INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR A TRANSFORMED WORLD: 
UDL THE LAST FRONTIER

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OVERVIEW

• The contours of pervasive change
• Globalized economy, provincialized minds
• Crisis, challenge and the impact of inequality
• Education in a brave new world
• Web 2.0 and participative democratic inclusion
• Looking at emancipatory directions – the path to UDL
• Case studies and sustainable projects
• Embedding transformative inclusion
1. PERVERSIVE CHANGE

- Patterns of constant change now the norm
- Permanent migration mobility
- Outsourcing
- Flexible structures and modalities
- Obsolescence of job norms
- Knowledge economy as driver but not arbiter of process
- Ecological pressures exponentially increased
- End of certainty
TRANSFORMED PLANET

- End of old certainties
- No return to ‘normal’
- Polymorphic media
- *Planet of Slums* (Mike Davis): hypercities of the future
- Informal economies
- Casualized employment
- Constant connectedness and information explosion
CHANGE AND GLOBALIZATION

- Globalization – accelerating and pervasive
- Crisis and re-structuring since 2008
- Devaluation of the public sphere
- Stratification and inequity – focusing on social justice
- Labor market transformation
- Mobile capital and global investment linkage
- Rights and inclusion – token or real?
- Who owns what? And why?
ICT AND RE-IMAGINING ACCESS

- Contradictory and paradoxical process
- Never greater potential - side by side with increasing disparities of access
- What we think:
  - Citizens
    - Shared knowledge
      - Participative engagement
- What we have:
  - Consumers
    - Increasing exclusion
      - Significant problems with equitable access
SHAPING DIMENSIONS

- Decreasing employee share in national income in all countries
- Labor productivity - up 85% since 1980
- Not reflected in wages - up 35%
- Declining social mobility
- Rising income inequality reflects declining equality of opportunity

Global Wage Report 2012/13, ILO
Prof. Miles Corak, Journal of Economic Perspectives 2013

We are increasingly becoming a winner takes all economy... over recent decades, technological change, globalization and erosion of the institutions and practices that support shared prosperity have put the middle class under increasing stress

Dr. Alan Krueger
STRATEGIC POLICY QUESTIONS

• Mythology of the ‘normal’ or standard
• Defining policy goals and aims to meet real needs
• Robust probing of social structure
• Unmasking power, relationships and inequity
• Learners already immersed in and emerging into this changed constellation – of which gatekeepers often know little
FRAGMENTS OF A GLOBALIZED FUTURE...

- Planetary urbanization
- New diversities
- Equality, access and inclusive design
- Understanding crisis – living with crisis
- Globalization: obliteration of borders... but creation of connectivity
- New markets
- Constant upskilling
2. CRISIS AND IMBALANCE

- Education as both structure and process
- Aims and goals vary considerably
- Education systems mirror world and society and of which they are part
- Education systems as constraining as liberating
- Forum for ideas or market for products? Or both….?
- Commodification of knowledge
- Impact on education systems (Freire, Illich, Field)
- Impact on work (Braverman, Haraszti, Davis)
- Impact on community
PURPOSIVE LEARNING IN AN AGE OF UNCERTAINTY

• End of linear models of learning
• Cognitive dissonance: what is needed is not being provided
• Alienation and anomie in a changing world
• Labor market flux and the loss of autonomy
• Adaptability and innovation as norm, not exception
• Globalized paradigms and fractured community
• Elephants in the room: power and ownership
OPEN DISCOVERY SPACE
CONTRADICTIONS OF WEB 2.0

• User Generated Content:
  • Plus: direct input; democratization; individual voice
  • Minus: ephemeral effects; trivialization; cult of celebrity

• Harnessing crowds:
  • Plus: participative architectures; collective effort; collaborative products
  • Minus: LCD mindsets; market survey; amateurish; superficial; from critical space to focus groups
FURTHER ISSUES

Quantum increase in data:
- Information as a marketable resource
- Massification at all levels
- Ownership and control
- The Surveillance State

Participation and openness
- Using a system or being used?
- Active use…to active participation
- At what point is meaning and value added?
ACCELERATING INEQUALITY

