development approach to their work. They facilitate the human right to communicate. They do this by providing a communications link for their communities. This provides the basis for communication to flow in many directions rather than in the traditional, one-way flow of mass media generally. The stations frequently target specific segments of their communities which enables the provision of multi, micro-public spheres.

Critical pedagogue Antonia Darder (2011: 696), who was deeply influenced by the work of Freire, writes about her concerns about the impact of Neoliberalism and “its deeply homogenizing impact on social, political and economic relations everywhere” (ibid.: 696). The politics of the airwaves and the privatisation of the media, should be of vital concern to critical democracy. Darder argues that community radio can provide public pedagogical spaces for often marginalized community voices to challenge the official public transcript of social life as ‘dictated’, more times than not, by the powerful and wealthy leaders who shape public discourse. Here independent radio production is discussed as an important tool for building community relationships and as a viable alternative for supporting civic participation and critical forms of public engagement. Here Darder quotes Giroux (2003: 13):

The time has come for educators to develop more engaged systematic political projects in which power, history, and social movements can play an active role in constructing the multiple and shifting political relations and cultural practices necessary for connecting the construction of diverse political constituencies to the revitalization of democratic public life.

This speaks of course to the heart of all critical pedagogical efforts within and outside of classroom life.

The *Global Hub* programme, presented by this researcher, is an example of how community radio can be used as a pedagogical tool. In 2016, funded by Irish international aid agency, Trócaire, a ten week course in Development Education was held at the local radio station and attended by seven members of the local community

who produced three programmes<sup>30</sup> on *Colonialism, Gender and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership* TTIP. The project was awarded a Distinction Award by CRAOL, the Community Radio Forum of Ireland. Some of those who participated continue to present their own shows on local and global social justice issues. Trócaire has a tradition of funding development education work in Ireland, which is separate to its international aid funding. This project shows the power of a collaborative approach between community radio, community members and development education professionals.

#### **6.4.4 The Creative Arts**

As the research unfolded over four years, it was clear that some students are more visual and indeed some, as in the Fine Art student teachers (teachers of Art in the classroom), were interested in exploring DE from a creative arts perspective. Therefore this section discusses the power of the creative arts in DE pedagogy, as opposed to new technologies. Telling a story through the creative arts is with us since the beginning of time. Cave paintings from ancient times remind us of how central storytelling and the arts have always been to the human experience. The animals in cave paintings for instance were interacting with one another - and interaction is story. The artist was a storyteller (Mozteach, 2019: 1). The creative arts can include of course web-based and radio-based creativity of many kinds. However, for the purposes of this research study, non-web-based creativity (such as literature, performing arts, and visual arts, particularly the latter) is discussed separately, in order to explore the more nuanced learning experiences of the different learning methodologies used by participants in this research. Full appreciation of a cave painting, for instance, requires going to a cave, seeing it in its context, understanding how the artist used the light in the cave, the location and the texture of the wall to tell the story. It is a different experience than seeing a photograph of the painting on a computer screen, although that has other advantages such as its accessibility to those who cannot visit the cave.

Hall and Clover (2006: 4-11), writing in a Canadian context, give a very useful overview of the importance of arts and crafts in DE at higher education level. They

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<sup>30</sup> The three programmes are available here: <http://gertrudecotton.info/development-education-project-2016-community-radio-youghal/>

begin by tracing the practice of popular theatre in the 1970s and 1980s to modern traditions of performances of young people leading the crowds in ‘cheers’ against continued global warfare. They discuss the work of Bishop (1988) who used cartoons cartoons and soap operas with women in a Nova Scotia fish processing plant to help them uncover and challenge local and global ideologies and practices that had a negative impact on the fisheries and their jobs. They discuss how women’s fabric crafts-based practices have been used to critique, raise awareness and overcome injustices (citing Clover, 2001; Stalker, 2003). For instance how women in Chile created *arpilleras* (detailed hand-sewn three dimensional textile pictures), which were used to bring through border controls to tell of Pinochet’s repressive regime. They discuss what Perron (1998: 30) calls the “subversive stitch” and textile practices such as quilting which have been used in Vancouver Island to help people understand, address and voice their concerns symbolically and metaphorically around development and global issues. They look at the power of poetry in discussing ‘peace’ in the university classroom as a transformative learning environment. They give the example of one of their own colleague’s work (Budd, 2005) regarding the invasion of Iraq by the US - with the critical support of the United Kingdom and other client states in the “coalition of the willing”. Budd’s 2005 course at the University of Victoria in Canada was called ‘Poetry, Social Movements and Peace’. It grappled with how we can use poetry to disrupt the dominant narratives of obedience, violence and peacelessness in the world. Participants read and wrote their own pieces and created a public poetry café where they read their collective work to a local audience. Hall and Clover (2006: 11), conclude that the arts and crafts are a very powerful tool in DE learning because they are able to actively encourage new aesthetic knowledge, stimulate oppositional imaginations, encourage people to have fun together but are also about risk-taking, an essential element of learning for change.

In Ireland too there are many examples in the literature about the use of the arts in DE. Mayfield Community Arts Centre in Cork, for example, has been using visual arts to engage young people and international partners with global issues for many years (Carson, 2009: 56-60). Here, Carson (ibid.) emphasises the importance of critical learner engagement. It is “crucial”, she says, that they first have the opportunity to explore these issues from a local perspective and make personal connections:

We have learned the need to move slowly, spending time with the young people so they can first explore what they view as important, particularly in their local community, and as defining their own identity. Taking the time to listen provides a valuable foundation for the exploration of global education topics and nurturing young people's capacity to understand others' perspectives and develop a sense of solidarity with youth from other parts of the world.

She concludes that as an arts centre, they have learned that the learning process itself can be just as important as learning outcomes if they support a deep engagement by young people with global issues.

Mc Closkey (2014, 1-14) discusses the importance of film for DE practitioners. However, he states that the DE sector has "arguably yet to fully explore the potential of film as an educational medium with target audiences or as a mainspring for debate between practitioners" (ibid.). It is even more important now, he says, as the accessibility of digital technology has potentially brought the filmmaking process itself within the compass of development organisations. He discusses examples of good practice within DE sector involving the development of a film-based resource and the showcasing of cinema from the global South. He sees "significant possibilities" for using film in DE, both in terms of content and methodology and in developing political and critical thinking. Like development education, he says, the medium of film has a flexibility that extends across education sectors, age groups and subject boundaries to enrich learning on a stand-alone basis or by complementing other activities. He argues that film contains significant potential for development educators in promoting cultural and development awareness but can also be a source of disquieting cultural homogenisation, particularly through the market dominance of United States' (US) films around the world (see United Nations Development Programme, UNDP, 2004: 86). The challenge for development education is to champion an alternative cinema that respects diversity, protects regional and national identities and promotes cultural rights.

A rare example of DE work with people with disabilities is that of *Disability and Development*, a film-centred educational learning resource linked to the post-primary school curriculum in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Brown and Collins (2014: 47-61) discuss how the project concept came about through discussions involving Development Media Workshop, a not-for-profit organisation focused on social development and environment issues based in Enniskillen, and five members of Dóchas (The Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organisations).



These organisations were Livability (the Disability and International Development Working Group), Children in Crossfire, War on Want (Northern Ireland), Christian Blind Mission, and Disability Aid Abroad. All of these organisations shared the view that disability issues were largely neglected in development education on the island of Ireland and agreed to become partners in a new initiative to address this gap in practice. Their collaborative resource explores the interconnection of disability and development through films of children's stories from a range of situations around the world. The seven films were made over a three-month period in 2010. The methodology underpinning the films was to facilitate families and children in becoming the directors of their own films, so that the films could be made *with* them and not *about* them. The project partners identified five main lessons from this project namely:

- (1) the importance of collaboration between six partners pooling their experiences and perspectives;
- (2) School engagement that involved cluster trainings for teachers and credibility to the training content and methodology. Clearly, developing strong links with the educational services that support teachers and schools is vital in rolling out effective teacher training and gaining effective access to schools and teachers;
- (3) Engaging an external evaluator from the outset enabled the partners to put in place a mechanism for measuring the impact of the project against the established criteria.;
- (4) Providing the learning resource online, as well as in hard copy, proved very effective because it allowed for greater distribution and mitigated against teachers losing the DVDs or resource pack, which commonly happens within schools;
- (5) The project illustrated the effectiveness of *using films within educational resources*. The films of children living with disabilities around the world were shot and edited in a style with minimal narration, allowing the pictures to tell the story and the viewer to interpret things for themselves.

#### **6.4.5 North-South (Online) Educational Partnership Models**

The online intercultural exchanges (OIE) in this study fall primarily under the CLL frame, in that they are partnerships between students and partners in a community

context – in Lesotho, India and Iraq. Since DE intrinsically connects ‘the local’ and ‘the global’ this study sought to explore what happens when we use online exchanges in different ways in DE pedagogy. For the community partners, their location was obviously ‘local’ and from the point of view of pedagogy in UCC, we were intentionally connecting with communities in the ‘Global South’. While OIEs may not constitute MML in the same way as digital storytelling or the creative arts, it does provide a platform, using web-based tools, to encourage the kind of ‘transformative storytelling for social change’ approach discussed above.

There is a large body of research in the field of online intercultural exchange (OIE), particularly in language learning. Also known as ‘telecollaboration’ or ‘virtual exchange’, these terms are used to refer to:

...the engagement of groups of learners in online intercultural interactions and collaboration projects with partners from other cultural contexts or geographical locations as an integrated part of their educational programmes (O’Dowd, 2018: 1).

Summarising the advantages and challenges of OIE, O’Dowd (ibid.: 18) references Cummins & Sayers (1995) who discuss the value of OIEs for experiential learning, collaborative critical enquiry, and cross-curricular learning; and Guth & Helm (2010) who discuss its usefulness in the development of transversal skills, digital literacies, intercultural awareness, and the ability to live and work together with people from other cultural backgrounds. Many educational initiatives, O’Dowd (ibid.) says, appear to have encountered the same problems and challenges such as students having limited access to technology, the limited digital competencies of teachers (he was writing in 1995), time-differences hindering synchronous communication, and institutional resistance to the inter-institutional approach to learning which virtual exchange can involve. O’Dowd and Lewis’s (2016) comprehensive collection of studies on OIE brings together some key findings in this field. Several chapters discuss the pedagogical challenges and benefits of OIE. Helm (150-173) shows how the facilitators’ efforts to nominate speakers, reformulate questions or comments, or perhaps provide a text version of an oral contribution all help to support exchanges which might otherwise have faltered or halted at uncomfortable junctures. Dooly (192-209) and Helm (ibid.) show how students can learn from critical incidents of communicative difficulty or breakdown during particular OIE projects, while Müller-Hartmann and Kurek (131-150) suggest how teacher educators can also learn from close analysis of

such incidents. Furstenbert, Guth and De Wit (ibid.) discuss tensions between freedom to experiment and institutional constraints, again at learner, teacher and OIE coordinator levels. Wilson demonstrates how unfavourable institutional conditions can be turned to advantage by enterprising individual instructors, and indeed the role of solo players or outliers in OIE to date is frequently emphasised (Furstenberg, Guth, De Wit). Such concerns clearly lie behind current efforts to institutionalise and consolidate OIE through scholarly organisations and journals.

The literature provides fewer examples of online North-South partnerships in higher education. One example is a virtually-shared undergraduate class, held in 2012 on *Rural Sustainability in Latin America (RSLA) between* Universidad Privada Boliviana (UPB) in Cochabamba, Bolivia and Siena College in New York (Abrahamse et al., 2015: 143). This educational partnership aimed to provide a course to both science and social science students, along with intercultural, active learning and service learning methodologies where students learn through working on real-world projects and applications. The results of this educational partnership show that virtually-shared classroom experiences can successfully facilitate international experiences for undergraduate students. Some of the difficulties encountered were the need for more administrative support; lack of technical support; cross-cultural communication factors (absence of early cross-group bonding and differences in learning styles); time investment of faculty; and curricular design issues and opportunities. Suggestions for improvement (ibid.: 12-13) include using better, more reliable equipment and providing technical support throughout; making sure the students understand the learning objectives early on; learning cross-culturally about different modes of discussion; keeping the assignments simple; incorporating more discussion and more active and discovery-based learning; and clarifying a lead role so that there would not be ‘too many faculty cooks’ at the beginning. Improved mentoring of student groups could also be beneficial, and a future rendition of the course could explore recruiting students from prior courses to serve as peer mentors and role models. With the increasing demand for globally competent citizens, this educational partnership can provide a model for providing international experience through virtual classroom exchange.

In an Irish context there is considerable literature (Bailey and Dolan 2011; Harle, 2013; Downes, 2013; Martin and Wyness, 2013; McCann, 2013; Mc Evoy, 2013; Nakabugo et al., 2010; O’Keeffe, 2013) on the theme of North-South partnerships, although not as yet on partnerships with an online component. However, some of the key discussions here are relevant in a broader sense to online exchanges. Harle’s (2013: 93) article on research partnerships with African universities finds that while external support is valuable, and international collaboration vital, African universities need to be able to define and pursue their own ambitions: access to foreign funding, and an increasing involvement in the networks of international scholarship can at once enhance and restrict their ability to do so. This is not incompatible with a community-linked-learning approach. The fundamental principle is that we move away from paternalistic models whereby the ‘Western’ university dictates for instance solutions to local problems. CLL espouses a partnership approach whereby a programme of study or work is based on stakeholder’s defining their own needs and not a top-down model which assumes that the ‘international’ partner holds sway because they have more access to resources of various kinds. In Downe’s (2013:11) critical analysis of North-South educational partnerships, he questions the medium to long-term sustainability of the partnership process, the asymmetrical benefits which tend to accrue to partners from the process, the difficulties inherent in monitoring and evaluation, and the efficacy (or otherwise) of investing in educational partnerships. Bailey and Dolan (2011: 42-43) note that partnerships form a strong pillar in current development co-operation policy. However, “it could be argued that commitments to partnership are tokenistic in some instances”. Bailey and Dolan (2011: 35-36) note that partnership approaches often fail to take into account issues of power in the relationship, and that the impact of power imbalances ultimately have an impact in the development of sustainable co-operation. The relationships developed by partners could benefit from some of the principles of development and intercultural learning, particularly on analysis of power. Conversely, development education has much to gain from development partnerships especially teacher education partnerships.

Reilly’s (2017) *Capacity Building through Education Provision* was a collaborative joint research project between Kimmage DSC (Development Studies Centre), Ireland and MS-Training Centre for Development Cooperation (TCDC), Arusha, Tanzania, which aimed to discover to what extent graduates continued to use their skills in

development practice and what difference their training made. The two centres have had a long standing, and in the Irish context, unique 20-year collaboration in the provision of high quality third level education. This training was delivered at MS-TCDC campus, Arusha, and attracted students from throughout east and southern Africa, and a few from further afield. Begun as a pilot in 1994, the collaboration was further enhanced through Irish accreditation of a BA course delivered in Tanzania (itself a first). The overall objective of this research was to explore what worked well in this partnership between two institutes from the 'North' and the 'South', and how this collaboration has advanced capacity building in its various forms to inform transformative learning and social change. Key lessons (ibid.: 6-7) to be drawn from the study include: (1) Capacity development did take place – for the students at the heart of the programmes run by MS-TCDC and Kimmage DSC – and in many instances, for their organisations and communities. There is also clear evidence that the staff in both institutes developed their individual and professional capacities through the dynamic of this partnership, and strong perceptions that both institutes were also transformed – being changed by the relationship forged by working together; (2) partnerships can be challenging but extremely fruitful. If ways can be found to resource the partners separately or through reciprocal arrangements this could remove a lot of the ‘wrong kind of power’ from the dynamics between partners; (3) the life span of partnerships needs to be longer than a typical project cycle of two or three years, as appears to be the consensus of many commentators, and endorsed by the TCDC/Kimmage partnership, which had no fixed time boundaries; (4) relationships are key, and must not be underestimated or undermined. By their nature, difficult if not impossible to quantify and hence challenging for funders to assess the value of, but the results of this modest review would seem to echo the strong arguments of others, that ways should be found to make ‘what cannot be counted, count’. This study presents a strong argument that time spent by lecturers respectfully engaging with course participants, and time invested by both sets of staff to the developing of constructive but convivial relationships bore fruit.

## **6.5 Conclusion**

Arendt argued (1958: 50-53) that politics are best understood as a power relationship between the private and public realms. Storytelling, she argued, creates a vital bridge between these realms, a place where individual passions and shared perspectives can be contested and interwoven. What follows in the next chapter, explains how stories were

told by many different people as individuals or as part of the communities to which they belong. The research focuses on the volatile conditions under which these stories are told – or silenced – as people, students and communities, try to make sense of the world they inhabit together, think about how they can remake reality or bring about needed change. Together they try to reclaim some autonomy, if nothing else over their own stories. They are sometimes therapeutic, sometimes relationship building, sometimes nostalgic, but they always have a political intent in mind. Here, storytelling takes on a political role and reveals itself as a crucial way by which we understand one another. Arendt sums up the unique power of storytelling in her famous quote: "Storytelling reveals meaning without committing the error of defining it" (Arendt, 1968: 105).

## CHAPTER 7: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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The purpose of this chapter is to describe critical ethnography, the methodological approach chosen for this project. It begins by summarising the theoretical framework for the thesis as a whole, this being critical pedagogy with a development education (DE) lens. It is important that the methodology is aligned with the theoretical framework and that the ‘critical’ approach is seamless throughout the research process. It explores how critical ethnography shaped my role as researcher in this study. I argue that the responsibility of the critical ethnographer is to actively participate in the shaping of a more socially just reality. I then explain the research design by describing the research aims, ethical approach questions and methods used to collect data. The chapter also describes the limitations of this research study.

### 7.1 Theoretical Framework

This research project is based on a critical research paradigm. From an ontological<sup>31</sup> perspective this means that it is based on the assumption that reality is socially constructed and that it is under constant internal influence (Patel, 2015: 1). From an epistemological<sup>32</sup> perspective the critical paradigm makes the assumption that reality and knowledge are both socially constructed and influenced by power relations within society (ibid.). The theoretical perspective of the thesis is based therefore on a critical social reality perspective, specifically that of critical pedagogy with a development education lens, and the study also draws on broader theories, specifically within the fields of community-based learning, critical disability, ‘race’ and feminist theory and critical narratives. Because of these underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions and theoretical frameworks, the methodology<sup>33</sup> used is critical ethnography, using community-based learning (CLL) (including online) methods, alongside multimedia narrative constructions. The research involves embedding myself as a qualitative critical ethnographic researcher, thus I am more aware of my own

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<sup>31</sup> Ontology is defined by (Crotty: 2003:10) as “the study of being”. It is concerned with “what kind of world we are investigating, with the nature of existence, with the structure of reality as such”. In other words, ‘what is reality?’

<sup>32</sup> Epistemology is “a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know”, (Crotty, 2003:3). Epistemology is also “concerned with providing a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we can ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate”. (Maynard, 1994:10) in Crotty (Ibid., 8).

<sup>33</sup> Methodology: the research approach I undertook in this study.

positionality and biases and how I use research methods<sup>34</sup> which support and reflect a critical approach and critical analysis.

## **7.2 Methodological Approach – Critical Ethnography**

Broadly speaking two schools of thought can be identified within the ethnographic tradition. The first, ‘conventional ethnography’ regards the presence of the researcher in the culture being researched as a disinterested and objective observer. Clair (2003: 3) notes that early studies “have at times defined cultures, named people and told them who they are and what they might become. In short, ethnography grew out of a master discourse of colonisation”. The second school, critical ethnography, shares some characteristics with conventional ethnography, such as “a reliance on qualitative interpretation of data, core rules of ethnographic methods and analysis, adherence to a symbolic interactionist paradigm, and a preference for developing grounded theory<sup>35</sup>” (Thomas, 1993: 3). Critical ethnography specifically rejects the positivist notion of an objective social science that produces value-free ethnographies. Influenced from the 1960s onwards, by discourse on new race, gender, feminist, sexual identity, and post-colonial social movements, it applies a Critical Theory approach to ethnography (ibid.). ‘Critical’ is described by Willis and Trondman (2000: 5) in its broadest sense as:

... recording and understanding lived social relations, in part at least, from the point of view of how they embody, mediate and enact the operations and results of unequal power. This is to trace and to try to make explicit, in ways difficult within lived practice, the lineaments of what Dilthey calls ‘to be aware of being a conditioned being’” (Willis and Trondman, 2000: 5).

As a critically positioned researcher, I intentionally adopt an action agenda with the purpose of empowering people and transforming political and social realities. As Anderson (1989: 249) says, "unlike other interpretivist research, the overriding goal of critical ethnography is to free individuals from sources of domination and repression". Carspecken (1996: x-xi) considers ‘critical qualitative research’ to be a form of social “activism”. In line with Freire’s idea that reflection without action is empty

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<sup>34</sup> Methods: the data instruments I used to critically explore the research questions.

<sup>35</sup> Grounded Theory is an inductive research methodology. It is the systematic generation of theory from systematic research. It is a set of rigorous research procedures leading to the emergence of conceptual categories.

(see - <http://www.groundedtheory.com/what-is-gt.aspx>)



‘verbalism’, and that action without reflection is potentially worse, manipulative ‘activism’ (Freire and Macedo, 2001: 47). I consciously seek to introduce critical development education pedagogy to university work, using community-linked and multimedia pedagogical approaches. Critical ethnography allows me to act and reflect alongside the participating students and communities. This is in line with Freire’s view that educators should be ‘problem-posing’ and engaged in a critical and liberating ‘dialogue’ towards a mutual conscientisation, one which includes empowering participants to take action (ibid.: 47). My research approach is not just to observe the world, but to transform it by critically viewing dominant beliefs, values and oppressive structures in society. The research is itself a process of ‘conscientisation’. There is, as Beach (2017: 27) states the ‘postmodern challenge’ which sees ethnography as “... viewing the world through particular lenses and as theoretically biased, personally slanted, subjective and highly relativistic fiction”. However, Beach (ibid.) argues, the worldview and politics of the researcher will always play a role in formulating research questions. Importantly, however, as Beach, Bagley, Marques da Silva (2018: 530) stress:

... we can account for selection effects on the development of data, their analysis, and the formation and communication of results, so that our work may then add another perspective to a developing inter-discursivity as a means through which we can try to understand and even explain educational events and processes as key aspects of human group life. [...] It is a position that acknowledges that the researcher’s worldviews, standpoint, and politics will always play a role (Haraway 1988; Harding 2003).

Approaching the object of analysis within ethnography from a neutral methodological stance is “philosophically problematic” and, “for some of us, also possibly broadly emotionally impossible as well” Beach (2017: 27). The reflexivity that comes from discussing and accounting for choices we make as researchers is still a worthwhile ideal which we can strive for. Ultimately, he says, we need to ask ourselves in whose interests we are doing this work. Are we doing it for the broad pursuit of ‘the good life’ for all, or, are we doing it in the private interests of those who accumulation “off the backs (and labor) or others”?

Critical awareness of my ‘researcher positionality’<sup>36</sup> in an educational ethnography is therefore important. I endeavour to acknowledge my “own power, privilege, and biases just as we denounce the power structures that surround our subjects” (Madison, 2012: 8). ‘Critical reflexivity’, in the Critical Theory tradition, is vital. It involves researchers locating themselves within political and social positions, so that they remain mindful of the “problematic nature of knowledge and power inherent in human relationships and organisations” (Rolfe and Freshwater, 2010: 185). This critical approach aligns with Bourdieu’s notion of ‘Habitus’, which, as noted earlier, is a system of beliefs, assumptions, or dispositions of a group or individual that are shaped by their environment and life experiences. It also aligns with Giroux’s idea of critique as a “mode of analysis that interrogates texts, institutions, social relationships, and ideologies as part of the script of official power” (Giroux, 2011: 4).

Willis and Trondman (ibid.: 5) also describe the “critical focus” in research and writing as a cultural description emerging from a long and intimate relationship with participants. As such ethnography is an iterative-inductive process<sup>37</sup> (O Reilly and Said, 2012) which retains an open and flexible design, led by the outcomes of reflexive research in the field. Ethnography, Willis and Trondman (2005: 5) argue, offers the possibility of keeping alive social hope for the social and human sciences by recording “the lived experience within the social” and keeping alive the notion of a “the cultural” which is socially embedded. By taking a broad, inclusive approach to “culture” the researcher can obtain knowledge which has a wider reference and can study how “the autonomy of culture is practically engaged, as well as eroded or disengaged, in concrete sites of human endeavour” (ibid.: 4). In a world which is being restructured and detraditionalised, all social groups can “find and make their own roots, routes and ‘lived’ meanings”, breaking down the certainties of inherited cultures and re-establishing themselves in new forms (ibid.).

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<sup>36</sup> “Positionality is the way her or his (the researcher’s) identity and perspective play out in the field, in relation to others, and within existing culture and power structures (Bochner & Ellis, 2002; Madison, 2012).

<sup>37</sup> Ethnographic research is iterative-inductive. This is a practice of doing research, informed by sophisticated inductivism, in which data collection, analysis and writing are not discrete phases but inextricably linked.

Critical ethnography takes an interest too in “cultural policy and cultural politics” (ibid.: 6). This Willis and Trondman define (ibid.) broadly as:

... the politics, interventions, institutional practices, writing and other cultural productions within ‘public spheres’, or capable of opening up new ones, that bear on the possibilities of ordinary meaning-making especially in relation to emergent cultures and to human practices involved in making sense of, as creatively living through, profound structural and cultural change.

To support this approach, critical ethnography enables field and participatory research in a range of research locations. In this thesis, the research describes the concrete experiences of groups and individuals in educational, community and online settings. In so doing, the ethnologic approach facilitates dialogue with the ‘other’.

A central aspect of this research is the “recognition of the role of theory” (ibid.: 3) in both the pedagogy and the research approach. It focuses on bringing theory and practice together and on exploring the scope of ethnographic methods in identifying, recording and analysing ‘ordinary’ human practices. It is open to unpredictability, in context and not led by pre-defined theoretical positions (ibid.: 3). This includes encouraging action on theoretically informed ethnographic work in relation to specific and general policy questions but more generally it commits academic work with and to larger social projects and seeks to identify and formulate different possibilities of ‘social becoming’ in an era of intense change (ibid.).

Inevitably, ethnography also responds to changing technologies, both online and offline. Pink et al., (2015), do not seek to formulate a new definition of ‘digital ethnography’. They favour Karen O’Reilly’s (O’Reilly and Said, 2005: 18) understanding of ethnography as an ‘iterative-inductive’ process which “draws on the role of theory as well as the researcher’s own role and that views humans as part object/part subject”. However, they argue that digital ethnography does have some distinguishing characteristics which may not apply to other approaches to ethnography. The first is *multiplicity*, the idea that there is more than one way to engage with the digital. Digital technologies and media (and the things that people can do with them) are interdependent with the infrastructures of everyday life, for instance access to a reliable energy source, or the ability of participants to use them. The infrastructures that exist to support digital media use have an impact on both the participants and the researcher.

Another is *Non-digital-centric-ness* meaning that by putting media at the centre of analysis too little attention is sometimes given to the ways in which media are part of wider sets of environments and relations. *Openness*, a third characteristic, refers to how digital ethnography is open to other influences or to the needs of a multiple disciplines and external stakeholders. It invites different collaborative ways of co-producing knowledge with research partners/participants. The distinguishing feature of *reflexivity* in digital ethnography relates to the ways in which digital ethnographers theorise and encounter the world as a digital–material–sensory environment. We need to ask questions about how we produce knowledge. Finally, digital ethnography is *unorthodox*. Pink et al. (2015) see the term as referring to digital approaches which enable ways of knowing (about) other people’s worlds that might otherwise be invisible or unanticipated by more formally constituted, and thus less exploratory and collaborative, research approaches. Modes of dissemination may also be unorthodox; for instance, a website might feature ‘raw’ footage of participants in daily activities, blogs and archives might be used to curate conference and paper presentations, digital content created by research participants and available on a website might share examples of a research process. These enable new forms of continuity between digital ethnography fieldwork, ongoing collaborations and dialogues with research participants, and a certain bringing together of the temporalities and sites of the research, analysis and dissemination processes (Pink et al., 2015: 8-15).

The Cyborg Anthropology (2011) website argues that the key to understanding digital ethnography is to remember that humans are still human and technology only connects and sometimes even amplifies that humanness. Aside from the technological interface structuring the field site, ethnography in the digital space is no more bizarre and strange than field work in the vast and varied human territories of real life (Cyborg, 2011: 1). This is emphasised too in Pink et al. (2015), as they examine how seven key concepts in social and cultural theory can be used for the design and analysis of ethnographic research. These represent a range of different routes to approaching the social world, that is: human experiences (what people feel); practices (what they do); things (the objects as parts of human lives); relationships (intimate social environments), social worlds (or groups of human beings), localities (physically shared contexts); and events (coming together in public contexts). They acknowledge that these concepts have always been part of social sciences and humanities research but that existing theoretical

concepts have been configured in ways that have responded to the specificity of the social, cultural and material forms that they have been used to understand. This means that sometimes they present limiting paradigms that do not reach the needs of contemporary researchers (Pink et al., 2015: 14-15). What matters, however, is that whichever methods are used, digital or non-digital, ethnographic research should be used towards bringing about the kind of desired social/political change. A critical ethnographic inquiry is still based on its foundational Critical Theory paradigm. Indeed, it is the flexibility of ethnological research traditions which continues to be one of their key strengths. It can respond to changing needs both within society and within a research process, yet Thomas's definition of critical ethnography as "storytelling with a political purpose" (Thomas, 1993: 4) and Critical Theory as a paradigm of inquiry, are as relevant across time, space and technological developments.

Kankkunen (2011: 1) discusses the subversive potential of critical ethnography, particularly when methods used in the research approach challenge paradigms which see science as the only 'truth' or the only valid means of 'telling the truth'. Thus, she says, the value of a text could be that it makes you think about the ways power and ideologies construct people through discourses. Its validity could be in its ability to emancipate and empower the society studied. Instead of reproducing and supporting the old structures by simply representing them in its descriptions, the text could aim at both deconstructing and reconstructing reality. Where interactive multimedia in general is concerned Kankkunen references Denzin (1997: 77) suggesting that it allows for the possibility of emphasising the image and the nonverbal in ethnography, thereby increasing both the openness and the fictiveness of the story. This openness to multiple interpretations can still contain political potential (Kankkunen, 2011).

Horst et al., (2016: 13) argue that the visual as a research method can serve to evoke feelings, relationships, materialities, activities and configurations of the things that form part of a research context. Qualitative research paradigms that pay attention to the context, to the nuances of students' artistic activity, to making the researcher visible, and to creative ways of writing have been seen as particularly useful for pedagogical research (Kankkunen, 2011). Gürcüm and Arslan (2015: 1) challenge designers to gain a deeper understanding of the importance of ethnographic research studies in textile

design and explain qualitative techniques that can be used in ethnographic researches for textile design, searching for meaning in socially constructed reality or a traditional context. Integrating artistic expression as a research method thus opens up new perspectives and widens the options for ethnographic presentation from written text to more varied approaches.

## **7.3 Research Design**

### **7.3.1 Research Aims and Questions**

The aim of this study is to address the core research question: ‘What can educators learn about engaging university students in Development Education?’ This is a critical investigation into the power of Community-Linked Learning (CLL) and Multimedia Learning Methodologies (MML) in higher education *and* its impact on community partners.

1. What happens for students, community partners, researchers and educators, when classroom-based learning, online and CLL and MML merge to enhance DE pedagogy?
2. What impact does storytelling by students and community-partners have on civic engagement and activism relating to DE issues?
3. What impact does story-telling and community-based research/pedagogy have on community partners?
4. How can we move from ‘the story’ and ‘community based learning’ to political conscientisation in DE?

This research process takes place over four academic years from 2014 to 2018. It involves a series of collaborative projects between groups of students at University College Cork (UCC) and partner community groups in Ireland and online with communities in Lesotho, Calcutta and Northern Iraq. The aim is to understand what community-linked learning and the use of web-based, radio and multimedia pedagogical methodologies can bring to DE learning. In particular, it looks at how these approaches can enhance student engagement with DE and at the impact of this work on community partners.

The table below is reproduced here again to provide clarity and to navigate the reader through the research process.

**TABLE 8: OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS**

Year	Student Group	Case study: Individual Student	Community-linked Partners	Case study: Community Member or Group	Collaborative Project	Data collection methods
<b>Pilot 1 local</b>	Six Professional Masters in Education students (PME)	.N/A for ethical reasons.	Minority Ethnic Group Cork, Women's Group named only as MEG in this research for confidentiality reasons.	MEG Group as case study	6 workshops on training for transformation community leadership.	Fieldnotes based on participant observation and in-class activities/drawings.
<b>Pilot 2 Global</b>	12 students in Lesotho, Cork, Canada, France, UK	Work placement student 1 – <b>ANDY</b>	Community Group based in Lesotho.	N/A	Online Inter-cultural Exchange.	Assignments Forum discussion Interviews Evaluation reports Observation & Fieldnotes.
<b>Year 1</b>	6 student teachers.  3 x 2 hour workshops: Global Teacher Award	PME Student – white Irish ethnicity  <b>Claire</b>	6 refugees and asylum-seekers living in Cork.  3 of whom live in the direct provision system. 3 are UCC students.	Man living in Direct Provision system – Nigerian ethnicity  <b>Obafemi</b>	Digital Story-Telling Workshop.	Observation & Fieldnotes  Narrative analysis  Interview
<b>Year 2</b>	6 UCC students  6 community partners. Mixed abilities.  6 x 2 hour workshops on Global Citizenship.	1st year.  Female Social Science Student  Aged 19  <b>Finuala</b>	3 x NGOs supporting people with disabilities, physical and intellectual.  Guest speakers: asylum seeker from cork, development worker Kenya and online to disability group in Calcutta.	Woman who recently moved to own home after 17 years living in residential care in Cork. Age 44.  <b>Vera</b>	Key student work placement.  All students: Digital story telling  Digital archive  Radio Show.	Observation & Fieldnotes  Blogging  Narrative analysis
<b>Year 3</b>	Cross disciplinary group	<b>Andy</b> <b>Finuala</b> <b>Obafemi</b> <b>Clair</b> see above	Family Carers Cork, Older People's Group. 15 people.	<b>Kathleen</b>  White, female, ex-carer in early 70s.	General election campaign prep. Policy toolkit. Digital story telling. Radio	Observation & Fieldnotes Blogging Interview Narrative analysis
<b>Year 4</b>	10 student teachers: 10 x 2 hour workshops- Global Teacher Award.	PME student.  White, Irish, Female, Age early 50s.  <b>Kate</b>	Yazidis family in refugee camp in Northern Iraq.	Yazidis man, early 20s living in Bersive camp.  <b>Arba</b>	Highlighting Yazidis genocide in 2 <sup>nd</sup> level classroom Multimedia art exhibition & Radio.	Observation & Fieldnotes Interview Narrative analysis



## **7.4 Research Methods**

Bazanger and Dodier (2004: 10) stress the open-endedness of ethnographic research. The researcher is flexible and responsive to new evidence and lines of enquiry, rather than following a rigid pre-arranged schedule and research plan. My approach to data collection is consistent with the *bricolage* approach discussed earlier. It includes the use of multiperspectival research methods. As Kincheloe (2001: 682) says, using multiple frameworks and methodologies, researchers are empowered to produce more rigorous and praxiological insights into socio-political and educational phenomena (Kincheloe, 2001: *ibid.*). The data collection methods used in this research are flexible depending on the context of a given situation. They include participant observation and narrative analysis of online discussion forums, student assignments, digital storytelling, digital archiving, radio, interviews and the creative arts.

### **7.4.1 Participant Observation and Field Notes**

Van Maanen (1973: 408) describes participant observation as a method of qualitative research, which is appropriate for gathering data on interactions and relationships through the recording of behaviour, conversation, and experience *in situ*. The aim of participant observation is to produce a ‘thick description’ of social interaction within natural settings (*ibid.*). Hopefully, in the process a more adequate picture emerges of the setting as a social system described from a number of participants’ perspectives (Geertz, 1973; Burgess, 1984, quoted in Smith 1997:1). The ethnographer is seeking to find meaning in the encounters and situations. In the postmodernist approach researchers also influence and affect the research setting and are very much a part of it (Angrosino, 2005: 230). The researcher is part of the production of knowledge. It is this co-production of knowledge which forms one of the core aspects of discovery in this research. The details of the research approach and the positionality of the researcher are often modified as the research proceeds. If the researcher starts the investigation with a specific hypothesis s/he may impart misconceptions into the setting. The participant’s view cannot be known until the investigation begins (Robson, 2015: 323).

Where possible the proceedings of all courses, events and workshops were recorded, notes taken and saved in Nvivo<sup>38</sup>. Workshops, interviews, events, radio interviews, digital stories, classroom work, involving the eight key participants were also transcribed. The recordings provide data about what transpired but there is a certain amount of selectivity in the field notes (Atkinson et al., 1992: 355). The field notes are about what I consider to be relevant to the setting, context of study and to the questions I want to explore in line with the study's focus. I noted for instance evidence of power differences in different settings, including between myself and other participants. I endeavoured to be aware of how *I* addressed this and how it influenced the data gathered. I was careful too to record some key aspects of the broader socio-political and cultural contexts and societal power structures in which the learning was taking place (TESOL, 2012: 1). The field notes also include a wider set of findings beyond description and analysis to include notes on facial expression, tone of voice, spatial and environmental considerations. They include my own actions, questions and reflections and notes which link my observations to the theoretical frameworks in this thesis. Recording one's personal feelings in field notes has been contested (Emerson, et al., 1995: 6) but critical ethnography is inclusive of personal accounts, reactions, reflections and anxieties (ibid.). Ethnographic research is not just about those being studied, but about those who are doing the studying. In this research, both I and the participants are co-constructing knowledge, experience and ways of participating. Therefore, field notes which record my own reflections and experiences are not just valid, they are part of the research findings.

### **1.1.1 Narrative Construction and Analysis: Web-based, Radio, Creative Arts and Interviews**

Narrative in essence represents the stories of our lives and the stories of the lives of others. Narrative analysis refers to a family of methods for interpreting texts that have in common a storied form (Riessman, 2008: 11). With a vast range of methods available for our collaborative research, it soon became evident that constructing and analysing stories would be a key method for gathering data. (Gottschall, 2013: 198).

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<sup>38</sup> Nvivo is a qualitative data analysis (QDA) computer software package produced by QSR International. It has been designed for qualitative researchers working with very rich text-based and/or multimedia information.

contends that as ‘storytelling animals’ we use stories to help us to navigate life’s complex social problems. When presented with the tools and opportunity to use web-based technologies, the creative arts and radio, storytelling ‘with a political purpose’ emerged strongly as a way of grappling with development education. The interviews and student assignments also provided rich narrative landscapes. However, it is in the storytelling that we can really feel “the ethnographic imagination” (Willis, 2000: 1). Moreover, we find, as Riessman (2008: 21) says, “the narrative impulse is universal” (2008: 21) and transcends factors such as gender, age and culture. The narrative develops through collaboration between researcher and respondent or storyteller and listener. It allows access to the respondents’ reality via their socially constructed stories.

