

Global learning enabling teacher voices in one Greek primary school: mixed methods including action research and interviews

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This chapter reflects on the methodological design of research that examined how teachers in one Greek primary school adopted global learning as part of their wider pedagogical ethos. The chapter will discuss the findings, which present possibilities of change that emerged for teachers through their engagement with global learning. Theoretical influences from the field of critical theory, more specifically, critical pedagogy and postcolonial theory, drive my conceptualisations of global learning. However, these are placed in the reality and lived experiences of the teachers, and influences from the philosophical tradition of pragmatism frame the wider methodological design. Having been influenced to a significant degree by Gert Biesta's (2017) work on teachers and their role in education, the prominent axiological drive of this research is based on trusting '*teachers' educational wisdom*'. It is on this basis that the methodology of the research was structured, which included a transformative mixed methods design incorporating two research phases. This chapter presents and discusses one aspect of the findings from the first research phase, which involved a case study of a Greek primary school. The design of the case study was influenced by features of participatory action research (PAR), which within the limits of this research was approached as a philosophical tradition rather than a methodological approach. The case study was positioned in a three-cycle PAR design, with each cycle involving the following three cycles: plan, act/observe, reflect. Findings presented in this chapter discuss conclusions from the 'reflect' stage of the first two cycles of the PAR, which included semi-structured interviews with teachers from a Greek primary school. These demonstrate how teachers' engagement with global learning enabled them to undertake a

journey of struggle towards their conscientisation and to challenge normative practices of the neoliberal structure as evidenced in the teaching profession (Apple 2018; Freire 1996; Sterling 2010). Further to this, the findings refer to notions on how global learning, and wider initiatives of global citizenship education (GCE) underpinned by critical notions, can offer spaces and possibilities to re-examine ontological and epistemological depictions informing research methodologies in an era of conscious deconstruction of colonial practices. Lastly, and considering the methodological uniqueness in studies that adopt a transformative mixed methods design, due to such research relating to historical and cultural experiences of oppressed communities, this chapter further extends the academic debate of such methodologies (Creswell and Plano Clark 2011; Mertens 2021).

Global learning: a pedagogy of interruption

Global learning is part of the educational landscape of approaches that seek to respond to increasing notions of interconnectedness and globalisation noted across contemporary societies in formal education. It, however, moves beyond discourses relating exclusively to cosmopolitanism and interconnectedness, and further seeks to offer alternative responses to an unjust global society. Positioned and dominantly influenced by critical pedagogy and postcolonial theory, global learning – as with the theoretically similar GCE – directly relates to issues of global social justice (Bourn 2022).

Although recognising that GCE and global learning pose identical theoretical influences and I treat them as interchangeable fields, I have chosen to frame my understanding of the teaching of global issues within the concept of global learning. GCE remains a more commonly used definition and offers a common understanding across a range of stakeholders, such as schools, non-governmental organisations or supranational institutions, especially following the use of the term as part of the United Nations' (UN) agenda of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Scheunpflug 2021; United Nations 2015). Alternatively, global learning seems to be used more evidently when it is placed in the context of the work of teachers (Peterson and Warwick 2014). The field dominantly grew within the context of the UK, following theoretical narratives from Bourn (2015, 2020a), who tried to extend the field of development education, and challenge perspectives that focused on elements of white salvation and reinforced colonial stereotypes of White/Western superiority.

Recent work from the context of the United States also uses the term global learning. There seems to be a trend, however, that this is dominantly used within the higher education setting to reflect on how globalisation and internationalisation have affected the higher education curricula (Zhou 2022). For instance, in one case, researchers discuss how reflection on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) could enable undergraduate students to engage with global issues and develop a better understanding about our world's interconnectedness and the competencies that one should acquire in today's globalised context (Mitchell et al. 2020). Nevertheless, global learning in this chapter is not understood as simply learning about the world, which focuses on skills and competencies needed in a global society, nor as a framework solely relating to global themes informing curricula design.