• 12 m.: numbers with more than $1m. to invest (9.2% increase since 2011)
• $46.2 trillion: aggregate wealth of this group (10% increase since 2011)
• Ultrarich (> $30m.) surged 11% (now 35.2% of all millionaires)

*World Wealth Report: RBC Wealth Management & Capgemini Financial Services (June 2013)*

• Declining social mobility
• Rising income inequality reflected in declining equality of opportunity

*Global Wage Report 2012/13, ILO (Prof. Miles Corak, Journal of Economic Perspectives 2013)*
REALITY ON OUR DOORSTEP
ANTICIPATING THE FUTURE

- Persistence and increase in inequality
- Permanent hopelessness of excluded
- Embedded violence and internal underclasses
- Social polarization
- Stripping away rights
- Invisibility, ethnic difference and the retreat to denial
- Ethics now central to effective education and learning
- Role of learning
3. INCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT

Inclusion - five key issues in Europe:

1. Measures to reduce early school leaving
2. Priority education measures in relation to disadvantaged pupils and groups
3. Inclusive education measures in relation to pupils with special needs
4. Safe education measures in relation on the reduction of bullying and harassment
5. Teacher support measures.
TRAJECTORIES OF INCLUSION

• Youth and mass unemployment
• Demographics: ageing and life expectancy
• Women and labor market participation
• Immigration, cultural and religious difference
• Disability
• Conflict, stress, anomie
• Urbanization, dissent and democratic deficits
MEANINGFUL INCLUSION

- Inclusion changes both sides – the act of mainstreaming is to change the mainstream not the ‘excluded’
- From objects to subjects
- Narratives of adaptation and discovery
- From target group to citizen
- Critical role of teachers
- Inclusion and the dialectic of rights
EXCLUDING SYSTEMS

• Legacies of segregated schooling
  • Gender
  • Disability
  • Religion
  • Ability
  • Language
  • Class
• Unequal school systems mirror unequal society
• Schooling is not separate from wider socio-political environment
DISABILITY AND A NEW WORLD ORDER

- Historic pattern of low expectations
- Institutionalization and ‘special’ needs
- Embedded pervasive imagery of dependence
- Family, support and care
- Medicalization of discourse
- Legacies of charity
- The vocational imperative – where to now?
- Teaching – and learning – around difference
CONTINUING BARRIERS

- Lack of consensus – goals, strategies, aims
- Turf issues – professional confusion
- Attitudes – the negative mindset
- Casualization – from shiftwork to adaptability
- Built environment
- Unthinking exclusion
- Fragmented planning
- Disempowered families and social stratification
How can one not be in exile working in academia, especially if one refuses the cliques, mediocrity, hysterical forms of resentment, backbiting and the endless production of irrelevant research? These spaces have become dead zones of the imagination mixed with a kind of brutalizing defense of their own decaying postures and search for status. Leadership in too many departments is empty, disempowering and utterly rudderless, lacking any vision or sense of social responsibility.

Henry Giroux, McMaster University. 2014
The emergence of a true global economy dictates a new role in international activities to promote the well being of persons with disabilities through access to jobs, better technology and social supports...

Source: NIDRR Long Range Plan 1999-2004
4. UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING

• **Universal Design for Learning** is a set of principles for curriculum development that gives all individuals equal opportunities to learn.

• **UDL** provides a blueprint for creating instructional goals, methods, materials and assessments that work for everyone - not a single, one-size-fits-all solution but rather flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted for individual needs.
UNIVERSAL DESIGN

- Originally it referred to designing buildings, products and environments that are accessible to all sections of society including the aged and those with disabilities of all kinds.

- The 9 principles:
  - Equitable use
  - Flexibility in use
  - Simplicity
  - Perceptible information
  - Tolerance for error
  - Low physical effort
  - Accessible size and space for approach
  - A Community of learners
  - Instructional climate
KEY FOCUS

• Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework that addresses the primary barrier to fostering expert learners within instructional environments: inflexible, “one-size-fits-all” curricula.