Some of the stories are told through the use of web-based technologies, including digital storytelling, digital archiving, blogging, websites and online discussion fora. Digital storytelling (DST) at its most basic core is the practice of using computer-based tools to tell stories. DST is “...an incredibly powerful way to foster creativity, engage community, transform perspectives, and support students and teachers in reflecting on their lives and learning process” (StoryCenter, 2017: 1). Digital stories are 3–5 min visual narratives that synthesize images, video, audio recordings of voice and music, and text to create compelling stories (Gubrium, 2009: 186). As I deepened my reading, I came to feel most comfortable with the term “Transformative storytelling for social change”, since this was the ultimate vision for the work (Transformative storytelling for Social Change, 2019). As an emergent technological method in social research, digital storytelling adds to the picture and narrative of inquiry. As a community-based participatory research (CBPR) method, it may be used “to investigate individual, group sociocultural understandings... while also increasing community members’ participation and input on studies of ... community concerns” Gubrium (2009: 470). In some cases, the digital stories are enhanced further by the creation of a digital archive<sup>39</sup> or a website. Individual stories join with other stories, histories, policy and activist messages. There are other rich sources of web-based narratives too. In the study, an online student discussion forum took place as part of an intercultural exchange and

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<sup>39</sup> A *digital archive* is a repository that stores one or more *collections* of *digital* information with the intention of providing long-term access to the information. An example in this study is the archive ‘Moving On’ - [www.movingonireland.com](http://www.movingonireland.com) - which forms part of this thesis.

offered an opportunity for deeper analysis of participant expectations, understanding of the core concepts, learning needs and experiences of the project as a whole. Thus, a digital archive is a space for planning, implementation and evaluation of the work of the project. Student assignments are also used with the online group and questions asked in the assignments allow for reflection on understandings and learnings.

One of the collaborative projects introduced students to the core concepts of DE using the creative arts. Student teachers worked in their second level classrooms on DE themes and displayed their artefacts at an exhibition called 'A Journey through Development Education', at the Glucksman Art Gallery, UCC (May 2018). This was year 4 of the 'Id Est' project which I was facilitating with my collaborative researcher, Dr. Stephen O'Brien. As part of this PhD study I had made contact with a Yazidis family living in a camp for displaced people in Northern Iraq. As part of this study I introduced one student, Kerry to the family. Kerry became my fourth KSP, while Arba in the camp, became my fourth KCP. As part of her PME course, Kerry introduced her second level Art students to the story of this family and surrounding community. They in turn developed their project for the Glucksman around the story of this family and the genocide of the Yazidis people. In making a replica of the family's tent, students could physically experience what it was like for ten people to live in this small space. On facebook, students could see photographs of conditions in the camp and hear their real-life stories. This led to a broader discussion about the Yazidis people in Iraq and about refugees and displaced people globally and locally in Ireland. The students also used radio to tell of their learning story. I met and interviewed them and their teacher in their classroom for a radio programme about the Yazidis people.

For ethical reasons and in order to understand the needs and experiences of participants there were a number of points in the research where I interviewed participants on a one-to-one basis. For the online participants I use skype to interview both individuals and as a focus group at the end. All the interviews were synchronous and each participant was given access to a computer at a mutually beneficial time in a private room at the (anonymous name) offices. With local community partners I used face-to-face semi-structured interviews to understand the expectations, from the research workshops, of the minority ethnic group in year one. I also interviewed students and community partners who participated in the digital story-telling workshop in year 2, in order to

understand more fully their experience of the workshop. These interviews form part of the construction of the narratives presented in this study.

Finally, because of my involvement with community radio, I have access to a radio station where I present a monthly programme called *The Global Hub* which focuses on development and human rights issues at home and abroad. Most of the participant collaborative projects in this research participated in a radio show in some way. In some cases the project was given a full hour of airtime. Students and community partners were involved in choosing content and speakers, drawing up the schedule, learning about interview technique for radio, researching and presenting. This was another rich source of narrative analysis used in this study.

The narrative analysis in this work explores and seeks meaning in the words, audio and visual components of these stories. I also see the process of making the stories, and the consequent relationships formed between participants, as part of the stories told. Both the process and the product are important. As Riessman says (2008: 11), “narrative analysts interrogate intention and language – how and why incidents are storied, not simply the content”. Like all aspects of this research project, it also takes the broader societal context into account.

## **7.5 Research Process: Linking Students and Partners at home and abroad.**

The research took place over four academic years from 2014 to 2018. It involved five student groups, one group each year, who participated on a voluntary basis. These are referred to in the research as the *Online Intercultural Exchange Group* (OIE), the *Global Teacher Award 1 Group* (GTA 1) the *Cross Disciplinary Group* (CDG) the *Mixed Abilities Group* (MAG) and the *Creative Arts Group* (CAG). These students all participated in the research on a voluntary basis and, along with community partners at home and abroad they worked on a series of collaborative projects. The community partners involved were: a staff team based in an Irish NGDO working in Lesotho, Family Carers Ireland (Cork branch), associates of three NGO’s working in the field of Disability Support Services in Cork, members of the Yazidis community in a refugee camp in Northern Iraq and a group of asylum-seekers and refugees living in Cork. Also

involved, to a lesser extent, was a group of people living in residential care for people with disabilities, in Kolkata, India. Students and partners took part in a series of collaborative projects as explained in this section. These included an online intercultural exchange; collaborative classroom-based learning; digital storytelling; a digital archive; visual arts and a public art exhibition at a high profile art gallery; and radio broadcasting. As mentioned earlier there was also a pilot community group in Year 1 of this study, which for ethical reasons is called only 'MEG' in this study, which involved collaboration with a Minority Ethnic Group in Cork. As explained in section 7.51 and in Chapter Eight, students did not become involved in a collaborative project with the MEG, but the learnings did inform the study as it moved forward.

This section provides a brief description of the student and community groups and the research process. It explains how these groups were recruited to volunteer in the research. However, while the findings do refer to the impact of the work on all students and community groups, I pay particular attention in the research to four individual students and four individual community partners. These are referred to in the thesis as either 'key student participant' (KSP) or 'key community partners' (KCP). These more in-depth studies of eight individuals is necessary to provide the 'thick description' required for a critical ethnographic approach. A more detailed description of these 'key participants' is given in 7.5.1 below.

Each year a group of students volunteered to attend DE workshops (usually six hours) and carry out collaborative projects with partner community groups. Typical themes covered in the six workshops included an exploration of the concepts of 'development' and 'development education'; wealth and poverty; refugees and migration; trade and climate justice; the sustainable development goals; human rights and development and women and development. Three of the student participants were on a work placement as part of their own study programme and they worked closely with the researcher over several months with community partners on designated projects. Other students volunteered to take part in community linked projects, some local, some in Global South countries. The students and community groups also used a range of media to develop their collaborative projects.

### **7.5.1 Pilot Study: Minority Ethnic Group (MEG) Cork**

The research began with a pilot project that involved working closely with a community group (minority ethnic group women's group) in Cork, with a view to deep preparation for working with a UCC student group in year two. This particular group, whom I do not name for ethical reasons (see 'findings' section), suffer considerable discrimination, racism and social exclusion in Irish society. Because of my work background and professional links to the group, I was aware of this group's desire to develop as a community group. I approached a leader in the women's sub-group, also the only member of the group to have attained a third level qualification. She and I had together previously run facilitated Paulo Freire *Training for Transformation* workshops with other groups. We invited a group of women to an information session and eventually ran a series of six workshops on community development based on Paulo Freire's 'Training for Transformation' model. I developed a consent form with images (Appendix 1) met with each woman with an interpreter to explain the research project again, answer their questions and ask if they definitely wished to participate and to establish what their learning expectations were from the workshops. I explained that they could say no or leave at any time. Nine agreed to participate, signed the consent form or gave verbal consent. Of the nine women only one had completed secondary school and none of the others has completed primary school. I transcribed each of the conversations and ensured that the transcriptions and audio recordings were in a secure, password-protected folder. Nine women participated in the research, ranging in age from 20s to 60s. The workshops took place in a community centre close to where most of the women lived. The following areas were covered in the six sessions:

1. Introductions, hopes, fears, listening skills, working as part of a group;
2. Exploring ideas of 'community', 'community development', how they see a 'good community' - using collage;
3. Storytelling, life journeys, hopes for themselves, their families and their group;
4. Irish life, society and politics;
5. Identifying skills within a group; identifying needs of the group (domestic violence emerged strongly and there was a subsequent plan to invite a local domestic violence

women's group to meet with the group); identifying a project (photography) to work on with UCC students;

6. Professional photographer visit: discussion about the project the group wished to develop with students; discussion on myths, legends and childhood stories in their culture. Planning for future collaboration with students.

I recorded each session (with permission) and made field notes immediately after each session. I used drawings, oral contributions and flip chart notes as part of the narrative analysis. For ethical reasons, as described in the 'findings' section, it was decided (in consultation with my PhD supervisor) that this project was not suitable for the type of research I wished to carry out. While this was disappointing, the deeply valuable learning from it informed the research in subsequent years. For this reason too, there is no 'key participant' for this project but the experience as a whole and of the group as a collective are analysed and presented in the research.

### **7.5.2 Project 1: Online Intercultural Exchange (OIE)**

As part of my exploration of the use of web-based technologies, I set about exploring how an OIE could be incorporated into a DE learning process. I approached an Irish humanitarian NGDO working in Lesotho. Having gained consent from the local coordinator and staff, and after initial private one-to-one skype interviews, we agreed to run an online course for staff and other professionals in the local area on *Community Intervention Management* (see Appendix 2.1 - Course Outline). Local facilities were provided and Lesotho participants attended a real-time online class twice a month. To recruit UCC students I attended a non-accredited course on Global Citizenship, which was open to all students and advertised through UCC's student email system (see Appendix 3). Six UCC students attended the online exchange with nine in Lesotho. I also invited three participants living in Canada, the UK and France whom I had met at intercultural training courses. All signed consent forms. I developed the online infrastructure on my website [www.globalcitizencontactpoint.com](http://www.globalcitizencontactpoint.com), using the Learning Management System, Sensei, a WordPress plugin. I wrote and recorded lessons and added audio-visual material. I set up Buddy Press, another plugin, which enabled an online discussion forum. The ten online workshops took place twice a month in real-time with the Lesotho participants and were also recorded. Other students listened



online and the discussion forum became a rich source of narrative analysis. The participants in Lesotho asked for written assignments to improve their English. To gather data, I used the initial in-depth interviews with each participant (Appendix 2.2), an online group evaluation interview at the end, forum discussions (Appendix 2.3), planning session and ‘field notes’ written after each class. The ‘key participant’ I focused on for this project is called ‘Andy’ (not his real name). Andy also took part in other projects as described below. He was an international student from the U.S. studying for his Masters in International Relations at the School of History UCC.

### **7.5.3 Project 2 – Student Group: Global Teacher Award Group and Refugee/Asylum-Seeker Digital Story Telling Project**

By year two my PhD supervisor and I had initiated a project called ‘Id Est’ (‘Integrating Development Education into Student Teacher Training’), at the School of Education, UCC. Its purpose was to introduce student teachers to DE and teaching about local and global citizenship and action for change. PME students were invited to participate in six workshops and work towards a *Global Teacher Award* (GTA), facilitated by an outside facilitator. The GTA covers topics such as ‘development’ and development education, social justice, trade rights, diversity, human rights, interdependence and sustainable development. Six students volunteered to participate in the GTA and in my research project (see Appendix 4 - Invitation). I attended, recorded and took field notes at all sessions. From this group I asked one student, Claire, to become one of my ‘key participants’.

Having completed their GTA course the student participants discussed a possible project they might work in collaboration with a community partner. They decided to invite interested refugees/asylum seekers, living in Cork, to join with them in a digital storytelling (DST) workshop, to learn the skills of DST and to highlight the local / global dimensions of refugee lives. Because of my experience with the pilot project, I sought people from those communities but who were experienced community advocates and/or third level students. The three-day workshop was attended by four PME students and four partners, living in Cork. The countries of origin of the participants included Ireland, the UK, Palestine, Nigeria and South Africa. I was also present as a participant observer. Each signed a consent form (Appendix 5).

The workshop was facilitated by Dr. Darcy Alexandra, a lecturer at the Institute for Social Anthropology, University of Bern. Dr. Alexandra specialises in ethnography and documentary storytelling and her work focuses specifically on audio-visual anthropology, digital storytelling and social documentary practices. Her own PhD research (Alexandra, 2014) involved working with asylum-seekers in Ireland. I invited her to facilitate this workshop when she was visiting Ireland. As a highly experienced and respected professional, she communicated with myself and all participants by email several times and sent substantial reading material in advance of the workshop. Participants were asked to bring their own story about ‘Social Justice’. The workshop itself consisted of an introductory session, a deeper storytelling circle and the production of digital stories. Dr. Alexandra was assisted on day two by two photographers. As a participant and researcher myself, I observed and wrote field notes throughout the three days. I carried out in-depth interviews and an online survey with participants and the facilitator after the workshop (Appendix 6). I also used narrative analysis of the stories<sup>40</sup> (see appendix 7 – example of transcript) including my own, to collect data. This approach focused on the lives of participants as told through their own stories. My question again was to what extent working with community partners suffering some level of social exclusion and use of digital story telling was useful for student engagement with DE and what was the impact on the participating partners.

From this group, along with PME student Claire, another man, Obafemi, an asylum-seeker living in the Direct Provision system in Cork, agreed to become one of my ‘key community participants’.

#### **7.5.4 Project 3 – Student Group: ‘Cross Disciplinary Group’ working on projects with ‘Family Carers’, ‘Community Radio Youghal’ Global Hub Programme and UCC ‘Friends of Refugees’ Group.**

Also in year 2 of the research study, I ran a six-week course on Development Education which I set up specifically for research purposes. I invited students from across campus (see Appendix 4 for similar invitation).

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<sup>40</sup> A sample of the digital stories is available on the accompanying USB (Attachment 2.1 Gertrude Cotter; Attachment 2.2 Obafemi; Attachment 2.3 Claire). . They are also available on the website: <http://www.gertrudecotter.info/phd.thesis/digital-storytelling-workshop/>

to attend and it became a base for four of the case study students, including Claire, Obafemi and Andy mentioned above. The fourth student, called Finuala in this thesis, was a first year social science student who responded to the research invitation. In total, a group of seven students, five female and two male, participated in the interdisciplinary group (all from the humanities), whom I recruited through the UCC email system, invitations posters, visiting classrooms and 'word of mouth'. They were from different nationalities (Irish, American, Malaysian and Nigerian) and ranged in age from nineteen to seventy. All except one were students at different levels in UCC, from first year to PhD level. Obafemi, was a post-secondary school student at a nearby college and was living in a direct provision centre. All participated actively, carried out community-linked projects and discussed the DE themes and their community-linked projects in weekly classroom-based sessions. Two of the students in this group, Andy and Finuala, were also undertaking this work as part of a work placement for their own studies. Topics covered in these workshops included 'development', 'development education' and related terms; social justice; global and local migration and refugee issues; human rights; hidden work of women and sustainable development.

All students participated in a project relating to refugees. They were actively involved in establishing a student group called *UCC Friends of Refugees*; they organised a public seminar about the global refugee crisis; and they made two radio programmes at *Community Radio Youghal (CRY)*<sup>41</sup>. Of the four 'key participants' Andy worked closely with me on a work-placement in collaboration with the Family Carers Ireland<sup>42</sup>, Cork Branch on their campaign and digital storytelling work. He also worked with me on several radio shows on a range of development issues and he took part in the online course with the Lesotho community. In the family carers group the 'key community partner' is Kathleen, described in more detail below. Obafemi and Claire worked on the refugee projects, including the radio and the digital story-telling project outlined above. Finuala collaborated with Obafemi on the production of part of a radio show about the asylum system in Ireland. She also worked with me on a work-placement, which is described under 'Project 4' below.

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<sup>41</sup> A sample of radio shows is in the accompanying USB – attachments 3.1-3.5. Also available at <http://www.gertrudecatter.info/phd.thesis/radio/>. Vera's radio interview is attachment 3.5 at the website: <http://movingonireland.com/valerie-browne/#radio>

<sup>42</sup> Family Carers Ireland advocates for the rights of family carers. See Att. 4.1 <http://behindthecurtain.info/> which is a website created as part of this research study.

### **7.5.5 Project 4 – ‘Mixed Abilities Group’ of UCC students in collaborative DE learning experience with service users from three Disability Support services in Cork, inclusive of people with Intellectual, Neurological and Physical Disabilities.**

In Year 3 I wanted to take DE to another group whom I felt were often excluded in DE learning, this being people with intellectual and physical disabilities. At this point too I was feeling less comfortable with a sense of ‘them and us’ in my research approach, so I wanted all participants, students and ‘community partners’ to participate in six DE workshops together. I ran six two-hour workshops on Development Education themes attended by twelve students, six from UCC and six from three ‘disability’ partner groups. These groups were service providers in the field of Disability in Ireland and all participants were living in residential care. The director of one of the services had an interest in sustainable development and had much experience in facilitating groups. She agreed to co-facilitate the six week course and to also assist by bringing some staff to help with logistics, transport etc.

The ‘key participants’ in my research work from this project were first year student Finuala and a wheelchair user, Vera (not her real name), who also had learning difficulties and more importantly had recently moved out of residential care and into her own home in the community. Finuala, a first year social science student, had responded to my call for researchers and she had already participated in the six week course with the Cross Disciplinary group. From discussions at the CDG I knew that Finuala was interested in gaining work experience and that she had a particular interest in the lives of people living in institutional care settings such as residential centres, direct provision and prisons. I invited her to take part in a work placement which involved attending the six workshops as a participant but also working closely with one participant, Vera (not her real name), a wheelchair user and person with learning disabilities. With Vera’s permission. I asked Finuala to work closely with Vera to help her to reach her full potential in the course, including practice help in getting to the class but also course content and activities. Given Finuala’s interest in this field, I asked Vera to share with Finuala, her story of living in residential care, moving out of that care setting and

moving into her own home. Finuala and Vera also worked with me and other students, on a digital archive about institutional care in Ireland, an archive that features Vera's own story of her move out of institutional care (The Archive Attachment 5.1 can be found at: [www.movingonireland.com](http://www.movingonireland.com)). Vera's story is on the accompanying USB (Attachment 5.2) and entitled *No Looking Back*. It can also be found at the website: <http://movingonireland.com/valerie-browne/>.

In addition, the coordinator of a course for people with intellectual disabilities at UCC asked if I could take one of their students on a work placement. This student joined our planning sessions and helped with the organisation and facilitation of the six DE workshops. When I attended a course myself on the theme of Sustainable Development I was fortunate to meet a woman who worked in another NGO working with people with intellectual disabilities.

One of these organisations also had a residential centre in Kolkata (formerly Calcutta) India. We had an online discussion with the group there about life in India and in Ireland. In addition, one of the participants had a sister who worked as a development worker in community radio in Kenya, with Irish Aid. She came to speak to the group about her work. The project which all students worked on together was the production of a radio show as part of the Global Hub. Some short extracts from this radio show are on the attached USB (Attachment 5.3). The full show includes an interview with the Aid Agency Concern as well as discussion on what the group had learned during their six-week course. At the end, the students were also presented with a certificate of participation.

I gathered data in the following ways: (1) observation – I recorded all workshops and wrote field notes immediately afterwards. I particularly focused on the experience of both Finuala and Vera. At this stage I knew both 'key participants' well. I had worked with Vera in the past and Finuala had been attending the cross-disciplinary group workshops. (2) Radio narrative - the students researched and presented a radio show about what they had learned. This was transcribed and content/process was analysed as part of the data collection procedure, particularly content relevant to Vera and Finuala. (3) Narrative from the digital archive and digital stories. I used data from student blogs and from Vera's story to analyse learning and experiences of this process. As always, my question was to what extent such engagement with community-linked learning and

multimedia, impacted on student engagement with DE issues and what was the impact of the work for community partners.

#### **7.5.6 Project 5: PME Students and Yazidi Community Partner based in Refugee Camp in Northern Iraq.**

By the time I arrived at Year 4 of my research, the 'Id Est' Project, described above, was also in its fourth year. Once again my PhD supervisor and I worked with a group of PME students to deliver Development Education in the classroom, through innovative, (particularly using the creative arts), teaching and learning methodologies. Students were again self-selecting and volunteered to participate in the evening outside of their teacher-training curricular programme. Each signed a consent form. We introduced students to the core concepts of Development Education in core lectures, we ran six hours of training towards the Global Teacher Award (GTA), facilitated by Galway One World Centre, and we had a guest speaker, a Development Education Officer from the aid agency Trócaire. We also had two workshops with professional exhibition design and curation experts, one from the Glucksman Gallery, an art Gallery at UCC, who agreed that our students could use the gallery for their exhibition. This allowed us to illustrate how creative arts and an art gallery such as the Glucksman can enable and enhance both teaching and learning of DE in the second and third level classroom. The student teachers developed an art exhibition called *A Journey through Development Education*, in collaboration with the Glucksman. The website, which I created to showcase their work, can be found at: <http://www.idestexhibition2018.gertrudecotter.info> (Attachment 5.4). In addition, I had some preliminary findings from my own research and a visual representation of my findings to date, was displayed at the exhibition (see Appendix 8).

I recorded all classroom sessions and made field notes the day after each class. The 'key student participant' for this part of the research I am calling 'Kerry' (see next section for a fuller profile of Kerry). I linked Kerry and her fifth year class in a school in a small rural town in North Cork, to a family living in the 'Bersive 1' refugee/internally displaced people's camp in Northern Iraq, which 'housed' around 4,000 Yazidis families who were from the Sinjar district of Iraq. Kerry's class, whom she taught as part of her teaching practice, made an artefact, in this case a tent, for the exhibition, as

part of a series of classes given by Kerry to the class. The tent<sup>43</sup> was a replica of the tent of one family, the family of ‘Arba’, a young Yazidis father of one child. While not part of my research, I asked a group of UCC students studying digital humanities to base their course project, which involved working on a website, on the Yazidis Genocide and on the story of Arba’s family <https://yazidisgenocide.com> (Attachment 5.4). They also communicated with Arba through Facebook as did the fifth year class.

I made contact with Arba and his family through an organisation in Ireland who work at the refugee camp and send volunteers to work there. After many emails with Arba, we agreed on the parameters of the project and I enlisted the help of a Kurdish speaker in Cork to help communications throughout. Arba’s family had to leave their home due to the genocide of the Yazidi people in 2014, by the so-called Islamic State (IS), who are recognised by the United Nations as the perpetrator of genocide of Yazidis in Iraq. A 2016 UN report says IS has subjected members of the religious group it has captured to the “most horrific of atrocities”, killing or enslaving thousands. According to the UNHCR, Ireland (UNHCR, Ireland, 2019), there are currently 68.5 million forcibly displaced people worldwide, with 25.4 million of these being refugees. The work of Kerry and her class also features on this website, the process of making the tent but also a radio show I carried out with fifth year students and with Kerry, where they talk about their DE learning. A detailed description of Arba as a ‘key community participant’ is at Section 7.6.8 below in the ‘Eight Key Participants’ section of this chapter.

## **7.6 Eight Key Research Participants**

As explained above this research paid particular attention to the experience of eight ‘key participants’ - four students, Andy, Claire, Finuala and Kerry - and four partners, Kathleen, Obafemi, Vera and Arba. This section profiles these eight key participants in more detail.

### **7.6.1 Andy (Key ‘Student Participant’)**

I first met Andy at a part-time evening course “STAND Global Issues” which was organised by SUAS, an Irish Aid funded organisation charged with bringing Development Education to third level students in Ireland. This course welcomed

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<sup>43</sup> See appendix 6.

students from across disciplines and involved a series of workshops that focus on “the interdependent and unequal world in which we live, through a process of interactive learning, debate, action and reflection”. I purposely attended the course seeking students who might be interested in being involved in my PhD research. Andy was a twenty year old Masters student in International Relations at UCC, who was seeking a work placement as part of his course. He was from the U.S. and spending a year in Cork as an international student. With the agreement of the head of his School (History) Andy worked alongside me on project work for his work placement. I saw ‘work placements’ as another way in which students can, as part of their studies, engage with DE and I wanted to explore Andy’s experience of such a work placement. He and I worked with the Family Carers, with UCC’s ‘Friends of Refugees’ and on the radio show *The Global Hub*. He also participated in the online intercultural exchange with the Lesotho group and in all six DE workshops with the Cross Disciplinary Group (CDG). Alongside fellow participants in that group Andy became actively involved in the ‘UCC Friends of Refugees’ Group, helped organise a public event about the refugee crisis, sold Christmas cards for the group and worked on the radio shows on local/global refugee issues. Andy had a zest for learning, was fully engaged and highly energetic. He began his nearly daily work placement in October 2015.

I had identified a community group in Cork, the Older Person’s Group at the Family Carers Ireland Cork Branch, who were seeking support with their advocacy campaign in the run up to the 2015 General Election in Ireland. Andy and I helped facilitate the Older Person’s Group to prepare for the General Election. A large and lively group of older carers attended eight workshops on advocacy and campaigning for older carers. We helped create an advocacy toolkit for training other membership groups around the country and we developed a website which included video stories about the lives of their members. We also supported the group to link to student groups in UCC. The carers gave five talks to trainee professionals in areas of education, social science and nursing, including our own cross-discipline group where we looked at the issues of women’s work in the Global Economy. The toolkit and a selection of the stories are presented in the attached USB and all the stories can be found on the website we produced (see <http://behindthecurtain.info>.) We put together a plan for the 2016 election campaign and provided information on the website on how the general public could help: Andy also ran some basic computer training workshops with the carers so



that they could access and continue to update the website into the future. The carer group also had a full hour long radio programme at the community radio station.

My method of data gathering with Andy as participant was: observation of his work-placement throughout; narrative analysis of his forum discussions (from the Lesotho course); narrative analysis of radio shows he produced and participated in; his final report to his School regarding his learning from the work-placement; ongoing informed discussions and interviews with him about his experience of this project. I also used some of his later emails to me showing his career progress one and two years later.

### **7.6.2 Kathleen (Key ‘Community Partner’)**

One of the family carers in the group which Andy worked with was a woman in her early 70s whom I will call Kathleen. She agreed to be one of the ‘key community participants’ for the research. She had cared for her husband for many years before his death. I first met Kathleen when Andy and I started to work with the ‘Older Family Carers group’ on their campaign strategy for the 2016 General Election. I knew from the first day I met the group that they were a strong, informed and well-organised group who would know how to best use the student and research resources being offered to them. They had an analysis and strategic plan, which in turn would benefit a student on work-placement. At the first meeting of the group one member took the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights out of his pocket and quoted relevant parts to me. As I got to know the group I asked Kathleen if she would be willing to be one of the key participants for this research. I could have asked any of the impressive people in the group but I wanted to highlight some local and global women’s issues with the cross-disciplinary student group. Additionally, Kathleen was not one of the obvious leaders in the group; she was relatively quiet and reserved, yet she was a solid long-standing member, knew her own mind and I felt, that perhaps she was ready for more attention to her story and willing to take on a more pro-active role. My fieldnotes at that time note “sort of like on the cusp of leadership? Or is it something about wanting to tell her story?” Like the others in the group, she attended the ten workshops we facilitated on developing a campaign strategy for the Cork family carers for the election. Together we also produced an advocacy toolkit for family carer groups wishing to campaign for carer rights. We also helped the group to make a website which featured the toolkit, the political campaign and digital stories we made with the group. A major part of the work

of this project was to produce videos featuring the lives of the carers. I was interested in exploring the impact of this work on Kathleen. What did it mean for her? ; Did she benefit?; What did she think the carers group as a whole benefited from the DE work being done?

She attended the campaigning workshops and was particularly interested in digital story telling. In the workshops, Kathleen was engaged, interested and clear in her thinking. She talked a great deal about her husband James (not his real name) who had died a number of years previously after a long illness. She talked about how she had cared for him. Whereas Andy had spent a lot of time working with the group as a whole, I myself also worked very closely with Kathleen with a view to understanding her experience of this work. I spent many hours with her to produce and edit her own digital story. Kathleen also attended a computer-training course, which Andy and I had facilitated.

My method of data gathering with Kathleen as participant was: field notes after each workshop; narrative analysis of a talk given by Kathleen and another carer to the cross-disciplinary student group and to other student groups in UCC; narrative analysis of her digital story from content, visual and audio perspectives, her general engagement with the process of making the story and working with Andy and myself; and an in-depth semi-structured interview with her at the end of the project.

### **7.6.3 Claire (Key ‘Student Participant’)**

The second ‘key student participant’ was Claire, who at the time of the research was a first year post-graduate student at University College Cork (UCC) studying for her Professional Masters in Education (PME). She is described in Section 7.6.3 above. Her undergraduate degree was in languages, French and Irish. The PME is the course taken by students training as secondary school teachers in Ireland. It is highly a competitive course and generally students are of a high academic standard. As described above, the PME Year 1 students were invited to participate in a six-hour course called the Global Teacher Award (GTA), which was run by staff of the Galway One World Centre. Claire attended all six sessions on the themes of Global Citizenship, Social Justice, Diversity, Human Rights, Interdependence and Sustainable Development. All participants attended the class voluntarily outside of their normal PME classes and were awarded the GTA certificate on successful completion of the course *and* a collaborative

project. Claire was clearly a highly motivated and engaged student and particularly interested in refugee issues. As explained above, she and other participants decided, for their collaborative project, to invite interested refugees or asylum-seekers living in Cork to participate in a digital story-telling workshop. All participants, both UCC students and refugees/asylum seekers (two of whom were UCC students), had been asked to bring a story about social injustice, either an injustice they had witnessed or a story about an injustice they had experienced themselves. They shared these stories in a story circle and produced a digital story over the three days

Having discussed my research with Claire, she happily agreed to join the cross-disciplinary research group and I was delighted to have her because of her passion, sensitivity and desire to learn more. She again attended the six DE workshops and collaborated with colleagues to produce a radio show (USB: At. 3.3). This show sought to engage with 'UCC Friends of Refugees' group and to organise a public event on the refugee crisis.

My method of data gathering with Claire as participant was: field notes taken at each of the six global teacher award workshops (all recorded); field notes taken after each of the six cross-disciplinary group workshops; field notes taken at the digital story-telling workshop; narrative analysis of Claire's story; narrative analysis of her radio interview; and a semi-structured interview with Claire at the end of the digital story-telling workshop (see Appendix 6).

In my visual representation of Claire my instinct was to show the well-developed critical pedagogical approaches she took to life in general. In the panel depicting her work (Att. 5.3) I depict her as learning, thinking and taking action in many ways, her willingness to use her voice to fight for the rights of others and her deeper understanding of human rights and the importance of dignity. Importantly too I show a playing card, the Ace of Hearts, with a picture of two aces. Under each Ace is the name of one of her two grandfathers, depicting, I what I sensed throughout my two year encounter with Claire, the importance of her early childhood values and the basic decency of her family foundations.

#### **7.6.4 Obafemi (Key ‘Community Partner’)**

Obafemi is a Nigerian man, in his early 30s, living in Direct Provision in an asylum-seeker accommodation centre close to Cork city. At the time of the research, he was studying in a college of further education in Cork - taking a course in social care. As an asylum-seeker he did not have the right to access Higher Education but he volunteered to participate in the digital story telling workshops and later in the cross disciplinary group, along with Claire, Andy, Finuala and other students. I had met Obafemi at a public event I had organised about refugee lives. I found him to be very engaged and vocal and I felt he might be interested in participating. He was interested in attending third level education if he was granted refugee status and the idea of attending this course attracted him so that he could ‘get to know’ UCC. He said he enjoyed coming to events at UCC where he found students and staff open and welcoming. His Muslim religion was important to him he said, as was his relationship with his family of origin. His father, a strict Muslim, had a strong influence on how he lived his life.

My method of data gathering with Obafemi as participant was: field notes taken after each of the six cross-disciplinary group workshops (all recorded); field notes taken at the digital story-telling workshop; narrative analysis of his digital story (At. 2.2); a semi-structured interview at the end of the digital story-telling workshop (Appendix 6).

#### **7.6.5 Finuala (Key ‘Student Participant’)**

Finuala was one of the students who replied to my general invitation to students to participate in this research. Then a first year social science student aged nineteen. She joined the cross-disciplinary group and attended five of six workshops on development education. She was by far the quietest of the participants, yet confident and interested in learning. Along with other students, she helped organise the refugee public event mentioned above and helped produce the radio programme on refugees.

Finuala also agreed to take part in a series of six workshops, which I organised in Year 3 of this research, with what I call the ‘Mixed Abilities Group’ a group of students with mixed intellectual and physical abilities, some students at UCC and some residents with disability support services in Cork city. Finuala had particularly strong feelings about institutions such as care homes, prisons and direct provision and why human beings should not live in them. She was therefore very interested in this particular project. I

also asked her to be one of my key student participants, which she willingly agreed to. As described above this group attended six workshops on Global Citizenship themes. Finuala also saw this as an opportunity to gain work experience, linked to her future career. Her job was to work with Vera, who also attended the mixed ability sessions (see below). Finuala first met Vera when I introduced them before the first ‘mixed abilities’ course on Global Citizenship. She diligently worked with Vera throughout. Her task was to support Vera, a wheelchair user, ensure she arrived safely to the classroom, was comfortable and was generally enabled to fully participate in the classroom activities. Both attended as participants in the class. Finuala and Vera also worked on developing a digital archive about the voices of people moving out of institutional care, along with other students on this course.

My method of data gathering with Finuala as participant was: field notes taken after each of the six cross-disciplinary group workshops and blog entries on the online forum established for this course; field notes taken at the six mixed abilities group workshops; narrative analysis of Finuala’s radio interview (Att. 3.3).

#### **7.6.6 Vera (Key ‘Community Partner’)**

Vera was a forty four year old wheelchair user, who had recently moved out of institutional care into her own home. I had known Vera for some time before the six-week course for the ‘Mixed Abilities Group’ started. When I started my PhD studies, I had taken up a part time job to support my studies. It was through this job that I met two of the participants in what would become the ‘mixed abilities’ group. They both lived in a residential care setting and my job for a year was that of ‘Community Transition Coordinator’. This involved supporting two individuals to move out of residential care into their own homes. In this thesis I call them Vera and Michael. My blog on the digital archive associated with this project<sup>44</sup>, notes my surprise at how much I liked this job. It is relevant to this research to note that when I went for the interview for this position I was not expecting to get the job - I had never worked with people with neurological, physical and intellectual disabilities. I realised at the interview for the job, something later confirmed by the interviewers, that my past work which included advocacy with people living in Direct Provision was very relevant to this position. As I describe later, the realisation and understanding of these linkages became

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<sup>44</sup> see <http://movingonireland.com>

a strong theme within the learning process of this project, not just for me but also for participants. I was equally surprised when I started in the position that:

...I had discovered a whole new world. More than that, I had discovered a profoundly new way of seeing, experiencing and understanding the meaning of life. This would be no ordinary job. These were no ordinary people. In fact I can't think of this experience as a 'job' as such. It was a learning experience in how to be a human being and it is this experience that I want to share in this story. I didn't feel like a worker in an economy. I felt like a person in a society. And sometimes we forget that this is what we are in this busy, digitally-driven, globalised manic world which we now inhabit (<http://movingonireland.com>).

Vera and Michael were highly interesting, intelligent, profound, brave and inspiring individuals living in a residential care home in Cork. Vera had lived there for seventeen years. In 2013, the organisation that ran the residential centre began to take a lead role in Ireland in supporting residents to move to their own homes. They used a 'Social Roles Valorisation'<sup>45</sup> approach to their work and trained us as new 'Transition Coordinators' (my position). I came to know both Vera and Michael very well and had an extremely good relationship with both. By the time I arrived at year three of my PhD I was no longer working with them. However, when I decided to run the Global Citizenship course with students and people attached to three disability support organisations in Cork, I knew that both would be delighted to attend and would contribute greatly to the research study. After a long consent process, to ensure that I was not imposing my own assumptions, I was delighted to welcome both of them on to the course along with the other participants, including Finuala. I asked Vera if she would be one of my key 'partner' participants, alongside Finuala. She graciously agreed. Vera attended all six of the Global Citizenship workshops, where she actively engaged in each class.

Vera, Matthew, Finuala, other student participants and myself as researcher, worked on developing a digital archive about the voices of people moving out of institutional care

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<sup>45</sup> Social Role Valorization (SRV) is the name given to a concept for transacting human relationships and human service, formulated in 1983 by Wolf Wolfensberger, PhD. The major goal of SRV is to create or support socially valued roles for people in their society, because if a person holds valued social roles, that person is highly likely to receive from society those good things in life that are available to that society, and that can be conveyed by it, or at least the opportunities for obtaining these. In other words, all sorts of good things that other people are able to convey are almost automatically apt to be accorded to a person who holds societally valued roles, at least within the resources and norms of his/her society.

in Ireland. The archive concentrated on the life of Michael and Vera, who told their story through the medium of film and through the use of their own photographs. The website associated with this archive is: <http://movingonireland.com>. Vera's video story is on the attached USB and entitled *No Looking Back* (Att. 5.2).

My method of data gathering with Vera as participant was: field notes taken after each of the six Global Citizenship workshops; narrative analysis of the digital archive; and her own digital story and that of her speaking about making this story.

### **7.6.7 Kerry (Key 'Student Participant')**

As explained under 'Project 5' above, we ran the 'Id Est' project again for Professional Master in Education (PME) students. I had made contact with a Yazidis community and particularly Arba and his family living in a displaced person's camp in Northern Iraq. I wanted to understand how working online with this family could engage both student teachers and what the impact of this work would be on Arba (not his real name) and family. I was interested in understanding how this partnership would impact too on the classroom-based work of a student teacher. I invited all of the student teachers taking the Global Teacher Award to participate in my research as a key student participant.

Kerry (not her real name), accepted this invitation. She was very interested in refugee and related areas and wanted to take this as a theme with her fifth year class. Her classroom placement, as part of her training, was in a small rural town in North Cork where she taught fifth year art. Kerry attended all ten classes on preparing for the art exhibition at the Glucksman Art Gallery which included the Global Teacher Award. She listened to guest speakers on 'how to curate' artwork in an Art Gallery. She and her class made a tent which was a replica of the Arba's family tent in the Bersive camp in Northern Iraq and which 'housed' a family of ten.

It was not possible for the class to talk directly to Arba, primarily because this had not been covered in the original ethical guidelines to this research. I had not originally envisaged working with young people under the age of eighteen, for example. Timing, technology and language would in any case have proved difficult. However, the class were aware that this was a real family and they read about the family on a website which was being created by a second year university digital arts and humanities (DAH) class I worked with as part of this project. The DAH students were working with me as

part of their own class project. Their university lecturer was looking for suitable ‘real-world’ projects and I felt that their skills would fit with Arba’s interest in highlighting his story. Therefore, there was not direct contact between Kerry’s second level class and Arba and his family, although Kerry herself did communicate with him through facebook and relayed these stories to her class.

My method of data gathering with Kerry as participant was: field notes after each of the PME classes; recordings of informal conversations; narrative analysis of an interview with her at her placement school; a radio interview with her fifth year class at their school; and commentary of visitors to the art exhibition, which included their reactions to the tent construction.

### **7.6.8 Arba (Key ‘Community Partner’)**

I had made contact with Arba (not his real name) through a volunteer organisation called DINIT, an Irish based humanitarian volunteer recruitment agency. The director of this organisation had said that he met with Arba who was interested in photojournalism and who very much wanted to highlight his story and that of the Yazidis people. Arba was a member of the Yazidis community, one of Iraq’s oldest minorities. In 2014, he and his family were forced to flee to Mount Sinjar in the Iraqi north-west region, or face slaughter by an encircling group of Islamic State (ISIS) jihadists. The UN has said that roughly 40,000 people – many women and children – have taken refuge in nine locations on the mountain at that time (Jalabi, 2014). ISIS has been recognised by the United Nations as the perpetrator of genocide of Yazidis in Iraq. As stated earlier a 2016 UN report (UNHCR, 2016) says IS has subjected members of the religious group it has captured to the “most horrific of atrocities”, killing or enslaving thousands.