Instead, global learning is understood as a pedagogical approach that aims to achieve global social justice. I place global learning within the framework of those approaches that enable individuals to seek democracy in contexts of neoliberal and colonial dominance. I see democracy as a process rather than simply as a form of government, placing democracy within the ancient virtue of cosmopolitanism (Starkey 2017). This sees democracy as an ongoing process of communication between the voices of Others and the constant changing of social habit to ensure that those voices are heard (Appiah 2007; Dewey 1916; Giddens 2002).

Globalised contexts and democracy: transforming the Aesthetic

More and more research in the wider field of GCE has been taking an anti-neoliberal stance (Bourn 2020b; McCloskey et al. 2021; Pashby et al. 2020). This refers to the conscious process of explicitly challenging notions of dominance emerging from colonial practices and neoliberal/neoconservative ideologies. As such, further to seeking to consciously challenge the voice of dominance – the Northern superior construct – global learning seeks to enable voices of those who have been silenced by it to be heard. These discourses are significantly influenced by Freire (1996), who in his seminal *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* saw possibilities of emancipation of the oppressed through the process of 'conscientisation' or critical consciousness. This refers to the realisation of the oppressed that their voices, their beings, their whole entities have been oppressed; their reality has been regulated by the agenda of their oppressors. It is only by realising their oppression that the oppressed experience an ideological awakening, a realisation that thus far they have been a part of

someone else's story; it is at that moment, according to Freire, that their journey towards liberation starts (Freire 1974).

Research in the field of global learning, both in formal and informal education, as well as research that has been focusing on community empowerment, demonstrates the possibilities towards one's conscientisation through engagement with such approaches (McCloskey et al. 2021). Global learning essentially enables individuals to reflect on the wider sociocultural context that recognises the inherent interconnectedness between local and global. Most importantly, however, it locates the importance and significance of local communities in valuing their lived experiences and allows them to recognise their role in influencing society as we know it (McCloskey et al. 2021). Global learning enables individuals to identify the importance of their own single stories, rather than accepting the single story of the dominant status quo, influenced by neoliberal and colonial narratives. As depicted by Giddens (2002) in his volume on globalisation, the process of 'democratisation of democracy' can only be achieved when the voices of the civic sphere share their voice and influence the ongoing discourse in search of democracy in spaces of ongoing interconnectedness and globalisation.

Apple (2018) positions this in a more timely framework, which actively depicts the unethical power of the neoliberal construct, or the oppressors, as discussed in the writings of Freire (1996). Versions of 'thin democracy' – according to Apple (2018) – or a 'distorted democracy' – according to Freire (1996) – dominate this reality and it is this type of democracy that we all live in. What we need, however, if we wish to remain true to our commitment to challenging normativity, is multiple versions of 'thick democracy', which represent the voices of those consciously resisting notions of thin democracy (Apple 2018). Global learning is one of these frameworks that, due to its theoretical influences, could enable marginalised and oppressed communities to find their voice, face their oppression, deny the dominant version of colonial, thin democracy, and essentially engage in an ongoing struggle of speaking their version(s) of thick democracy (Bourn 2022). Of course, any such initiatives that seek to challenge dominant perspectives of the colonial structure and the status quo require struggle; one's 'struggle for democracy' (Apple 2018).

Spivak (2012), a feminist postcolonial scholar, also explores the possible processes by which individuals can regain their consciousness in today's globalised context. However, she specifically locates the nature of dominance in the colonial construct, which has been our reality since the Enlightenment era. She calls this construct the 'Aesthetic', which describes the role of the colonial construct in forming the lives of

the people. It describes our role and existence in an unconscious reality that has been forced upon us, a reality that has been created to fit the Aesthetic perspectives of those in power. Spivak argues for the conscious undoing of this unconscious reality, which limits one's scope of action within the limits and purposes of those in power. Although recognising Spivak's direct positionality in a postcolonial framework, I use her term of the Aesthetic to describe both colonial and neoliberal structures oppressing the lives of people today.