• Inflexible curricula raise unintentional barriers to learning.

• In learning environments individual variability is the norm, not the exception

• UDL addresses learner variability by suggesting flexible goals, methods, materials and assessments that empower educators to meet these varied needs.
UDL FRAMEWORK

• The universal design concept transferred to education and applied to the learning process and learning environment - universal design for learning (UDL)

• Universal Design for Learning is a framework for learning that includes all students. UDL views learning environments and social interactions as key elements in development and learning.

• The key principles driving UDL include:
  • flexibility, simple and intuitive instruction, multiple means of presentation, success oriented curriculum, appropriate level of student effort, and appropriate environment for learning.
STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK

- CAST (Center for Applied Special Technology) established 1984
- First Federal grant from NSF 1994
- UDL defined. CAST invents “Bobby” 1995
- CAST Advisory Council established 2005
- National UDL Taskforce established 2006
- First Statutory definition of UDL 2008
- National Center for Universal Design established 2009
- University of North Carolina academic expertise
THEMES OF UDLNET

1. **Inclusive learning environments** (assistive technologies/interventions, mobile environments, access, ergonomics)

2. **Resources** (educational resources, development OF inclusive school, accessible educational resources, Universal Design of Online Courses)

3. **Teachers' and school leaders' competences** (curriculum design, applying UDL to Lesson Design, inclusive teaching strategies - game based approaches, independent living principles)

4. **Examination of barriers and identification of opportunities** (learning difficulties/needs of students - learning styles, barriers/challenges in classrooms of all types, UD policy and legislation, raising awareness)
GENERAL OBJECTIVES

• To improve classroom practice and raise awareness of European educational communities on inclusive teaching and learning practices

• To improve teachers’ work practice, combining ICT skills with innovations in pedagogy, curriculum, and institutional organization

• To redesign, adapt and personalize curricula and instructional methods

• To create a learning environment that helps each student develop his or her full potential
PRINCIPLES

• At the core of Universal Design for Learning is the principle of equity and inclusion.

• UDLnet Best Practice Guidelines for design and implementation of inclusive resource-based educational activities as a reference to be adopted by educational stakeholders

• To develop a detailed and systematic methodology with the view to provide/collect inclusive teaching and learning practices
The project aims to improve teachers' and school leaders' knowledge and understanding of effective parental engagement and enable them to develop skills that will strengthen and improve the role of parents in schooling. This will be achieved through use of state-of-the-art ICT networking tools. These technologies will benefit teachers and parents by enabling them to connect to education services, resources and collaborative learning support activities.
5. CONCLUSIONS

- Relevance
- Sustainability
- Cogency
- Academic depth
- User friendliness
- Progression and deepening
- From reconciliation to transformation
- The role of human rights
- Lessons for Europe
TECHNOLOGY, LEARNING AND QUALITY

• Students learn more effectively in technologically enhanced environments
• Technology is a tool not simply a solution
• Technology supports quality – it informs and is informed by best practice
• Move towards designing courses as interdisciplinary explorations
• Learners learn within a community
TARGET GROUPS IN TRANSIT

Target groups

- Educational Experts
- Educational Initiatives
- European Teacher Networks
- In-service teachers (Teacher/School networks)
- Pre-service teachers (Pedagogical Universities)
- Policy makers (Ministries of Education, Curriculum developers)
- Teacher trainers (Pedagogical Universities, VET for teachers)
TRANSIT: FOCUSES ON FIVE COMPETENCES.

The five competences are transversal. They are cross-curricular and pervasive. They support acquisition of all key competencies.

- Digital competence
- Learning to learn
- Social and civic competences
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- Cultural awareness and expression.
KEY POINTS

- Schooling and education at a crossroads: both structure and process
- Labor market and education increasingly connected
- Planetary focus is on mobility, skills and innovation
- Huge impact of increasing inequality of access and of resources
- Crisis as the norm
- Addressing assessment
- Performance, standards, quality, reproducibility and added value at the heart of competence
- ICT embedded in contexts of vision and values
THANK YOU

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