My initial discussions with Arba took place by email. I was led entirely by Arba’s request to DINIT to help with the telling of his story. I sent several long emails to Arba explaining the purpose of this research project, to which he often used the term “thank you for this humanity” or “I am very happy with this humanitarian work. Note I know Arabic and Kurdish language” or “Ok my friend I’m OK on everything”. He first told me his story by email as follows (note the initials below refer to names of people in his family, his wife, his child, his parents, brothers and sisters):



My name is 'A' a Yezidi displaced from Iraq, we have been displaced in 2014 because of ISIS's attack when they shut our villages in the early morning of 3/8/2014 because we are from a different religion .many many of our men have killed by them, and kids, girls and women have been taken by force as well. We ran away without food and clothes climbing Shingal mount where we stayed thirsty and hungry there under sun light for a week. Then we went to Syria and after that we settled down in Zakho which is a city of Kurdistan region. Now we live in Bersive 1 camp since that date, actually we have suffered specially in summer, the camp lacks to a lot of services especially shared bathrooms and WCs for different many families, in addition the water is not pure and always we are in danger of the tents being burnt since that thing happened several times and people died as result. We also are afraid in this community to be attacked again for religion difference causes. The yezidis have been exposed to genocide 74 times over years. My father's family consists of: AMH,1969, householder; DSM,1971, housewife; AAM,1997, high school student; SAM, 2000, high school student; OAM, 2003,2003, secondary school student; AAM, 2008, elementary school student, OAM, 2015, a child. (Email 12<sup>th</sup> January 2018).

Arba stayed in touch with the DAH students and with Arba and sent copious numbers of images, some of which can be seen in Appendix 6. These photographs were sent by Messenger and were displayed on Arba's Facebook page. They illustrate his interest in photojournalism and the power of images to tell a story. Many of the images show the conditions of living in the camp. Some show the aftermath of a particularly harsh flooding event at the camp with images of people wading through the floods or the filth and debris inside tents in the wake of the storm.

My method of data gathering with Arba as participant was: narrative analysis of his emails, facebook entries and choices he made about what information to put on the website.

## **7.7 Research Ethics**

Ethical aspects of this research are placed within the Code of Ethics mandated by the UCC Ethics Committee under their 'Code of Research Conduct, University College Cork', and by the Social Science Research Committee (SRE) group which ultimately granted approval for this study. However, ethics in this research project is not just about following a set of fairly standard guidelines, but a core part of ongoing deep reflexivity in practice, based on my own ethical responsibility as a researcher. The ethical nature of my qualitative study was more than principlist as it was based on relationships (Cullen, 2005: 254). The principlist paradigm, Cullen explains, assumes

that research can be guided by a straightforward code of ethical conduct that focuses on the individual rights of the participant (ibid.: 254). In contrast, a *relationships* paradigm of ethics “is concerned with relationships and groups involved in the research and is context based” (ibid.: 254). In my research I deliberately blurred the more separate or distinctive roles of researcher and the researched, which caused several ethical issues and possible dilemmas to arise and the implications of these are discussed in more detail in the findings section of the thesis. Indeed, ethical issues are a core part of my research findings. It was through doing the research that I more clearly understood the deeper ethical implications of this kind of work. Here I outline the key principles and practical ethical concerns which informed my project from the outset.

***Informed and voluntary consent:*** In my research, I perceived potential participants as partners in a learning process, based on a relationship of mutual respect and trust (BPS, 2014: 6). A key element of this relationship is informed consent. My pilot project taught me that simply following the guidelines of a code of conduct is not enough. Each relationship has a context. In some situations it is not always easy to refuse participation and you cannot necessarily fully know this even when you have signatures from seemingly consenting adults. Informed consent became an even higher ethical concern as my understanding of its deeper meaning evolved. However, from the start I met with all participants individually either online or in person, to discuss the purpose of the research, provide them with a consent form and time to read and return it to me if they did not want to participate. All participants were informed that they did not have to participate and if they did not, there would be no implications of any kind. They could leave the research project at any time and again there would be no repercussions. Indeed in the case of courses they could stay in the course and not be part of the research project. Where necessary I paid an interpreter to ensure full comprehension where English was not a first language. Where literacy was an issue, I provided simple to follow consent forms with images which I also read through. In the case of participating organisations, a representative of the organisation also signed a consent form.

One particularly vulnerable set of adults was those with intellectual disabilities or learning difficulties. In the case of the I knew before the research began, I met them twice along with an independent advocate from the National Advocacy Association or

family member. Each also met their advocate alone. I did so in order to ensure that our previous professional relationship, which was one of great trust, did not in any way make them feel compromised. I believed from working with them that they would really enjoy the project and I felt we had an excellent rapport, but I wanted to be as certain as possible that I was not imposing my own impressions. I had to note that I cared deeply for each of these individuals and also enjoyed their company. I felt confident, having involved independent advocates that both were aware of the purpose of the research and were eager to sign the consent form. Other members of this group were accompanied by two advocates, a senior staff member at their service along with their independent advocate.

### ***Respect for rights of privacy and confidentiality***

The issue of confidentiality is not a simple one given that the very nature of the research meant that web-based tools, radio and public art exhibition were used to produce sometimes very personal stories. It was also not a simple one because one of the key research findings is that those who are socially excluded have a strong desire to have their story heard. At the same time there were decisions to be made between myself and the participants as to which parts of their private lives they wished to make public. There had to be agreement with each individual on which parts of a storytelling process, interview or observation might be public and which parts would be public. This was not problematic in terms of the parts which were agreed to be in public. As my project and methodology dictated an equal relationship with the participants, honesty and integrity were essential. There is a high degree of importance placed on reciprocity (Harrison, et al., 2001: 1). However, ethical dilemmas did arise for me regarding the use of my own observations for discussion in this thesis, especially when the identity of the participant is on a public platform. My methodology was *critical* ethnography, I was exploring and initiating pedagogical change, and its impact on participants. Some observations were personalised in a way which an individual might find challenging to read about themselves and the dilemma lay in how such findings were to be shared. This was addressed in several ways. The first was to use different names in the thesis for each participant. Thus, those who are not in a public platform are not identified. The second was to discuss the account of their case study with each individual in the spirit of collaboration and mutual respect. The trust that had been built up ensured that this was not a problematic process. The *critical* aspects of the research are, in any case,

in the findings and analysis and are not about the individuals involved. In respect of confidentiality and groups, some broad observations relating to members of groups are shared without identifying the individuals concerned and great care is taken to ensure such privacy is not compromised.

### ***Ownership of Data***

Interviews and private recordings were not shared with anyone except in some cases with my PhD supervisor and this was made explicit in the consent forms. Raw data was stored in password protected computer folders and in Nvivo which is also password protected. However, some of the personal information shared by participants was made public because many of the collaborative projects with real communities were advocating about real world challenges. In relation to digital stories all but two (UCC student) participants agreed to have their stories publicly available on my website [www.globacitizencontactpoint.com](http://www.globacitizencontactpoint.com) and indeed actively sought, in most cases, to use the videos in public fora in order to highlight their situation. All participants received a copy of their own story. In relation to ownership of websites, I retain control of the websites as they were developed for the PhD research. Where an organisation (e.g. Family Carers) wanted to also retain and continue to use the website, the website was cloned so that I retained the original PhD version which remains static and the organisation could continue to update the cloned version.

### ***Ethics in practice***

A sense of ethical probity also guided my conduct as a researcher. I was given a privileged position and allowed access to observations and stories. Trust between myself and participants was essential. Also, during this time my relationships changed. No longer was I just a research student, but in many situations I became friend, and even confidant. As such there was a responsibility not to betray this trust. There were occasions when my role as activist was also tested and constrained.

## **7.8 Data Analysis**

LeCompte and Schensul (1999: 195) define data analysis as "the process of reducing large amounts of collected data to make sense of them" or in their later book (2012:2) they state that "analysis reduces data to a story ethnographers can tell". However, Thomas (1993: 43), argues that "something more" happens in data analysis, the "value-

added element”. It is not sufficient to study the world without also attempting to change it. Critical ethnography identifies ways in which alternative interpretations of cultural symbols can be displayed. It directs attention to things that are not quite right in our culture (ibid.: 47), it requires that we attend to the various dimensions of topic selection, data acquisition, interpretation, and discourse to look for ways to move. Keeping this in mind and guided by my research questions I set about the process of data analysis.

The broad analytical procedure I utilise is the threefold process which Ricoeur (Ricoeur, 2012: 52–87) calls Mimesis I, Mimesis II, and Mimesis III. Ricoeur’s Mimesis I is prefiguration. Prefiguration is the pre-understanding that I as the reader or researcher bring to a text/the data. It is the practical understanding gained through my own life experience that enables me to understand what is happening. It is how I make sense of the text. I see this as linked to concepts of reflexivity and awareness of researcher positionality discussed earlier. Mimesis II is configuration, which is a form of emplotment, organising the various elements of a narrative into relation with each other, or into “an intelligible whole” (ibid.: 65).

This is similar to what Labaree (2017:1) terms a “holistic perspective” which acknowledges that all the individual research activities can be understood as a complex system that is more than the sum of its parts; the focus is on complex interdependencies and system dynamics that cannot be reduced in any meaningful way to linear, cause and effect relationships and/or a few discrete variables. Configuration is what stops the text from merely being a series of studies or incidents joined together. Mimesis III refers to re-figuration, which is “the intersection of the world of the text and the world of the hearer or reader” (Ricoeur, 1984: 71). Once again a hermeneutic circle emerges, what Ricoeur considers a ‘healthy circle’: we bring understanding to a text and the text deepens our understanding, which we then bring back to the text. This is linked to the concept of the ‘inductive process’ mentioned earlier. Patterns, categories, and themes evolve as data collection proceeds rather than imposing them a priori (Tesol, 2012). As noted previously the analysis is also context sensitive, generalisations and meanings are not necessarily transferrable to other settings. Academic rigour, described by Kincheloe (2004: 22) is important, not through “pre-specified, correct patterns of analysis” but through “more holistic, inclusive, and eclectic models. In this context the ‘present awareness’ of numerous cultural, historical, and philosophical traditions is explored for

insights into new ways of thinking, seeing, being, and researching and new modes of thinking, teaching and learning.

In terms of the 'breakdown' of different 'stages' of research I originally planned to use Carspecken's (1996) five stages of research analysis but while I was influenced by some of his basic principles, such as researcher praxis, rigour, validation and use of system relations to explain findings, I found the model too linear, prescriptive, restrictive and difficult to use in a research project which was intrinsically collaborative. In particular I found that Carspecken did not give sufficient attention to relationships and since this was an important aspect of my research, I chose to seek a broader approach which, while retaining academic rigour and core 'critical' considerations and frameworks, allowed me to continue with my bricolage approach. I was therefore guided by, but did not adhere rigorously to, Carspecken's five stages. I borrowed too from the work of Kathy Charmaz (2006) on Constructing Grounded Theory, particularly in relation to coding, memo writing, theoretical sampling, and in line with Ricoeur above, then reconstructing theory to arrive at a rigorous analysis of the findings.

In order to manage the volume of data I used the qualitative data analysis programme Nvivo, useful as a tool for organising my data and coding. It was a useful means of storing, coding and reporting data. With six hundred and seven raw data sources to manage, it was helpful as a data management tool. The first step was to bring together all of the primary records I had collected over four years and import them into the 'sources' section of Nvivo. I created folders and sub folders where all sources were categorised according to source type (e.g. field note or digital story) into folders and sub folders (see section of list of sources in Appendix 8). There were 607 sources in total including field notes, assignments, forum discussions, student blogs, digital stories and their transcriptions, interviews and their transcriptions, radio shows and transcriptions, visual artefacts such as student artwork or photographs taken by participants, text and images captured from the digital archive. Web-based sources were captured using Ncapture, a web browser extension, which allows for easy capture of content such as web pages, online PDFs and social media. Essentially I worked with what I found. I allowed the story of the research to speak to me and emerge from the findings.

Qualitative coding was the next step. I created a folder 'phase 1 initial noting and coding' under Nvivo 'nodes' where each key participant had a dedicated folder

including one for ‘researcher’. Thus I could study early data and begin to separate, sort, and synthesize this data through qualitative coding. Charmaz (2006: 3) defines coding as:

Coding means that we attach labels to segments of data that depict what each segment is about. Coding distils data, sorts them, and gives us a handle for making comparisons with other segments of data.

Charmaz’s understanding of grounded theory coding is helpful in this study for a number of reasons. It asks ‘which theoretical categories might these findings indicate?’ and offers the analytical frame for further research. Such an approach allowed for an ongoing dialogue with the research process. It was not a static constrained piece of work, it was a living learning process, where learning emerged organically, new questions and insights unfolded and there was an ongoing layered conversation with the research findings.

I used a system of open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 2008:160) combined with a line by line approach to each source which, as Charmaz (2010: 184) says reduces chance of bias. I was careful to allow codes to emerge from the data. I began with a holistic reading at least twice of all sources and many more times for sources related directly to case study participants. This process was similar to Carspecken’s ‘preliminary reconstructive analysis’ where I identified preliminary patterns, meanings, power location, role relations, context, systematic factors and cultural values within each case study, which Carspecken describes as factors that are not observable and usually “unarticulated by the actors themselves” (1996: 42). I find this view to be counter to my understanding of a critical approach where participants are actively, continuously engaged themselves in reflection, context analysis, developing group or self-empowerment strategies and decisions about taking action for social change. Carspecken’s approach seems to not sufficiently take the participant autonomy into account. Nevertheless, at this point, with all sources collated and looking at the data holistically, it could be said that I took an etic-perspective (ibid.: 42) to identify the patterns and meanings across all the participant, even if most of the sources had already undergone an intrinsically ‘critical’ process in their creation. It should be noted that a line by line approach was not just a procedure for learning about the world I was researching, rather it was a heuristic device and useful for taking a fresh look at the material Charmaz (2006: 2).

Coding is not just labelling, it is linking (Saldaña, 2012: 8) – from the data to the idea and back to other data. I attended to the need for validity by coding from a variety of sources so as to create a series of nodes containing segments from different sources. Validity awareness was implicit from the start as categories were tested against new data. Through this process, the voices of the participants were free to emerge and speak to the guiding research questions rather than be influenced by an established set of codes. In other words the Codes emerge as I scrutinised the data and defined meaning with it. Unlike quantitative research, there is not preconceived categories or codes available. From the start I kept in mind that “a word or a phrase does not “contain” its meaning as a bucket “contains” water, but has the meaning it does by being a choice made about its significance in a given context” (Huberman and Miles 1994: 56/citing Bliss, Monk and Ogborn, 1983). I found Nvivo’s memo facility useful for writing up observations about categories/pattern codes to explain their significance. The memos formed part of an interim participant analysis. I now had a series of nodes (similar to categories or patterned codes) forming an initial story of each participant.

From this data I began again and created phase 2 coding. I used ‘focused coding’ Charmaz (2006: 11) for each of the individual participants. This means using the most significant and/or frequent earlier codes to sift through large amount of data. As Charmaz notes (ibid.), moving to focused coding is not entirely a linear process. Coding is an emergent process, and calls for a concentrated, active involvement in the process. Data to data comparison helps develop focused codes, and then these codes are further compared with data for further refinement. At this point too I consulted with each of the key participants keeping Carspecken’s ‘dialogical data’ idea in mind. The meaning making in itself had been intrinsically participatory but I was interested in participant’s views on my interpretation. For each participant I identified the most significant and frequent initial codes relevant to their story and sorted synthesised, integrated, and organised data of relevance to each person. I sent each key participant a detailed account of my preliminary analysis of their ‘story’. At this point too I had also created a visual representation of each story for the art exhibition in Year 4 (see appendix 6). I sent each person a photograph of their ‘story’ which was represented on a canvas panel and two students also visited the exhibition in person. I recorded the views expressed by the participants in a node entitled “dialogue revisited”.



Only at a third stage, after comment from participants, did I begin a more focused, selective phase using the stories of all participants together. Once again I identified the most significant and frequent initial codes and sorted, synthesised, integrated, and organised what were now larger amounts of data which included all participants and their view on initial findings. This resulted in a further set of more focused nodes derived from the open coding and consultation phase. In phase 3 I used Axial (Charmaz, 2006: 59) coding as a way of relating codes (categories and concepts) to each other, via a combination of inductive and deductive thinking, with a view to more specifically answering the research questions. I was moving closer to a set of conceptual frameworks with which to answer the research questions. While the ‘critical aspects’ of the research were implicit at all times, in order to add rigour and to support validity, I also had a separate set of memos under each case study, to include any further analysis of the ‘critical aspects’ which may not have occurred to me previously. I called these memos ‘what is critical?’, in the ‘critical ethnographic’ sense of the word. These memos were in turn coded to phase 3 nodes. Axial coding was helpful for bringing the data back together again in a coherent whole, similar to Ricoeur’s (1984: 71). concept of Mimesis III, re-figuration described above as a hermeneutic circle emerged once again. This process helped to answer questions such as: ‘when, where, why, who, how, and with what consequences’ and to identify conditions, actions/ interactions, and consequences.

The data collected and analysed during Stages 1 to 3 were linked to broader socio-political aspects and corresponded to Carspecken’s Stages 4 and 5, moving between the etic and emic perspectives. I used selective coding described by Borgatti (2018) as “the process of choosing one category to be the core category, and relating all other categories to that category. The essential idea is to develop a single storyline around which all everything else is draped”. This time the codes were categorised under each research question and drawn holistically from each case study. Each folder was a research question, not an individual or collective story and each now contained nodes from all participant stories which were now more holistically answering the research questions. I also coded from the memos in phase 2 which were included as nodes in phase 3.

Grounded theory construction leads to a final more sophisticated level of coding leading to a hypothesis which is integrated into a theory. However this was not my purpose in

this study. For the final stage of the analysis, I used an approach which was similar to Carspecken's fifth stage, involved explaining the findings in the phases outlined above, interpreting the findings in relation to relevant theories and challenging these theories. This led to the next stage of the study, which was to write the "analysis of findings" based on the methodological approach taken in this chapter. The writing process adopts further reflexivity as I bring my personal shape and approach to the findings, including awareness of my own praxis, changing biases, positioning. My findings chapter includes quotes from narratives in order to hear the voices of the participant experience and make more vivid their context. It makes explicit the links between my findings and the theoretical frameworks in earlier chapters. It is also open-ended to an extent, shining light on tensions in interpretation and data from the field, and encouraging the readers to form alternate paradigms of interpretation. These findings can be found in Chapter Eight.

## **7.9 Research Limitations**

Qualitative research studies are designed to provide a deep understanding of a particular phenomenon, making the results difficult to generalize (Yin, 2003). Some would see this as a limitation, but as mentioned earlier, all studies have their limits. The depth of understanding of the experiences of all participants in this research far outweighs, in my view, the limitations. Readers must keep in mind that data that resulted from this examination add to the literature on development education, but are limited to those participants represented in this study. There are however a number of limitations which are important to mention.

The first limitation of this study is that the student participants were self-selecting. This has a number of implications. The students were by-in-large already interested and usually active in development education and they were highly motivated. Therefore the research did not reach a wider more general audience. However, self-selection is often necessary when there does not exist an environment (e.g. a course) that closely matches one's research interest, in the study location. The research in itself developed an interest in DE as a field of study, to such an extent that the funding body Irish Aid have agreed to fund the development of a DE module across all faculties in UCC. It is also important to learn about what does happen for the motivated student. They may be motivated but they are still interested in learning how to process their ideas, develop

their skills, how to take action with others and to understand theoretical frameworks. Their experience is valid in itself.

A second limitation is that none of the courses offered as part of this research offered an accredited qualification. For one online group in particular this was particularly significant because of the value they placed on a European qualification, as well as their own time limitations and technological difficulties. For the UCC students this did mean that the depth of analysis one might desire for instance in an assignment at third level (e.g. an essay or analysis piece) could not be expected to be at a level they would provide in a 'normal' classroom situation. This related particularly to the theoretical analysis rather than the practical impact of the student work. Nevertheless I feel that there was enough material to indicate how important the theoretical aspects were to students and how theory and practice would be combined in a student assignment. In addition, some of the students were using this work as part of their course work and in that way there was some evidence of a higher level of analysis.

Linked to the voluntary nature of participation, the issue of time was a limiting factor for many participants. This applied more to the full time students, who were busy with their usual course work. It was a particular difficulty for the Lesotho group who faced significant challenges in reaching the course venue and/or fitting it within their work and home life schedule. This was helped significantly by the incredible support of the management. For this group too there were other technological limitations which impeded progress, particularly the internet connection, which when it dropped meant that the participants had to regroup on another day. This meant that sometimes two or even three weeks transpired before the next class. Some could not access online lectures in between these sessions because they did not have access to a computer in their home. Therefore there was an inequality of access. In addition, as an individual researcher attempting this kind of research I was under pressure and it was a humbling learning experience to realise that such an ambitious project requires considerable resources and the full backing of a university.

Another limitation was my own personal biases as a researcher with some of the participants involved. In particular, I knew some of the participants who had a disability in advance of the research and I had assisted them in their move out of

residential care into their own homes. There were limitations but also positive aspects which I feel far outweigh the limitations.

A further limitation was the amount of time and number of projects I undertook. My PhD research took place over four years. The amount of data I gathered was more than what may be required for a PhD. However, as someone with a deeply committed approach, there were questions I wanted to explore which required further research into year four. I needed to satisfy myself that I had explored my initial questions and questions that emerged as the research proceeded, in a manner which I found comprehensive and deep. I was unwilling to take a superficial approach. This satisfied my own needs but it did mean that presenting the data in a succinct manner, which would give justice to the findings, was challenging.

## **7.10 Conclusion**

The research methodology and methods in this thesis have evolved through interplay between theory, research questions, my own experience, the needs of the participants, conversations and reflection. I chose this approach because I wanted my methodological assumptions to match with my ontological and epistemological assumptions about community-based and multi-media development education. Objectivist approaches would not have suited the evolving narrative approach to the research. I did not start with a hypothesis, I did not seek ‘proof’ or ‘evidence’. I wanted the research methods to be “exploratory, conversational, tentative, and indeterminate” (Hart, 2002: 141). They do not produce the Truth but offer “a measure of coherence and continuity to experience” (ibid.: 156). Narrative researchers, he concludes, are not “scientists seeking laws that govern our behaviour,” but rather “storytellers seeking meanings that may help us to cope with our circumstances” (ibid.: 155).

## CHAPTER 8: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS 1 – NAVIGATING SPACES BETWEEN NEW DE PEDAGOGIES AND OLD DE BASICS

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This chapter presents and analyses the findings of the research. The analysis is based primarily on the experiences of eight key participants (KPs), four key student participants (KSPs) and four key community participants (KSPs). Important learning moments with other student or community participants are also discussed at times, where it is deemed the finding is important. My own experience as researcher in the educator, facilitator, observer and sometimes student role, is interwoven throughout. The chapter aims to empirically address the core research question: *What can Development Education educators learn about engaging university students in Development Education?* I look to evidence provided by students and community partners about the power of Community-Linked Learning and Multimedia Methodologies in higher education and its impact on community partners.

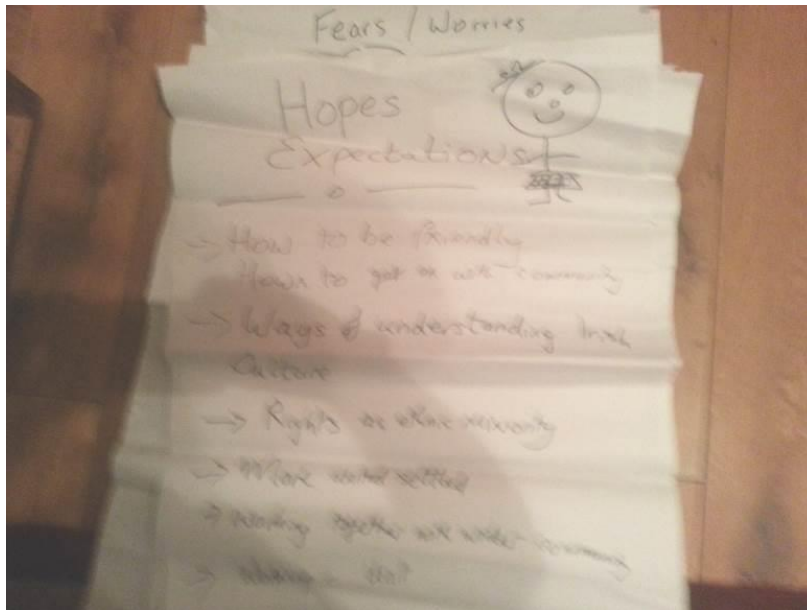
The research was preceded by a pilot project which is where this chapter begins. While this pilot project presented some challenges, the learning from the experience was very valuable for what then became a four year research project.

### 8.1 Pilot Project Year 1 – Minority Ethnic Group (MEG)

The research began with a pilot project that involved working closely with a community group (minority ethnic group - women's group) in Cork, with a view to deep preparation for working with a UCC student group in year two. This particular MEG, both men and women, suffer high levels of discrimination in Ireland and in other countries. Figure 2 below indicating their hopes for this course, sadly indicates how much they wish to understand how to belong. The first three 'Hopes' are "How to be friendly" and "How to get on with the community" and "Ways of understanding Irish culture".

As discussed in section 7.51, a group of nine women attended six workshops, facilitated by myself and a woman in a leadership role in that community.

**FIGURE 2: HOPES AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE MEG GROUP.**



The workshops were based on a Freirean model *Training for Transformation* and covered topics such as: listening skills, working as part of a group; ‘community’, ‘community development’; Irish life, society and politics; and ‘needs analysis’ for the group. The women also identified a project (photography) to work on with UCC students. At the sixth session a professional photographer met with the group to discuss a photography project which was on the theme of myths, legends and childhood stories in their culture. The purpose of the six workshops was to introduce the women to basic community leadership ideas and skills and to begin to enable them to analyse and take action on their experiences of discrimination, exclusion and racism in Ireland. From a pedagogical perspective the intention was to prepare as a group to work with incoming UCC students the following semester, with a view to working closely together on a DE project over that semester. For ethical reasons it was later decided to not continue with the group for the purposes of this research, although we did complete the six workshops as agreed.

My concerns began when I became aware at an early stage of the influence on the group of a local (Irish) man, who was, as a community leader, apparently wishing to support the project. Here I will call this man ‘Tom’. My feeling at an early stage was that the

man, no doubt with good intent, wanted me to provide an advocacy service. He was encouraging the women to participate in the training and was present (in the next office – on a Saturday morning) when I met each participant individually. I wanted to ensure the women themselves wanted to participate in this project. Having met them individually and as a group, along with an interpreter, I did feel confident at this stage that they did want to participate in the workshops and that expectations had now been raised. However as time went on I noted an unusual dependency by the group on the women and indeed on the wider group of men, women and children. An early ‘warning sign’ was when one woman said “without ‘Tom’ we can’t do anything”. Another early concern was when at one of the classes the women wanted to discuss bodily parts, which would not normally form part of an everyday conversation. This included very brief inappropriate touching (of me by one of the women). I discussed this incident immediately with my PhD supervisor. Throughout the process I had reservations about this group being ready for a research project of the kind I envisaged. While the inappropriate touching mentioned above was a fleeting moment, I knew that I had a duty of care to students and ethically this alone was paramount in my decision to discontinue with this group in a research context. Within the research context, I felt that the extent of the expectations of the participants was problematic. I felt that the group had so many critical concerns that it was unfair and unethical to continue with the research project as proposed. For instance before one of the six workshops began the group were very upset because social services were taking the child of a woman who had just given birth, and still in hospital, into state care. Her husband was in the class with a letter which had arrived only that morning. I made several calls to arrange for free legal advice for court the following day. With regard to the research, I knew that my purpose was not to provide a personal advocacy service but to explore the power of CLL. Throughout the process, it was clear that most participants saw the project as primarily an advocacy opportunity for the many difficulties and challenges facing them in their lives.

The issue of needing an advocacy service may have been overcome, although the inappropriate touching could not be. However, other conversations and events which happened outside of the formal research process also led me to discuss with my supervisor if this was a suitable environment within which to bring students for the purposes of this research. For instance my field notes indicate my concern that there

was an “ownership of the group by Tom. I had witnessed a conversation between Tom and one of the women and recorded it as follows:

Woman: “I don’t have a house. I was thrown out. I went to see KL (Politician)”.

Man: “you should not go without asking me first”.

Woman: “she (politician) was good”.

Man: “you should go to the homeless unit”.

Woman: “they will take my child away”.

Man: “I told you to come to me first”.

Woman: “the politician was good. I hate the homeless unit. They are terrible”.

I suggested she go to an advisory professional, who was, at that moment, in the building in a room adjoining our room. The man would not allow her to do so. The woman said to me confidentially: “he thinks he owns us. We can’t do anything. He wants to know about it”.

A further field note entry noted that I had:

...witnessed money being given directly to participants in the course. I was not aware until then that people were in receipt of payments and while their receipt of payment was not contingent on attending, they had a strong impression and fear that payments would be stopped.

I felt that there were too many complex power issues and the women were not in a position to give full autonomous consent. All of these events were discussed at PhD supervision sessions and it was agreed that the setting was not suitable for the research as planned. At the end of four years of research, when I was facilitated by an artist, to explore, through the medium of art, my research findings, my image for this pilot showed quite a nasty man playing with female puppets, alongside a set of gates and a reference to gatekeepers as not helpful. Indeed this was my enduring feeling throughout the process. As a person deeply moved by injustice, I found the entire experience painful and deeply worrying.

For DE educators exploring a CLL model, some important lessons had been learnt. It highlighted the importance of a ‘relational’ ethical paradigm as discussed earlier, one



that, as (Cullen, 2005: 254) says, “is concerned with relationships and groups involved in the research and is context based”. Importantly too, the level of experience of a community group in being able to utilise and collaborate in leading a research process of this nature, is important. The ‘developmental’ stage and autonomy of a group as a community is important. Very importantly too, the community development approach being used with a community needs to be aligned with DE values, otherwise community participants could be exploited and students are not learning about good practice. Despite significant earlier preparation, some of the more worrying issues which arose were not as obvious at an early stage. Finally, the decision to work with this group for six weeks in advance of working with students was a wise decision. This ensured that the MEG benefited from the process but that an informed-decision was made and lessons were learnt at the pilot stage of the research. This level of engagement before any such engagement, is worth considering in any similar project.

## **8.2 Key ‘Student Participant’ (KSP) 1 - Claire**

### **8.2.1 Global Teacher Award – Claire**

In semester 2 of the first year of this study, a group of UCC Professional Masters in Education (PME) students participated in a six week course called the Global Teacher Award. This had been arranged, as part of a new project called ‘Id Est’ (Introducing Development Education to Student Teachers), which had been initiated at the School of Education by my PhD supervisor and myself. Claire participated in these workshops, which covered topics such as ‘development’ and development education, social justice, trade rights, diversity, human rights, interdependence and sustainable development. The six students who attended agreed that their input at the GTA classes could form part of this PhD study. Four students also agreed to participate in a community-linked project with a view to investigating the extent to which working with a community partner, on a collaborative project, might enhance their engagement with DE. It had been envisaged that this would be the MEG group above, but this strategy had to change given the ethical issues discussed above. The Digital Storytelling workshop with refugees and asylum-seekers which followed the GTA is described in section 8.2.2 below. From this group Claire agreed to be a ‘key student research participant’ (KSP) for this study. She said she was attracted to the research study because she was very

‘hands on’ and could see the value of investigating how ‘activism’<sup>46</sup> and multimedia could be incorporated into DE learning.

In the GTA classroom it was clear from the outset that Claire was motivated by an interest in human rights and was drawn to Freirean traditions. In one class there was a discussion about ‘informed solidarity’ about which Claire became quite animated and said that it is important “to be informed, I mean like really properly informed. Able to support our point of view. Like back it up with real informed information”. In another comment about the meaning of the term ‘critical’ Claire said, “I think of it as criticising the world system things like Neoliberalism. But I don't know how you can do it in a school system? How do you do it? Solidarity...the only way”. This question was addressed throughout the GTA classes as she was introduced to analysis, approaches and activities which she could use in her classroom. When discussing definitions of DE in the GTA class, she said "for me it should have the word action". Panel five (Appendix 8) of my Glucksman exhibition artefact depicts Claire’s sense of urgency about issues that matter to her. It perhaps touches too on the ‘rush’ or the busyness of life, something that emerges in this research several times. Engaged students feel frustrated about changes that are needed in terms of human rights issues. Claire was also interested in a discussion in the GTA classroom about Andreotti’s idea that ‘all knowledge is partial’ (2006: 49). She said: “yes we really should appreciate the life experience of anyone in a room”. This respect for the dignity of people was always in evidence over the two years we worked together, for instance her respect for two carers who came to visit our class when there was some opposition from other students (see below); her regard for older people in the classroom during a fire alarm and her empathy with asylum seekers during the digital storytelling workshop. The story she told at the digital storytelling workshop showed a close-knit family with intergenerational love, affection and care. Claire too had a strong sense of global solidarity. In the GTA classroom she said:

When we use words like Developing/Third World/Poor...God I really hate it...it’s so so patronising. Who do we think we are? I like it that we are looking at the words themselves.

Like the other students she was also open to new ideas:

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<sup>46</sup> ‘Activism’: Claire used this word in a broad sense. She wanted to take action for social justice and be ‘in solidarity’ with those who are disenfranchised in Ireland or elsewhere.

...at the start of the course I was just thinking about sustainable development mostly ...and refugees. Now I am shocked about trade injustice.

From an educator perspective I was asking questions about how MML and CLL would help engage a highly motivated, interested, action-orientated and intelligent student such as Claire. The following three sections follow her journey, her thoughts and my reflections on that journey.

### **8.2.2 Digital Storytelling Workshop - Claire**

Having completed their GTA course the student participants discussed a possible multimedia project they might work in collaboration with a community partner<sup>47</sup>. Collectively we decided to invite interested refugees/asylum seekers, living in Cork, to join with us on a three day digital storytelling (DST) workshop, with a view to learning DST skills and highlighting the local / global dimensions of refugee lives. Because of my experience with the pilot project, we sought partners (in this case refugees or asylum-seekers living in Cork) who were experienced community advocates and/or third level students. They were not a 'community group' but they did form a collective of people from a group of identity (asylum-seeker/refugee living in Cork). While they were not being asked to 'represent' their 'group of identity', each did have extensive experience of representing others, leadership, public speaking and advocacy. The workshop was attended by four PME students, one PhD student (at the School of Education) and four invited partners. I also attended as a participant observer and organiser. One participant, Obafemi, lived in a direct provision centre in Cork; two had previously lived in direct provision and now had refugee status. Both were now students at UCC and were taking leading roles in advocating for asylum/refugee rights. The PhD student, Waleed (a pseudonym), was Palestinian and had grown up in a refugee camp in Lebanon. The countries of origin of the eight participants were Ireland, the UK, Palestine, Nigeria and South Africa.

The workshop was facilitated by Dr. Alexandra Darcy who carried out intensive preparation by email, with participants, in the weeks before the workshop. All participants had been asked to bring a story about social injustice, either an injustice they had witnessed or an injustice they had experienced themselves, which they are

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<sup>47</sup> A community group or a community of 'identity' who are socially excluded.

willing to share. The three day workshop consisted of a comprehensive introductory session, followed by a deep storytelling circle, the production of a digital story by each participant and a final screening of the stories at the end, along with discussion and debriefing.

The storytelling circle was intimate and was the point at which the first meaningful connection was made between participants. It was emotional and most people were in tears as they told or heard the stories as they unfolded. There was a sense of deep empathy amongst all participants and from an educator perspective care is needed here for all those present. The partner participants spoke first, one about his interview for asylum in Ireland, another about his life in Direct Provision, a third about her experience of sexual harassment after she was granted refugee status. A fourth told of his time in a Lebanese refugee camp. The PME students arrived with stories about 'injustice' but notably, at the storytelling workshop, decided to talk about personal experiences. For instance one student told of her difficulties with her brother. Key student participant (KSP) Claire told a story about her two grandfathers who had recently passed away. None of the PME students made a story about a moment of injustice, even though they had been asked to do so. I and the other PhD student present felt that it was very obvious that they made this decision during the story-telling circle, after the partner participants spoke of their stories. We surmised that their stories of 'injustice' may have felt insignificant and they therefore chose stories that really mattered to them and which allowed them to access deeper feelings of empathy, grief or sorrow. All four PME students, in their evaluations after the workshop, disagreed that this is what had happened. However, for me as an educator and researcher, it raised a question relating to the courage attached to telling a private story in public and how it seems that 'the other', or the oppressed, is often required to tell about their private lives. The students decided to share private moments which had deeply impacted on their lives. They did not have an explanation for this other than that they had not really 'thought about a concrete story in advance of the workshop', so their story choices emerged during the storytelling circle. Here again, consideration of educator care emerges, care for the learners but care too for the educator herself. In this deep work, educators need to be able to hold a lot of emotion and therefore self-care is something educators need to think about.

My own story was the story about the doll as outlined in Chapter 1, when I witnessed injustice at the age of six. Making this story impacted me deeply as I embarked on my research. The story, recounted at the beginning of this thesis, allowed me to ‘get in touch with’ the moments which had influenced the very reason I was sitting in that room, thinking about DE pedagogy and the reason I was doing a PhD. The most powerful moment was when I returned, during the workshop to the place where the story of ‘the doll’ took place. Standing in that place, and perhaps more powerfully, Obafemi standing in the place of the little girl from the Traveller community, made for a powerful connection between past and present and between injustice in Nigeria, where Obafemi was from, and injustice in Cork. I stood in that place at the age of six and still stand there, asking the same questions and asking others to also ask those questions.

When asked how she would assess the workshop as a method for learning about DE, Claire noted that the emotional connection between participants was important. It surprised me, given her activist background, that she had never met a person who is seeking asylum and living in Direct Provision. I noted that we can forget that young people, despite their exposure and interest in ‘issues’ have not always had life opportunities and experiences of this nature. Claire also felt that it was useful to learn filmmaking skills at third level and it helped with ‘reflective practice’. This echoes Mc Drury and Alterio’s (2003: 2000-2001) idea of reflective storytelling. She also felt that the “process” of making the film, and the story circle in particular, was important, an idea which is remindful of Shor and Freire’s contention that dialogue is the quintessential human act, the social moment when we establish ties and where we have authentic recognition of the other: “When we tell stories and process them, using reflective dialogue, we create the possibility for changes in ourselves and others” (Shor and Freire, 1987: 98-99). The process, she said, meant that we could feel a sense of going “through something together”...we were together as “human beings with feelings”. One participant had asked if we could have had the same impact if we made a cake. Claire said “...no, this was more focused on the themes and lives of the people involved, we were thinking of particular times and imagery and sounds. You can’t do that in a cookery class”.

When asked if the time taken to learn the digital tools had taken away from or added to learning about social justice issues, Claire said:

...yes possibly. It took a long time and we were on our own a lot for this part. Although we did have time to discuss and the viewing and sharing afterwards and in the car and at breaks, was enlightening.

She found the viewing of the films at the end, and the discussion, to be ‘enlightening’, although, she said, more time for discussion and debriefing would have been helpful. When asked what she learned about social justice issues she said she had “learned about real life experiences of asylum seekers”. When asked how she felt about putting herself ‘out there’ in public to tell her story, Claire said she felt her story was “making a mountain out of a molehill, but it was “authentic”.

The impact of this workshop on Claire became even more evident in year 2 of this study. Claire agreed to participate, still as a KSP, in the six-week DE course which I set up specifically for this research. From this classroom space, she and other students from different disciplines, who all volunteered to participate, used CLL and MML to advocate for the rights of refugees in Ireland and across the world. This group is called the Cross Disciplinary Group (CDG) in this study.