As noted by Freire (1996), an individual's emancipation relates to their ideological awakening, their conscientisation. This has influenced discourse in the field of transformative learning, and essentially an individual's conscientisation is viewed as relating to their epistemological transformation. Bateson's (1972) theory of transformative learning places the process of conscientisation, or 'epistemic learning', in a three-stage process. His theory of the three loops of transformative learning presents the following three stages: learning or first-order learning, meta-learning or second-order learning, and epistemic learning or third-order learning. Each of these loops of learning present a nested system with learning being the central loop and epistemic learning being the outer one. Sterling (2010) has explicitly explored how global learning could enable one's conscientisation by placing its process within Bateson's loops of transformative learning. Learning or first-order learning refers to most of the learning that happens, and it explicitly refers to the learning of the Aesthetic. Meta-learning is an individual's conscious effort of doing things different to first-order learning, whereas epistemic learning refers to an individual's conscious effort of challenging it. This is the type of learning that results in epistemic transformation, achieved through an individual's conscious effort to challenge notions of first-order learning.

As mentioned already, however, any such undoing of the unconscious dominant reality of the Aesthetic requires struggle (Apple 2018). An individual's struggle for the undoing of the colonial and neoliberal realities does not guarantee escape from it, however. This is due to the immense pressure and power of the dominant status quo, and of our explicit role in being part of the Aesthetic (Spivak 2012). As such, the struggle to challenge the Aesthetic can only be seen within a framework of ongoing possibilities of struggle (Apple 2018; Sterling 2010).

Discourses about democracy presented here do not refer to democracy as a form of government, but as a process that enables the voices of all to be heard, a process of challenging the normativity dominating and oppressing the lives of all (Apple 2018). Global learning encompasses this theoretical positionality and places the struggle for democracy in

a cosmopolitan framework; a world that is inherently divided into the powerful and the powerless (Andreotti 2011). Global learning aims to challenge the colonial Aesthetic, empower marginalised communities and resist policies that aim to strengthen thin democracy. Global learning is understood as a pedagogy of global interruption, a possibility for individuals to find their voice, to gain their consciousness and strive to challenge the normative Aesthetic (Bourn 2022; Spivak 2012; Verma and Apple 2021).

Global citizenship education: the case of Greece

Global learning has been framed as a pedagogical approach that can reinforce cosmopolitanism in an interconnected world, as well as enable possibilities of struggle and interruption of the construct of the Aesthetic (Bourn 2022). This theoretical discourse in the case of this research was placed under examination in the reality of teachers in Greek primary schools.

Following the years of sociopolitical turmoil, Greece's formal education system seems to be stabilising, and is currently undergoing a stage of Europeanisation and internationalisation (Traianou 2019). The modernisation of the country's education, however, seems to be solely based on frameworks that essentially target the work of teachers and which have been intensified under policies of neoliberal accountability and regulation (Chalari 2020).

Further to this, and despite the significant impact that globalisation has had in the context of Greece, educational approaches that seek to respond to the increasing interconnectedness of our society are still rare in the Greek context (Skliri and Karakatsani 2020). The limited research emerging from the context does not place approaches of GCE in a systematic pedagogical framework that could enable possibilities to address cosmopolitanism in formal education, as well as reinforce spaces where individual voices can contribute to the bottom-up democratisation of democracy while undergoing struggle to challenge notions of the normative Aesthetic.

Instead, fields and terminology such as interculturalism and intercultural education seem to be preferred when it comes to framing educational responses that seek to address increasing notions of globalisation and the need to address cosmopolitanism as part of the teaching and learning process. These, however, focus on abstract notions of citizenship and cultural respect – which seem to be mainly assimilative and

as noted by earlier research are not informed by critical frameworks (Kakos and Palaiologou 2014). More recently, research has been using the term GCE more consistently than before. Nevertheless, GCE still does not seem to be placed in critical frameworks, but is rather influenced by moral depictions and approaches that seem to be mostly placed in moral frameworks of GCE (Doulami 2020; Oxley and Morris 2013). These reflect on issues particularly relevant to the education tradition of GCE, such as issues relating to human rights or attempts to conceptualise one's citizenship in a cosmopolitan context. However, and despite their relevance to GCE, such depictions fail to systematically challenge issues of inequality evident across our societies, which have emerged through the practices of the Aesthetic. Critical ideological depictions of GCE are noted in a small number of doctoral research studies, fundamentally influenced by Freirean approaches. However, and despite placing their conceptual frameworks within critical ideologies, these are not reflected in the methodological design, and essentially fail to enable the voices of individuals to be heard (Seira 2020; Sounoglou 2016). A more recent research study has explored issues of GCE and its relevance to issues of justice and emancipation. The research concludes that these issues can be found in school textbooks and that justice and emancipation could be a possibility. Nevertheless, these are solely examined in school textbooks, which historically have been used by the neoliberal structure to regulate official knowledge, and voices of teachers are not taken into account (Vavitsas 2022).

