Refereed Conference Presentations


Other Conference Presentations (partial list)

Systems Thinking and Global Education: Towards a Framework for a Transformative Global Education

ABSTRACT

A transformative global education, one critical of the status quo and supportive of the development of students’ ability to change their world, would benefit from further development of a conceptual framework within a holistic paradigm. Some who have begun to explore the potential of such a global education and its significance for curriculum and practice look to systems thinking to provide such a framework (Pike & Selby, 1988; Selby, 1999; Young, 2010). This research seeks to continue this exploration by identifying particular systems concepts that might have particular relevance for global education, and by imagining how they might inform practice. In order to discover whether systems theoretical concepts can serve as an effective theoretical framework for a transformative global education, I turned to both literature and teachers’ practice. I worked with a group of four global educators, exploring their practices through interviews and observations. Moving back and forth between the experiences of the teachers and systems theory literature (Ackoff, 1974; von Bertalanffy, 1968; Churchman, 1971; Georgiou, 2007), I was able identify and better understand systems concepts and how they might be enacted in global education classrooms. The importance of boundary judgements in systems theory has great significance for global education, underlying such key ideas as a synthesis approach to study of phenomena, relationality, recognition of holistic and multiple perspectives, and critical awareness of system boundaries and goals and their relation to power dynamics. The fact that systems concepts are already embedded in the practices of some global educators who are not themselves knowledgeable about systems theory, coupled with my own experience of reaching greater understanding of the concepts through an exploration of practice, suggests that teachers might not need expertise in the theory to adopt such an approach. However, the concepts developed here can provide guidance and support for teachers seeking to practice a transformative global education.

Awards

2011 Graduate Fellowship, Simon Fraser University
2010 Graduate Fellowship, Simon Fraser University
2009 Graduate Fellowship, Simon Fraser University
2009 President’s Research Stipend, Simon Fraser University
2008 Graduate Fellowship, Simon Fraser University
2008 Rotary Club of Burnaby Scholarship
2007 Graduate Fellowship, Simon Fraser University

Academic Record

Doctor of Philosophy – Curriculum Theory and Implementation, Simon Fraser University
Dissertation – Systems Thinking and Global Education: Towards a Framework for a Transformative Global Education
Master of Arts – Diversity in Curriculum and Instruction, Simon Fraser University
Thesis – Global Education and Good Citizenship: An Examination of Student Outcomes
Bachelor of Education – Teaching Secondary School English, Saint Mary’s University
Bachelor of Arts – English Literature, University of Kings College

Publications