### **8.2.3 Cross Disciplinary Group - Claire**

In year 2 of this study Claire attended six DE classes with the ‘Cross Disciplinary Group’ (CDG). This comprised a group of seven students all of whom attended on a voluntary basis. Topics covered at these six classes included ‘Development’, ‘Development Education’, ‘Social Justice theory and Practice’, ‘women’s rights’, ‘refugees and human rights’, ‘taking action for change’ and sustainable development. Two students (also key research participants), Andy and Finuala (see below), participated in a work placement as part of this study. Andy worked with the Lesotho group, family carers and a community radio, while Finuala worked on an educational project alongside people with intellectual and physical disabilities, linking too to a similar group in India. Claire had already attended the GTA and the DST workshop. One of the students in this class was Obafemi, a key community partner participant in this study. He had also attended the DST workshop, although not the GTA. The other three students were students at UCC, two studying for a PhD and the third an undergraduate social science student. As the course progressed, the students working with community partners brought their experiences to the class for discussion. In a sense the classroom was a ‘hub’ for each student to return for discussion about their

individual projects and to discuss the collaborative project the group took on together. As the class progressed, an interest in refugee and asylum issues emerged strongly as a theme which interested all participants. The group worked together to establish a UCC group called *UCC Friends of Refugees*, organised a public event and produced two radio shows. Claire had been influenced by her earlier DST experience and wanted to take further action on refugee issues.

Hence, one of the ‘spaces’ we inhabited during the six CDG sessions was a traditional classroom. From an educator perspective, the CLL and MML model changes much of what happens in a classroom context, but the role of the classroom is still very important. The educator role becomes one of connector, guide and facilitator. The educator seeks to connect theory and practice, local and global and student to fellow students in a mutually supportive environment. For example, at one point Andy, working with the Family Carers, invited two women to speak to the class about ‘the hidden work of women’. We were looking at women’s work in economies and societies around the world, especially in Mali. One student, an Irish woman in her 60s, said “I do not want to hear these (family carers) women, I want to hear the voice of the voiceless”. This student’s demeanour was somewhat hostile when the women came to give what was a superb talk on their lives as women, now in their seventies, who had been family carers for, in one case, all her life. A second PhD student nodded in agreement. Ironically, Claire, a young student in her early twenties, very much related to the life of family carers given the recent death of her grandfathers and the care they received from male and female members of her family. Regarding their care she said:

... one person (to care) was not enough. One woman (mother) and my grandmother trying to lift him between them. My parents paid for private carers. Not everyone has means to hire more.

As educator I initiated a discussion about underlying economic, cultural and political power structures, systems and institutions which impact on women in Mali and in Ireland. I was also able to connect the experience of the women with Lyotard’s (1993:1), “incredulity toward metanarratives” and other feminist writers regarding global social constructs which define gender goals. Impressed with the Carers’ talk, Claire easily made connections. She said: “... you would see the gender issues. This is so common around world. Bills. Money in the man's name”. I wondered if the build-up of a professional relationship and ongoing engagement by Claire in DE issues, made

it easier for her to understand this quite complex local/global connection. I must admit a certain relief, as the facilitator of this process, that Claire was able to articulate her understanding of relevant overarching feminist paradigms. This served to encourage the group to discuss connections between the experiences of women across the world, past and present. Claire also initiated a discussion on the women's movement and its effects on her own family, referring to how her brothers are more involved in care. As educator, again I felt my role was to make connections with social movements such as the women's movement and the role of 'collective action' and education and collective action in effecting social change. We noted how women are still fighting for rights in both the Global North and the Global South. Throughout the family carers' talk, Claire also raised issues such as the difference between rural and urban carers and other pertinent questions.

The CDG, along with myself as educator/researcher, founded a group called *UCC Friends of Refugees* (FOR) and encouraged UCC staff and students to join with them. At the first meeting of this group 20 staff and 300 students attended. The classroom was a space for planning, organising and regrouping. They sold Christmas cards organised a high profile public event about the refugee crisis, and worked on two radio shows on local/global refugee issues. In the classroom they discussed the work placements of Andy and Finuala and they also planned, debated and evaluated their public event and radio shows. CLL in the context of the CDG as a whole, did not mean working directly with a group of people from the refugee/asylum-seeking community. Rather, it meant working on an issue of deep concern but connecting outwards to the wider community of students, staff and general public. MML in this context related primarily to the production of two radio shows, one on local asylum-seeker issues in an Irish context and one about the global refugee crisis. It became clear that students played different roles and again the role of the educator was to affirm qualities and strengths of each individual, while at the same time supporting those who wished to develop new skills, knowledge and competencies.

What became very evident in both the planning for the new FOR group, the public information session on the refugee crisis and preparing for the radio shows, was that Claire – and other students – were able to 'find their level'. In other words, people with different levels of experience, ability or academic level, could 'enter' into CLL and MML at their own pace and learn in a non-threatening environment. It also meant that



there was much peer learning. As a highly motivated, bright, practical and action-orientated student, working on 'real-world' issues, raising awareness and organising were stimulating for her. She took both a leadership role and a caring role. In terms of leadership, she often took the initiative when the group needed to make decisions. She was a very organised person and her analytical and planning skills helped the group to focus. At the same time, she sensitively supported others in the group who were shy or who were not as experienced as she was academically and otherwise. Her particular combination of assertiveness, kindness and integrity were valuable. As an educator, I felt that in CLL and MML learning these we have to find ways of recognising and assessing these kinds of attributes. They could not be visible for instance in an exam or end of year essay. While assessment was not necessary in this context, because students had volunteered to participate, it did raise the importance of assessment for the purpose of evaluating the full range of DE competencies. Assessment might also be based on what the student wanted to learn and the extent to which these learning objectives were met. For instance, Claire was clear about what she wanted to learn. At an early stage in the study my field notes quote her as saying: "I'd like to learn radio/editing/putting it together skills". She also wanted "knowledge - more background in the war in Syria etc. and the causes of the refugee crisis". The theme of knowledge is one that often emerged in this research. In the case of Claire, she wanted to learn more in order to defend her arguments and her positionality in relation to refugees in particular.

Classroom spaces and dynamics change when CLL and MML are integrated into pedagogy. In this study, the classroom provided a space where students could bounce ideas, analyse and discuss DE issues as they arose in their 'real world' project settings. Importantly too, as noted also by O'Brien and Cotter (2018: 1) they found other like-minded students who provided support and willingness to tease out complex theoretical and practical aspects of the CLL. The classroom provided a safe space and an important space where the educator could link local to global, policy to practice and theory to the real world of peoples' lived lives.

#### **8.2.4 Radio - Claire**

The cross-discipline group researched and presented two radio shows at a community radio station. The class wanted to focus on refugee issues. The first show concentrated on the Irish context, for instance how the Direct Provision system results in asylum-

seekers often waiting in unsuitable accommodation for many years, on a stipend of €19 a week for adults and €12 for children. The second show focused on the European context and EU policy on refugees.

In general Claire took the role of ‘continuity person’ introducing other students who were interviewing guests on the show. She also interviewed a local woman in Cork who had led a highly successful support group for refugees living in the Calais “Jungle” in France. Claire said she “loved the radio show”:

I can't quite put my finger on it but it feels important, like its real, you feel like to you are learning in the real world. And you learn a lot. Like communicating. Thinking on your feet. And you have to know your stuff! You have to prepare. Not just for an essay. But for real serious life stuff. I had to know my stuff because I was on air.

This sentiment lies at the heart of the value of radio in DE pedagogy. Claire was interested from the outset (see above) in improving her knowledge about refugee issues. Being live on air meant that she had to research the issues, not in the abstract but in a ‘real world’ context. She and the wider group had to discuss the main messages they wanted to broadcast. While there were two hours in total, they could not cover everything they wished to, so they had to make decisions based on what they wanted the public to know and what they felt was important to highlight. They had to prepare insightful questions and they had to decide whose voices they wanted to hear on the show. This amounted to a mix of people, those who were themselves asylum seekers or refugees, a migration studies academic, a representative from the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Ireland and a Cork-based campaigner who had been part of a team leading a successful initiative to support refugees at a refugee camp in France. Claire also interviewed one of the quieter students and helped her to talk about what she had been learning in this course (see Finuala below). Through radio Claire felt that she was ‘taking action’. For many students their course work does not provide an opportunity to ‘take action’, even in small ways, because time is not always available. Claire felt a sense of satisfaction that she was raising, in a public forum, issues that really mattered to her and this in itself was important. Essentially the radio broadcasts *were* one of her actions.

DE educators can learn from Claire’s experience of MML and CLL. Despite her ability and previous experiences, she had not yet had opportunities to meet with people living

in Direct Provision. This had a significant impact. The storytelling circle and debriefing at the end of the workshop were emotional, something which motivated her to take further action, which she did by organising public events, showing the films in public, setting up *UCC Friends of Refugees* and producing radio shows. The ‘informal learning opportunities’ or ‘spaces in between’ at the Digital Storytelling (DST) workshop (driving, shooting film, helping one another to write, coffee breaks) were important spaces for learning and relationship-building. She understood that the ‘process’, not just the film ‘product’ was important but noted that the ‘task’ of making films, did take time away from the personal stories and possible political discussion. The DST workshop took place after the GTA course, whereas the radio shows took place during the CDG class in Year 2. In this way, the classroom formed an important hub for discussion and theory. At the DSW the debriefing and showing of films at the end was helpful in this respect but was not enough in itself. Claire also saw DST as an important mechanism for ‘reflective-thinking’.

Producing and presenting the radio show allowed her to carry out research and ask questions which interested her, in a real-world setting. This meant that her content, questions and approach were being heard by a public audience and were also relevant to her, and the group’s interests. Through radio, building the new refugee group and organising a public meeting her abilities were challenged in a positive manner. Taking action and joining with others in doing so also added to the ‘multiplier effect’ of her and the group’s work. Personally the most profound aspect of the DST workshop was the re-enactment of the events and the embodiment of a moment at the age of six which connected to my present work and to this PhD. Standing in that place was powerful. As a researcher/educator, I also felt highly engaged with the work of the group and felt that it made DE very relevant to myself and to the participants. We were acquiring real life and work skills and values which were highly relevant to DE pedagogy, reflective practice, critical analysis, communication, leadership, empathy. As learners we were researching and disseminating information to a wider public audience and there was a sense of sustainability to the work because, for example, of the establishment of *UCC Friends of Refugees*.

**FIGURE 3: MEMBER OF CROSS DISCIPLINARY GROUP AT THE RADIO STATION**



Part of the central question in this thesis is to ask what educators can learn about the learning impact of CLL and MML on community partners. This first KCP is Obafemi (not his real name). A Nigerian man, in his early 30s, he was living in Direct Provision, (an asylum-seeker accommodation centre close to Cork city). At the time of the research he was studying in a college of further education in Cork, taking a course in social care. As an asylum-seeker he did not have the right to access Higher Education but he volunteered to participate in this study. I met him first at a public event about the global refugee crisis at UCC where I was handing out invitations to students seeking participants for this research. He was outraged about his own situation living as an asylum-seeker in Ireland and he expressed his outrage several times at this public event. He graciously agreed to participate in this study. Along with Claire, Obafemi took part in the Digital Storytelling (DST) workshop outlined above. Like Claire he also participated in the cross disciplinary group (CDG) as a student.

### **8.2.5 Digital Storytelling - Obafemi**

The opening line of Obafemi's digital story is:

Anybody that denies others of the freedom does not deserve it themselves. This reminds me of one of my experiences of staying in direct provision, where my dignity seems to have been stolen and my freedom restricted.

His story was describing an incident which took place at the Direct Provision Centre where he was living. He was leading a protest and police were called. The theme of dignity is a strong one in much of Obafemi's discourse, both in class and in his video.

His story is an account of a security guard not allowing Obafemi's friend to visit him at the direct provision centre.

The security came and told me friend that he was not supposed to be there. He felt embarrassed and I felt bad. I immediately remember my father telling me: Your dignity is worth more than your money. Try as much as you can to keep it. I stood up to the security as they were trying to drag out my friend. I told them that my friend was not going anywhere against his wish... they called the cops.

**FIGURE 3: OBAFEMI'S PROTEST AT A DIRECT PROVISION CENTRE, GARDA PRESENCE**



The word 'dignity' emerges again and again in Obafemi's discourse:

I stood my ground, even with the idea of the cops. More policemen were called because I was adamant that I refused to compromise my dignity. Until the owner of the centre arrived. She got a good meeting with me. I told her that I was fighting for my rights and my dignity. At the end of the day, there were nine police vehicle and 12 – 13 policemen on me. It was intimidating.

The effects of living in Direct Provision were constantly in evidence:

Direct provision has made a lot of people useless. I cannot compromise my dignity. When you live in a situation that does not respect your dignity, it actually affects every part of your life.

This word dignity struck me strongly as it did the PME art students who later interpreted my findings. My own artefact (see Appendix 8, image 5) which depicts

Claire and Obafemi, shows Obafemi standing at a podium, because he wanted to stand up and speak about conditions in Direct Provision. On his podium is the word “dignity”. Obafemi is shown too with the words “BUT...where are the decision makers”? He felt strongly that while he and others such as Claire, did speak out, nobody was listening, particularly those who could effect change. Two of the PME art students chose this word ‘dignity’ from every other story and radio piece in the PhD research stories. One student took Obafemi’s digital story and made a beautiful audio piece using the word “Dignity” (see <http://idestexhibition2018.idestucc.com>). Another made a visual interpretation of a hand with the words she associated with the word ‘dignity’. She requested anonymity regarding the website but her words as “anger”, “power”, “freedom”, “useless”, “oppression” and “hurt” show the power of art to express the learner’s feelings and its power to influence others. Together, the audio piece and the hand reached many people at the exhibition whom I heard use words such as ‘powerful’, ‘impact’ and ‘isn’t it just awful that direct provision is still in Ireland’.

**FIGURE 5: REPRESENTATION OF OBAFEMI'S VIDEO BY (ANON) STUDENT**



One of the visuals in Obafemi’s video is Abraham Lincoln whom he describes as his hero, because he “abolished slavery”. It is accompanied by Mariah Carey’s song ‘Hero’, the words of which Obafemi said he found ‘consoling’:

There's a hero, if you look inside your heart, you don't have to be afraid, of what you are. There's an answer, if you reach into your soul, And the sorrow that you know, Will melt away.

Solidarity was important to Obafemi. The visit of his friend on the day of the protest was: “a good moment from the beginning because a visitor brings back your hope and

makes you feel that you're not alone in your struggle". Likewise he was happy that he stood his ground and that "some others then came out and gave their support until the owner of the centre arrived".

He saw the documented story as "safe forever now" because it was in a film format and online. In a semi-structured interview with Obafemi after the story telling workshop, he said:

I appreciated a particular aspect of my life was documented....I have these and safe forever now...my own story ... my own video in it. It's what it is. It's raw. It's going to pass across more emotions to people that watch it and bring questions to them. I don't want to think about the beginning. The injustice in that film. People who are not emotional doesn't care.

Obafemi said he wanted the story to be used for. He said that "the first usefulness is the impact it makes on my own life. After I made it I felt emotional". The 'telling his story' of the story was important to Obafemi. He also wanted others to learn from him:

...people to learn from me, it's not a drama, put in cinema. It is for a particular purpose. It's my story about dignity and my image and it's my everything and I don't want it to be rubbished.

Obafemi certainly understood the power of storytelling and he was aware of the personal and public reasons he himself chose to share his story.

At the same time he was aware of his 'social' status, both at this workshop and at his school:

...the censorship: personal. In front of people who are more privileged. It's the same in school. There is a social equation. How will they think of me? These are factors to bring into consideration.

There was undoubtedly a great deal of emotion and some mixed feelings attached to this piece of work. On the one hand, Obafemi was finding the 'telling of the story' somewhat cathartic and felt that it was 'safe' now that it had been recorded, as though nobody could say 'this did not happen'. He acknowledged that making the story was useful for himself first but also hoped that others would learn from his experience, about life in Direct Provision. At the same time the emotion, shame and sheer indignity associated with being an Asylum Seeker in Ireland, was palpable. While he would never allow his dignity to be taken away, he was struggling to hold onto it in these circumstances.

Obafemi was interested in the different types of stories presented, particularly my own story (The Doll – see attachment 2.1), about how I had witnessed injustice when I was six years old. Obafemi had helped to make my video by driving with us to the scene of the original incident (over 40 years ago) in Cork. Obafemi features in my film, since he stands in the place of the little girl I played with. Obafemi experienced the power of this ‘embodiment’ of the moment, in the same way that I felt it and it was very powerful. He said: “it was interesting and meaningful and was telling about social justice”. Obafemi very much felt that he was ‘on the same page’ as the traveller girl I played with:

...the stories – of the students - are not as important as ours. They might not be as important in social injustice but they are still important because they are about personal emotions, emotional injustice. I was impressed with the (researcher’s) story because it gave me insight on what happened to Travellers and how it shaped who she is, what she felt. Such things happen to me too. For me it’s the other way around, I really felt for that girl. What is the difference between her and me? And what can she do to improve such thinking about Travellers [...] I challenge injustice because it makes me feel oppressed. I am not fitting into anything. I can stay with the president (of Ireland) and have a chat. I met him. But I am oppressed. Even he thinks it’s wrong. But I am still oppressed. Something like this workshop can boost morale and life my spirits. I sat with the teachers, like you are doing a PhD, and I made my opinion known. I didn’t feel bad. It was a kind of opportunity. And I developed relationships with the others there.

This was a powerful moment of feeling in solidarity with an ‘Other’ who experienced the same kind of social exclusion Obafemi was feeling. He was relating to this person as an individual. His meeting with the President of Ireland is difficult to understand to people who have not lived in Ireland. Ireland is a small country and access to politicians and even the President is less difficult than it is in most countries. In his own country, Obafemi said, ‘this would never happen’. Experience tells me that often people in Direct Provision feel honoured to have met politicians, and it takes time to realise that this meeting will have no impact on their lives. Even more confusing is the fact that the President he refers to, President Higgins, is highly supportive of human rights and actively critiques the asylum system in Ireland and elsewhere. However, as President, he has limited power to do anything. Thus, like the many Irish people Obafemi meets, the President will meet him, express solidarity, want to see change, but for Obafemi nothing is changing. He was still living in Direct Provision, had not been granted refugee status after four years living in Ireland, was not allowed to access work or third level education. As an educator with long experience of the issues raised by



Obafemi, I grappled internally constantly with issues of this nature many times during this study. On the one hand, I want to express solidarity, I want society to learn and I want students to understand and act. I want the voices of people experiencing injustice to be heard, if they want to be heard. On the other hand, I am aware of the false expectations that can be created and the stark reality that even after twenty years of campaigning by human rights activists like Claire, the situation remains the same for Obafemi and others in the asylum system. In thinking about what we can learn as educators, there are no easy answers, there is a need to be deeply aware, but even that awareness does not offer great resolution to what is great injustice. It reminds the educator perhaps to come back to the DE basics. This is a long term, often lifelong commitment, commitment as an educator and as a human being. It is important for the educator to remind herself and students that change does happen over time.

All of the participants in the Digital Story Telling workshop told of how what could be called “the spaces in between” (lunchtime, chatting at computers, driving home, driving to photo-shooting locations) were spaces where much learning happened. With regard to Obafemi, Waleed, a refugee from Lebanon, also in the group said:

...In particular I had a chance to speak to Obafemi on three different occasions about other social injustice issues. His political choices and about gay marriage and the referendum (Obafemi was strongly against same-sex marriage). We would have had the chance to speak about this if it wasn't for this workshop but at the same time...That has some purpose and in fact I think it had a very important focus. For me that was actually the most powerful part of it, those conversations like the one in the car.

Indeed Waleed, while not one of the key participants, had a number of interesting observations about the digital story telling workshop which are worth mentioning here. As a PhD student with a strong interest in story telling in general, he was pondering many of the questions arising from this workshop. In the debrief after the workshop he discussed his thoughts with me. Like Obafemi and Claire he appreciated the skills he had picked up at the workshop, which he said:

...made me feel empowered because now I have a new skill that I can apply in so many different ways. To tell a story, for this story to go, to spread for more people to listen to the second thing that comes to mind, straight away, is right, so I'm making the video and if I'm going to finish with that video my aim is for it to go viral.

For him the “definition of success” was that the story would “go viral” and “if it touched people or not”. He went on to discuss how “we are playing on sentiments, sentimentalising and sensationalism”:

Do you know what is bugging me? Do you know the seminar afterwards?<sup>48</sup> She (an academic member of staff who attended the seminar) said things that made me reflect on the workshop and make me realize what was bugging me. What we are doing, what we did in this workshop for me was a little bit too globalized NGO way of doing stuff and for me I have a problem with NGO’s. For me NGO’s a deflate pressure that...capitalism will put on you. They do not solve the problem but deflate it. These videos are not there to solve a certain problem, they are there to deflate or to disperse the problem or to make you feel better afterwards without really critically engaging in the problem and solving it. That’s why we may have spoken during the workshop about the therapeutic effect of coming together and sharing these kinds of stories.

Waleed also spoke about it being difficult to build up trust in such a short length of time. It should be noted that whereas Claire and Obafemi were part of a longer process, having attended various workshops together before the story-telling workshop, Waleed had not and the participants were mostly new to him. He asked further important questions such as “what are you (the researcher) getting out of it? What is (the facilitator) getting out of it? Who is benefitting”?

### **8.2.1 Cross-disciplinary group and Radio - Obafemi**

Obafemi later joined the cross-disciplinary group (CDG) and helped organise the radio shows. He had made some interesting contacts during his time as an asylum-seeker in Ireland. He had joined Fine Gael, the political party in power at the time and the party presiding over the Direct Provision system. One of the other participants in the class was amazed by this and said that, in her view, they were not the party that would undo the injustice of the asylum system, that they were in fact responsible for it. He had also met a community policing officer and Obafemi said “he is interested in immigrants”. Obafemi suggested both he and the then Cork-based Minister for Defence with the Fine Gael political party could be invited to participate in the radio show or at the seminar the group were organising. Obafemi, with the help of Claire above, asked both the

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<sup>48</sup> This is a reference to a seminar which took place the following day with staff at the School of Education, UCC given the facilitator of the workshop and attended by the researcher of this PhD and the other PhD student. “She” is an academic who commented on the workshop as being like a therapy session.

minister and the community police person to participate in the radio show and/or the seminar. Neither was in a position to attend. Obafemi said he could not ask them himself and Claire replied “but we can together”. This prompted Obafemi to say “you can feel empathy here (in UCC)”. Obafemi was determined that the radio show should feature people who can make decisions. He said:

...so-called refugees and asylum seekers, people on the street might feel sorry for them but nothing will change if the message does not get across to those people who matter, who can implement decisions. I have been coming here to these classes. I was in the Digital Story Telling workshop: I gave public talks. From there I was asked to talk by other groups in UCC, like Amnesty. I wonder why I am doing this. I have gone to the podium. I have spoken. Are we just doing this for students to learn from it or are we passing the message across to the people that matter? I come to UCC every day. Am I coming because of (the researcher), because I feel I owe her or to make an impact on society or to talk to people who matter?

Here Obafemi had come to the core of what were my own ongoing feelings about this work. Essentially he is teaching us about critical literacy and this is a vital learning for the educator. It raises again the inherent discomfort in DE which engages directly with the oppressed. While long term collective action approaches to advocacy and campaigning are critical, in the meantime we meet real people. When we discuss our concepts of inequality, oppression, reflection, human rights, it is a very different conversation and a different set of feelings. I articulate these feelings in a poem called ‘Bersive’ in the section about the Yazidis project below. As discussed below there are no easy answers to the question raised by Obafemi. He is asking a core DE pedagogical question and really speaks to Andreotti’s ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ approaches to DE. If, as Regan suggests (2015: 1), DE students and educators do not stand on the side of the oppressed, and take political action, then DE will remain limited in its outcomes. It is difficult to achieve this in an educational institution, but this depends on how one defines ‘the university’ or how one defines ‘education’.

In the radio preparation class we went on to discuss the value of having a group and access to some resources and while we could not change the world we could impact on our own sphere of influence. At the same time I wanted Obafemi to know that he did not have to represent his group, for instance Nigerians or asylum-seekers. He could just say what he would like to get out of this work himself such as video-making skills or learning how to use social media. This prompted him to say:

...most of time I don't talk for myself. I feel pain when I feel people in the process. I can use my ability and knowledge and resources. If anyone calls me I will always answer them and do what I can to help: It's not all about me learning something.

At this point Obafemi became agitated and spoke for about five minutes saying that he “pushes himself out”, “nobody is asking me to do it”, “I want to be part of society”, “I do this for myself” and several times saying “I am not normal, I am crazy”. He said he could understand “the jokes” like being told “to go back to where you came from, we don't want you here, go back”. In an animated, angry voice, he said what makes him feel “crazy” and “makes me want to die”, is when people who are “supposed to know more, treat us like this”. It is little wonder that Obafemi said he was ‘sick’ the day we went to the radio studio.

### **8.2.2 Lessons for the Educator - Obafemi**

CLL with people who are disenfranchised in one's own city is deeply challenging for the DE educator. The issues are not ‘out there’ in ‘the global’ world. We are faced with the realisation that it is we who have lost our dignity as a society and one has to live with the reality of this as well as taking action to change the political realities. The learner and educator undeniably learn, they make connections to the global context, discuss the root causes of forced migration, understand more deeply what life is like for people living in subaltern conditions. The dilemma is, what does a community partner gain from such an encounter? Obafemi wants his story and the story of ‘asylum-seeker’ to be heard and we can support him and others to do this. He says “it (his story) is safe forever now” because it has been recorded. He says the story is important to him and it is his “everything”. It is important for his voice to be heard and for us to meet as human beings. As a group we moved from the personal, to the political, to ‘taking political action’. However we are still left with the dilemma of the inherent power imbalance in a situation where half of the group cannot attend this university, work in this country or bring their children up in a normal home. The educator must try again and again to instil the importance of critical literacy in learners, we need to read and re read the world. Freire and Macedo's (1987) discussion on emancipatory literacy suggests this requires identifying the inherited dominant culture, analysing how education functions to legitimise dominant values and meanings and being informed by a radical pedagogy,

which would make concrete such values as solidarity, social responsibility, creativity, discipline in the service of the common good, vigilance, and critical spirit. In effect they argue that literacy, in this sense, is grounded in a critical reflection on the cultural capital of the oppressed. It becomes a vehicle by which the oppressed are equipped with the necessary tools to reappropriate their history, culture, and language practices. There are no easy answers but it is important to return to basic DE principles. Our intention is to be in deep solidarity with our fellow human beings. Doing nothing is not an option. The personal connection is important. At the same time we need to ensure that our work forms part of a wider, more sustainable context, so that the work does not become the ‘soft’ DE Andreotti speaks of. We need to be brutally honest about who is benefitting but we also need to explain the purpose of this approach to all who participate. We need to explain precisely why we do this work. It is not a ‘once off’ event where we meet, learn skills and move on. Those who attended the GTA understood the purpose of the workshop. A community-linked workshop of this nature needs to be integrated into a longer DE module and into a wider movement for social change.

### **8.3 Key ‘Student Participant’ (KSP) 2 - Andy**

Andy was an ‘international student’ at UCC who worked with me for a year on a work placement, as part of his Masters in international relations. He worked with the family carers, the Lesotho group and on the community radio show *The Global Hub*. He also participated in the *Cross Discipline Group* (CDG). In year 2 of this research the CDG formed a hub for the student participants. Three of the key ‘student participants’ - Claire, Andy and Finuala – attended a six week DE course as part of the CDG and each carried out different kinds of community-linked multimedia projects. The CDG as a wider group of seven students also established *UCC Friends of Refugees* (FOR), organised a public event and produced two radio shows. As an exceptionally committed person, Andy played a strong part in all of these projects.

Andy often spoke of his adoption as a baby by North American parents. Ethnically, he described himself as Vietnamese American. He had in recent years made contact with his birth family and this was important to him. On the online discussion forum with the Lesotho class, he acknowledged how this had challenged him: “As an ethnic Asian (Vietnamese – adopted in the U.S.) whilst also cultural American, culture has been quite

a challenge for me to define in my own life”. Politically he said his family were from a strong Republican background. His parents were both teachers and his father a Boy Scout leader, both of which, he said, gave him a curiosity and love of learning, a sense of civic engagement.

Most notably, he often talked about his Catholic faith which was a key influencing factor in his life. He enjoyed the company of the college chaplain and made friendships with other students who frequented the chaplaincy. He talked about faith motivating his interest in social justice and his desire to serve. In one radio interview he spoke of the influence of his parents, the Boy Scouts and of his faith:

...this idea of social justice is quite Catholic. I definitely, as a practicing Catholic, you know, I wake up in the morning and thank the Divine for simply existing...

I think if you are able to appreciate just one single moment during the day of beauty...and you're aware of what's happening in the world of other people who are struggling to take a breath and appreciate what they have, or rather what they don't have. Which is a moment of freedom, like, for example, the refugees and all of the very strained camps in Lesbos in Greece. I can't see how I've not been called to help them in some way. Jesus is like the sun, I try to fundamentally look at everything through the lens of helping others.

His faith-based motivation is depicted too by a crucifix, a symbol of the Christian faith, in the artefact for the Glucksman art exhibition, which I made about what Andy's story has been teaching us in this research (Appendix 8 image 4). Andy's ideas were in the radical love or the critical spiritual pedagogy (CSP) traditions, Hanh (1993), Gomez (2004) or Hooks (2006) mentioned earlier or Freire's ideas of reclaiming our humanity (ibid./Freire, 1972: 55).

Andy's mother was a mental health advocate because Andy's sister struggled with complex mental health challenges. This background gave Andy an interest in advocacy and campaigning.

Andy was taking a Master's degree in International Relations at UCC. He said on radio:

As I'm studying global trends — political, economic, social — I thought the collaboration course would be a most appropriate supplement to a study on how the world works. Anyone who has global interests has an interest in what and how others think and believe, so I'd like to learn

about the diversity of world opinions in the class and how each of you, each with his or her own unique background, views the same world I do.

From a DE educator's perspective it is noteworthy that all four student participants were strongly influenced by early family values and had either experienced or witnessed injustice or challenges at a young age, which motivated them to commit to DE. Such values, they each revealed, were a factor in their motivation for joining this research study. It is important to remember the importance of 'values' in DE work, which can sometimes be forgotten with a focus on 'issues' and 'action'. Their values encouraged these committed students. Andy very much had a deep commitment to 'service to the community' and was coming from a strong faith perspective. Theoretically he was drawn to discussions we had on radical love, liberation theology and social justice. At the same time he had a global sensibility, was deeply interested in international relations and in 'making a difference' in the world. Given his personal background, particularly his adoption by a North American family and his sister's mental health difficulties, his engagement was deeply personal. From a DE educator's perspective, it is also interesting to note the usefulness of working in small groups and understanding student motivation, interests and deeper connections to this work. This helps greatly with personalising DE pedagogy to meet the needs and interests of students individually and collectively.

### 8.3.1 Work Placement A: Family Carers Cork (Andy)

*Figure 6: Family Carers (and Andy) campaigning during the General Election.*



In his end-of-year report to his faculty, Andy made the following points:

...drafting a civic advocacy toolkit and working on digital stories, for the Family Carers Association, I learned a diverse range of subject matter. I garnered knowledge in every area, it seems, from first-person perspectives of the emotive experiences of those who care for those who cannot care for themselves, about the ever-evolving definition of global human rights, how best to approach educating a person (if that exists), and how to collaborate with others in a group setting to draft a collective response to a question posed. In addition, I honed in on my writing and critical thinking skills, as well as work independence, whilst drafting Carer documents and considering how best to assist Ms. Cotter's academic research.

This report captures some of the reasons why an educator might consider incorporating a work placement into DE pedagogy. In this real-world setting Andy was developing strong DE competencies. He has an awareness of the different layers of learning that occur in CLL of this nature. He has witnessed the connection between his personal experience of working directly with people who are advocating for their rights as a group, with their national advocacy campaign and with global human rights. He has identified the value of digital story telling and the power of emotion in such 'first hand' testimony. He has been part of an active advocacy campaign with an experienced community group who are highlighting their key political demands during a national election. To develop the campaigning toolkit he had to research those key political issues and think about how he and the group would articulate key messages at a sensitive political moment. He was part of 'the making' of knowledge for the electorate and politicians and not just reading about issues of concern to carers. He identified the link between this work and global human rights. He identifies too some DE skills and values he has been developing such as collaborative skills, empathy, critical thinking, campaigning, planning and taking collective action for change.

The importance of relationship is one of the key findings in the work with Andy, particularly with the carers, with whom he helped make a series of digital stories for their election campaign. There is of course the learning of work related skills, knowledge about carer issues, collective action, government policy and so on. However, from an educator perspective, I observed that the time spent in attending carer meetings and particularly the time it took to make digital stories, was where there was particular power. It takes quite a long time to make a story of this nature with an individual or group. Andy and I discussed this from time to time because the tendency



in a workplace, and particularly for a highly motivated student, is to 'get the task done'. In this kind of community engagement, it is about the task but the process and the relationship is where there is real power. Andy recognised this in an interview I did with him on radio:

It's very hard to showcase a relationship because a relationship by definition is between two specific people and only those two people can really ever – because they've experienced it, how can you really show what's in your mind and your care and your love, if you will, for them. How can you showcase that in a class in a 15 minute or less PowerPoint presentation? In our work, PhD school of education, your PhD collaboration group, bringing in several people from the organisation which I built the relationship with and worked for and helped them put together videos about their own personal histories and talking with them in a familiar way. It shows to other people when they see us being familiar, that he built a relationship with them. Now, they can see how I shared with these people and how it's special. Not just how it's special but in this conversation, a gleaming gold piece of information.

Andy is speaking here to the power of 'soft' knowledge, skills and values. There is a deep 'knowing' here for the student. From an educator perspective, this richness of experience is difficult to develop, let alone articulate and assess, in a 'mainstream' educational setting. In CLL the student can experience, develop and become aware of the power of such skills. Because there is encouragement of reflective practice, the student can also articulate this important DE learning and if there is assessment, such awareness can be recognised and valued. It is very interesting to note that Andy was in fact being assessed in his end of year report to his faculty. He was reflecting on his work placement. In his post-graduate class he was the only student who took a work placement as an option. As an educator I met a student through a full academic year who achieved an incredible amount of learning and took strong civic action on a number of important issues. In his faculty, while he did receive a high grade, he was disappointed with his result because his fellow classmates, who wrote an essay at the end of their modules, and spoke little in class, received higher grades. It struck me as an educator – and this was a subjective observation - that his reflections were based on his learnings about DE, but these reflections were not perhaps appreciated in the 'mainstream' classroom. To integrate DE learning into a learning environment an educator has to proactively encourage, recognise and find ways of assessing the full range of DE competencies. For busy educators with large classes this is complex, but perhaps only complex because we have an education system which has made 'marking

an essay' as the norm. We need to consider how we can instil an appreciation of new norms, ones which are based on real-world contexts, the learning needs and interests of students and embracing of the kind of learning experience Andy describes.

This kind of learning, what Andy terms 'service learning', enabled him to express himself in a manner that was fulfilling to him. As in Maslow's (2017/1943: 66) theory of 'self-actualisation' it allowed him to pursue and fulfil his own unique potentials. Using the radio programmes to consider questions such as the importance of relationship and the motivation for his service learning, also helped Andy to reflect, to stop, slow down, consider what was happening and why this learning was happening in the way it was. 'Slowing down' became something we also spoke of. One day Andy's task was to ring the carers to arrange a time to meet them. He was dutifully rushing through the task to make sure he got it done. I could hear some difficulties in communication, partly because of his non-Irish accent and partly because of the hearing difficulties of some carers. We spoke about how in this work, maybe it wasn't just about 'getting the task done quickly', maybe the carers might prefer a chat. Andy was uncharacteristically annoyed. It struck me that it is maybe in moments of discomfort that we find gems of wisdom. This was a moment of both intercultural and intergenerational learning, one that happened because we were working together on a project and deeper student-focused learning was possible. It is noteworthy too that the carers did tell me later that they could not understand him. This led to an intercultural and intergenerational moment of learning on the carer side too. Aware of his dedication and hard work, they came to a realisation that maybe they were a little harsh in their complaints. During this debriefing (as per field notes) one carer said, "he is here to learn", and they invited him to the Irish music and singing session at the carers' centre that day. Andy relished this experience.

In the CDG classroom an incident happened which serves to illustrate the way in which (a) the 'local' and 'global' can be connected in teaching moments (b) how the 'local' challenges some students and (c) the value of student-led learning. At one of the workshops two of the family carers, including Kathleen (key community partner – see below) came to talk to the group. We were discussing the hidden work of women in economies around the world. When I first informed the group that two family carers would be attending the class, one of the CDG students said, "I don't want to hear them; I want to hear people who have no voice". A second CDG student appeared to nod in

agreement. Andy, who now knew the women because he had been working with them daily, was highly respectful, supported the two women in their input to the class and ensured that connections were made between the 'local' and 'global' issues relating to women's care work in particular. They were also happy to see Andy. Their input covered all aspects of care work in the home. They spoke about their life experiences, including detailed issues about loss of pension and lack of job security. They talked about the campaigning work of the family carers association and the policy changes for which they were advocating. The student who said she did not want to hear this input, who was also of a similar age to our two guests, in her sixties, was quite disengaged, one might say rude, during the conversation and asked what its relevance was to DE.

This was an important learning moment. Firstly, it was a learning moment about what we mean by 'local' and 'global'. Andy for instance had come to Ireland from the U.S. because of his interest in 'international relations'. In the class he expressed surprise that some students saw the carers' talk as 'local'. I suggested that perhaps making the 'local' / 'global' distinction in this way was missing the key point. The discussion moved to how we can stop and talk about development paradigms and see what the lives of these Cork women and the structures in which they live, have in common with the Mali women we had been discussing. Oxfam were working on a campaign at the time which included highlighting the hidden work of women in Mali. This point is illustrated in the art exhibition panel image three (appendix: 8) which shows a picture of a woman – meant to indicate a family carer - 'behind the curtain' (hidden but looking out), alongside the difficult work being carried out by women in Mali. We were able to explore what the women in Mali and the women in Cork had in common, in terms of the relationship between economic growth, forms of political accountability, development of critical consciousness and the impact which collective civic engagement work enables social and political change to happen. This is the kind of pedagogical moment that helps us to understand the importance of current debates concerning the role of DE in the global North (Khoo, S. and McCloskey, 2015: 1–17). As discussed in the literature review, DE has traditionally focused on the Global South (Daly et al., 2017: 16) and 'the local' has generally been included by means of encouraging learners to take local action for global change (e.g. the fair trade movement). This example shows why the shift towards focusing on understanding the causes of social and economic inequality, locally and globally is important (ibid.). For instance, we can look

at the dominance of neoliberalism as a socio-political and economic matrix that frames the conditions for political transformation across the globe, North and South. We can ask who is deciding on policy which favours a free-market system, we can ask who is benefiting, we can ask what the impact of neoliberalism is on people in Ireland and people in Mali. We can bring students back to DE basics. Are current political and economic policies and approaches to development, alleviating poverty? How are the resources of the world being distributed and what is the impact of growth-led development on the resources of the planet?