This has resulted in two main issues. First, GCE in the case of Greece's formal education has not escaped the narrative of normativity and seeks to explore issues relating to citizenship through the construct of the Aesthetic and mainly through moral and abstract dimensions. Critical approaches of GCE that could enable possibilities of struggle for finding democracy in moving towards a world of global social justice are to a great degree still absent. Second, research in Greece in the intersection of GCE and teaching is limited, as most of it focuses on peripheral examination of the issue, such as content analyses of school textbooks and teachers' perceptions on the topic. Voices of teachers – whose role is being actively intensified by the neoliberal construct, especially more recently (Chalari 2020) – are largely ignored. Even when research aims to reflect on how teachers could embed GCE as part of their teaching, this is still delivered from the 'critical' viewpoint of the knowledgeable researcher and notions of criticality are offered to teachers as blueprints of correction of their malpractice.

The themes in this chapter are based on research which aims to address the extent to which global learning – a critical GCE approach – could enable teachers in a Greek primary school to address cosmopolitanism through a more critical lens. I position this criticality within the fields of critical pedagogy and postcolonial theory. Further to this and having noted the increasing effect of the neoliberal construct in the lives of teachers, this chapter further seeks to examine the extent to which global learning could enable teachers' engagement in a journey of struggle towards the ongoing vision of thick versions of democracy. This forms the hypothesis of this research.

Teachers' educational wisdom: the axiological drive

Global learning – positioned in a critical agenda of addressing cosmopolitanism and challenging the construct of the Aesthetic – framed the theoretical stance of this research, which was positioned in the reality of teachers in Greek primary schools. Having reflected on my own identity as a teacher and currently as a teacher educator, I agree with Apple (2014) about the importance of ensuring that any theory needs to be related to the lives of the teachers, become relevant to their lived experiences, and essentially enable them to struggle for thick democracy in an era of immense neoliberal oppression.

Biesta's (2006, 2017) work on democratic education and teachers' role in teaching frames my positionality to approaching this issue. Similar to Dewey (1916) and Giddens (2002), Biesta also places democracy – which he explores not as a form of government but as a process – in a context of plurality and difference and identifies the importance of communication between people to continuously re-examine the meaning of democracy. Having built on Deweyan approaches, and also drawing on influences from Arendt (1990), Biesta argues that democracy is essentially based on the continuous interaction of human beings and their beginnings, and how individuals respond to each other's beginnings by bringing their own. He relates the notion of 'beginning' to birth, when a new entity arrives in the world. Democracy can be found in spaces where human beings can bring their own beginnings. Nevertheless, democracy can only exist as a process if one's beginnings are taken up by other beings, and are responded to by someone else's new beginnings. Essentially, democracy according to Biesta (2006) is a conscious political praxis where individuals interact with one another on the basis of everyone's unique stories, in a global context of plurality and difference.

Further to discussing the process of democracy, Biesta notes that if an individual tries to control how they respond to their beginnings this would mean the end of democracy. To a great degree this could also be related to work by Freire (1996), where he talks about the process of dehumanisation, and how the oppressors oppress the oppressed in their own version of democracy.

This framed my consideration when it came to exploring how my hypothesis – discussed in the previous section – could frame the methodological design of this research. Despite my depictions of critical approaches of GCE, I did not want to enforce my version of GCE on teachers. If I did that, ultimately I would oppress their responses to my beginning; hence, the process would stop being democratic. Instead, I could bring my beginning to them – my belief in global learning, a critical pedagogical approach to addressing cosmopolitanism – and give them space to explore this as part of their own lived experiences and explore their responses to my beginning.

