Integration and Decolonising the English Curriculum

Dr. Richard Race, University of Roehampton

When exploring decolonising the curriculum and the wider academy, we have to mention colonisation and the processes that have shaped modern education. Within education, the national curriculum was created in 1988 by the nation state to centralise content and how it was taught in the classroom. If we take integration to be a conditional relationship between the nation state, which creates policy, and individuals/communities who accept or resist that policy, then we have a theoretical perspective on policymaking. The national or nation has always been deliberately singular rather than plural, and it can be argued that the national curriculum in England was a Brexit policy, 30 years before Brexit (Race, 2019). On the other hand, I have also suggested that curricula for programmes of study in citizenship and history actually reflect cultural diversity quite fully. The issue lies more with initial teacher training and actual teaching in all education environments although the problem is systemic rather than individual or institutional (Race, 2015). This paper will examine the notion of colonisation alongside integration and the conditions that are laid down by the state when creating a national curriculum. Then I will suggest possible solutions for decolonising curriculum and wider professional practice within a multicultural education framework (Banks and Banks, 2020).

Dr. Richard Race is Senior Lecturer in Education at Roehampton University. The third edition of his monograph Multiculturalism and Education is forthcoming with Open University Press. He is editor of Advancing Multicultural Dialogues in Education with Palgrave Macmillan. His current research focuses on Integration and Education Policy Making which includes looking at how state policy making processes and how education policy has been instrumental in colonising the curriculum. Richard has published these ideas in Research Intelligence, Issue 142 (BERA, February 2020) and will also publish in the British Journal of Sociology of Education (July 2020). Email: r.race@roehampton.ac.uk