This class was cut short by a fire alarm and I did not want to lose this learning moment. This is when the online class discussion forum became helpful. Andy had struggled with the idea of “paid care work” and I was able to suggest some readings. This was later reflected in another of his forum comments:

I was a bit confused about one thing and was talking to Gertrude about it. It's that I want to see a world where love does matter and love/care doesn't become something that is commodified...like doesn't that make it part of a neoliberal thing again? Not sure if I was fully getting the point about unpaid care work...although I get it that women mostly get the brunt of it around the world. Gertrude suggested that I take a look at the Cantillon and Lynch (2009) book ... It does address my question. It talks about 'love labor' which is inalienable and non-commodifiable. The issue is not to choose between equality and care but to develop a 'connection-based' conception of equality and justice that recognizes that dependency is a typical condition of human life, that dependents need care, and that dependency workers, both paid and unpaid, cannot and will not have parity of participation in social or political life without recognizing the primacy of affective relations in the framing, and misframing, of social justice. Affective relations, and especially love, matter for social justice! Have a look at page 5 where Fraser talks about "...all jobs would be designed for workers who are caregivers, too; all would have a shorter work week than full-time jobs have now; and all would have the support of employment-enabling services. Unlike Universal Breadwinner, however, employees would not be assumed to shift all carework to social services" (Fraser 1997: 61).

Here, the kind of mutual respect which had been built up through working together on the work-placement meant that from an educator perspective I could be student-focused. This was now a real issue which we were having an ongoing conversation about, both during the work-placement time and in a structured forum. It was not a static 'once off' essay but a real and public engagement with the questions, which, returning again to DE basics, also had a multiplier effect in that other students could join in the conversation.

On my request, Andy had been reading about a campaign Oxfam was organising called *We Care*. I did ask Andy to seek out ways in which we can make these kinds of global connections regarding women, economies and ‘hidden care work’. Andy read and quoted Eva Feder Kittay in the online class forum, referring to her article – ‘From the Ethics of Care to Global Justice’. He referred other forum participants to the section saying, “you get some interesting thoughts on the local/global”. He was particularly interested in the point about migrant care workers and referred to Kittay:

The challenge comes most directly from the migration of caregivers. These women leave home, often for years at a time to travel to wealthy parts of the world, to care for children, the ill and disabled, and the elderly. They leave their own dependents in the care of other family members or still poorer women who lack the resources to travel abroad. The families of these domestics receive the most minimal care. If we want to build a society that is based on a public ethic of care and on a feminism that seeks to benefit all women, it cannot be one where the public support for care benefits dependents and citizens at the expense of migrant women who have to sacrifice their own familial connections in order to support their families (Kittay, 2011: 118).

Here he was trying to find a connection for other students who were interested in migration issues but not necessarily in Irish carers. From a DE educator’s perspective, not only was Andy learning about focused research and proactive engagement with fellow students, but he was showing ways in which the world is interdependent. In a sense he was encouraging others to develop this sense of interdependency. From an educator perspective, the online forum was a positive tool which allowed the conversation to continue and gave this student an opportunity to grapple with the debate. For Andy’s work to be effective in a ‘normal’ classroom, such discussion would need to be built into the pedagogical approach, including in an assessment model. This would encourage other students to engage with the debate.

### **8.3.2 Work Placement 2: *The Global Hub* Radio Show (Andy)**

Another significant piece of work carried out by Andy for his work placement was to assist with the research and production of several radio shows for *The Global Hub* show. In essence, we were using radio as Darder suggests (2011: 696), as a form of “public pedagogy”. Andy was attracted by the topics being covered at the *Global Hub*. He assisted on many programmes. For instance, he worked on a series of programmes on the experiences of Irish development workers; he worked on a programme dedicated to Family Carers Ireland; he interviewed his own mother in the U.S. about her role as a

mental health advocate; and he spoke of his own battles with mental health. As part of this work, he attended a public meeting of public representatives and NGOs in Ireland working in the field of mental health and he interviewed an Irish political figure.

In his work placement report to his supervisor Andy referred to the series on Irish people who had international experiences (such as development workers). He enjoyed preparing a show with Tadgh Daly, which involved researching and understanding the work of a town planner in Northern Zambia and the work of Irish Aid. Andy enjoyed the ‘real world’ accounts and emailed this anecdote from Tadgh about his work updating housing plan layouts in Kasama:

I hadn't noticed any lake in this housing development when I'd briefly perused the plans earlier. -“Lads what's the story with the lake?” - “hmmm yeaaaah” (a bit of head scratching commenced) - “Gis a look at the plan there again Tryson willya” (I then survey the plan) - “Lads, there's meant to be 3 rows of houses right here” - “Oooh..... hmmm ..... ahhh ... well yeah that's the problem with doing the plans from the office” (everyone erupts laughing). Basically, nobody had even been out to the site to notice this massive fucking lake in the middle of this piece of land! Initially I felt like Roy Keane in Saipan but after a few seconds I just had to smile. hilariously farcical.

This is humorous, but it is also a story Andy remembered and his conversations with Tadgh about land ownership in Zambia were deeply educational. Here he was acquiring ‘knowledge’ about development issues but rather than just reading and writing about it, he was researching within a real world context, synthesising knowledge so as to disseminate it to a wider public and he was engaged in a conversation with someone working ‘on the ground’ in a ‘Global South’ country. He was working in a real-world situation, talking to an experienced town planner, in a country with a strategic plan aimed at reducing chronic poverty, vulnerability and inequality. He was also learning about Irish government policy and practice in a country like Zambia. I even got to tell him about a priceless piece of Irish football history (Roy Keane in Saipan).

As part of the UCC CDG mentioned above, Andy, along with other students, also became involved in establishing ‘UCC Friends of Refugees’. In the context of the radio placement he worked, alongside other participants, on two programmes about the refugee crisis. He chose to carry out a ‘vox pop’ on campus at UCC because he wanted to find out what people knew about the Syrian crisis. As he said in the introduction to his radio piece: “I was just curious about the general public thought about Syria”.

When asked on radio if the people he met were informed about the Syrian crisis, he said:

... people just hear little quick bits from the news and often don't read into it. People have an idea that the crisis of people leaving Syria, that they need help and a lot of people were empathetic. Like you said, they wanted to know how they'd give help. I've tried to put together a little bit of a compilation of resources that I think would help the general public who are curious about how they could help the refugees with donations and actual volunteering in time.

Recognising from this 'vox pop' that there was an appetite for 'easy to understand' information about the refugee crisis, he went on to give a synopsis of the current crisis in Syria. Again he was creating knowledge and disseminating it to a wider audience. He explained to listeners that there was a cease-fire in place but that things were still very uncertain. He provided information about the Arab Spring in the Middle East and the origins of protests and rebellions in Syria against the administration of President Bashar Al-Assad and how various rebel factions were fighting in Syria since 2011. He explained how the Islamic State, the Islamic terrorist group, had taken over the Eastern part of Syria and Western parts of Iraq "filling the vacuum because of the factions". He spoke about US and Russian involvement, about how millions of Syrians were leaving as refugees, where they are going to, how minority religious groups were being persecuted and how European borders have been closed to them. He suggested how listeners might consider supporting refugees by outlining well researched options for people with different approaches to helping such as donating to Save the Children, helping the Red Cross at train stations, supporting migrant aid organisation to prevent deaths at sea or:

... if you're a person who's more a hands-on, more Kinaesthetic in your approach to helping others, there are organisations like Glasgow Solidarity with Calais migrants, where someone named Diane and Bob are driving to Calais with supplies...or there are lots of different ways that doctors of the world are providing care for vulnerable people in camps... You can go even for the summer to Lesbos in Greece and hand out food or pass out books. One of the issues in the refugee camps is idleness and helping them pass time. There are lots of different things you can do.

Here the educator is learning about how to enable learners to see themselves as teachers. Andy was 'problem-posing' for himself. As Freire (Freire and Macedo, 2001/1968: 10) states, in problem-posing education, "people develop their power to perceive critically

*the way they exist* in the world *with which* and *in which* they find themselves. He understood Freire's idea that the world is not a 'static reality', but as "a reality in process, in transformation" (ibid.). Again Andy was researching knowledge and, at the same time, finding ways of communicating it to others. He was aware of the different ways in which people might contribute and at the same time he understood the political realities and origins of the crisis in Syria for instance. He is also doing his part to highlight the global refugee crisis and in so doing shows how the use of community radio can be, in itself, the 'action' aspect of DE. Through the act of informing others Andy was trying, within his sphere of influence, to make what impact he could make in relation to an issue he felt passionate about.

In my quest to understand why students were engaging so well with radio I asked Andy for his view. On this radio programme he said:

I think radio, because we as humans are such visual and we're auditory, because it's literally a voice, you hear another human being's voice and there's something evolutionary about it that I think to a listener, to someone listening to this radio today will go, 'they're human, they're talking about this Syrian refugee crisis and let's hear what they have to say'. It's a conversation almost. A person listening to the radio doesn't get to respond often, but they're listening in way that I think if it was just a PowerPoint presentation or website they're going to look at, it's more human. Again, it's a voice.

This is a powerful testimony to the power of voice and to Andy's insight into that power. Essentially he is referring here again to the power of radio to develop a 'relationship' with, in this case, an unseen audience. In this sense the Andy's radio piece above was not just 'giving voice' to refugee issues, but was also 'being the voice'. Hendy (2000: 155-156) discusses how, because there are no non-verbal cues for the radio listener, a presenter uses his or her voice to develop the "interpersonal relationship" in order to make the programme "listenable-to". This was an important DE skill to develop since communicating a message effectively is important for DE students wishing to move from 'voice to influence' (Allen & Light, 2015: 1).

Proudly and rightly describing himself as a 'chief correspondent' in his final work placement report to his faculty, he reflected that:



Being truly ‘educated’ means realizing there is so much to learn about the world in which we live and so many ways to learn about the world - one must recognize there are intellectual opportunities outside the classroom worth the work. As such, I embarked on an adventure on this work placement that took me from gathering international perspectives to hearing about domestic affairs from those who are in charge of them to advocating for issues of importance to many interest groups. I have absorbed and processed much about the way the world works from this first-person perspective, by participating in this outside-the-classroom learning experience. Whilst it may sound trite to say ‘I learned a lot’ in an academic course, my intellectual expectations for this particular module went significantly beyond what I might expect, in skill sets gained and knowledge learned, than in the average postgraduate classroom. Why? Because this module was based entirely outside of the classroom; I was able to work at my own independent pace on helping Ms. Cotter with her global weekly radio program and other other projects, learn from others I met who had experience in the international relations field, and develop human relationships with all supervisors—an essential skill of any future career-seeker. As mentioned at the start. Learning means knowing you cannot possibly know everything from simply studying one source: you must explore, you must experience, you must take on a work placement!”

Here Andy is telling the educator a great deal about how students learn and for him, ‘learning outside the classroom’ clearly inspires him. The ‘real world’ nature of both the radio and the family carers work not only suited Andy but also meant that he took it very seriously. The varied tasks, using social media, liaising with other students, developing campaigning skills, editing digital stories, deciding on speakers and speaking in public, suited his practical and energetic nature. Yet academic rigor was not lost. Indeed this approach to learning demands new perspectives on what we mean by ‘academic rigor’: We cannot be afraid of taking new journeys. It is a matter of how we value different ways of learning, different sensibilities and different ways of ‘being in the world’. Radio emerges as a powerful learning tool. Andy had to think about how he would use radio to engage with an audience on issues that mattered to him. He was able to explain in a meaningful way, for instance, the causes of the conflict in Syria and why refugees are moving. He found innovative ways to connect, for instance using ‘vox pop’ and really listening to what the public needed (clearer information about the causes of the refugee situation and information about how they can help). Moreover, he was finding ways of using his research to inform and influence others, to ‘voice’ his position and to frame how he thought the world should respond. Radio, and his relationship with it, gave him access to his strong DE voice.

### **8.3.3 Work Placement 3: Online Intercultural Exchange (OIE) - Andy**

The online educational exchange with the Lesotho NGDO is described in section 7.5.2. Unfortunately space does not permit a detailed account of this work, but the OIE was attended and supported administratively by Andy and his experience of this part of his work placement is explained here. This section also gives a flavour of the experience of some of the partners who participated in the OIE from Lesotho, where they worked as the staff team at a local Irish-funded humanitarian NGDO working in Lesotho. On the Lesotho ‘side’ there were 14 participants on this course: Two men and twelve women, all adults, with varying levels of education. Some have a third level qualification already. Five were members of staff at the NGDO. One was the manager of the community development section and another managed the enterprise section. Three others worked as administrative staff and with educational and children’s projects. Other participants worked with the Lesotho Ministry for Culture and Tourism or worked locally as teachers or in nursing. On the ‘UCC side’ six UCC students attended the online exchange with nine other ‘students’ in Lesotho. I also invited three participants whom I had met at various intercultural training courses in the past. This was with a view to having a deeper intercultural experience. These people were living Canada, the UK and France.

I wanted to explore how a structured collaborative partnership with a community partner in a ‘Global South’ country, could enhance DE learning for students and I wanted to explore the impact on the community partner. I wanted to know the ways in which such collaboration might benefit that community, if at all. As with the ‘local’ community partners in Cork, I wanted to know what educators might learn from an exchange of this nature. As mentioned earlier, I worked with the staff of an Irish humanitarian NGDO working in Lesotho and at their request ran an online course for staff and other professionals in the local area on ‘Community Intervention Management’ (a term most recognised in Lesotho) with a focus too on intercultural communications (see Appendix 2.1 - Course Outline). This would meet their needs (there were some difficulties between the Lesotho staff and Irish students who interned with the organisation from time to time). It would also meet the needs of the UCC student participants who had accepted my invitation to participate. There was significant consultation with the Coordinator of the Lesotho project and one board

member in advance of the class and the coordinator was extraordinarily supportive at all times, something which was very significant in the successful aspects of the project. She also appointed a staff member to liaise with me on a regular basis. This meant that there was ongoing solid communication, through either skype or email and practical difficulties such as technology, lighting, sound, camera angles, were dealt with as well as could be expected (internet access was not always available when it was needed so classes were sometimes cancelled).

The ten online workshops took place twice a month in real-time with the Lesotho participants and were also recorded. In this section I am primarily interested in Andy's experience as a student on this course. I developed the online infrastructure on my website. This was useful if I needed to record the classes when there were technical breakdowns. It meant that participants could access the course when they wished. I also set up an online discussion forum. This forum, along with assignments written by Lesotho students (at their request – they wished to practice their written English) formed a very helpful source of ethnographic material.

Andy supported the work of the Lesotho project in a practical sense, such as by helping people to access the online course and forum and emailing other students to remind them of upcoming sessions or forum discussions. He also listened to all the audio presentations for the online course and contributed diligently, enthusiastically, openly and intelligently to the online forum. He read avidly about Lesotho as a country and, based on his interactions with the Lesotho group, he presented a short piece to the cross-disciplinary group about development issues in Lesotho (see paragraph below below). The class, assignments and forum questions were designed to meet the needs of participants. Lesotho participants were interested in intercultural communications and in community development in their workplaces. The students, such as Andy, were aware of the purpose of this research and were open to exploring how participating in such an exchange could enhance their DE competencies. Here, in this section, I focus on Andy's experience and refer too to some of the impact on the Lesotho participants.

Andy's talk to the CDG class provides an interesting account of what he was learning, how such learning was shared with the CDG participants and how learning happens in an OIE of this nature. He based his talk on comments made by the Lesotho participants in class, on the forum or in written assignments. In this way he said to the CDG class:

“this is what life is really like on a day to day basis, or what people think about Development”. Andy referred to a discussion about the term ‘Development’ which the class had online. He quoted one Lesotho participant who saw the term ‘Development’ as a very broad concept but felt that:

... it’s to do with transformation – transforming from the worse situation to the better”. He saw it in local terms, as ‘Community Intervention’ – community developing in “different ways – financially, maybe you transform them, you take them out of a bad situation and you put them in the better situation. Maybe you develop some strategies that they could have themselves to alleviate themselves from poverty and when you intervene you develop – intervene, that’s how I feel about it because you bring development projects and then you are intervening into those people’s problems because you intervene – when you intervene you help people to transform like we said; to transform from a certain situation to a better level. You take them from below...

Repeatedly the issue of unemployment in Lesotho was raised – Andy spoke about what he had learned about solutions being sought on the ground:

... in terms of money because if we are intervening, I think whatever Lesotho is facing now is due to unemployment – people are not able to get jobs, people are not even able to create jobs to offer other people, most of the employed are employed by the government. The private sector is tracking – I think I mentioned earlier that we are trying to encourage people to enter into the crafts sector maybe to try to create jobs for themselves and for others. So I think in that way I’ll be in terms of money.

Andy also referred to assignment three in particular which raised the many development issues that concern the participants, with unemployment, poverty, rape, incest and sexual abuse, vulnerable children and orphans being issues of high concern. One Lesotho participant said that HIV and TB are a particular concern, “especially men because they seek medical attention very late when they are almost dying and they therefore end up dying”. Incest and sexual abuse – “In places it was so common that children thought it was a normal way of living and worst of all, some religious leaders abused women and children”. Hence, in terms of Andy’s input to the CDG he focused both on DE themes and on some of the solutions which this NGDO were working towards, on a day to day basis. Each of these issues presented learning points for discussion in class. The themes raised were highly sensitive and discussions between people from different parts of the world about such issues are very important. Discussion focused for instance on how in Ireland, we are still dealing with systematic abuse which happened decades ago. We discussed what is meant by ‘systematic’ and

we looked at how long it has been taken (and not yet resolved) to address these matters which could not be spoken of at one time in our history.

On the online discussion forum, Andy was learning about societal issues too in Ireland. The discussion questions were framed in such a way as to bring the dialogue to DE issues. In one discussion I, as educator, wanted to raise the issue of relative and absolute poverty. I asked one of the Cork students to talk about social issues in Ireland such as homelessness and unemployment during one classroom discussion. A Mosotho (a person from Lesotho) asked “but you have unlimited resources there?” The Irish student did some work on explain how there was a housing crisis in Ireland as he understood it. The Basotho (plural of Mosotho) group were shocked to hear the social welfare in Ireland for a single person was in the region of €220 a week, which he said was more than most people he knew earned in a year.

These kinds of conversations provided opportunities to explore development issues in both Ireland and Lesotho. It also raised issues on which there was fundamental disagreement. One Masotho participant, proud of her unique culture, said: “Children are brought up differently from children other nationalities. Children are lashed when mischievous.” Struggling with how to respond to some of the views he disagreed with, one UCC student approached me in person to ask how best to broach the issue of treatment of children. He decided that he would prefer to raise his concerns “in class” (on skype) rather than in the forum where he felt there could be some misunderstandings. Here we find a comment about not wanting to preach:

Let’s talk about why we don’t do that (lash children) in Ireland”, he said. “But I don’t want to sound like we are preaching. It just upsets me.

Field notes indicate that in the skype-class discussion, as educator I took on a type of mediator role. This class was very well planned. I discussed it in detail with the Lesotho coordinator in advance and she sat in on the class. Two of the staff worked with children and she was anxious to ensure that there was clarity about their policy as an organisation that children would not be harmed in any way. This is a discussion she had had many times with her staff. Andy, the Lesotho coordinator and myself as educator, discussed how we would approach this discussion and other ‘difficult’ issues. I asked Andy to help because of his unique skills in dialogue, mediation, keeping calm in difficult situations and wishing to ‘love’ others even when he disagreed radically with

them. In the class each “side” was given time to think about points they wished to make to support their position and when they did, others listened. When asked to try to see what they had in common it was evident that all were interested in the welfare of children but had a different idea of what was ‘good’ for children. The group concluded that dialogue was the way forward on this issue and at the end of the class they agreed to “let’s keep talking about this”. It was a good start to the conversation. Later too, I posed a question on the forum about ‘critical thinking’. One Mesotho participant student concluded that she felt the conversation “added value” in the “online cultural exchange”. She was interested in the idea of ‘critical thinking’. We should not, she said, accept everything we read in a book or newspaper “without analysis and questioning it”. “In our culture”, she said “we grew up not asking questions...if you are told what to do a person must obey and not show some resistance”. She felt that as a consequence of being exposed to new cultures and ideas, she might have an impact in changing such oppressive cultures and bring about change.

This led to a self-reflective moment for myself as educator, when I worried if as a DE educator I was manipulating participants. In the example above, we planned in advance what was ultimately a staff intervention relating to the care of children. It was raised carefully and in collaboration with the local manager. However, it does raise the discomfort that can exist for a reflective educator. There are often dilemmas of this nature. Ultimately the learning I take from this incident was again to come back to DE basics and one basic assumption I have is that children have the human right not to be harmed. The other is that it is not my role as an educator to impose my culture but I think it is authentic to speak my own truth. Andy taught me (and the other UCC student) about dialogue in many situations and he was my teacher that day. He showed me how to tell my story without imposing it. We were able to share what were very strongly held views and at least start a conversation.

Andy was interested in the fact that most of the Basotho participants mentioned their church: “Christianity – daily confessions are real ... they help the Christian to be very positive and very successful in life regardless of the challenges that he/she faces because he/she is transformed.”. Another said “I like Christianity because it shapes culture and transforms nations”. My field notes indicate Andy’s insight into how religion is responsible for wars but “for ordinary people it also binds people across the world”. Andy and I noted how he, growing up in the U.S. and this group, growing up

in Lesotho, had been shaped by Christianity. This raised the issue of ‘manipulation’ for me again. Knowing that one student in the CDG felt very strongly about the colonisation of Africa by Irish missionaries – which she saw as a negative influence – I invited the CDG group to discuss the role of missionaries in Africa and gave a short input on the work of Irish missionaries in education, health and religious formation in Africa. I wanted to have conversations in the classroom which gave voice to different perspectives. I note several times in memos that this is something that I struggle with as an educator. DE as a discipline does hold a position e.g. the human rights of children. DE also encourages a world where there is respect for different cultural norms. Navigating the space between the two is not always easy. I concluded in a memo that critical reflection by the educator is essential but also that supervision by a peer might be useful for DE practitioners in a way they are used in other professions such as social work or counselling. I wrote in the memo: “choppy waters, sea sickness, fog. I need a lighthouse”. This is perhaps an honest reflection by a reflective practitioner and negotiating these spaces might be well served if there is more than one navigator. I found myself often using maritime analogies in my reflections, illustrating perhaps the process, the journey and the iterative nature of DE pedagogy.

Towards the end of the project Andy and two other UCC students worked alongside the staff team on a strategic plan they were working on as an organisation. Being participant-led some of my later sessions were on Strategic Planning, which in my previous work roles I had extensive experience. I was able to pass on my knowledge and skills about developing a strategic plan in an NGDO context. Andy and other students were learning a great deal about development issues in Lesotho and about day to day life for those working in an NGO such as the one we worked with. His contribution to the class on what he was learning about Lesotho was very instructive. Again his learning was based on real-world interactions and was with a group of people who knew what they wanted to achieve in terms of the development of their region and country. Working on the strategic plan helped all involved to focus on something practical, yet strategic and very much focused on and linked in to long term strategies and structural reform, rather than simply an assessment led college project. Furthermore, the ability to make local and global connections was facilitated well by this online approach. Students could discuss issues in their respective countries and how inequality or poverty are politically constructed.

In terms of more challenging impacts of this project on the Lesotho participants two important and interlinked ethical considerations emerged. The first can be loosely termed ‘expectation’, the second relates to accreditation and the value of a European qualification. The first assignment shows evidence of very high and varied expectations amongst the Lesotho participants, despite much initial conversation and planning about the purpose and limitations of the project. For instance students said:

“I wish to complete the course and have the Certificate. I also hope this course will make a good progress in my job because I want to learn how to manage children and have a strategic plan on what I am going to do with them”.

“My expectations: to be part of this course again next year; to have an improved English writing; to have a certificate at the end; to have intercultural communications skills”. Finally, one student said, “I expect Community Interventions Management<sup>49</sup> training to equip me with skills on how to successfully engage with the Communities and also expose me on how to seek funding for Community Development Projects”.

“It enables us to be aware of other people’s beliefs, cultural values and perceptions and be able to interact with them. It connects people of different social groups hence we are able to communicate. We get to experience the use of new technology and be exposed to 21st century skills such as problem solving, digital literacy and critical thinking. Authentic language experience; we are to experience the use of correct English words as it is the second language in our country, it is also difficult for us to choose the right words to describe or define something”.

A UCC student said: “Just a few lines to introduce myself. My name is X and I am studying Social Science. I have a big interest in world events and culture so looking forward to getting to know other participants on the course :)”.

Managing these expectations was an ongoing challenge. Again despite intensive early communication over many months, over-riding all other aspects of the final evaluation by the Lesotho group (in an online focus group), was the issue of accreditation. From the beginning the Lesotho participants asked what they get out of this in terms of certification. While I made great efforts to find a mechanism within the university to accommodate this, it was clear that a certificate of participation was the best that could be made available. Indeed, such was the value of a European qualification to the group, that even this certificate was deemed extremely important to the participants. Again

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<sup>49</sup> Community Interventions Management is a term chosen by Lesotho-participants. Similar to Community Development, it is a term more widely recognised in Lesotho.



when facilitated, through art, to think about key findings from this project my image (Appendix 8 image 2) was one of ‘fortress Europe’ with a bag containing precious stones and the stars of the European Union and a ‘precious’ certificate. These are shown alongside a map of colonial Africa in 1914, asking the question perhaps, ‘how far have we come since then’? The lack of certification was the main reason for the decision was made to not continue with the project for a second year. Clearly Andreotti’s (2011) post-colonial lens is important here so that we can acknowledge the power inequalities inherent in North-South relationships.

Other practical challenges emerged. For instance the Lesotho participants said that not being able to access a computer and the internet in their homes was a huge hurdle, despite trojan efforts by the NGDO to facilitate the project within working hours. In their evaluation at the end of the course, the Lesotho participants did feel that the course was time-consuming, particularly two participants who were embarking on a new enterprise project locally. Time was a critical issue for the participants in Lesotho in general.

The role of the Coordinator of the Lesotho NGDO was a vital one for overcoming not just practical barriers to also in ensuring that the project linked to the work of the organisation and by providing a dedicated time each week for participants to come to the online class and spend time on their assignments. The Coordinator along with a board member of the NGDO, also spent significant time with me before, during and after the project, planning, encouraging and evaluating in a pro-active, solution-focused and constructive manner. One particularly useful approach was linking the collaborative project which formed a core part of the project, to the work of the NGDO and the development of a strategic plan. This developed the strategic planning skills of all participants, was informative about development issues, enabled a linking of theory and practice in a development NGDO and was relevant and useful to the Lesotho participants.

This online evaluation also provided positive feedback. The Lesotho participants stressed that they felt that they had a “voice” and a “culture” which was valued during the course. They felt that instructions on what they needed to learn were “very clear”. They spoke about how interesting it was to learn how different people “communicate” and one participant said that the course “changed the way I think, I feel more

empowered, we addressed some of the issues which were a challenge”. In general the group felt they had “learned a lot” about “intercultural communications”, “global issues” and “studying online”. One participant said “it was hugely valuable for learning how to think”. The Coordinator was also positive. She felt that the online forum had been very useful for developing written skills which were important in the work context and she specifically highlighted better quality work reporting in general. In the past, she said, “they literally used to refuse to write reports”. She felt that the process and discipline of learning had helped to improve the group dynamic. However, she did feel that the group were challenged by “self-learning” and that they were a group who needed to be directed and needed a lot of structure.

## **8.4 Key ‘Community Partner’ (KSP) 2 - Kathleen**

Kathleen is introduced in section 7.6.2 above. I approached the Family Carers organisation after the pilot MEG project, knowing (from my experience in the community sector) that they were a strong advocacy group with a working ethos that is in line with DE approaches. One of the family carers whom I call Kathleen (not her real name) in this study agreed to be one of the ‘key community participants’ for the research. She had cared for her husband for many years before his death. This section discusses the impact which this work had on Kathleen. As explained earlier, the Family Carers were preparing for the General Election and wanted to lobby political parties and candidates relating to political changes they wanted to see in relation to family carer issues. Hence, unlike the Maryland project in section 6.4.2 there was a political purpose to this project. Members of the group made stories about their lives as family carers and these form a collective story of ‘Older Family Carers’ on the website Behind the Curtain ([www.behindthecurtain.com](http://www.behindthecurtain.com)). Andy and I created this website to support the work of the group in their political lobbying work. At all times the carers were leading in terms of the content and appearance of the website.

In the campaigning workshops, which I facilitated and Andy attended, Kathleen was engaged, interested and clear in her thinking. She talked a great deal about her husband John who had died a number of years previously after a long illness. She talked about how she cared for him. Whereas Andy had spent a lot of time working with the group as a whole, I myself also worked very closely with Kathleen with a view to understanding her experience of this work. I particularly spent many hours with her to

produce and edit her digital story. I noted in field notes on several occasions that this was a deeply intimate journey for Kathleen and a privilege for me as a researcher, to walk with her on that journey. As Shewbridge (2017) also noted in the Maryland Project mentioned in section 6.4.2 above, as students and residents make stories, they also create relationships, and the sharing of personal experiences goes well beyond the digital stories themselves.

Working through her story she made her way from their early days as a couple “very much in love”, on their honeymoon, on holidays, “being at home” for her children and John’s career in a well-known city-centre store in Cork city. She described how he was diagnosed with Parkinson’s three years after he retired. There followed a very detailed account of his medical care. There are many video recordings about injections, contracting the MRSA hospital bug, a possible amputation, a day to day, year to year account of every detail of John’s treatment and of Kathleen’s care for him. Not all the recordings could be included in the final short digital story and every word and image had to be discussed and chosen carefully. Some parts would not be omitted under any circumstances, like the image of the wound in John’s infected foot. She recounted proudly and defiantly how she had to battle with medical professions to be heard. They “shrugged their shoulders” when she said that a proposed amputation, was a risk she did not want to take. They told her it was a risk they had to take. Her suggestion of using homeopathy before the last resort of an amputation, led to improvement within three weeks and a fully healed foot within nine months. “All of this could have been saved for John, that suffering, if they kept him in hospital long enough on the first instance”. She tells of how she cared for John over the final few years and not being listened to about his care, such as her contention that John did not need anti-depressants and how he improved every time she took him off them after a hospital stay where the medics insisted he take them. She spoke often about bureaucracy, the “10,000 questions”:

They write down everything, but they never read them over again. They seem to get lost. Every time that you’re admitted to hospital, you have the same questions over and over and over again. Surely, they can read them and make some sense of them. Like, they don’t. The length of time they keep you there in the hospital admitting the person is ridiculous with all these questions. The other thing is that they don’t heed what’s important for the patient. Then when you’re looking for information, you go here for one thing and you go somewhere else for another. It would be great if you could get just a one-stop-shop that you could pick up all of your information and your forms, and anything you have to fill out or whatever. Yes, the lack of

communication is something wicked altogether and it's time wasting. They need to listen to the person that's caring for them.

The final days of his life are recounted in minute detail, again not all reaching the final “online” story, but recorded and kept by Kathleen. She speaks of the importance of the Family Carers Association:

If I hadn't have found them, I would have really been on the floor. It's an awful void in your life when your partner is gone. You're nobody's special person anymore, she said.

What was clear during all of the recording sessions was the importance of recounting every detail with accuracy, the importance of the audience knowing this happened, that carers are not being heard and that this was a task which Kathleen was taking very seriously. This was the person she loved and lived with for over fifty years. Telling this story about their love, life and end of life care mattered and she wanted others to know what happened. The result was a beautiful story, which was very meaningful for Kathleen (see attachment 1 on USB). It was truly, as Meadows (StoryCentre<sup>50</sup>: 1) says a “short, personal multimedia tales told from the heart”, a “multimedia sonnet”.

*Figure 7: Kathleen and her husband in their younger years.*



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<sup>50</sup> StoryCentre is a leading NGDO in the field of DST. Based in California, it supports individuals and organizations in using storytelling and participatory media for reflection, education, and social change

When the final version of the two videos were finally signed off on by Kathleen she said the words which in my view most strongly represent her experience of the entire process: “there’s no denying it now”. When I asked what she meant, she said:

...well it’s on the web now. Nobody can say it didn’t happen. They have to listen to me now. And everyone will know how much I loved John.

This is very similar to comments made by Obafemi above about his story:

I appreciated a particular aspect of my life was documented....I have these and safe forever now...my own story ... my own video in it. It’s what it is. It’s raw. It’s going to pass across more emotions to people that watch it and bring questions to them. I don’t want to think about the beginning. The injustice in that film. People who are not emotional doesn’t care.

These are powerful testimonies about the importance of ‘telling the story’ to people who have not been heard and who want to be heard. Both Obafemi and Kathleen said in interviews with them that the purpose of making the stories was for themselves in the first instance and then to also educate others.

As with the Maryland project mentioned earlier central to the process was Kathleen’s sense of individuality and ownership. The story was made in Kathleen’s own voice. This raised a dilemma which arose too in the Maryland project. Kathleen could not have the hours of video on the Carer website. She had to compromise and make decisions about what to leave in or out. From an educator perspective this can be easily addressed. Kathleen wanted to have a video to show herself and her friends. She also wanted to have the hours of original voice recordings which I recorded at the outset. There does not have to be a compromise. Kathleen made decisions about what would be on the website, along with the stories of other carers. In this way she was joining in a wider narrative about “the life of family carers”. This had a political purpose and she happily gave permission for the organisation to publish her story. At the same time there was no reason why she could not have a longer video for herself. This was time consuming but it was important to her. Through the process of making the video she also became interested in computers and joined a short ‘introduction to computers’ course which was run by Andy, for the carers.

She reiterated all her points in the later informal discussion which included reference to the radio show she participated in with other carers:

...radio - and digital story - now captured for posterity - my friend couldn't believe stories she saw on video and radio. Things like that if on radio or print will last and more will see it.

All of these thoughts and feelings are reiterated again on the radio show which Kathleen participated in along with other family carers and the manager of the Cork Family Carer Centre. Their willingness to travel to Youghal shows both dedication to their 'cause' and their perception of the value of radio in amplifying their voice. At this point the organisation joined with another similar organisation and became known as Family Carers Ireland. They had come as a group to campaign for Family Carer rights during the election campaign. The manager highlighted the concerns of the organisation for carers as a whole, as did the more experienced advocates. Each carer also told their personal story. Kathleen believed her husband had been misdiagnosed and said they, the medical professionals:

...didn't want to hear. They knew best. I knew nothing. I knew him for 44 years and they only just knew him for the last 11 weeks and they still thought that they knew more.

I noted how this connected with my own experience of my own mother's almost identical words as social workers told her how to care for my father after fifty years of marriage. Kathleen's defiance resonated closely with me. But, she says, "we had good times too, we had very good times. We had lovely holidays here in Youghal a few times. It was very popular at one stage for holidays. It was brilliant because you could just roll him out the door and you were at the sea". She concluded on radio and in a final interview with her about the entire process that she would:

...like to think that they wouldn't do that to another person, that anybody else wouldn't suffer in that way. I'd like to think that they'd listen to the people who knew the patient better than they did. I had lived with it for 44 years, I knew the type of person he was.

In an hour long programme on *The Global Hub* show (community radio), she moved between the personal and the political. The group who had created the website and the digital stories, were also now using radio as a campaigning platform. This transmedia approach was powerful not just because of the wider audience but because it also provided a sense of belonging and community, a pride, like the students, in the fact that they were collectively taking action for change. She spoke of the value of the support of other carers and the Family Carers Association both during and after John's death.

That's really what brought me back on my feet again. When your partner in life dies, where do you go? Everywhere you go, you're totally on your own. If you go to a wedding, you might have all your relations around you but you're still on your own. They were all in a similar boat to yourself. They understood what I was going through and it was easy to talk to them, then. Whereas, you couldn't talk to the people on the street because they'd start running away from you. They'd get bored with you.

Kathleen, along with another carer also visited the interdisciplinary group for this PhD research project. It was interesting to witness her own development as she went from a person who before the visit was saying "I don't know why they would listen to me", to "I suppose we are not as bad speakers as we thought we were". This is an affective lesson for the adult learner, confidence, self-esteem and related areas, can be developed at different times in our lives, in different ways. She and other carers also visited other classes at the university such as trainee nurses and social workers. In a final discussion with Kathleen she herself referred to the growth in her confidence –"I gained a little confidence I didn't have at the start", she said. For me as an observer, this was one of the most obvious impacts of the process on Kathleen. As she said:

...when you are caring your head is down and there is no choice but out in these situations you are talking to people, you open minds and pass information to other people.

At the end of the project I had a discussion with Kathleen with a view to understanding more deeply the impact of the project on her. She stressed again that the reason she became involved in this project was to make sure that the public understood the situation for family carers and other do not have to "jump through loops to try to get what they want". She was very positive about student placements. Like the others in this group she was open to working with young people, she said they "come up with questions we don't even think of", that it is good to have an "extra head" and it is good for them to know these things when they are young. In general she said she liked young people on student placements, since they are inclined to be active and ask questions. "I like to see them involved. They are very helpful".

There were also advocacy or political reasons for Kathleen's participation.

We want to bring out our situation as carers because we are never looked at by the government, that we are doing a good job and we are saving the government millions, no billions by doing unpaid work. It is our loved ones but if we stopped tomorrow the hospitals would be at a standstill cos they couldn't cope with patient numbers. We want to make it more possible to

keep our patients at home and look after them with the care and attention they should get and we definitely need some help: Help is needed. To get the message across a wider audience and also for trainee professionals to hear.

When asked how important it was to tell her story on radio and through digital storytelling, she said it was “very important”, but I did want to “bring out the fact that what happened to my husband, should not happen to anyone else. She felt that bringing the “private” into the “public” arena was effective. Of radio, she said:

...there is always someone listening to a radio show for instance. One day it could be their problem. I always learn something myself. You learn what happened and what shouldn't have happened may broaden people's knowledge and mind.

She saw the value of engaging with people in a classroom, there is “interaction and you can explain as best you can the answers to their questions”; “They feel comfortable with you and vice versa”. “Online, or in public, it goes to more people and people will learn from what they read”. She found it empowering:

... It was very empowering. I would have been a very private person all my life and wouldn't have thought of doing this but I see from what I have been through myself and the lack of knowledge I had and how hard it was important to pass on information to one another and I am glad I did it”. The radio she said, was nerve wrecking at first, but I enjoyed it. It was a great experience. The story is in your head so it is easy enough to tell it. You (the researcher) were very encouraging to help us along and keep conversation going.

There are a number of learnings for a DE educator, from Kathleen's experience, about the impact of this kind of learning (using CLL and MML approaches). For Kathleen this was a very positive, empowering experience. The ‘personal’ and the ‘public’ came together, yet they were also separate. This was a very personal story, told from the heart, one which she very much wanted to tell with an understanding that now nobody could ‘deny’ that this had happened, that she loved John and that she had not been listened to by professionals. Her comments would appear to indicate that this was a cathartic process and she was very happy with the outcome. At a personal level too her growth as a community leader was very obvious as she moved from someone “on the cusp of leadership” (as I noted at the start in my field notes) to a strong leader and advocate for carers. Her confidence grew through the making of the show, through the radio broadcast and through her visits to the various classrooms at UCC, where she spoke to the CDG students and to trainee nurses and social workers. She was also very



well aware of the value of collective storytelling and, in this case, of its political purpose. Hers was one of several stories on the website. Some of these stories were also shown to election candidates at an event organised by the carers for the Cork-based candidates. She saw the role of student as ‘supportive’. It was clear to me as an educator that this group were in a position to guide Andy through his learning journey. They knew what their issues were and knew how to articulate them. At the same time they appreciated the skills which Andy and I could bring to support their work by bringing DST and radio skills and supporting the group to identify their key messages. They led but we followed and supported them to communicate to decision-makers, the relevant trainee professionals and the wider public.