Biesta (2017) also argues, in his rediscovery of teaching, that any theories that limit the scope of education to future aims essentially fail to find education. According to him, the only place where we can find education is in the sphere of the ‘here and now’, in the pragmatic reality and lived experiences of teachers. It is not about the promises of idealistic notions or about populist regulation. It is about educating in the here and now, and this can only be a possibility if we trust teachers’ educational wisdom to do so.

The abovementioned two elements – namely, the limitless interaction between people’s beginnings and trusting teachers’ educational wisdom – formed the axiological stance of this research and framed my positionality of global learning. I brought to the context of Greek primary schools my beginning of global learning, as a response to gaps identified in the literature. Nevertheless, and having argued against approaches of GCE that dictate how teachers should implement it, I placed my beginning of global learning in the here and now – in the framework of pragmatism – and it was up to the teachers how they would respond to this beginning.

Methodology: a transformative mixed methods design

The research on which this chapter is based focused on the examination of how teachers in a Greek primary school embedded global learning as part of their practice and the extent to which this could enable possibilities of change. Having been influenced by notions of democracy and the

extent to which an individual's beginnings could control their responses to these beginnings, I further reflected on Biesta's (2010) argument for the need of moving beyond methodological frameworks that are solely based on paradigmatic expectations. Placing my research in a mixed methods design enabled me to ensure that methodological decisions were based on fitness for purpose, rather than predefined methodological decisions that essentially could oppress participants in predefined frameworks (Tashakkori and Teddlie 2010). Furthermore, as per the axiological stance framing the research, I was mostly interested in teachers' educational wisdom in adopting global learning as part of their practice. My rationale to bringing global learning as my beginning into teachers' professional space in the case of the Greek primary school was based on my commitment to social change and transformation, after having noted the inherent oppression that teachers in Greece's context encountered; a context that further to its neoliberal agenda seemed to largely ignore the voices of others and more critical depictions of cosmopolitanism. Further, this was framed within my commitment to work closely with teachers, who I saw as being members of an oppressed community of practice. I wanted to immerse myself in their context of oppression and alongside them struggle on the journey of challenging normative agendas (Mertens 2021). Hence, a transformative dimension or design – not paradigm (Biesta 2010) – framed my overall mixed methods study.

The study included two distinct research phases, both of which were qualitatively driven. The first research phase included features of quantitative data, which supported inferences from the qualitative data. Both sets of data were collated concurrently in this phase. The second research phase included only qualitative data and was only designed following preliminary findings from the first phase; hence, it was auxiliary to it and offers supportive findings. Research phase 1 incorporated a case study, which was influenced by features of participatory action research (PAR) (Kemmis et al. 2014). The design incorporated three cycles of action: plan – act & observe – reflect (Kemmis and McTaggart 1988). The data collection focused on teachers' practice in adopting global learning as part of their wider pedagogical ethos in each of the three stages of action which lasted for a period of 20 months. Qualitative data collection involved participant observation (individual or in team-teaching), focus group discussions, interviews (individual and group) and a narrative response, which covered all three cycles. Quantitative data collection involved two Likert-type questionnaires administered to teachers in cycles 1 and 2 of the PAR. Considering the limits of this chapter, and the key role that interviews played in my findings, I only focus on the findings

from interviews with the teachers from the Greek primary school that took place as part of the reflect stage of the first two cycles of the PAR.

Reflexive thematic analysis was used to analyse the interviews (Braun and Clarke 2019). In the early stages of analysis, inductive reflexive thematic analysis was adopted, and following several layers of reflection over a period of a year the theme of change was identified as the dominant theme emerging from the findings and teachers' interviews. This change is framed within the theoretical framework that was discussed at the beginning of this chapter and is related to Bateson's (1972) three orders of learning.

Teachers' engagement with practices of global learning through all cycles of the PAR demonstrated their struggle to democratise democracy. Further to the teachers adopting more critical responses to addressing cosmopolitanism as part of their practice, this level of criticality extended to challenging notions of normativity and oppression evidenced in their professional practice. Placing the case study within a PAR design further enabled me to note each of these stages of change of the teachers (Kemmis et al. 2014).

Bateson's (1972) three orders of learning influenced the representation of each of the PAR cycles. Teachers at the Greek school already demonstrated their commitment to meta-learning by wanting to do things differently in terms of how they would teach about today's global society. They willingly wanted to embed and systematically reflect on notions of global learning; hence, they were already moving 'towards meta-learning'. This framed the first cycle of the PAR. The second cycle demonstrated teachers' active resistance to notions of normative practice; hence, this was framed as moving 'towards epistemic learning'. In the next two sections, I present and discuss the findings from the first two cycles of this case study. Pseudonyms have been used for all teachers of this research.

Teachers' struggle towards meta-learning

Interviews with the three teachers as part of the reflect stage of the first cycle of the PAR demonstrated that teachers' engagement with global learning was based on the rationale of teaching about global issues and responding to increasingly prevalent notions of cosmopolitanism. Teachers identified the explicit need for formal education to address wider identities in today's contemporary society, moving beyond national borders.

students [need] to learn from a really early stage to care not only about themselves but to move from the 'I' to 'us', and start thinking that their choices today will be affecting their tomorrow. (Marina)

Teachers in the Greek case study primary school decided to adopt global learning as part of their practice for the exact same reason I designed the research in the first place. They could see the need for formal education in Greece to respond to increasingly prevalent notions of cosmopolitanism, reflect on more global identities, review individuals' positionality in various geopolitical contexts beyond national borders, and essentially enable students in today's formal education to consciously consider their decisions within a more global, interconnected world.

Nevertheless, despite their comments, their commitment to addressing such issues more consciously as part of their wider teaching and learning ethos was depicted through abstract notions of citizenship and moral idealistic notions (Oxley and Morris 2013):

students [need] to learn to care about participating in public life, participating in school activities, later in activities within one's society, but also within a European and global level. (Natalia)

As noted from the literature review, notions of GCE in the Greek context are dominantly guided by school textbooks and abstract notions of normativity. Responses to notions of citizenship focus on moral issues such as human rights; however, they fail to systematically engage with the reasons why there are still places in the world where human rights are not a given for all. Teachers, however, cannot be considered responsible for not embedding more critical notions of GCE as part of their practice. It is the Aesthetic through practices of regulation that has prescribed teachers' reality and oppressed them in doing things in a certain way, and through means available from the Aesthetic itself, such as textbooks. As explored in the literature, even more recent research exploring issues relating to GCE identifies issues of emancipation through analysing school textbooks on citizenship education (Vavitsas 2022). How can emancipation truly emerge from means of the oppressors such as the school textbook? Textbooks do not allow for an individual's beginnings in the world, as they seek to control their responses. This is the effect of the Aesthetic; that even emancipation is offered disguised in the means of the oppressors, which eventually leads to further oppression of voices of the people.

To further build on the effect of the Aesthetic in the professional lives of the teachers in the case study school, I reflect on another theme

that emerged from the interviews with the teachers in this cycle of the PAR. Several teachers mentioned that some of their more experienced colleagues tend to resist new pedagogical initiatives, such as global learning. Alternatively, more experienced teachers reported that colleagues new to the profession focus on career progression and do not fully embrace such pedagogical initiatives. My reflection here is not about gaining a better understanding of which group of teachers presents barriers to another, but instead to expose the unethical practices used by the oppressors, who seek to individualise practitioners. In a research project in the context of Cyprus – which presents great similarities to the Greek one – an action research initiative concluded that school textbooks that are part of the wider neoliberal practices in the Cypriot context have led to teachers' 'socio-political alienation' (Koutselini 2012). When asked to reflect on barriers to adopting global learning as part of their practice, comments from the teachers in the Greek case study school focused on their colleagues, and demonstrated issues of individualism and professional alienation, which are practices reinforced by neoliberal practice.

Overall, however, teachers as part of the first cycle of the PAR demonstrated conscious effort towards doing things differently compared to normative practices. They identified the need to reflect on wider notions of cosmopolitanism, something that they acknowledged is absent in the assigned curricula. Global learning, and their willing arrival in the field, enabled them to consciously move from first-order learning to second-order learning or meta-learning (Sterling 2010).