### **8.5 Key ‘Student Participant’ (KSP) 3 - Finuala**

Finuala is introduced in Section 7.6.5 above. She was a first year social science student aged nineteen. She joined the cross-disciplinary group and attended five of six workshops on development education. She was by far the quietest of the participants, yet confident and interested in learning. Along with other students, she helped organise the refugee public event mentioned above and helped produce the radio programme on refugees. Finuala agreed to take part in a series of six workshops, which I organised in Year 3 of this research, the ‘Mixed Abilities Group’ (MAG) a group of students with mixed intellectual and physical abilities, some students at UCC and some residents with disability support services in Cork city. She agreed to be one of my key student participants, which she willingly agreed to. She attended six workshops on Global Citizenship themes as part of the MAG group. Her job was to work with Vera, who also attended the mixed ability sessions (see below). Finuala first met Vera when I introduced them before the first ‘mixed abilities’ course on Global Citizenship. She diligently worked with Vera throughout. Her task was to support Vera, a wheelchair user, ensure she arrived safely to the classroom, was comfortable and was generally enabled to fully participate in the classroom activities. Both attended as participants in the class. Finuala and Vera also worked on developing a digital archive about the voices of people moving out of institutional care, along with other students on this course.

Vera could be challenging in that, accustomed to living in institutional care, she expected Finuala to behave like a care worker, which was not her role in this context.

The role was more like one of ‘buddy’ or ‘friend’, something Vera had not experienced often in her life, particularly outside of care settings. Finuala as a relatively (to Vera) shy young student, was struggling at times to understand how best to cope with Vera’s expectations. Nevertheless, as field notes indicate, she persevered. She was learning through experience how to cope with challenges and clearly developing valuable and deep awareness: “I have noticed a little about what living in an institution can do to you, it’s not Vera’s fault if she expects me to treat her the way institutions have always treated her”.

I had invited a guest speaker, Nora, to talk to the class about her experience of living in a Direct Provision centre in Cork. She lived there for a number of years. Now a refugee, studying at UCC, she had also been one of the participants in the digital story telling workshop discussed above, facilitated by Dr. Alexandra and attended by Claire and Obafemi. She was a powerful public speaker and spoke about the long asylum process, the humiliation of living in direct provision, the lack of control over many aspects of her life, the dangers living there as a woman, the horror of seeing her child grow up there and the patronising attitudes of staff and some members of the public. Vera was clearly moved by this and kept repeating “we are on the same page” when the speaker mentioned different aspects of institutional life. There were several discussions between the two which were also very illuminating for everyone else in the classroom. The bureaucracy, the waiting, the discrimination, the politics were very familiar to each of them. They knew of the experiences of ‘the other’. I slowed the class down and brought attention to this vital moment. I mused in my notes that I had witnessed many students struggling to understand the deep structural inequalities in society and power dynamics which lead to injustice. I noted how I had witnessed many communities struggle in their own ‘silos’. I know that I had often wished that we could work closer together as human beings with more in common than what separates us. It is hard to explain how powerful this learning moment was for everyone involved and it was important. It was an example of an educator recognising a teaching moment (Freire and Macedo, 2000/1970: 88-89). Here we had a black South African woman who grew up as the child of a domestic servant in a white household, who lived as an asylum seeker in Cork and we had a woman of the same age who struggled all her life because of her disability. Vera had never heard of a refugee until that day but she somehow knew about the experiences of a refugee. Nora said she knew little about residential care for

people with disabilities in Ireland and hadn't thought about how much they had in common.

In the radio extract below, where Claire interviews Finuala, Finuala's comments about this learning moment, illustrate the power of peer learning and the connections with the Freirean idea of 'naming the moment' (Cavanagh, 2000: 73). Cavanagh describes 'Naming the Moment' as

... a participatory method of identifying and analysing issues in order to decide how to act on them. [...] it combines a critical (and dialogic) understanding of both the structures of our world (political, economic, environmental, cultural, etc.) and the fluid movement of forces that act to sustain those structures in hegemonic equilibrium. Understanding that, when shared through dialogue, including drawing, and popular theatre and storytelling, allows for relationships that resist the tricky ways in which people and groups have been trained to often collude in their own oppression. Naming the Moment advocates and necessitates alliances across many sectors (from labour to community to academia) and between different social movements. It is a multi-cropping practice of story-sharing, skills building and democratic dialogue that is simultaneously theory and practice (ibid.).

Finuala, could hear, see and feel the power of what we were witnessing. As an educator I had purposely brought the attention of the class to this learning moment, so it was rewarding to hear both students had understand the significance of that class discussion. She talks about this in the following extract from the radio show where she is speaking about her work placement:

**Finuala:** Well, it's a partnership with a person with disability. You're on equal grounds with the people. You do the same work, which is very humanising and it gives you a chance to know a person that you have never met before. My partner was Vera and she was in a wheelchair. We did activities such as a live link from India and talking to refugees and doing posters and...fun.

**Claire:** Perfect. There was a link between the work placement and the refugee crisis?

**Finuala:** Yes, we did two classes on the refugees and the refugee person who was once in direct provision came in and talked to us and told us her

experience. Her name was Nora (pseudonym) and she had a very good story, a sad story to tell about how she survived in direct provision.

Yes. Also, the feelings of Nora and disabilities in general, it would be like they're incarcerated. Many people were in institutions such as my partner Vera and she felt empathy and a connectedness to her because she was in an institution for years but now she's moved into her own house, which is a big deal. A lot of people can't do that. People just want freedom and it's a very simple thing to give people but it's not been given.

**Claire:** Vera, the person in the wheelchair that you were working with was able to leave institutional living and live independently.

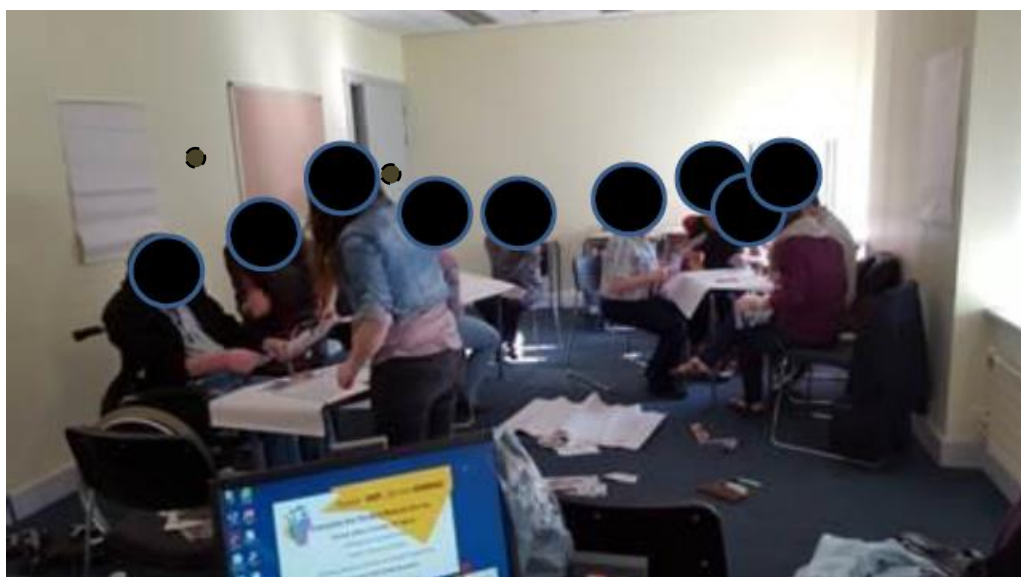
**Finuala:** In her own house, yes.

**Claire:** She would stress the importance of that and you said she felt a connectedness with Nora who was living in an institution as well?

**Finuala:** Yes.

**Claire:** Perfect. She would like to see something like that extended to those living in direct provision as well. Yes, more freedom for people. Interacting with the community, maybe that would be better than putting them into institutes.

*Figure 8: Mixed Abilities Group hard at work.*



Foucault's (1988) work rings very true in the context of Vera and Finuala's meeting. Seeing his ideas literally embodied in your classroom makes it easier to understand how a society constructs meanings and experiences of 'disability', 'prisoner', 'asylum-seeker', 'carer' or who can be a student. Just as Claire, a highly engaged and interested student, had never met an asylum-seeker in person, both Vera and Finuala had not met others in residential care or direct provision. This in itself is an indication of how power is used to hide people from others in similarly disenfranchised institutions. As discussed earlier Foucault (1975/1995: 193) says that our approach is more subtle as discipline becomes a mechanism of power which regulates the thought and behaviour of social actors through subtle means, as opposed to the brute sovereign force exercised by monarchs or lords. Discipline also works by organizing space (e.g. the way a prison or classroom is built), time (e.g. the set times you are expected to be at work each day), and everyday activities. As this played in front of us in the classroom, I am not sure if I agreed with Foucault that this was 'subtle'. People are hidden away from both society and from one another, that would seem to be very 'unsubtle' especially in a society where there is instant access to stories such as those of Nora, Obafemi or Vera (see below). There is no excuse in our society for 'not knowing'.

Finuala had spoken about being bullied at school. She was also the youngest in the CDG group, the only first year undergraduate. She was moving into young adulthood in a university environment and very eager to learn. Like Kathleen and Obafemi I felt that she in particular, from the student group, was also finding her voice, her positionality (Sorrells, 2013) in relation to issues which mattered to her and her confidence. This kind of experiential pedagogy, directly based on her interest in institutional care, was very suitable for her to explore the questions she had both personally and academically. Finuala also mentioned in a discussion I had with her, that she preferred the Mixed Abilities Group, to the CDG which she found more tense (this was also my experience as educator). The MAG "was less competitive, more enjoyable, there was less tension and it was more about real learning", she said. Indeed she was like a different person in each class. Vera had helped Finuala to socialise by asking her to bring her for coffee after or before the class. By asking Finuala to explain parts of the course to her, it also meant Finuala needed to verbally articulate the her interpretation of what we were learning. At the beginning of the CDG I would not have imagined Finuala talking on radio, yet she did, with careful pairing with Claire. Finuala

was literally finding her voice. It illustrates too the popularity and accessibility of radio to all age groups and abilities.

## 8.6 Key ‘Community Partner’ (KSP) 3 – Vera

*Figure 9: The Launch of the ‘Moving On’ Website at the City Hall, Cork*



Vera is introduced in section 7.6.6 above. Vera was a forty four year old wheelchair user, with ‘learning difficulties’ who had recently moved out of institutional care into her own home. While Finuala met Vera for the first time at the ‘Mixed Abilities Group’ (MAG) course, I had known Vera for some time before the course started. Vera took part in the MAG class and also participated in the radio show which the MAG made together as their collaborative project at the end of the six week course. Before the MAG course started I worked with Michael and Vera to support them to tell their own stories, using digital storytelling, of moving out of residential care. Vera, Matthew, Finuala, other student participants and myself as researcher, worked on developing a digital archive about the voices of people moving out of institutional care in Ireland. The archive concentrated on the life of Michael and Vera, who told their story through the medium of film and through the use of their own photographs. The

website associated with this archive is: <http://movingonireland.com>. Vera's video story is on the attached USB and entitled *No Looking Back*.

As with Kathleen above, Vera put many hours and days of work into this story, with every image and word carefully chosen. As with Obafemi and Kathleen the telling of this story was very important to her. There are images of her visits to the local shopping mall and to her mother's grave, to show how independent she now is and a photograph of her mother and her close friend, now deceased, hanging in her new home. The images represent family, friendship and independence and they speak to the theme of 'home'. This is represented strongly by Vera's choice of images of the words 'home' and 'love' around her house, as well as photos of her at her 'own front door'. She speaks about her early life, the death of her parents and the fact that she had to wait for thirteen years for a bed at the residential centre. She says she then lived in the residential care centre for sixteen or seventeen years and:

It's like in a school, you have to be part of the group and I like being my own individual person, deciding what I want to do instead of being told what to do. Sometimes it's good; sometimes it's bad, it's the same everywhere. Well, it all depends on the person you get on mostly with. There is a lot of jealousy everywhere. If you're friends with someone, someone might think, 'She's favouring her or him or whatever'. I said, 'That's it. I'm gone'. I had enough.

She speaks about her journey out of the centre as one which was bureaucratic and hard "because there were so many papers to fill out to get where you want to go and it just took forever". Up to this point she had waited for fourteen years on the social housing list. What was very important to Vera was that nobody believed she could "do it" (move into her own home). Like Kathleen, she was not believed. "They thought it was a big joke", she said. However, she says defiantly:

Believe in yourself and ignore the begrudgers because there will be people that will put you down anyway. If you want to do it, you do it. It's worth it to have your own front door.

Like Kathleen, her confidence grew during the process of making the story. She describes what she learned as she prepared to move out. She learned, she said, that she is a "good boss", "good at organising things" and that people think she is "warm and funny". She talked about what she likes to do such as cinema and watching TV. As

with Kathleen and Obafemi, Vera wanted this story for herself but also to advocate for people in her situation and she wanted to be heard:

...I want to talk about what life is like for people with disabilities. I want to say that people should listen to me. Sometimes people want to tell me what's good for me. Like, they tell me to go to a day centre. I don't like day centres. Simple, I know my own mind.

This is an aspect of Vera that I was well familiar with. As I walked alongside her for a year I witnessed how people doubted her ability to live alone and her ability to make her own decisions. Professional people would try to veer her in the direction of day centres for people with disabilities and couldn't seem to understand the simple fact that she did not like going to day centres and did not want to go to them. The film, she said, was her opportunity to tell people. She was proud of her achievements, moving to her new home. In her new home she said:

You can have your friends over to visit. I've made a lot of new friends. New neighbours and one is next door. There is no looking back and no going back. What I can do now, I can go to the shopping centre near my house on my own. I have my own front door. I can go to the family centre. I can visit my mum's grave. There's no looking back and no going back.

Vera had often told me that her experience of school was very negative. She did not read or write. She had made a decision not to join classes, particularly if she could not just 'drop in and out' if she wished. She did not like to commit to a course. However, she attended all six two hour classes in our course. She was on time every week and she participated enthusiastically in each class. When I asked her why, she said "I like you". I noted in my fieldnotes that the kind of trust that had been built up between us enabled Vera to feel safe and comfortable in the class. There is a lesson here for educators. Knowing her as I did I was aware of how important it was that someone genuinely believed in her, did not pay lip service and did not patronise her. I noted not for the first time in my field notes, one talent I believe I do have is an ability to bring out the best in people. While this raised ethical issues for me and I struggled with it in my field notes, on balance I felt that if she was enjoying and benefiting from this learning experience that is what really mattered. Not only did Vera attend the class but she brought her sense of humour, wit and basic common sense to bear on the learning. There was one aspect of Vera's learning which particularly struck me and this was her interest in and ability to see the commonalities of the experiences of others who had similar residential experiences to herself. As explained earlier, Vera was able to relate to the speaker who



had lived in Direct Provision and said “we are on the same page”. I noted in my field notes this particular learning moment as being particularly “profound”. Interestingly Vera also noted it when she too took part in a radio show as part of a programme produced by the mixed abilities class which was about what they learned on the Global Citizenship course. Speaking about Nora on radio, Vera said:

... she was able-bodied, wasn't given a choice to cook her meals or have her own friends. I'm in a chair, haven't someone to cook for, also, I want my own space. I think no matter whether you're in a wheelchair or a walker, I think sometimes you need to help but you don't need to be, “This is bad for you or that is bad for you” because you're going to drink it anyway. Somethings, like doctors, I know they mean well but they suffocate you.

She expressed similar views with the group in India. We were fortunate that one of the ‘disability’ organisations involved with this course had branches around the world. We were able to link to their counterpart in India and discuss with a group of residents in Kolkata who spoke about life in that city. Again Vera in particular was very interested and engaged with the conversation, repeating her contention that “we are on the same page” in relation to living conditions within residential care and asking many questions about life in Kolkata. It is worth noting here that staff from that particular organisation had a particular interest in global citizenship and helped to facilitate the course. This was an exceptional bonus in that their experience, knowledge and resource support was invaluable but it highlights again the importance of sustained leadership and support from staff or key members of such organisations.

We were also fortunate that one of the young men in the class had a sister who happened to work in Kenya using local radio to promote health and other development issues. She talked to the class about her work in Kenya and this provided a perfect opportunity to link her story of working in local radio in a Global South country to the project this class was taking on, which was to produce a radio show on community radio about what they had learned. The day the group travelled to the radio station was an exciting one, each person being well prepared with questions to ask and questions to answer. They spoke about their learning and they also interviewed a staff person from the Irish aid agency Concern about the work of Concern.

It is worth noting the importance of celebration throughout the MAG research. The launch of the *‘Moving On’* archive for instance, took place at the City Hall in Cork and

was launched by the Deputy Lord Mayor, Vera, Michael and the CEO of the service organisation they had been living in. Vera and Michael proudly spoke about their films which were then aired in public for the first time. Images of the event were captured on the Moving On website. It was heart-warming to see in attendance the CEO of one of the organisation where Michael and Vera had lived, all the students from the mixed ability and the cross disciplinary groups and their friends and families. It was very moving to see Vera inviting Nora, the guest speaker with whom she felt “on the same page”, to attend and to see them embrace one another at the launch.

There were other celebrations too. The radio station treated the group to a party and the manager of the station gave a speech about the importance of diverse voices in a community radio station. Finally, at the end of the six week course there was another important celebration at UCC. Each person received a Certificate of Participation which was presented by a senior staff member at UCC. There are photographs of each participant proudly receiving their certificate and a class photograph. I notice now when I visit Vera in her home that this certificate is framed and immediately visible when you enter her sitting room, the UCC crest telling her visitors of her achievement. Again the certificate and recognition matter greatly to people who have not had access to such opportunities.

It should be noted too that just as the carer group had used their stories to lobby politicians, the stories of Vera and Michael were shown to a group of local authority councillors in a particular part of Ireland where there was upset about people moving out of care. This happened because of my intentional invitation of a senior official relating to disability in Ireland, to the launch. Vera and Michael were delighted that this happened. She in turn found the stories helpful in her efforts to show the benefits of the move which was being promoted by government policy. While this may be controversial in places, the government policy did come about after many years of hard work by all the major organisations working in the field of disability in Ireland. Therefore the stories and the archive were part of a wider story about the right of people to have their own homes.

Another aspect of this project was the development of a digital archive called *Moving On: From Residential Care to Living in the Community, History Policy and Personal Stories of Courage* (<http://movingonireland.com>). ‘Moving On’ is the story of the two

people, Vera and Michael, who participated in this study. It is primarily the story of their move out of residential care. As I have written in the home page of the archive

...they tell of their own unique stories. Their voices echo those of many people going through a similar journey in Ireland at this time. The site is also a digital archive documenting not just personal stories but also the history of disability care services, debates about those services and progressive moves to improve the lives of people with disabilities.

My own thoughts at that time were as follows:

The site is... primarily a labour of love since I worked closely with M and V and was moved and educated by their hard work, bravery and unique perspectives on life. Their voices are ones that should not just be told but they are voices which must be told.

The site also has some reflections from some of the students who helped in its development. While Finuala did work on the archive, she did not provide a reflection here due to her exam commitments at the time. However, Andy made these remarks:

Whilst completing a work placement with Gertrude Cotter, I became familiar and fond of V and M and soon saw beyond their disabilities. I learned not only about what work needs to be done in regard to disability policy and societal attitude, but how to change it — through relationships, engagement, and possibly work placements. I developed a sort of personal bond (relationship) with those I worked with professionally. In doing so, as with any knowledge of another human being that becomes emotionally bonding, I began to care about Vera and Michael. One cannot care for another without attempting to remedy parts or people of/in their life that hurt them or could be improved (relationships care for the happiness of loved ones). As such, I became more informed of disability and mental health issues, because I wanted to help those for whom I personally cared. Now, when advocating for these issues, I have a personal passion because of lovely people in my life like Vera and Michael. If one truly wants to help others care about the quality of care in institutional care or how those with disabilities are treated in our society (or any “social justice” issue, really), then have him or her have some form of regular contact with those most and truly affected, have him or her develop a relationship, have him or her do a work placement!

One of the objectives of this study is to assess the impact of this work on our community partners. In relation to the digital storytelling, the launch and the archive, in many ways Vera had a similar experience to that of Obafemi and Kathleen. Again ‘the telling of the story’ was deeply important to her at a personal level and she also wanted to use the story to educate others. Like Kathleen, Vera also visibly grew in confidence as she proved to the world (by telling the story) that she was in fact able to live on her

own despite the many ‘begrudgers’. For a person who had difficulties with the education system, and who disliked groups, Vera did very well in the classroom, she was highly engaged and made very helpful connections to both the group in India and to Nora’s experience in Direct Provision. The support of Finuala was important and transport was also provided and paid for. It also fulfilled other needs such as Vera’s wish to socialise and meet friends for coffee. She in turn helped Finuala who was somewhat shy. Vera spoke at the launch and on radio and she was very proud of her certificate as were all the participants in the MAG group. Both Finuala and Vera were finding their voices and they were helping one another to do so.

## **8.7 Key ‘Student Participant’ (KSP) 4 - Kerry**

Kerry (pseudonym) is introduced in section 7.6.7 above. At this point I was in my fourth year of research and had focused primarily on CLL and web-based technologies. Since the PME group this particular year (2018) was comprised of primarily student teachers with degrees in Fine Art, it was an opportunity to engage with MML from a ‘Creative Arts’ perspective. Having made contact with a Yazidis family in a ‘displaced persons’ camp in Northern Iraq, I asked the PME students if they would like to be a ‘key participant’ in my study. Kerry took up the offer because of her interest in refugee and related issues and the fact that she was working on ‘refugees’ as a theme with her fifth year art class at a secondary school in a rural part of North Cork. I wanted to understand how working online with this family could engage both student teachers and what the impact of this work would be on Arba (not his real name) and family. I was interested in understanding how this partnership would impact too on the classroom-based work of a student teacher. Kerry attended all ten classes on preparing for the art exhibition at the Glucksman Art Gallery which included the Global Teacher Award. She listened to guest speakers on ‘how to curate’ artwork in an Art Gallery. As part of her ongoing project on refugees, Kerry’s fifth year class decided to make a tent which was a replica (3 x 2.4 meters) of the Arba’s family tent in the Bersive camp in Northern Iraq and which ‘housed’ a family of ten.

At college, in the PME classroom, Kerry spoke about how enthusiastic her fifth year class were, how they had been researching the Yazidis genocide and how they had been taking the project very seriously. I asked if they had been exploring the reasons for the forced displacement of this population. I noted in field notes that she herself had moved

from empathy and compassion to seeking deeper knowledge such as the causes of the genocide or even of broader human rights issues.

When I interviewed her fifth year class at their school, and saw the tent, it was clear that she had facilitated her students to do so. During the interview, the students told the story of Arba's family. They explained for instance that the family had been displaced in their own country, Iraq, and forced to move to the safety of the camp in the northern part of the country. They described the journey and how the family "escaped over mountains and lived in the tent for years". They told the story of the family; "it's Arba and his wife and they've got one boy who was at the age of four, so it's A, K, and Y, that's the baby. K is the housewife. The family live with his seven brothers and sisters".

Another gave the story of the Yazidi people:

The Yazidi people are a Kurdish-speaking religious ethnicity from Northern Iraq. They are Islamic, but they are being persecuted by ISIS because they believe that the world is ruled by seven angels. The most important – the leader of those angels is the Peacock angel, which is often mistaken with the equivalent of Lucifer, which would be the Fallen Angel. ISIS believes that the Yazidi believe in the Devil, which would be the Devil, but to them, he's not the Devil, he is a fallen angel, but he's not the Devil because they don't believe in hell, so he could never be the Devil. That's the main reason why they're being followed and persecuted by the ISIS.

Still on radio, another explained that they had been introduced to the family by their teacher and that "before she introduced it to us, none of us really knew anything about it". "She brought it to us and brought the idea to us and we decided that we would do a tent. We would make a tent out of whatever materials we could find to represent what he was going through". Showing me around the tent, one student proudly described its dimensions and how ten of the class had gone inside to feel what it felt like as ten people. She described conditions in the camp:

... there are thousands of people living there. Obviously the conditions are bad. [...] They share bathrooms. They cannot cook for themselves or live a proper life. There's no education or school. Arba is actually trying to teach the children. I know that they're separated from the ISIS by a normal fence, which is not helping them at all. They're constantly living in fear of being attacked again, or even killed. I know that here is a lot of women who have been taken, and children, by the ISIS before. They're living in constant fear in small tents with a lot of people and basically nothing they can do

The class lay down in the tent and as one student said “lying down, so they know how it feels to be stuck with a load of people and not being able to turn and stuff”. Another student also referred to the team work which developed as they worked together. Allowing the tent to tell its own story was perhaps the strongest example of (Arendt, 1968: 105) contention that "storytelling reveals meaning without committing the error of defining it".

*Figure 10: Fifth Year Class inside the tent modelled on Arba's Family Tent*



The young people went on to explain how they had been struck by the fact that there were people living there who are the same age as they are, born in 2000.

We have to consider that we are lucky because being the same age, we have more possibilities, we have a home here, we can eat when we want or drink, and we have education and everything. While there are people of our age in other parts of the world who are suffering, and they have to share bathrooms. They don't have a private room, or they have to sleep every night with other nine people.

They also saw the importance of education in terms of the general public.

First of all, people don't know about these problems because no one thinks about it if no one tells us. The fact that we are already working on it, it's good. I think people should start

thinking about other problems around the world. We're just here living our lives without thinking about it.

In terms of refugee protection in Ireland and Europe, one student spoke about the common European Asylum system saying:

...it does protect the rights of the asylum seekers and the refugees. However, not all EU states comply to these rules and they don't operate fairly. The laws are meant to set out the minimum standards and the procedures for processing and deciding on the asylum applications.

He said the Ireland was not "doing its bit in terms of taking in refugees". When asked what they would like listeners to do the class said "to spread the word and let as many people know as possible about the injustice that's going on in Iraq, to the Yazidi people, and support them in any way that they can really. One student said, "one thing I think people would really like to see is change in the laws in Ireland, to allow these refugees to seek asylum in our country".

The young people were looking forward to the Glucksman exhibition, none of them had ever had an exhibit at an exhibition and they were excited by the opportunity. At the end of the radio show, when asked to give one or two words on how the project had impacted on them they used the following words:

...shocking and appalling really; upsetting, very upsetting; helpful and compassionate; disgust and anger; anger; overwhelming and disappointed; hurtful; anxiety and fear; interesting in another way; contemplative and lucky; change and thoughtful; bothering and awareness; action and social justice; motivated, like to do something.

On the radio show too, their art teacher, Kerry, talked about the use of this story in teaching about human rights. She talked about how well the students responded and how the "piece of the story that really captured their imagination" was that some members of the family were born in 2000. This she said really motivated them to participate in the project. In addition the fact that Arba's brother, their own age, could not go to school. "They took their education for granted", she said.

When they heard that he was in the tent for the last four years. That he didn't have the opportunity that they had because of his religion. It really brought home for them, I think, the injustice that others suffer.

Finally, on the subject of learning about human rights through art, Kerry said

I think it is because at that age, in the classroom, they don't yet have the words. We'll say, art is a very personal response. It's a way of making it a subject that might be very emotive or tricky to cover in a class. Art is a very nice way.

The benefits of this learning for Kerry and her class are evident. Making the connection with the story of one particular family in one particular community, currently living in very difficult circumstances, made their DE experience very real and very serious. The work had a deep impact on the young people and on Kerry. In earlier stories I discussed the idea of 'embodiment' or 'putting yourself in the space of' someone or something, in order to feel or touch that experience in a different way than text or speech might convey. This was the power of the tent and again for the educator it highlights the power of experiential learning. The young people inhabited that space and imagined the world of Arba's family. Moreover, when they made their tent at the Glucksman Art Gallery exhibition, this tent was at the entrance to a busy art gallery and many others too entered that space. They asked questions. They thought about the reality of the life of a family who live in such conditions. They were directed inside the tent to a computer with a website which was made by third level digital humanities students. Here they read more about the Yazidis people and the political context of the tent. Meanwhile on radio the powerful voices of the second level and third level students added another layer to engaging with the public. The entire process was multi-layered in terms of raising awareness about the Yazidis genocide. The use of CLL made this experience very real, and very serious, for all concerned. Kerry and her class wanted to take action and were determined to ensure others also did so. The use of MML in this case meant literally making the tent and being inside the tent, inside the tent was another layer, a website about the Yazidis people and the journey of the Arba family. The exhibit itself was in an Art Gallery with a high status, it was a piece of public art, valued in a high profile gallery. The quality of the location mattered because it gave a gravitas, a visibility and an audience, this audience included many DE academics from universities around Ireland who came to see the exhibition as part of a networking day. Hopefully those academics, who in turn teach student teachers, might also now highlight the Yazidis. Furthermore, the exhibit is also on a website dedicated to this exhibition (attachment 5.4) where once again there are possibilities for usage as a resource in schools or groups or with the wider public. The multiplier effect of this work has been significant.



## **8.8 Key ‘Community Partner’ (KSP) 4 – Arba**

Arba is introduced in section 7.6.8 above. As outlined, I had made contact with Arba through a volunteer organisation called DINIT, an Irish-based humanitarian volunteer recruitment agency. The director of this organisation had said that Arba, who was interested in photojournalism, had asked him for help in highlighting his story and that of the Yazidis people. Arba was a member of the Yazidis community, one of Iraq’s oldest minorities. In 2014, he and his family were forced to flee to Mount Sinjar in the Iraqi north-west region, or face slaughter by an encircling group of Islamic State (ISIS) jihadists. ISIS has been recognised by the United Nations as the perpetrator of genocide of Yazidis in Iraq. A 2016 UN report (UNHCR, 2016) says IS has subjected members of the religious group it has captured to the “most horrific of atrocities”, killing or enslaving thousands. Arba and his family, as described earlier, were now living in the Bersive 1 camp in Northern Iraq.

As described earlier, my initial discussions with Arba took place by email. I was led to engage with his story by Arba’s own request to the organisation DINIT, to help with the telling of his story. The CEO of DINIT, an organisation and individual I trusted, met with Arba several times and knew of his interest in informing as many people around the world as possible about the conditions of life in the Bersive Camp. I sent several long emails to Arba explaining the purpose of this research project and wondered if we might be of assistance to him in any way. He often used the term “thank you for this humanity” or “I am very happy with this humanitarian work”. When I asked him several times if he understood what we were doing and if it was helpful for him, he made comments such as: “Ok my friend I’m OK on everything”.

I introduced Arba to PME student Kerry who in turn talked about the family to her fifth year secondary school class, as explained above. I also enlisted the help of a second year digital humanities class at UCC, who were required to work on a project as part of their course work. I met that class and discussed in detail why we were doing this work and eight students chose to help with the project. I felt that responding to Arba’s desire for a website about his life and the Bersive Camp was beyond the scope of what the PME students could achieve since their participation in the GTA was completely voluntary and they were already involved in creating artefacts for the exhibition. I also could not link the fifth years directly to Arba for child protection reasons.

Arba sent copious numbers of images, some of which are collated on the page below. These photographs were sent by Messenger and were displayed on Arba's Facebook page. Some were used with his permission on the website created by digital humanities students as part of this project. They illustrate his interest in photojournalism and the power of images to tell a story. Many of the images show the conditions of living in the camp. Some show the aftermath of a particularly harsh flooding event at the camp with images of people wading through the floods or the filth and debris inside tents in the wake of the storm. A political message in one image which shows an unstable tent lifting off the ground. Above it are the words, "Thanks, America! For all the \$\$\$ you give to the Iraqi and Kurdistan governments to provide adequate housing". Underneath are the words "It has now been four years since my Yazidi and Assyrian Christian friends have enjoyed free housing provided by your monies and the UNHCR. On *Facebook* there are similar images, along with photographs of Arba and his family. One FB entry says "This is the most difficult history in the life of the people of Yazidi. History of the sad and the death 3, 8, 2014". The 3<sup>rd</sup> of August 2014 was the day the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) attacked the Yazidi religious minority living in the area of Mount Sinjar in Nineveh governorate, Iraq.

Figure 11: Bersive 1 – Displaced Persons' Camp, Northern Iraq. 'Home' of Arba's family.



As the DAH students worked on the website, they communicated regularly with Arba. They were anxious they said “to do this justice”. The final website is at <https://yazidisgenocide.com/> and also formed part of the tent exhibition at the Glucksman Art Gallery. However, it transpired that the students, one in particular, was very upset because Arba had been persistently asking for money. Arba sent an email saying “I need to support money from humanitarian organizations or charities” (Email: 24<sup>th</sup> January). I phoned Arba to discuss his email, only to realise that he did not speak English and had been using an ‘app’ to translate. I realised that I would need an interpreter and employed the services of a professional interpreter in Cork, a

Syrian/Kurdish refugee who spoke Kurdish, Arabic and English. It was interesting to note that the interpreter had met the Arba family previously. With the help of the interpreter, I explained again, in detail, the purpose of the research and asked if Arba was satisfied to proceed on the basis that this was primarily a student project aimed at bringing awareness to the Yazidis genocide and using the power of Arba's story to also educate students at second and third level. The interpreter assured me that he understood this and Arba was adamant that he wanted the story to be told. Once again Arba said he understood the purpose of the project, he thanked me for the "humanitarian work" and said he was happy for the project to feature at the exhibition. He said there had been a misunderstanding. That he had not asked the student for money. I reassured Arba that nobody is judging him and that we can see from his images how difficult life is for him. He said he understood this and that he was happy with the website which he would use in the future to highlight his case. As with the websites for the other projects, this highlights the multiplier effect of using online technologies. The information could be easily disseminated to people in any part of the world.

While the students completed the project, they were upset at what transpired and the relationship between them and Arba was strained for a time. However Arba did continue to send photographs. I noted more than once how amazing it is to use such technology, to talk at no cost on an 'app', to follow a man's life on *Facebook*, to bear witness through a virtual reality, yet the people involved were living in this real place. I noted more than once in field notes that I wondered if this is "academic injustice" or "simply wrong". I noted my own inner conflict in a poem I wrote which helped me to process some of my questions and dilemmas – see below.

This poem highlights some of the dilemmas involved in DE work of this nature. It reflects the fact that for many critical DE educators the work of DE is very challenging. The question of 'who benefits?' raises its head once again. This has been a central dilemma in this study for me as a researcher and educator. It emerged in particular with the Lesotho group who sought an EU qualification and it emerged again with the Arba family. Arba as an individual understandably had expectations that we could either give him money or ask charitable organisations for money for him. These expectations could not be met. He, nor the students, should ever have been put in this situation. This was a failure of this researcher. The poem identifies the Educator's internal tug-of-war between ethics and the need for these stories to be told. There were many such

moments throughout this research, despite in-depth planning and consultation. However, there is much to be learned from these stories and some 'ways forward' are suggested in Chapters 9 and 10 below.

## **BERSIVE**

...by Gertrude Cotter

### **The Question**

as  
the  
voices  
from Shingal mountains  
echo in the marshy red Valley  
I sit in virtual safety, behind a screen  
knowing that white privilege protects me  
that living in the leafy green fields protects me  
even against my own guilt, which rages at images of Bersive  
Who benefits? I ask. When we tell the story.  
Even if the images and the voices  
belong to the people living  
*the most difficult history*  
*in the life of the*  
*Yazidis, 3, 8,*  
*20*  
*14*

### **The Dilemma**

In  
this red  
marshy Valley  
I know it is I who  
benefits with my P+H+D  
and students getting degrees  
and the UCC community engagement plan  
In the name of humanity, is this right or wrong?  
Or a patronising, righteous, imaGINing of social justice?  
Is Waleed right to ask “who benefits from this”?  
The dilemma for me, is that if I or DE  
Do not tell the stories  
Do not take action  
Do nothing  
Then  
who  
does?

### **A Resolution?**

Is  
there one?  
A pedagogical one?  
There are no easy answers  
Doing nothing is not an option  
I believe we must foster outrage  
An outrage that will outlast Neoliberal education  
An outrage that seeks to unmask the layers of privilege  
opens the curtains of discomfort and knows that this is not a stage  
Although it is a theatre of the oppressed and the oppressor  
We must also foster hope, hope that a chorus  
of voices and actions can together  
finally, one day, bring  
dignity & freedom  
to a world  
which  
begs  
us

## 8.9 Conclusion

This chapter tells the story of four students and four community partners and associated people and projects. Together their stories can provide educators with valuable insights into the use of CLL and MML in DE methodology, ethics, policy, practice and theory. The individual stories discussed in Chapter 8 are woven together in Chapter 9 to provide educators with a more holistic perspective on what can be learned from this collection of stories.

The student stories in Chapter 8 reveal that CLL and MML can inspire and motivate students to engage in DE. Both are particularly effective if students are deeply prepared. Just as the educator needs to connect at a very early stage with communities, so too must students be prepared. Planning for any CLL experience must begin at a very early stage, and not just when the student begins their programme of work with a community. Time to critically reflect and be fully informed needs to be integrated into all stages of the process, including planning, implementation and evaluation of the.

The ‘real-world’ nature of CLL and associated MML is attractive to students. These pedagogical approaches help students to empathise with community partners, form relationship and gain concrete knowledge about the lives of people affected by injustice. This level of engagement motivates students to engage with local, national and global strategies, debates, campaigns and discourse. This is particularly effective if the community is experienced, strategic in their work and, importantly, aligned with DE aims, values and intended outcomes (justice, equality, emancipation for students and participants).

There are challenges, sometimes in the rush to respond to injustice, students forget to reflect or to slow down. The task becomes the end goal, whereas the wisdom is often in the relationship built up in both MML and CLL. The educator can guide students back to the basics of DE, to critical reflection, critical analysis and taking the time for ‘informed action’ for social, political and economic change. Students can be encouraged to find their ‘positionality’ in relation to injustice and inequality and to find theoretical frames which are relevant and meaningful to their lives, projects or work placements. Indeed the role of the educator changes greatly to one of facilitator of learning and collaborator in intentional action-based learning. While sharing a personal story does help to connect to others as humans, DE does have a political intent and this

needs careful attention. The educator, through the Creative Arts, Radio or Web-based technologies, can guide the learner to listen deeply to the story, to empathise, to support those who want to tell their story. However, with critical pedagogy in mind, the educator brings 'sense' and 'sensitivity' together. The educator, student and participants can together, ask how we move between reflection and action, between empathy and social change and between 'hidden stories' and political change. Students actively seek out knowledge and welcome exploring theoretical discourses. Students and educators are learning too not just to research information but to create, distil and disseminate it in a manner appropriate to the 'action' context.

In terms of what educators can learn about the impact of this work on community partners, ethical concerns were writ large. Ethics emerged as a relational and evolving aspect of the research, a relationship which had to be discussed, negotiated and sometimes renegotiated with each individual and each student and community group. Another very strong learning was that people who had been socially excluded in different ways, have been unheard and very strongly want their stories to be told. There is a balance to be had between the ethics of protecting individuals

Encountering 'The Other' is powerful, but also powerful is when 'The Other' meets 'The Other'. When Obafemi met the traveller girl in my own story, he stood in her place and understood her; when Vera met Nora they were 'on the same page' despite never having met people from the background of 'the other' in the past. The fact that they had not previously met is also part of the story. This is Foucault in the Twenty-First Century. Discipline (in Direct Provision) is a mechanism of state power which regulates behaviour; in both Direct Provision and in Vera's residential home, food, the body, space, timetables, activity and behaviour were regulated; and discipline was a form of power. Obafemi talks about what Foucault would call a 'complex system of surveillance', although in Obafemi's, Vera's and Nora's world the surveillance is blatant, oppressive and pervasive, leading to lives which are unfree and lacking in 'dignity'. In such circumstances 'telling their story' feels emancipatory, the fact that it is 'online' seems to give it more power, more of what Kitty calls 'there's no denying it now', because she had told the story and it is real because of her telling and perhaps now they will hear 'how much she loved Tom' and 'how as a family carer, a wife, she had not been heard'. There is a subversion in the individual stories which is powerful in



itself, something often not appreciated in DE in our intellectual drive to ‘not exploit’ or even when we rightfully ask, as Waleed did, and I do, ‘who benefits’. The dilemma is that people do have agency and it is not our job either to remove that agency. The reality too is that our community partners are powerful. Vera’s move to her home was an act of subversion in itself. It was a living praxis, she knew what she was doing, why she was doing it, where the power was around her, why she needed to take her power, how she could take her power, who she could trust and why it was important to stride forwards and ‘forget the begrudgers’, because she knew she could do it. She was emancipating her self.

As these stories came together online, in public art exhibitions, or on radio individual voices were heard and they also became part of wider narratives. The stories of the family carers, Yazidis, people moving from institutions, refugees or people living in subaltern communities in an unequal world, can serve to educate, even to liberate. However, with a wider perspective in mind, how do we shift from ‘giving voice’ to influencing those with the ‘power to change things’ (Obafemi). We have to continually come back to the basics of DE and critical pedagogy. These are strong roots and standing on them keeps the educator grounded. Without the theoretical roots, the entire purpose of DE falls apart and becomes what Andreotti calls ‘soft global citizenship education’ and what McCloskey (2016:110) terms a ‘soft, transactional-based’ approach. Action needs to be factored into planning DE pedagogy not “short-term activities” but “long-term, systemically oriented” planning (ibid.). This study indicates that this might best be achieved by combining the power of the long term student engagement (e.g. in work placements), relationship building and individual subversion, with wider social movements, sometimes advocacy groups, sometimes not. If projects are the only mechanism for engagement, then we need to think about how best those projects can contribute towards more systematic, long term change. If the bottom line is a dignified, emancipated life for all, we need to discover how each of us with our unique talents and attributes, can best serve that purpose.

This discussion will be expanded in the next chapter, where the learnings from these diverse student and partner stories are woven together to provide a richer analysis of the collective narrative of this study. It asks, what can we learn from this study about DE practice, policy, theory and methodology when we work with MML and CLL, when we weave the stories together to look at the wider tapestry?

## CHAPTER 10: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS 2

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This chapter draws on the findings and analysis in the previous chapter and asks ‘what can DE educators learn about CLL and MML from the learning experiences of the students and community partners, when the findings are taken as a whole’? The chapter explores what we are learning about DE policy, practice and theory. It begins with an analysis of the impact of the CLL and MML on *community* partners. It is important to start here because these experiences have a large part to play in how we plan and practice DE which uses CLL and MML methodologies. It then goes on to discuss what we are learning from the experiences of the four students. It concludes with a critical discussion on key lessons for the DE educator, following close scrutiny of the learning experiences of the eight participants

Several broad themes emerge in this chapter relating to the impact of this work on community partners namely: ethical and practical considerations; the importance of stories being told and heard; the public/private nature of multimedia and the impact of ‘encountering the other’.

### 10.1 Impact of MML and CLL on Community Partners – What Can Educators Learn?

#### 10.1.1 Ethical and Practical Considerations

Ethical concerns were writ large in this research with all participants but particularly with those most disenfranchised communities. Ethics emerged as a relational and evolving aspect of the research, a relationship which had to be discussed, negotiated and sometimes renegotiated, with each individual and each student and community group. DE is a value-driven discipline in the first instance; therefore it is not surprising that ethical considerations were so strongly in evidence throughout. One ethical issue related to the autonomy and experience of community partners and their ability to benefit from, lead and support research of this nature. Here we can contrast the experience of the MEG group with that of the Lesotho or the Carers group. On the one

hand, there was a clear inability and lack of autonomy which rendered it difficult for the MEG group or the students to benefit from this research model. This was not helped by local gatekeeping and a development model which was at odds with the kind of approach in which a DE framework would need to operate. There is great learning from a challenging experience and the later work in this study (e.g. with Family Carers and the Lesotho group) benefitted from earlier learnings. The role of staff at a local level in Lesotho cannot be overestimated, but these were staff who knew how this exchange could benefit their community and how they could support students. It was helpful and important too to link into the work already in progress by groups, such as the strategic plan in Lesotho and the political campaign of the carers. This meant that students were learning in a real world context but also working with groups who were solution focused and seeking reform of political and economic structures which were not benefitting their communities. This also alleviated to some extent the time commitment of the Lesotho partners some of whom had to travel long distances and who were embarking on new work plans. The strategic work they were doing in their workplace became part of the community intervention course.

Another ethical consideration was the issue of qualifications and accreditation. With the Lesotho group and with asylum seekers, it is imperative to analyse this with a postcolonial lens. While it would appear that every effort was made to manage expectations from the outset, nevertheless, the issue of a European qualification was a key concern. This is despite months of conversations with local staff, board and management, before and during the online exchange. In addition, the Lesotho participants had very high and varied expectations of what was a student intercultural exchange, despite one-to-one discussions with each participant, group discussions, planning sessions and written descriptions of what was planned. This is a clear example of privilege. An Irish qualification was very important to the Lesotho group. This in itself was a deep learning curve as a researcher, educator and for students. Despite their positive feedback on the online course the issue of accreditation was a disappointment to them.

Arba and family also had expectations regarding finances which could not be fulfilled. Arba did have an underlying desire to tell the story of the Yazidis but at the same time he also needed money. As an educator, my job should be to manage such eventualities in advance and even if I thought I had, the ethical considerations are still deeply

problematic. One wants to tell a story and a family wants to tell their story, they want the world 'to know', they are stories which need to be told and there is huge value in telling the personal story. One does not want to exploit those who may not have agency, yet one doesn't want to patronise and assume adults do not have agency. Reading about the Yazidis in a news article would not have had the same educational value, but there is a fundamental discomfort in doing so. Yet Waleed's question remains, 'who benefits'? There are no easy answers but such considerations can be overcome perhaps by establishing more long term partnerships with NGOs or colleges or other civic organisations, so that we move beyond the personal and collaborate, as with the carers or disability groups, in an more established groups or social movements with similar aims and strategic approaches to structural change.

In terms of certification, it should also be noted that for those in the 'Mixed Ability Group', all participants valued and enjoyed the ceremony where certificates were awarded. Vera continues to have her framed certificate of participation in pride of place in her home. The ceremony and the photographs were a celebration, recognition and also a closure. For younger students too, such as Finuala, at an early career staged, certificates were greatly valued.

The other ethical issue related to the question 'who is benefitting'? In the case of Obafemi, while he appreciated his personal story being told, he asked why we were telling these stories, and why decision makers were not listening, not just to this story, but in general. It is helpful to note that those who participated in the longer module were more aware of the purpose of storytelling workshop, it was part of a wider programme of learning, as opposed to the acquisition of skills, meeting 'the other' or sharing of stories. Even so, even the third level students were not fully clear about the purpose of the workshop and deeper clarity of purpose from the outset would have been useful. Again significant preparation has been given at a preparatory phase, but it was clearly not enough. Waleed also noted that the facilitator had influenced the stories with choice of images and sound. Perhaps the approach taken with Kitty, which was to have different versions of the story depending on the purpose, helped with this public/private dilemma. The question of agency also arises here. Some might argue this process was exploiting Arba's lack of agency, yet the dilemma for a researcher, is,

should I take away agency from this adult person, with a lifetime of experience and make the decision about whether to tell his story, or not. Many of these questions cannot be addressed precisely in an ethical statement, they are negotiated and relational.

Practical difficulties such as time, access to technology and support for vulnerable adults, were also evident throughout the research process. The CLL and MML approaches taken in this research are time consuming for participants and educator/researcher. All online classes had to be recorded for those who missed the face-to-face classes; there were technical difficulties relating to internet connections; and making digital stories with carers took considerable time. Work with people with disabilities required support from volunteers, staff and carers. This meant considerable resource commitment from the organisations involved.

Ensuring all participants arrived safely at the radio station took considerable time and resources. Providing the Lesotho participants with the feedback they requested on their written English required recruitment of volunteers. One of the factors which helped greatly was the support of staff in all organisations involved both in Cork and in Lesotho. However, this thesis argues that these supports should be normalised. The education system, it is contended, ought to respond to the needs of the people, not the other way around.

### **10.1.2 The importance of telling ‘My Story’.**

Another very strong finding was that when people came together to collaborate, storytelling became not just a natural way of connecting but it was clear that people who had been disenfranchised or unheard, very much wanted their stories to be told. The journey of writing her story, with Kitty, was a deeply personal one for Kitty; one she found cathartic and a journey which was a privilege as a researcher. Kitty had three versions of her story. The first version was the one she put on the carers website, with the stories of other carers, to form part of their collective narrative and campaign for justice. The second was another digital story she made for herself (the full, longer version) with some intimate matters she did not want to share publicly. The third were the uncut, many hours of recorded talking which she wanted to keep. Kitty’s comment “there’s no denying it now” is very telling. In her mind, the fact that this online story now existed, meant that nobody, for instance medical professionals who did not listen to

her, could come along and deny that this happened. She also felt strongly that having it online meant that others might learn from her experience with medical professionals. She added impact to the campaign, along with other carers, by visiting classes in UCC such as trainee nurses and social workers and telling her story. She and the other carers also used radio effectively, combining the advocacy position of staff with personal stories of carers. Kitty carefully chose what she would and would not share. Sometimes this was at variance with what an organisation may wish for but she and other carers were clear that this was their story and they would tell it as they saw fit. The personal sat alongside the community and the political all the time culminating in her statement that now “everyone will know how much I loved John”. The personal was political and politics was personal. That is of central significance to DE with a CLL and MML approach. The educator has a role in moving between the personal and the political and between the political at both a local and a global level. Kitty saw her personal and the collective family carers’ story as “captured for posterity” and believed that because of their public space, more would listen and see the experience of carers. At a personal level too Kitty’s confidence, and that of other carers, was strengthened by these experiences. She moved from “I don’t know why they would listen to me”, to “I suppose we are not as bad speakers as we thought we were”. At the same time she saw the value of engaging with people in a classroom, since the personal interaction allows students to ask questions and feel comfortable with the carer.

Similarly Obafemi had personal and political reasons for telling his story. He wanted to tell the story of living in Direct Provision where his freedom had been stolen but he said, he would not compromise on his dignity. He made a similar comment to Kitty:

I have these and safe forever now...my own story ... my own video in it. It’s what it is. It’s raw. It’s going to pass across more emotions to people that watch it and bring questions to them.

Like Kitty, he wanted it to be used for others to learn from, he saw the educational value of such stories, but it was important at a personal level:

It’s my everything and I don’t want it to be rubbished. The first usefulness is the impact it makes on my own life. After I said it I felt emotional.

Also like Kitty, there was some self-censorship. He was aware of talking about personal matters in front of more privileged participants, he wondered what they would think of him and he made decisions about what he would say in public.

Vera's story of her move out of institutional care was also deeply important to her. The level of detail, time and care she put into the story was similar to that of Kitty. Learning from her story was transformative for students and researcher but also transformative for Vera herself. She was able to tell of her successes and challenges along the way, she was able to tell the story of living in institutional care and the importance of having one's own 'front door'. She had found self belief, she tells us to 'ignore the begrudgers' and she learned about her own strengths. She was able to state things that mattered to her, for instance that she knew her own mind, that she did not like day care centres and that she could manage living in the community in her own place. There is no doubt that the trust we had built up over a long period of time, mattered greatly, both in the storytelling process and in her attendance at an educational institution. Evidently too Vera has much to teach us in the classroom, her humour and common sense were very welcome and her lessons about being 'on the same page' as our online participants in Kolkata and Direct Provision, was a transformative learning moment. Vera was proud that she had drawn attention to these similarities. She articulated the common experiences of people in institutional care better than any other student in that class who was obtaining a third level degree, yet people with Vera's so called 'disability' are effectively excluded from participating in the academic privilege of a university. This raises questions about the nature of an education system; who is allowed 'in', who is left out, who is benefitting and who is not?

Finally, despite the difficulties outlined above, Arba too wanted his story and the story of the Yazidis people to be told. Where language was a difficulty, images served to tell the story and indeed had a strong impact. The aftermath of a particularly harsh flooding event at the camp with images of people wading through the floods or the filth and debris inside tents in the wake of a storm, could not but impact significantly on the audience. Like with the other stories, politics was graphically displayed, the family were living within a tent constructed within political realities. Around them political slogans were hung on the walls. Arba was 'grateful' to us for our "humanitarian work" and he was happy with the website which he would use in the future to highlight his case. Yet my poem (in chapter 8) sums up an ongoing inner conflict and question I had

as researcher. Who benefits? How do we ‘tell the story’, collaborate, co-create, show solidarity and make a human connection and, at the same time, live with our European privilege? It is interesting that poetry seemed like the only way I could really access some words to express my own inner voice. It helped me to express my own emotions, to articulate what I believed really mattered and to suggest some ways in which we might seek a way forward.

### **10.1.3 Encountering ‘The Other’**

The story of Vera meeting Nora is a clear example of how power, injustice, social exclusion, discrimination and postcolonial racism permeate different societies around the world and how the human experience is one which is shared despite differences. Their personal encounter created a bond. When the website and films of ‘Moving On’ were launched, Vera invited Nora who came with her two children. It was an act of solidarity. Finuala and all the other students also attended the launch. We were all proud of the work we had achieved together and we were determined to be present to celebrate alongside the two people featured in the films.

The ‘spaces in between’ (not in a classroom and not in a formal encounter), were often where people met. Obafemi and Waleed’s encounter were more intimate and perhaps more challenging than they might have been in a more formal setting. The discussion about same sex marriage and power would not have happened in this way in the storytelling circle. Claire also spoke about the conversations over lunch and in the car. Obafemi also noted the value of learning about life in a Lebanese refugee camp. Obafemi’s encounter with myself when I made my digital story at the actual location where ‘the doll’ incident happened, was particularly powerful. As with the fifth years encountering ‘the other’ in the tent, Obafemi stood in the place of the Traveller girl I played with. The fact that he was a black asylum-seeker experiencing the racism and discrimination oft encountered by the Travelling community, was not lost on either of us. I witnessed injustice then and I witnessed it now; there was a clear link between the two encounters. This ‘standing in the place of’ or ‘embodying of a situation’, I personally found to be very powerful. Obafemi spoke about it later when he said it was “interesting and meaningful and was telling about social justice”. My dialogue with him in the hotel about the same sex marriage referendum, was also a lesson in the power of dialogue. Like Claire, Obafemi also felt that the digital story telling was effective for



technical and communication skills development as well as providing the opportunity to express oneself in a particular way about one's story. Obafemi was able to empathise and recognise injustice in different parts of the world and in his own world.

As noted earlier, Andy worked more with other carers in his work placement. However, Kitty also expressed an appreciation for the work of students and recognised that they helped her to see and do things in new ways. Again 'having the cup of tea' and having the time, played a big part in building trust. The length of time together was interesting, she said. "There was something about the relationship and the length of time together which was nice. You have a cup of tea and relax and get to know more and say more". This trust enabled me, as a researcher to 'go there' when the conversation about Andy arose. That was a powerful interaction. In essence, I was asking them to consider if they related to the Irish student in a way they could not relate to Andy – his voice, his accent, his nationality and his ethnicity. As an engaged community group whose advocacy work had taught them to think critically, they recognised the point I tried to make. Inviting Andy to the party was an act of acknowledgement. They were now seeing the incredible work he did with them before they were seeing the parts that were 'different' to them. They were realising that the person who 'looked and spoke the same' as them (the local student who had left the work placement at an early stage) was not in fact present to go the party but the young man (Andy) who worked tirelessly, despite their difficulty in understanding his accent, was at the party. Learning how to communicate better together had a good chance of working with music and dance as a starting point. We all enjoyed it.

Arba did not encounter the students in the same way as they met with him. He spoke mostly to myself as researcher or to the digital arts and humanities students. The only conclusion we can come to is that, despite the difficulties, he did appreciate the work which he saw as a 'humanitarian act'. The Lesotho participants were positive about encountering 'the other' and spoke about how interesting it was to learn how different people "communicate", that the course "changed" ways of thinking and was empowering. They did note that more face-to-face interaction would have been more welcome than the online forum.

## 10.2 DE Practice: What Can Educators Learn?

### 10.2.1 Multiple DE Learning Spaces

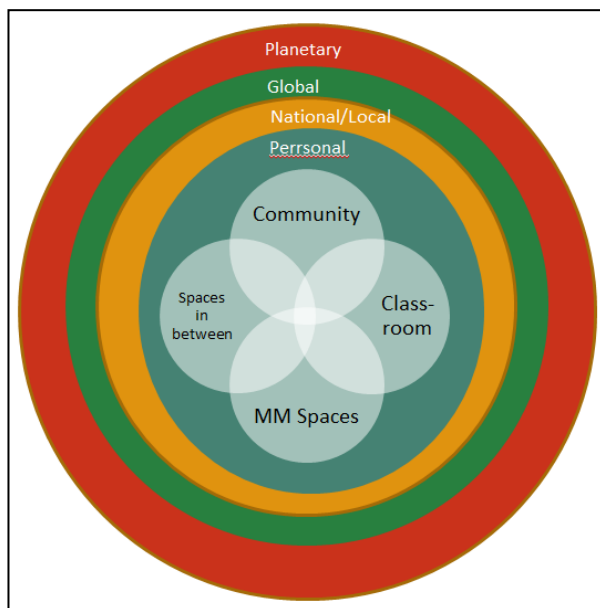


Figure 12: Learning Spaces and Learning Levels

Working with community and multimedia, impacts not just what happens in the community, in online platforms in art galleries, or on radio. It changes too what happens for the educator in the classroom. This study has found too that the ‘spaces in between’ or the ‘informal learning opportunities’ (journeys, making film, lunch, morning coffee) were significant loci of learning with both CLL and MML providing more opportunities for informal learning than might happen in

the mainstream classroom only. Long term learning and transformational learning moments, take place in each of the four spaces. Important learning moments do not ‘just happen’ and they need to be recognised, discussed, acted upon and serve as wider educational moments. The ‘practice’ of DE using MLL and CLL requires investigating what happens in the different learning spaces. Each space has an important role to play and the interplay between the different learning spaces is both exciting and challenging. The role of the educator in each space is discussed throughout. While DE learning and praxis is a long-term process, which cannot be neatly summed up in a diagram, it does serve to highlight the different spaces and levels at play in DE pedagogy.

### 10.2.2 Space 1: DE Classrooms

Students appreciate and actively seek knowledge and theoretical understanding. The role of the educator is no longer one which imparts information, but one which guides students through the body of knowledge that is DE (and related areas) and ensures that CLL is aligned with DE values. This includes an understanding of interdependence at personal, local, global and planetary levels. The classroom is a space where students can support one another, debrief, plan, challenge, evaluate, debate and think about their own ‘positionality’, a vital component of DE learning. It refers to the personal ‘habitus’

of students and educator as well as to the theoretical and political underpinnings of DE. If this does not happen, DE becomes, as Mc Closkey (2014) says, merely a transactional project-led exercise. The role of the educator becomes one which weaves DE theory, knowledge, policy and practice into an integrated, engaged, discursive, dialogic learning environment. This requires educators to have deep knowledge of their discipline and an ability to hold the DE space without losing scholarly rigour. While learners acquire knowledge, skills and experience in other spaces too, the classroom is a place where learning and skills can be shared, distilled and challenged with others who are also seeking to understand the world from a DE perspective. Fostering an ability to hold discomfort is helpful, in that this is a pedagogy of disruption of dominant political, economic, social, environmental, cultural and educational paradigms. Indeed, this thesis argues that fostering ‘outrage’ (appropriate anger and shock and a desire to take action for change) is desirable, once it is managed responsibly and is solution focused. While it is not always possible, working in small groups is beneficial. It enables a deeper understanding of student motivation, values, learning needs and interests. In this research student values were deeply engrained and important motivators for their DE engagement. Yet the axiological qualities of learning are not always discussed in depth in learning environments. Smaller student groups support deeper critical analysis of the links between CLL and theoretical, structural and policy contexts. In terms of third level cross disciplinary work, DE is an ideal discipline to bring students from different disciplines together, not least because a solution and theoretically focused approach to learning is strengthened by different perspectives. Individual specialism is important. However, a reimagining of a university could create spaces, both accredited and non-accredited, where the specialisms come together to talk, think and act together.

The findings relating to the ‘mixed abilities’ classroom (MAG) and work placement indicate that DE is accessible to all ‘abilities’. Indeed because our partners experience inequality, discrimination and social exclusion, they can relate very much to the issues being discussed. Bringing this real world into the classroom meant that the participants were also the educators. Vera, for instance, was offering expert advice. She told her stories of living in institutional care, yet in our education system, her input is valued neither financially nor with a qualification. The experience highlights the futility of an education system based on ‘you pass’, ‘you fail’. It forces us to question the basic ways in which we organise ourselves in educational systems and society as a whole. Here we

had a deep learning experience, our understanding of the impact of institutional care, was deepened in a way it never would have been in a mainstream classroom. Both Finuala and myself as educator found the entire experience to be less competitive, less tense and more about learning and solidarity. Vera also enjoyed it and learned in a way she had not previously learned. At no point in her life did she like ‘groups’, ‘school’ or ‘education’. Yet she came to all workshops, participated fully, taught us all and thrived, as did all of us who had the privilege to participate. Nobody was passing or failing, each person was reaching their own potential. It raises the idea again of a reimagining of the university, where spaces are available for society to come together to address problems facing humanity, including talking to others around the globe who want to do the same - a people’s space with access to the resources of the university, with equal recognition of each person’s contribution. Meeting ‘the other’ in the classroom was particularly powerful and it appears that the more diversity that exists in a learning group, the richer the experience.

A number of factors contributed to the success of the MAG project. These included: the planning sessions which took place in advance of each class attended by partner participants and staff; the attendance at all sessions by staff (of disability services) who cared deeply for the participants, and whose working model was aligned with DE values of parity as human beings, respect, and a deep understanding and desire to work on DE issues. When people have intellectual and physical disabilities, care and safety does matter and resources are required. However, each student who attends a university requires resources of some kind. We construct our universities and way of seeing the world, in a way which favours those with certain kinds of abilities. We can find ways, as we have here, to deconstruct these barriers if there is a will to do so. Nobody failed.

### **10.2.3 Space 2: Community**

If planned well, with a clear understanding of the purpose of CLL in DE, introducing CLL to DE can enhance the learning experience of students and contribute in a practical way to relevant societal issues. Linking to the ‘real world’ helps students to develop core DE skills, knowledge, values and ‘action’ (the core aspects of DE). The students liked a ‘hands-on’ approach and they like to develop work related skills. They could see the impact of injustice and when thinking of broader theoretical considerations they could relate them to the ‘lived’ experiences of people they were meeting in communities. They felt they were contributing to social change and that there was a

critical purpose to their learning. Real-world advocacy helped them to make links between local, national and global contexts, realities and paradigms. Community groups can benefit from student support, skills and enthusiasm, particularly if they are experienced advocacy groups. Individual partners grew in confidence, added their experiences to a wider narrative and benefited greatly, particularly in the ‘telling of their story’ (see section on multimedia below). As discussed above, deep preparation and ethical considerations are vital. There are also many practical issues to take into account such as resources, time considerations, student mentoring and access to technology. Some further implications are discussed below.

As a discipline DE would benefit from integrating CLL, be it online, through project-based learning or work placements. However, such placements are ideally better placed if linking into a community partner’s strategic goals or linked into a wider movement with objectives which are aligned with DE values and aims. Work which aims to address underlying structural imbalances which lead to injustice and which encourages relationship building and advocacy work for social change can help students to develop skills and values and can provide support to partner organisations. The more time spent in building relationships the better but even if time is limited, it is important that any intervention with community partners forms part of a deeper and longer DE programme. Building relationships is important but time is needed to understand key concepts, process learning experiences, develop skills and values and critically analyse the experience from a theoretical perspective. Forming long term but realistic educational partnerships with partners at home and abroad is worth considering, with planning and small steps leading to long term collaboration, sharing of resources and mutual benefit.

All parties having a clear understanding of the purpose of the placement or project is important. From a DE educator perspective the purpose is to develop core DE competencies, which includes skills, values, knowledge and an understanding of ‘how to take action’ for change. It also involves being able to identify, critique and seek to transform underlying paradigms, policies and structures and contribute to the work of community partners in a manner which supports their goals and not the agenda of the student or the university. It is not the job of the community partners to formally make these connections for students, but it is important that students are aware that the CLL is not just about ‘getting the task done quickly’. It is important for educators to spend time with students and partners to draw attention to the purpose of a DE learning

experience. DE which has a CLL focus might learn from other disciplines where practice placements are well established. High standards should be expected, so that a DE qualification is recognised for its practical and academic rigour.

We need to listen to questions such as ‘who benefits’? or ‘where are the policy makers’? Universities need to respond to these important questions and address them at planning as well as implementation stages.

#### **10.2.4 Space 3: Multimedia Spaces**

Another cornerstone of this research was the use of MML. Again the findings relating to the use of web-based technologies, radio and the creative arts, have a number of implications for the educator.

From a DE perspective, web-based technologies offer educational, campaigning, research, communicative, creative, and collaborative tools not even heard of a decade ago. On the other hand, DE can bring to Digital Arts and Humanities, or indeed any subject, a value-base, principles, social analysis and a world-view based on social justice, equality, human rights and critical thinking. There is an increased interest in 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills and global citizenship at third level institutions. DE practitioners might consider how they can include DE competencies in these developments, so that the universities are prioritising social justice and sustainable development, rather than market-orientated global skills.

Digital storytelling is a powerful and at times subversive tool for disenfranchised communities and individuals. From a DE perspective, learning needs to move to a more political platform, while at the same time deeply respecting the storyteller’s experience. In longer term work placements, time spent together making stories, archives and websites, is important. When time is limited, especially in ‘encountering the other’ in multimedia; spaces it is important that the experience forms part of a longer term learning programme. It is important to contextualise and debrief on the DE ‘intent’ of the encounter, so that the short term intervention does not become just a workshop about, for instance, digital *skills*. The end objective of DE is not the completion of the product, it is about the process and transformative, emancipatory learning qualities.

The level of experience of community partners is important. When people’s private worlds come to public web-based spaces, there can be vulnerability and this requires

sensitivity. Through dialogue and reflection, the best choices can be made as to how much or how little is shared publicly, if at all. It is important that students and educators are sensitive and aware of the importance of ‘telling the story’ and that not all people in society, even in a privileged country, have had the opportunity to be ‘heard’. Websites or digital archives are helpful for highlighting a collective narrative. Digital archives, in part because of metadata facilities, are strong repositories of ‘memory’. A collection of voices can come together, from anywhere in the world and add strength to one another. It is easy for important voices to be forgotten once the ‘task is over’. These stories need to be heard, not just now but for future generations, so that lessons can be learned and history can be continually understood. As a teaching tool archiving is also helpful for reflective practice, as the voices of contributors become part of the story.

When we move from the personal to the ‘group’, particularly groups who are advocating for societal and policy change, the narrative of their ‘collective stories’ is very powerful. Implicit in the DE approach is the importance of enabling all participants to explore the societal structures, policies and practices that serve to disempower and discriminate against certain groups or sections of society. The story reveals the impact of disempowerment on people and this is important in itself. However, DE pedagogy needs to find ways to move from the story to policy or structural reform so that participants and students are taking meaningful action to mobilise people towards meaningful action or changed behaviour.

Online forums were used twice in this research. For the OIE the forum was a valuable space for discussion, particularly for those who were unable to attend at a specific time. We need to recognise the power imbalances that exist in terms of aspirations, expectations and resources. There is no room for ambiguity. Time and resource constraints are a consideration for all parties. For the Cross Discipline Group (CDG) the forum was particularly helpful for following up on discussions that happened in the classroom. DE issues are complex and the extra ‘layer’ of critical discussion, beyond the classroom, is helpful for delving further into difficult or contested issues.

A significant finding in this research is the popularity of community radio amongst partners and students, as a way of co-creating broadcasts and reaching a wider audience - again ‘in the real world’ and beyond the classroom. In Ireland community radio

stations are not-for-profit providers, and they engage an important community service. These services can provide a valuable DE teaching and democratic resource, as they work from an ethos that is broadly aligned with DE. Even where access to a station is not possible, podcasting is a similarly powerful tool which could be created as a scholarly and activist tool in any third level course. Each year new students can contribute and become part again of a wider academic and activist discussion, forming a public forum for deeper discussion on DE concerns.

The creative arts can facilitate learners to explore DE using different perspectives and senses. Public art helps learners to reach a wider audience. It allows the learner to walk around spaces of 'the other' (such the refugee tent or the cardboard box of a homeless person at the Glucksman Exhibition featured in this research), touch, sometimes taste or smell and generally heighten sensibilities. We have seen how embodying a particular incident can be a powerful way of accessing an experience. As pointed out above, ethics and sensitivity are important here, so that people are not exploited for the sake of sensationalism. However, when treated with care and respect and in collaboration with partners, the creative arts can reveal challenges of human experience in a way not always accessible through words. Again it is important not to stay with the single story. The educator needs to hold the DE space and ensure that the artistic experience moves on to critical debate about real civic engagement.

#### **10.2.5 Space 4: Spaces 'In Between'**

The 'spaces in between' (SIB) are given a sub-heading in order to emphasise the importance of the finding in this research, that much learning happens in the non-formal spaces, between students, participants and educator. Perhaps some of the strongest learning took place outside of the more formal settings, particularly in long conversations and dialogue that took place on a one-to-one basis. The value of both CLL and MML is that they naturally create such spaces, but even if time is limited, informal spaces can be built into learning processes. Coffee breaks, lunch together, class breakouts or working together on a project, give participants and educator time to get to know one another and discuss some of the questions and ideas they did not want to raise in a more formal space. In mainstream classrooms this does not always happen as students rush to the next class or meet naturally only with friends from the class.



Any opportunity which encourages meeting ‘the other’ is helpful for developing DE competencies such as intercultural and intergenerational communications, listening, seeing the world with different lenses, critical thinking, valuing diversity and encouraging inclusion. Meeting students and participants in this way also helps the educator to understand the values, motivations and interests of students and partners, all of which helps to inform learning experience.

## **10.3 DE Policy – What Can Educators Learn?**

### **10.3.1 Structural Reform and the role of the University**

The literature shows how DE practitioners can struggle to operate within a university (and global) environment which is led by a neoliberal model of education (see section 3.4 above). The creative educator can, as we have seen, find spaces in what is an increasingly market-orientated system, operating more like a commercial business to prepare students for an economy rather than for society. Many students are also thirsty for DE approaches, as indicated by the fact that, on a voluntary basis, 100 people expressed an interest in attending the classes for this research. This offers hope. However, in a broader sense, DE educators might consider joining with other like-minded academics, overtly recognising the dilemmas faced in the current academic system. These partnerships can openly and collectively begin to challenge the dominant university model. This thesis demonstrates that looking at society from a justice or human rights lens does not mean we cannot also learn Twenty First Century skills. Indeed digital arts and humanities and DE are complementary and have much to offer one another. It may be useful too to enlist the active support of leaders, such as the elected President of Ireland, whose writings and speeches regularly indicate his alignment with DE and CP perspectives. These structural issues are prevalent at a societal level; we see them in neoliberal growth-led development models. However, if we cannot tackle our own academic homes, it will be very difficult to do so at a wider societal level.

Meanwhile, it seems that we may have two choices, one is to leave and the other is to lead. One can understand the attractiveness of both positions. The passion and enthusiasm of the students and communities in this research should serve to offer hope. Many third level students do strive for a better world and seek opportunities, allies and

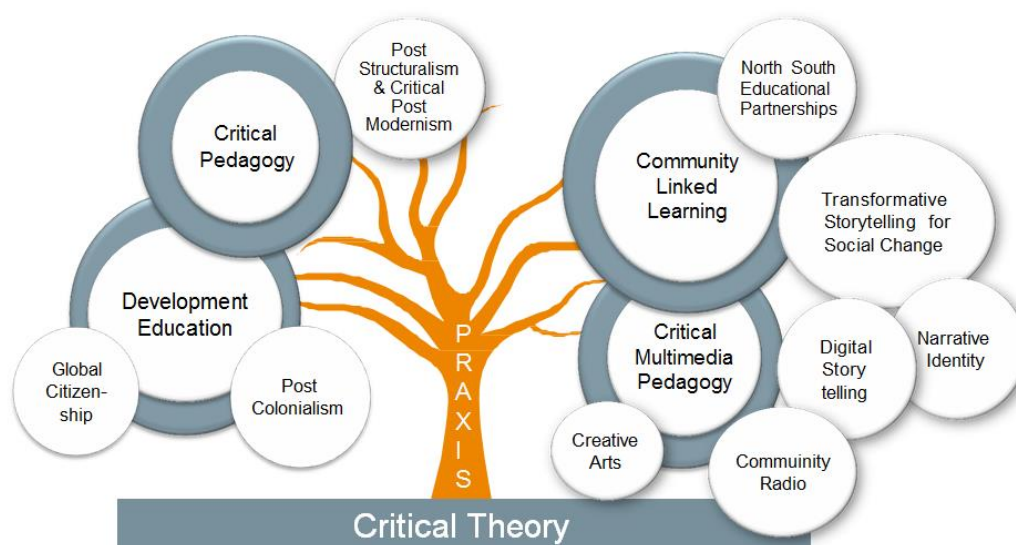
guidance on how to do so. Therefore, educators can consider students too as allies. They can both meet with those in societies who promote DE values; academics can talk to the students union, initiate public dialogue about the role of the university. Ultimately, educators can profess publicly the kind of education they wish to have and what kind of society they wish to inhabit in the future. How often do we talk to scholarly leaders and students about the central role of the university in society?

## **10.4 Theoretical Implications – What can Educators Learn?**

At third level it is important that theoretical positioning accompanies the practice of DE. If this does not happen, DE becomes a set of uninformed actions with no clear emancipatory or transformative intent. Theory and practice go hand in hand in DE pedagogy, which brings us back to Freire's core idea of praxis, or informed action for change. The same is true within communities. Community partners do take particular 'stances', not just in terms of what they do but also in terms of underlying values and purpose. It is helpful if there is compatibility in terms of the underlying principles and values of the DE practitioner with the community partner. No academic discipline or community perspective is static and frameworks can change and be refined but the core tenets of DE do come from a deep-rooted commitment to social, economic, political, cultural and environmental justice and equality and from a human rights perspective.

This thesis has found that being able to draw on a wide range of theoretical positioning in the pedagogical process is very helpful. In addition, understanding neoliberalism, and globalisation (market and growth-led policies) and their pervasive influence around the world (more extremes of poverty, the rise of the alt-right, depletion of natural resources, climate injustice, forced migration, etc.) is critical. Some of the key theories used to make sense of this research are illustrated below. These include the theories which inform DE in general, for instance critical pedagogy, post-structuralism and post-colonial theories. However theories relating to both multimedia and community linked learning and various critical theories of gender, race, class, disability and society have also helped shape the analysis. A helpful approach has been to take the critical traditions in all of these fields of study, so that there is a consistent alignment, not just with the research methodology, critical ethnography, but also for educators wishing to begin to untangle the many possible approaches they might take to the theoretical base of CLL and MML in DE.

## Theoretical Perspectives & Literature Review



*Figure 13 : Examples of theoretical positions underpinning CLL and MML approaches to DE.*

The important point is that it is not enough to just learn about groups of people or regions in the world which are experiencing social exclusion or discrimination; it is not even enough to meet them. We need to work together to critically inform ourselves, defend our position and take action to seek structural and transformational change. A solid theoretical base is the foundation of good DE. If there are solid theoretical roots, educators and learners can link to communities, build stories, take action for change, but they can also stand in their critical roots, know what they are trying to achieve and why; and know the critical purpose of their ultimate goal.

### 10.5 Conclusion

This chapter has explored some of the key learnings of this study for the educator. It leaves the DE educator with many layers of complexity to grapple with, but it also encourages DE educators to remember its solid roots, roots in critical theory, critical pedagogy and Development Education. Basic DE concepts, values, theories and principles, will take the educator through the privileges and the ethical dilemmas that inhabit the DE landscape. Approaching DE with CLL and MML methodologies has implications for DE theory, practice, ethics and policy. These implications are discussed as part of the final chapter of this thesis, which also brings us back to the

overall research question and objectives, summarises the findings, explains the importance of this study and makes recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSION

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### 10.1 Introduction

This idea for this thesis emerged from my life and work experiences and educational philosophy. My own experiences span decades of grappling with the realities of injustice, discrimination and inequalities which I witnessed at home and abroad. I worked and studied both in ‘Global South’ countries and in community development in Ireland and have been deeply committed to DE over decades, particularly within Higher Education and within community development settings. Working with refugees and asylum seekers in particular over ten years, I saw on a daily basis how the ‘local’ and the ‘global’ collided, merged and struggled. I could not but bring my own ‘habitus’ (Bourdieu) to this research study. I wondered how third level students could gain many of the DE competencies outlined in common definitions and descriptions of DE. I wondered if perhaps DE had become removed from more ordinary day-to-day struggles facing people in local communities, be they in the ‘Global South’ or locally near UCC where the study took place. Might it help us to understand the experience of ‘other’ parts of the world if we become closer to people experiencing social exclusion, poverty or injustice in our own locality?

At the same time, returning to university much later in life, I could see vast and extraordinary differences in the kinds of online resources we now have available to us. When I first attended university in my early 20s, none of us students, or indeed staff, had access to a computer, let alone possess one. I wondered how these technological advances could enhance DE, if and how DE was changing, how using new web-based resources were different from traditional media such as radio or the creative arts. Bringing these interests and questions to my academic interests I set about bringing students at UCC together with local and international community partners, which eventually reached to Cork city, Lesotho, India and Northern Iraq. Many people volunteered to participate in this study, but I focused primarily on the work of eight key participants - four key student participants (KSPs) Andy, Claire, Finuala and Kerry and four key community participants (KCPs), Kitty, Obafemi, Vera and Arba. I also refer in the study to the pilot project with a minority ethnic group in Cork and to the experiences of some participants on an online intercultural exchange with a community in Lesotho.

The research is a deep and critical investigation into the power of CLL and MML in Irish higher education Development Education pedagogy. It focuses on how a ‘merger’ of these methodologies can enhance DE pedagogy. The key research question in this study presented as thus:

‘What can educators learn about engaging university students in Development Education, using Community-Linked Learning (CLL) and Multimedia Learning Methodologies (MML) and what is the impact on community partners’?

This thesis is grounded within a critical theory (CT) tradition, strongly influenced by critical pedagogy (CP) with a development education (DE) lens. It places Freire’s concept of ‘praxis’ at the centre of the theoretical approach: “the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it” (Freire and Macedo, 2001/1968: 79). In essence, Praxis is about informed action for change. Freire argues that is not enough for people to come together in dialogue in order to gain knowledge of their social reality. They must also act together upon their environment in order to critically reflect upon their reality and so transform it through further action and critical reflection.

## **10.2 Role of Researcher in a Critical Ethnographic Study**

The research methodology for the study, Critical Ethnography, was aligned with the critical theoretical framework of the thesis. As a critically positioned researcher, I intentionally adopt an action agenda with the purpose of empowering people and transforming political and social realities. My researcher role was akin to a Gramscian ‘organic intellectual’ or Freirean educator. I was sometimes a participant, sometimes an educator, sometimes an observer but always a researcher and intentionally co-creating educational spaces which could reflect, discuss and take action on social justice, human rights, discrimination and equality and strive to improve the conditions for a sustainable, dignified life for people and planet. This does not compromise research; it gives research relevance and purpose.