Teachers' struggle towards epistemic learning

This section reflects on findings from the interviews with teachers from the Greek case study school as part of the reflect stage of the second cycle of the action research. Six teachers were interviewed as part of this cycle. The reflect stages of the first and the second cycles of the PAR were conducted two months apart, and during that time teachers at the Greek school had been incorporating global learning as part of their practice, recognised as the plan and act/observe stages of the PAR.

The theme of change still framed the wider inferences emerging from the interviews with the teachers. Teachers reflected on wider notions of teaching about global issues and responding to cosmopolitanism through having adopted global learning as part of their pedagogical approach. Compared to the first cycle of the PAR, where teachers identified the moral need to adopt practices of global learning to respond to the

lack of GCE approaches in the Greek context, in this cycle the teachers reflected on more personal dimensions of change. Having reflected on notions of global learning, this enabled them to explore their positionality in today's global context, as citizens of this context themselves.

Things have changed for the best; I feel that I have now become a more active citizen myself. It might be that I was doing it [reflecting on the teaching of global issues] without realising – it was unconscious; whereas, now I am implementing such notions consciously. (Melania)

Teachers' willingness to respond to the need to teach about global issues and respond to issues of cosmopolitanism encouraged them to arrive in the field of global learning, and as a school community to enrol on the funded professional development programme. Having had the chance to reflect on a range of approaches as part of the two cycles, global learning further enabled them to rethink their own selves in juxtaposition with the themes that they were teaching. Having repositioned themselves in this new cosmopolitan reality, this further enabled them to reposition their purpose of teaching and learning, and what schooling should eventually be all about:

First of all, I have changed personally. Having engaged with global learning initiated thinking at a personal level; also, it further made me think more critically in terms of our role as teachers, and what are we essentially doing at the school. (Pandora)

Such reflections went deeper and foregrounded teachers' personal identity within their professional spaces. The personal change that all the teachers spoke about did not relate to them acquiring new skills, but to them approaching their role through a different ideological positionality. This change concerned the teachers who were speaking their true reality and voicing their individual stories. The teachers integrated their unique political entities, their role as human beings, into professional spaces that continuously seek to oppress them and force them to teach the reality of the oppressors (Apple 2018; Freire 1996). One of the teachers, Kornilios, explicitly referred to the issue of refugees and how propaganda – which he recognised as a tool of conservative ideologies – was used to exclude these marginalised groups from the Greek context. He referred to how a global learning ethos could enable people to recognise such patterns and essentially struggle to challenge them.

We forget that refugees leave their country because of the atrocious war conditions, and sadly, propaganda and fake news gain ground. Fake news has emerged from conservative ideologies, ideologies that support ‘political correctness and morality’. (Kornilios)

Similar to Kornilios, another teacher, Viviana, commented on the need for global learning as a tool of resistance against ‘conservative and right-wing ideologies that build on the fears of every citizen’. These teachers did not acquire these political positionalities through their engagement with global learning; however, global learning enabled them to integrate their personal viewpoints into their professional settings; a professional space that continuously oppresses them. Global learning enabled them to be the humans that they were, and to bring this human version of themselves into their professional context that was consciously seeking to dehumanise them. These teachers were regaining their consciousness and having adopted global learning as part of their practice enabled them to do this.

Further to global learning having enabled teachers to bring their real entities to the classroom – as much as they could, of course, in spaces of neoliberal oppression – they further changed their teaching and learning practices. These changes demonstrated their adaptation to a new professional reality that enabled them to position a wider global learning ethos as part of their practice.

Let me give you an example of how we were going about implementing global learning. I was teaching description of a picture; the features that we need to use, key phrases. I chose a picture from the demonstrations about George Floyd and Black Lives Matter, and students needed to describe that picture. Athina also used it and explored it further as part of religious education, then the art teacher used it as part of her lesson. (Nepheli)

This is just a short depiction of how teachers collaborated together and moved beyond the limits of the school textbook to deliver the aims of the assigned national curriculum. Compared to the first cycle, despite teachers’ acknowledgement of the importance of global learning in today’s schooling, they identified other groups of teachers as barriers to fully adopting such practices. These were placed in the reality of sociopolitical alienation promoted by notions of neoliberal oppression (Koutselini 2012). In this second cycle, and through their shared commitment to adopting global learning as part of their pedagogical approach, the teachers did not refer to any such barriers. Alternatively, they came together in

professional communities of collaborative practice to deliver their shared vision and commitment to teaching about global issues in today's world and challenging narratives of the Aesthetic.

A common trait that was evident among all the teachers is that on this journey towards conscientisation, of bringing their own selves to their professional spaces, the textbook became a supportive learning resource instead of a control mechanism. Textbooks in the context of Greece's education are intrinsically linked to the education process. To date, there is limited research that explores issues of power relating to the use of school textbooks in Greece's formal education. Teachers as part of the second PAR cycle took ownership of their educational wisdom. They did not simply deliver the curriculum through the assigned textbook; they either completely set it aside or used it as a supportive resource to guide the learning process for their children.

It was more productive to apply a global learning lens than simply teaching about present simple and present continuous. Prior to stopping using the textbook – because as you understand I needed to set the textbook aside – we were doing this really boring, standard lesson. (Nepheli)

Interestingly, Nepheli was one of the teachers who other than teaching in the explored case study school also taught in a different school community. She identified that in the case study school, she was able to teach based on her educational wisdom. However, in the other community she was not able to do this; she was oppressed to continue teaching from the textbook. Going further than replicating research that shows that global learning can be implemented in supportive school environments that actively seek it adopt it as a whole-school approach (Hunt 2020), this research further demonstrates that global learning enabled teachers to gain their consciousness within the limits of the setting. It allowed them to be humans; to bring their own realities to a diverse and plural global context.

Findings from the interviews with the teachers as part of the second cycle of the PAR demonstrated teachers' conscious struggle towards epistemic transformation. Global learning enabled them to be the humans who they had always been. Teaching is a neoliberal process that consciously oppresses individuals through various mechanisms such as an assigned curriculum, a textbook or by alienating their professional voices. In the case study school, global learning enabled teachers in this Greek context to resist such mechanisms. Their commitment to embedding global learning as part of their practice, in order to respond to

increasingly prevalent notions of cosmopolitanism, changed them in two main ways. First, they engaged with practices for teaching about global issues through a more critical lens. Second, and more importantly, global learning enabled teachers to undertake a journey of struggle: their journey of conscientisation to rediscover their own selves and bring their own beginnings to their professional spaces.

Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated how global learning enabled teachers of a Greek primary school to engage in a process of conscientisation. Global learning enabled teachers to find their voice, bring their own stories to their professional spaces and as such consciously struggle to resist patterns of neoliberal oppression enforced by the Aesthetic.

Global learning enables the voices of individuals of oppressed, silenced and marginalised communities to be heard, as noted across the literature of the field. In the specific case of this research, this was situated in the intensified professional lives of teachers. Global learning, however, enables for a deeper epistemological transformation, that of research methodology itself. Global learning enables us to question the extent to which methodological notions are influenced by the Aesthetic and the extent to which we unconsciously embed such notions in our research frameworks. The possibility of acknowledging the realities of silenced communities – in this case teachers – requires us to become the enablers of those who need to be heard, who struggle to find their voice. My voice is heard, even within an oppressed reality; I make my voice heard by being in the privileged position of writing this chapter, for instance. I argue that research needs to provide space for those who cannot be heard to be finally heard. As a researcher and privileged member of the academic community, global learning enabled me to guide my methodological design based on the voices of my participants, rather than on my beliefs about what constitutes academically valid research. Frameworks of validity were of course adopted, and are essential in all research; however, these need to be closely interlinked with axiological depictions that frame the researcher's methodological decisions. In the era of colonial and neoliberal dominance, all practices of the status quo will need to be carefully examined, including research methodologies. Global learning could offer fresh thinking in terms of structuring methodological designs that are positioned at the heart of enabling single stories to be heard, not my story, but their story.

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