Such an approach brings challenges, inner conflict and complexity. The research approach required critical awareness of, and reflection on, my ‘researcher positionality’; I strive to be conscious of my own biases, power, subjectivities and system of beliefs, assumptions and dispositions. I was part of this research and action agenda. Therefore

my findings are an interpretation of what I witnessed and experienced. I write as clearly as possible about what I saw, heard, felt, touched and sensed, but I also brought myself into the research focus. I had to remain conscious of my own motivations and weigh the possible repercussions of my actions. This balancing required continued reflexivity (Bourdieu and Wacquant's, 1992) and awareness of limitations regarding power and bias about what I hoped this work would be.

## **10.3 Summary of Findings**

### **10.3.1 The Experience of the 'Community Partners'**

For each individual partner the process and the act of 'telling their story' was deeply transformative, cathartic and meaningful. Individual partners grew in confidence and added their experiences to a wider 'community' narrative which were also used for political purposes. When we move from the personal to the 'group', particularly groups who are advocating for policy change, the narrative of their 'collective stories', is very powerful. The availability of a wide range of platforms meant a wider reach and access to resources which helped with campaigning, education and generally activism awareness.

There were ethical challenges, particularly in relation to autonomy, experience and expectations of partners. The question of 'who benefits?' from this work was a complex one. The question of 'who has real personal agency to participate?' also arose. Important balances are to be had and critical reflection is vital. It emerged that the experience, positionality and personal agency of the community partners as groups or individuals was important. For the community partners this experience meant that they knew how to and could utilise the support of students and the multimedia opportunities. It also meant that they could provide students with a more solid learning experience. It is important that the work of the partners is aligned with DE values and principles. It was helpful for students to link into work already in progress by groups. This meant that students were learning in a real world context and working alongside solution-focused communities who were seeking reform of political and economic structures and systems which were not serving them well.

For people who have not had access to education and particularly a relatively (in a Global South context) highly valued qualification (which in itself is problematic),

accreditation and certification are important. Lack of educational opportunity in a country is deeply troubling in itself; how to address the problem is part of the story of 'development' and DE; why a European qualification is of more value is also troubling; while analysing and addressing these realities with a post- colonial lens is imperative. A certificate of participation (and celebration) was important to many participants especially those who had not had access to education (e.g. mixed abilities group) but also younger students who are starting their careers. In the partner organisations too the role of management and local staff was critical and very supportive in balancing the needs of the staff, community partners and students. Another key finding was the value of meeting 'the Other' and the transformative moments when people recognised their own experience in the experience of another. For us all to understand the value of 'being on the same page' (at least on similar pages) is central to the core DE political position that injustice is socially constructed and that addressing such injustices require commitment and political solutions.

### **10.3.2 DE 'Practice' – What the Findings are telling us**

If well planned, with a clear understanding of the purpose of CLL and MML in DE, integrating both can enhance the learning experience of students and contribute in a practical way to relevant societal issues. The students enjoyed the 'hands-on' approach and when thinking of broader theoretical or systematic considerations they could relate them to the lived experiences of people in communities. They felt they were that there was a purpose to their learning. A key to moving from the local to the global is exploring how we, in different parts of the world, are impacted by systems of power locally and globally. How for instance, does neoliberalism, impact on peoples' lives 'here' and then how does it impact on peoples' lives across the world. In Bourdieu's (1993) *La Misère du monde* he refers to as 'the misery of position'. This misery of position is expressed in the degraded social spaces of today: abandoned individual low cost housing, priority urban renewal areas turned into "slums," and agriculture brutalized by the market. But this misery of position also hits the first echelons of public institutions: teachers, "cops," social workers, and judges. The exploration of these new spaces is inseparable from the role of advocate that the sociologist or educator has endorsed. The educator becomes the spokesperson for social suffering, no longer relayed by institutional political representation. This questioning of



representative democracy is coupled with a denunciation of the state's betrayal. Neoliberalism has prospered following this betrayal.

For student learning digital storytelling is a powerful and at times subversive tool for disenfranchised communities and individuals. From a DE perspective, it is important that learning moves to a more political platform, while at the same time deeply respecting the storyteller's experience. The relationship which builds between partners and students while making stories, archives, websites or artefacts is important. The relationship matters for partners and it is a vital part of the student learning experience. In shorter projects, it is important to contextualise the DE 'intent' of the encounter, so that the intervention does not become just a workshop about, for instance digital skills. Such projects are more effective when they are one part of a longer course of study. The end objective of DE is not the completion of the product, it is about the process and transformative, emancipatory learning qualities.

The stories in this study had a political intent (Thomas, 1993: 4). The educator guides the process of moving from the personal, to collective action, to understanding local, national, supra national (e.g. EU) and wider global contexts, policies and connections. Critical reflection and analysis is core to developing understandings and meanings. This reflection happens in different spaces and different processes – e.g. in community, in an art gallery, online – but the classroom remains a focal point where learning and skills can be shared, distilled and challenged with others who are also seeking to understand the world from a DE perspective. That support from educator and fellow students is important. The classroom is also a place where students can plan collective actions they may be taking as a group themselves. They can debrief, plan, challenge, evaluate, debate and think about their own 'positionality', a vital component of DE learning. If this does not happen, DE remains but a transactional project-led exercise. The role of the educator becomes one which weaves DE theory, knowledge, policy and practice into an integrated, engaged, discursive, dialogic learning environment. Fostering an ability to hold discomfort is helpful, in that this is a pedagogy of disruption of dominant political, economic, social, environmental, cultural and educational paradigms. Indeed, this thesis argues that fostering outrage is desirable, once it is managed responsibly and is solution focused.

Online fora are valuable spaces for intercultural dialogue particularly for those who do not have immediate access to the internet but who can access it from time to time. We need to unambiguously recognise the power imbalances that exist in terms of aspirations, expectations and resources. For the Cross Disciplinary Group students, the online forum was helpful for following up on classroom discussions. DE issues are complex and the extra ‘layer’ of discussion, beyond the classroom, is helpful for delving further into difficult or contested issues. Using multiple media such as digital archives, websites, radio digital storytelling and online courses, enhances student engagement and provides wider platforms for communities wishing to highlight DE related themes. The digital archive and websites provide valuable oral testimonies which together tell stories that are important to preserve.

A significant finding in this research is the popularity of community radio amongst partners and students, as a way of co-creating broadcasts and reaching a wider audience. Community radio can provide a valuable DE teaching and democratic resource and they generally work from an ethos that is broadly aligned with DE. The creative arts too can facilitate learners to explore DE using different perspectives and senses. It allows the learner explore with all the senses and stand in the place of ‘the other’. Embodying a particular incident can be a powerful way of accessing an experience. It is important not to stay with the single story, the educator needs to hold the DE space and ensure that the artistic experience, moves on to critical debate and civic engagement. In terms of third level cross disciplinary work, DE is an ideal discipline to bring students from different disciplines together, not least because a solution and theoretically focused approach to learning is strengthened by different perspectives. Kincheloe’s (2001) *bricolage* has much to offer the educator in conceptualising how this might happen in practice. Individual specialism is important. However, a reimagining of a university could create spaces, both accredited and non-accredited, where the specialisms come together to talk, think and act together.

The findings relating to the ‘mixed abilities classroom’ (MAG) and work placement indicate that DE is accessible to all ‘abilities’. As a pedagogical approach all classrooms ought to be differentiated. Because our partners experience inequality, discrimination and social exclusion, they can relate very much to the issues being discussed. Bringing this real world into the classroom meant the participants were also the educators. The experience highlighted the futility of an education system based on

‘you pass’, ‘you fail’. It forced us to question the basic ways in which we organise ourselves in educational systems and society as a whole. Here we had a deep learning experience, our understanding of the impact of institutional care, was deepened in a way it never would have been in a mainstream classroom. It raises the idea of reimagining of the university, where spaces are available for society to come together to address problems facing humanity, including talking to others around the globe who want to do the same. Much learning happened in ‘Non-formal-learning spaces’ and the nature of CLL and MML means that there are more opportunities for informal learning (at breaks, on journeys, in community) than often happens in a mainstream lecture theatre/classroom.

### **10.3.3 DE Policy**

Creative educators can find spaces in what is an increasingly market-orientated university system (O’Brien, Cotter 2018). Many students are thirsty for DE approaches, as indicated by the fact that 100 people expressed an interest in attending the classes for this research on a voluntary basis. This offers hope. The passion and enthusiasm of the students and communities in this research should serve to offer hope. Many third level students do strive for a better world and seek opportunities, allies and guidance on how to do so. The ‘Id Est’ project at UCC, for instance, shows how engaged student teachers are and how creative they can be when given the opportunity. Therefore, educators should consider students as allies, meet with those in societies which promote DE values, talk to the students union, initiate public dialogue about the role of the university, what kind of education they wish to have and what kind of society they wish to inhabit in the future. How often do we talk to leaders and students about the role of the university? If we are, as an academic and activist community, going to retain the ‘radical’ traditions of DE as it has developed in the Irish context, we need to create safe spaces for independent voices. ‘The University’ can provide that space if there is clear leadership and courage amongst academics particularly those in leadership roles.

### **10.3.4 DE Theory**

At third level it is important that theoretical positioning accompanies the practice of DE. If this does not happen, DE becomes a set of uninformed actions with no clear emancipatory or transformative intent. No academic discipline or community

perspective is static and frameworks can change and be refined, but the core tenets of DE do come from a deep-rooted commitment to social, economic, political, cultural and environmental justice and equality and from a human rights perspective. This thesis has found that being able to draw on a wide range of critical theoretical perspectives on the learning process is very helpful. Understanding neoliberalism, and globalisation (market and growth-led policies) and their pervasive influence around the world (more extremes of poverty, the rise of the alt-right, depletion of natural resources, climate injustice, forced migration, etc.) is critical. We need to work together to inform ourselves, defend our position and take action to seek structural and transformational change. A solid theoretical base is the foundation of good DE. If there are solid theoretical roots, educators and learners can link to communities, build stories, take action for change, but they can stand in their critical roots, know what they are trying to achieve and why; and know the purpose of their ultimate goal.

## **10.4 The Contribution of this Study to Knowledge**

The literature indicates that there is a dearth of DE research which takes a critical ethnographic approach. This is somewhat surprising since DE is generally framed within a critical theory paradigm and it is helpful if research methodology is aligned with the overarching theoretical framework. Critical ethnography has been a very useful approach for this study for a number of reasons. Firstly, it does not pretend that researchers and participants are neutral, ‘unconditioned beings’ (Willis and Trondman, 2000: 5). Exploring my own ‘habitus’ (Bourdieu, 2006) in detail at the outset of the study, helped to ground my critical reflection and analysis throughout. Bringing attention to this depth of self-awareness at the outset meant that I could observe and participate in the research but could also strive to be as critically aware of my own positioning and biases as possible. Secondly, very importantly for a DE study, critical ethnography allows the researcher to adopt an action agenda with the purpose of empowering people and transforming political and social realities. As Anderson (1989: 249) says, “unlike other interpretivist research, the overriding goal of critical ethnography is to free individuals from sources of domination and repression”. It is very liberating and fulfilling for a researcher coming to research with a DE lens, since the research was part of the action agenda and vice versa.

Critical ethnography, or what Carspecken (1996: x-xi) calls ‘critical qualitative research’, is in itself a form of social “activism”. It aligned perfectly with the Freirean idea of reflection without action is empty ‘verbalism’ and that action without reflection is potentially worse, manipulative ‘activism’ (Freire and Macedo, 2001: 47). Critical ethnography also allowed me to use a very wide range of data, which is important for DE which is seeking to respond to the needs of a wide range of participants, learning needs, geographical locations, action and campaigning agendas. Critical ethnography allows the researcher to not just observe the world but to transform it through critical analysis of dominant beliefs, systems and oppressive societal structures and constructions. Its storytelling function allows us to see, hear and feel what this is like for those impacted by these structures. The research approach is itself a process of ‘conscientisation’. In addition critical ethnography allows the researcher to recognise the role of theory in both the pedagogy and the research approach. It focuses on bringing theory and practice together and on exploring the scope of ethnographic methods in identifying, recording and analysing ‘ordinary’ human practices. It is open to unpredictability, in context and not led by pre-defined theoretical positions (Freire and Macedo: *ibid.*). This includes encouraging action on theoretically informed ethnographic work in relation to specific and general policy questions but more generally it commits academic work with and to larger social projects and seeks to identify and formulate different possibilities of ‘social becoming’ in an era of intense change (Freire and Macedo: *ibid.*). Critical ethnography can also respond to a diverse range of technologies, both online and offline and to a diverse range of methodologies including MML and CLL. Exploring the usefulness of critical ethnography for DE research is a much needed contribution to research in this field.

Most importantly this thesis closely investigates the power of community-linked-learning in engaging third level students in active citizenship and DE in general. The Irish proverb, ‘Bionn adharca fada ar na ba thar lear’ (‘Far away cows have long horns’) raises the idea that it can be easier and perhaps more exotic sometimes to look ‘outwards’. However if DE looks to local communities, there are a myriad of ways in which students can develop and enhance DE competencies. Knowledge, skills and values can be developed and actions taken in real world contexts, something which students in this study appreciated, enjoyed and excelled in practicing. The research also brings the community to the university, for instance people with intellectual disabilities

share our classroom, family carers come from ‘behind the curtain’ to explain how we can link their experience to systematic problems in Mali. Part of the role of the DE educator then is to ensure that there is a global dimension and that learners are exploring constructs, systems and structures (including a strong focus on the impact of neoliberalism) that are oppressive at local, national and international levels. It seeks to explore what humanity has in common rather than ‘what can we do for you’? While much academic research exists in relation to community based learning in a domestic sense, the literature is not strong on linking these community engagements with the global context. This thesis aims to contribute to this, much reduced, literature and research base. Rather than divide the world into ‘them’ and ‘us’, it attempts to look at ‘local’ and ‘global’ in a more nuanced way and interrogate the global forces that impact on humanity.

Importantly too, it looks at the impact of this work not just on students and the educator but on the community partners we work with. It reveals the thirst amongst people who have been rendered voiceless, to use their voice and understand its power, especially when it joins with other ‘voices’. It reveals the importance of trust building, dialogue, ‘relationship’, communication, collaboration and the need time for ‘nurture and growth’. The thesis supports a view that a work placement or some form of ongoing relationship with a number of local and global partners, to work with over time, is valuable in DE, once the partnership is educational from a DE perspective, reciprocal and mutually beneficial. Work placements, commonly used in other disciplines, have not been seriously investigated in a DE context and including studies of work placements, also provides a valuable contribution to the literature. The literature in this aspect relates more to students carrying out work placements in ‘Global South’ countries, as part of an international experience.

The study also merges Community-Linked Learning with Multimedia Learning in a unique combination which recognises the ubiquitous nature of multimedia in our daily lives and its usefulness to DE pedagogy. It looks at how we can use various online tools such as digital archiving, discussion fora, e-learning tools and digital storytelling to enhance DE learning. The study also uses the power of online tools to connect outwards through online educational partnerships. There is a strong body of literature about North-South partnerships but not so much on online partnerships within a DE pedagogical context. While we use web-based technologies in particular in all aspects

of DE pedagogy, there are few research studies which ask what the implications, impact and challenges are of such usage, on both student engagement with DE and with partners we work with.

It is interesting to note that with all of these new media, helpful as they are for DE pedagogy, participants used them primarily for returning to the most ancient of human communication activities, that of storytelling. Whether it was in a cave thousands of years ago or on the World Wide Web today, human beings are still telling stories. There is something reassuring about this contribution to knowledge, the human condition; basic human needs and desires, transcend time, place, nationality, institutionalisation, legal status, age, status or role in life. At a very human level there is something deeply encouraging for DE pedagogy in this; it allows us to imagine that returning to the Yawuru's *Bugarrigarra* (Dodson, cited in Daly, Regan, Regan, 2018: 6) is something many human beings do yearn for. Perhaps it is not too unsophisticated to ask if we can slow down and return to "a time before time, well before Western philosophy, religion and laws existed or travelled to our lands". This level of 'knowing' has come about in this study through four years of exploring different approaches to MML and CLL. There is, I hope to have shown, an academic rigour in the research process and analysis which brings authentic, real, sometimes conflicted voices to DE academic discourse.

Also enduring the test of time are the power of radio, specifically community radio, and the creative arts. While DE has a long tradition of working with the arts, in this thesis the act of political and public art merges with an online exchange to a family living in a refugee camp in Iraq. The political context and desperate efforts to seek international attention to just one story, come together to ask a wider audience to take action on the treatment of Yazidis people. The voices of young people telling this story on radio adds another powerful layer to what is ultimately a political act. Community radio has also received deep attention in this thesis and it has emerged as one of the 'heroes' of the thesis. The thesis shows that in community radio we find a powerful democratic resource which is perhaps underutilised in DE. It too can now enter the World Wide Web and be widely distributed through pod casting. It is accessible and enjoyed by all participants, it enhances DE competencies in many ways and it keeps the focus on the

human voice and the message rather than complex tasks which sometimes become the learning focus.

The thesis also contributes to our knowledge about the role of the educator. The role of the educator becomes one which is a facilitator of learning, a co-creator of learning, a guide and a work or project-related mentor. Students do value the ‘passing on of knowledge and skills’, but such knowledge and skills are woven into the fabric of the learning experience, not imparted from ‘the expert’. The role of the educator becomes one which weaves DE theory, knowledge, policy and practice into an integrated, engaged, discursive, dialogic learning environment. The educator ensures that CLL and MML is aligned with DE values and learning objectives. This includes an understanding of interdependence at personal, local, global and planetary levels. It requires educators to have deep knowledge of their discipline and an ability to hold the DE space without losing scholarly rigour.

## **10.5 Questions and Opportunities for Future Research**

This study reveals possibilities for further research questions in a number of areas. Firstly critical ethnography provides a helpful and robust research methodology which aligns well with critical pedagogy and DE. There is scope for far more research using CE as a research methodology in this scholarly field.

Secondly, the theoretical roots of DE require more attention. Critical pedagogy provides a strong academic frame for DE but that is not always reflected in the literature. Furthermore, the ‘Development’ aspects of DE are not always well conceptualised but are grounded more in theories of ‘Development’ which belong more to Development Studies. Andreotti’s work on post-colonial studies is a significant contribution but there is certain confusion about what we mean by ‘Development’ within a DE context. More critical discussion about the ‘sustainable development goals’ as what we are now being asked to strive towards is needed. Are these goals now how we define ‘Development’? Research on the levels of criticality in the DE sector in Ireland might be useful. Has it become somewhat complacent and what is the impact of having one major funder for the entire sector?



Thirdly, it would be useful to research the role of universities in advocating for policy reform in relation to DE both within and outside of the university. There appears to be significant support amongst third level students for DE but is this interest being adequately heard? It would be helpful to research the many ways in which DE can be integrated across all aspects of university life, and how DE could contribute to and benefit from existing policies.

Fourthly, in terms of the practice of DE, further research would be helpful on the theme of ‘online educational partnerships’. This is an area which poses both challenges and opportunities but has not often been given adequate attention in research studies. More work is also needed to present case studies on how we can introduce students to global systems which impact on the lives of those in North and South contexts and how we can develop international partnerships to work together as a wider social ‘DE’ movement.

In terms of my own professional future I would like to explore the possibilities which exist for long term educational partnership with local and international organisations, social movements or third level institutions. I would also like to investigate the ways in which DE can be integrated into teaching across all university disciplines.

## **10.6 Final Thoughts**

Perhaps the Irish saying ‘Ní neart go cur le chéile’, ‘there is no strength without unity’ or the South African concept of ‘Ubuntu’, ‘I am because you are’ or ‘unity of being’, can sum up the many ways in which this thesis brought university students together with communities at home and abroad. While there were many ethical challenges, at the same time, there was much that was mutually beneficial for students and community partners. The study has provided educators with many insights, questions and learnings. There have been transformative moments, including for myself as researcher/educator. Telling the stories of Andy, Kitty, Arba, Kerry, Finuala, Vera, Obafemi and Claire has been a privilege. For some telling their story has truly been a ‘Hero’s Journey’ that has inspired myself and the students who walked the DE walk. DE is a pedagogy of disruption and challenge, but it is also a pedagogy of hope. Hope that comes from the courage of communities and individuals who act in the name of justice; hope that comes from the aspirations and concern for the future by third level students; and hope that

comes from the enduring power of Development Education as a consciously political, transformative and relevant approach to education. Like critical ethnography, critical theory and critical pedagogy, Development Education can respond to changing times, new ways of relating to the world and new technologies that enhance and challenge our work. In the final analysis, we do come back to the basics, and the foundational values and characteristics of DE have lasted the test of time, because they matter. The stories we tell and the actions we take are what makes us human. They are what make this world. To change the shadow spaces in our world, we need to shine a strong light on what we do with our word and our actions. I hope that this is what this thesis has achieved.

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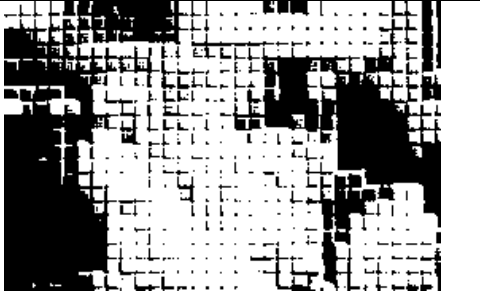




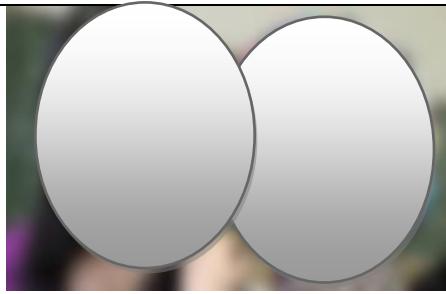
# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1: Consent Form – MEG

(Note this has been altered to blur images and words which might identify the ethnicity of the group)

	<p>This is called a <b>CONSENT FORM</b></p> <p>It is for the [REDACTED] Women working with Gertrude Cotter who is taking a PhD course. I understand that a PhD is a degree at the University in Cork and Gertrude is doing research with students there and with [REDACTED] women living in Cork.</p>
<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>Gertrude Cotter has spent time with me and explained why she is asking me to sign this. A person speaking my own language, [REDACTED] helped me to understand any parts of the conversation I did not understand.</p>	
	<p>Research is about finding out things. Sometimes it is about finding out what ways we can help one another to have better lives.</p> <p>This research is about finding out how [REDACTED] women and students at the university can learn together and get to know one another.</p>
	<p>The UCC students are training to be teachers and we, the [REDACTED] women, are helping them to be better teachers. [REDACTED] we will teach them about how life is for us in Cork. We hope that by getting to know us they will teach young people to treat people fairly.</p>

	<p>The students are learning about “social justice”. This is about how everyone in our community can be treated fairly.</p>
	<p>The students are also learning about how to get along with people from other cultures.</p> <p>So that they can teach children how to understand about people from different backgrounds.</p>
	<p>The research is also about  women learning:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How to become community leaders</li> <li>2. How to get into the Irish education system</li> <li>3. How to prepare to work with others and do some serious work with the students</li> </ol>



I understand that what I have to do is:

1. Attend the course “Introduction to Community Development” for Women for 10 weeks
2. Work on a project with students from UCC on a project
3. Meet with Gertrude, the researcher, to talk about how I am getting on during this work
4. The research will take two years

I understand that we are trying to find out how both the students and the women can learn from this work together.



- I understand that I do not have to take part in this research
- I am happy to take part in the research and I am volunteering to do so
- I know I can leave at any time
- I understand that what I say will be confidential
- I understand that even if I do not take part in the research I can still take part in the Women in Leadership Course
- I understand and am happy for Gertrude to record interviews with me

### Consent

I \_\_\_\_\_ agree to participate in Gertrude Cotter's PhD research study.

The purpose of the study has been explained to me and I understand it. I am taking part voluntarily.

I give permission for my interviews and written work with Gertrude Cotter to be recorded and I understand that personal details are not given to anyone unless I say so. The lessons we all learn from this work together will be shared in a final report which Gertrude will write.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 2.1: Community Interventions Management Course Outline**

and Partnership Project with University College Cork

**NOTE: Names have deliberately been omitted.**

### **Introduction**

This course forms part of a participatory research project being carried out at University College Cork. The course is being carried out in a partnership arrangement between XXXXX and University College Cork's School of Education.



### **Overview of Course Content**

This course introduces the student to key aspects of Community Intervention Management from Policy and Practice perspectives. It also prepares students for a collaborative project with students in Ireland. Together all participants will work on a joint project of their choosing. The project will focus on a Development or Human Rights issue. The four parts of the course are as follows:

1. Basic Concepts and Skills of Community Intervention Management;
2. Planning, Implementing and Evaluating a Community Intervention;
3. Planning for collaborative Project with University College Cork;
4. Implementing collaborative project.

### **Learning Objectives**

- Understand core concepts and theories which inform Community Intervention Management;
- Develop the necessary skills to manage effective community intervention projects;
- Explore values, principles and qualities associated with community intervention leadership and management;
- Undertake an international collaborative project;
- Demonstrate an ability to integrate knowledge, skills and values to manage a community intervention aimed at effecting social change.

## **Methodology**

- This course is experimental in design and forms part of a participatory research project being carried out for a PhD at University College Cork;
- The course will take place on-line by distance education and technologies such as skype, email and online collaboration tools will be used to facilitate the international partnership approach which is a core aspect of the learning;
- Participants in the course will collaborate in facilitating the course on the ground, with a view to the smooth running of the course and enhancement of organisation and facilitation skills;
- Discussion, working in pairs and groups, simulation, role play activities, meditation, visualisation and use of visual images, web-based technologies, reflective practice, critical analysis and case studies;
- Practical assignments and assessment will ensure that the learning is directly relevant and meaningful to participants and their work or community.

## **Assessment – For the purposes of [REDACTED] (Name of Organisation)**

Participants must complete:

Planning and implementation of Community Intervention Project Group Project

International Collaborative Project

Attendance at weekly group discussion

10 online Forum contributions: (5 individual contributions plus 5 responses to other participants)

## **Additional Requirements**

- Since this is part of a research project you are requested to participate fully in the ongoing evaluation of the project. This will involve individual interviews with the researcher, surveys and focus group discussions.

## Course Description

Class	Key Knowledge & Theory	Key Skills
<b>1. Basic Concepts and Skills of Community Intervention Management</b>		
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• Overview of course</li> <li>• Adult Learning Styles</li> <li>• Howard Gardner Learning Styles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using icebreakers</li> <li>• Critical thinking about learning styles of your group</li> </ul>
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How groups work</li> <li>• Group theory</li> <li>• Roles people play in groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitation Skills 1</li> </ul>
1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining Community Development</li> <li>• Defining Community Intervention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening</li> <li>• Building trust in group</li> <li>• IT Skills for this course</li> </ul>
1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies to engage your community or group</li> </ul>
1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with people, empowerment and activation</li> </ul>
<b>2. Leadership, Governance and Management for Community Intervention</b>		
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Intervention Model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs assessment of your community or group</li> </ul>
2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Planning</li> <li>• Operational Planning</li> </ul>
2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation, Evaluation and Sustainability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging community</li> <li>• Increasing Participation</li> <li>• Evaluation methods</li> <li>• How to sustain project</li> </ul>
2.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a funding strategy</li> </ul>
2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational policy and procedure</li> <li>• Governance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing organisational policy and developing new policies</li> </ul>
<b>3. Planning for collaborative Project with UCC</b>		
3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intercultural Communications 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Networking and partnerships locally, nationally, internationally</li> <li>• Valuing partnerships</li> <li>• Valuing networks</li> <li>• Valuing one's own identity and that of others</li> </ul>

3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intercultural Communications 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intercultural Planning</li> <li>• Importance of interconnectedness</li> </ul>
3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ireland</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research</li> </ul>
3.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning session 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration skills</li> <li>• Online collaboration skills</li> <li>• Practical IT skills</li> </ul>
3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to UCC Students</li> <li>• Getting to know one another</li> <li>• Discussion on possible collaborative project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open-mindedness towards other people's perspectives and willingness to learn with and from perspectives of others</li> </ul>
<b>4. Implementation of International Project</b>		
4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying the problem</li> <li>• Planning collaboration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brainstorming</li> <li>• Identifying skills, knowledge, attitudes required</li> </ul>
4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be decided</li> </ul>
4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be decided</li> </ul>
4.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be decided</li> </ul>
4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch/Celebration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch/Celebration</li> </ul>



## **Appendix 2.2: Interview Schedule - Lesotho Group**

**Purpose of this Survey is to Develop a Profile of Lesotho Students Participating in  
this Research Project (PhD Gertrude Cotter, School of Education)**

**Your Participation is Appreciated**

### ***SECTION 1: INDIVIDUAL PROFILE***

Name:

Designated Code No: L

Q.1.1 Gender:        Male                      Female

Q.1.2 Age:                20-25                26-30                31-40                40-50                50+

Q.1.3 What is your level of education?

Primary                      Secondary                      Further Education                      Higher  
Education

Professional Training/Apprenticeship

Q.1.4 Nationality:

Q.1.5 What is your occupation?

Q.1.6 Why did you become involved in this project?

Q.1.7 What would you like to learn from this project?

Q.1.8 Have you undertaken any studies in community development, community  
interventions management, development education, intercultural communications,  
social justice studies, development studies, international politics or related areas?

Yes    No

If yes, please give details

Adult Learning                Arts                      Children                Community Development

Disability	Education	Health	Men's Issues
GLBT	Environment	Older People	Equality and Human Rights
Homelessness	Youth	International Development	
Poverty	Social Care	Migrant/Refugee/Asylum Seeker	
Social Enterprise	Sport	Youth	

Other: Please specify

## **Section 2: Your Local Development Work**

Q.2.1 Please describe the work you do in Lesotho.

Q.2.2 Describe the structure of the organisation you work for and your position in that organisation.

Q.2.3 How do you see this project benefiting your organisation?

Q.2.3 Part of the assessment for this training course is to work on a community intervention project and devise a management plan to develop the project to its next stage. Do you have any ideas at this stage what you would like to work on?

## **Section 3:**

Q.3.1 What do you think students in UCC should know about life in Lesotho? Why?

Q.3.2 What would you like to know about life in Ireland or for a UCC student?

Q.3.3 Have you any ideas at this stage what kind of work or what kind of project you would like to do with the UCC students?


Q.3.4 What is your understanding of the term "Development"?

Q.3.5 What is your understanding of the terms "Community Development" and "Community Intervention"?

Q.3.6 What is your understanding of the terms "Intercultural Communications"?


## Appendix 2.3: Extract from Lesotho Forum Discussion


Black box covers names to preserve anonymity




**nkhatosa**  
Participant  
(105.226.146.118)


I think it add value in my online cultural exchange, because of the different culture, knowledge and the skill. Having discussed some of the issues like not accepting everything that you read from the book or newspaper. without analysis and questioning it. In our culture we nominally grew up not asking question. eg If you are told what to do a persona to obey and not show some resistance. Due to some influence from cultural grown up may have some impact I can influence that through education and the kind of lessons that we get. I would make sure they do not happen and through the lessons that we get


November 26, 2015 at 1:17  [EDIT](#) | [MOVE](#) | [SPLIT](#) | [TRASH](#) | [SPAM](#) | [REPLY](#) #4817



**Participant**  
(109.77.141.188)

Hi, nkhatosa!  
I agree with your idea of not accepting every idea one reads in the newspaper/general media about a foreign culture as 'true' or 'accurate' without further investigation — meeting a person who holds that cultural belief, asking polite questions, and inquiring an academic in the field for verification of a cultural trend/fact are  of concluding 'Yes, that's the way they do things in X country'.  
Best,  
-Aaron

December 9, 2015 at 9:33 p  [EDIT](#) | [MOVE](#) | [SPLIT](#) | [TRASH](#) | [SPAM](#) | [REPLY](#) #4849



**Participant**

Hi Nkhathosa and Aaron, this is an interesting conversation. Well done on exploring the idea of critical thinking. We have spoken about that in the classes. Its so liberating to learn how to think and not accept everything at face value. As explained in the lecture, we need to know so many things about a piece of writing or an image for instance. Who is writing? What is their purpose? What is their agenda? etc

### Appendix 3: Advert for Participants 2018

#### PhD Research Project Participants Needed!

*Dear UCC Student,*



I am looking for 10 students to participate in my PhD research project. Students can be from any discipline and any age. The research involves creating an experimental learning experience building on your existing engagement in local and global social justice and human rights issues.

The project would require the following time commitment from you:

1. Reflection in a forum on your current engagement in local or global social justice, community or human rights work e.g. your involvement in a society or course-based project work;
2. Attendance at a total of 10 x 2 hour conversation groups over the full academic year as part of an experimental project to develop an innovative educational model;
3. Ideally, but not essentially, participate in an online course on Intercultural Communications leading to a certificate from Global Citizen Contact Point. Students in Lesotho will also participate in this course and you will be required to carry out a "Global Citizen" collaborative project with this group. Even if you do not wish to take part in parts 1 and 2 above you can take this course only and its free!

Gertrude Cotter 086 3781593

[gertrude.cotter@ucc.ie](mailto:gertrude.cotter@ucc.ie)

I also have a number of interesting work-placements available as part of this research. Several UCC Departments are happy to accept these placements. Participation in the above research can form part of a work-placement.

## Appendix 4: Invitation to UCC PME Students to GTA Information Sessions



education  
you are invited to...  
an info session on:

# Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship

(ESDGC) Project

Find out how you can:

- Take a "Global Teacher Award" in 4 x 2 hour workshops.
- Apply for student awards for your work in this field.
- Support pupils to understand local and global injustice and feel empowered to take action.
- Draw on the voluntary workshops to inform aspects of PME coursework and later thesis production.
- Participate in a research project being carried out at the School of Education in this field.

Be part of the history of action on social justice and sustainable development in Cork.

Date -Time: **Thursday 29th January 2015 at 6-8 pm.**

Venue: **W5, West Wing, UCC Quad.**

 **Irish Aid**  
Department of Foreign Affairs  
An Roinn Gnóthaí Éireannacha

"This project is supported by the Ubuntu Network which is funded by Irish Aid"



## **Appendix 5: Informed Consent Form (Student Participants)**

### **UCC Student Group Year 2**

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#### **Introduction**

You are being asked to take part in a research study called:

*Civic Engagement in Social Justice Issues: Examining the Impact of Transformative and*

*Innovative Pedagogical Methods on Students at University College Cork and on Local and International Communities of Interest.*

The project is being conducted from University College Cork (UCC) by Gertrude Cotter who is a PhD candidate at the School of Education, University College Cork, Ireland.

This is a consent form. Signing this form means you give your consent that you are happy to participate in this research. It also means that you have agreed that you understand the purpose of the research and why you are being asked to participate.

---

#### **Who are the participants in this research study?**

1. Year 1: Students of Education UCC; Roma community Cork; Refugee Community Cork; Action Lesotho in collaboration with local community leaders in Libere region.
  2. Year 2: Third level students from a range of disciplines in UCC, Action Lesotho, International participants online, partner groups where students are working or volunteering.
- 

#### **Purpose of the study**

- To explore the impact of a collaborative approach to learning on all participants, particularly on student motivation, attitudinal change, skills development and willingness to take action;
- To discover how we might include, in a deeper way, the voices of people who are suffering social exclusion and injustice and how our partner groups are impacted by this project;
- To explore the use of online collaborative partnerships between UCC students and participants in Lesotho, Cork, Canada and Japan;

- To explore new methods of teaching and learning in third level education, including transmedia methodologies;
- 

- **What will you be asked to do?**

1. Attend a two hour session once a month for ten months to work on a collaborative learning experience in the field of “Development Education and Social Justice engagement and activism”.
2. Join an online discussion forum to discuss content and methodology of workshops throughout the year.
3. Take part in discussions to discuss the work of the project and evaluate impact.

### **Choice**

You do not have to participate in this research study. It is entirely your own choice. Your participation is appreciated and we hope that you will find it beneficial if you wish to stay. You may, if you so decide, withdraw at any stage

---

### **Confidentiality**

Any information you give to the researcher will be confidential. The final report will draw conclusions but at no point will your name ever be used in the final thesis or with any other person unless you give your written approval. Moreover, all contextual and background details will be anonymized so that individual contributors cannot be indirectly identified, unless a person has given explicit permission for the use of his/her name.

In the final thesis there will be quotes from the work of all participants and their evaluation of the process. Individuals will not be identified unless they give explicit permission to do so.

This research is aimed at informing pedagogical development in this field and aims to be a realistic and meaningful engagement. Research is essential for progress to take place and for new ideas to emerge.

### **You can get the answers to your questions, concerns, or complaints.**

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this study, contact the researcher Gertrude Cotter. Email: [gertrudecotter@hotmail.com](mailto:gertrudecotter@hotmail.com)

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## **Consent to Take Part in Research**

By signing this consent form you are stating that, having read the information above, you agree that you wish to participate in the research project.

### **Consent**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (print name) agree to participate in Gertrude Cotter's PhD research study.

The purpose of the study has been explained to me and I understand it. I am participating voluntarily.

I give permission for my interviews and written work with Gertrude Cotter to be recorded and I understand that such personal details as I have provided are not disclosed to anyone other than Gertrude Cotter unless I give written permission. General findings will be shared with Gertrude Cotter's PhD supervisors and will also be documented in the final PhD report.

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix 6: Digital Story Telling Workshop debriefing with Participants

1. How would you assess the workshop as a method for learning about social justice issues?
2. Would you use it in your work e.g. with classes?
3. How would you use it in your classroom or in other work you do as a way of engaging others on social justice?
4. To prepare it as a social justice tool how would we do it differently if we were to prepare again?
5. Would the same thing have happened if we had a cookery class? Why not?
6. Did the time taken on the digital tools take away or add to learning about social justice issues?
7. What did you learn about social justice issues? eg about the refugee and asylum
8. How did you feel about putting yourself “out there” in public to tell your story?

## **Appendix 7: Transcript of Video (Obafemi)**

All videos of key participants have been transcribed. This is an example.

### **FILE DETAILS**

Audio Length:	00:04:33
Audio Quality:	Good
Number of Speakers:	1
Speaker:	-----

---

### **Start of Audio**

Anybody that denies order of the freedom does not deserve it themselves. This reminds me of one of my experiences of staying in direct provision, where my dignity seems to have been stolen and my freedom restricted. My friend has come to visit, it was a good moment from the beginning because a visitor brings back your hope and makes you feel that you're not alone in your struggle. The security came and told me friend that he was not supposed to be there. He felt embarrassed and I felt bad. I immediately remember my father telling me: Your dignity is worth more than your money. Try as much as you can to keep it. I stood up to the security as they were trying to drag out my friend. I told them that my friend was not going anywhere against his wish. This began this thing, they called the cops. I stood my ground, even with the idea of the cops. More policemen were called because I was adamant that I refused to compromise my dignity. At the end of the day, there were nine police vehicle and 12 – 13 policemen on me. It was intimidating. Nevertheless, I stood my ground and this caused a huge thing. Some others then came out and gave their support until the owner of the centre arrived. She got a good meeting with me. I told her that I was fighting for my rights and my dignity. That [inaudible 00:02:17] this would not have happened. It was wrong, not only for me but for every other resident at the centre. She agreed with me and told the policemen to go. That we could settle it amongst ourselves. I later initiated a protest in the centre against all aspects of intimidation. Direct provision has made a lot of people useless. I cannot compromise my dignity. When you live in a situation that does not respect your dignity, it actually affects every part of your life.

### **End of Audio**

## Appendix 8: Early Visual Representation OF PHD Research

Displayed at the Glucksman Art Gallery, UCC in May 2018.

These seven panels represent some of initial research findings. They are based on the stories of the eight research participants. More detailed photographs can be found here:

<http://www.idestexhibition2018.gertrudecatter.info/other-artefacts/>



