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The Elephant in the Room: MOOCs and Neoliberalism

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) has been promoted in the higher education sector as an avenue for students to access affordable courses online. While there has been wide-ranging optimism for MOOCs globally, their ethical, economic and political motives are rarely interrogated. To date, research interrogating the deeper assumptions of MOOCs are still in its infancy, along with their connections with the global forces of neoliberalism. Gramsci's theoretical framing of hegemony assisted in highlighting how neoliberalism has become so normalised within higher education that individuals have come to believe that MOOCs are in their best interest. Even though substantial research has been carried out in the field of MOOCs, no single empirical study exists that critiques their underlying ideologies behind their websites. The significance of this research rests in illuminating the taken for granted assumptions that inform the practices of four of the largest and earliest MOOC providers, while connecting these with the development of global neoliberalism. It does so through the application of McGee's (1980) approach to ideological criticism called Ideographs. Ideographs were used by flagging particular ideological vocabularies through the application of emphasising contentious terms in their websites. Such realisations from this study hope to liberate individuals to see that it is not technology that provides agency, but rather it is the agential and labour capacity of the individual that truly provides value. Understood this way, education is the disruption of what Gramsci (1971) refers to as 'common sense' through a contest and cultural struggle over ideology.

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The Effect of an Instructional Practice Based on Metacognition Upon Science Teacher Trainees' Critical Thinking and Metacognitive Awareness

The aim of the study is to find out "The effect of an instructional practice based on metacognition upon science teacher trainees' metacognitive awareness and critical thinking". The study group was consisted of the chosen teacher trainees studying at Firat University, Primary Education Department (Daytime Classes and Evening Classes) Science Teaching after a cluster analysis. Groups consisted of 25 teacher trainees (Daytime Classes), 28 teacher trainees

(Evening Classes) in Science Teaching Department after a cluster analysis. The study was carried out via “pre-test- post-test control group model”. The experimental group was applied to the instructional practice based on metacognition. The control group was applied to the traditional methods. The data of the study was gathered through “A Metacognitive Awareness Scale for Teacher Trainees (ÜFAR)” and “California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (CCTDI)”. Some of the findings of the study are below:

Statistically significant differences were observed in some factors of pre-test – post-test metacognitive awareness and critical thinking mean scores of the experimental group in favour of post-test.

i) Statistically significant differences were found in some factors of post-test metacognitive awareness scores of the experimental and control groups in favour of the experimental groups; ii) No statistically significant differences were observed between post-test critical thinking scores of the experimental and control groups; iii) No statistically significant differences were observed in metacognitive awareness, and critical thinking achievement scores of the Experimental I Group and Control I Group; iv) Statistically significant differences were found in some factors of metacognitive awareness scores of the Experimental II Group and Control II Group in favour of the experimental group.

The results of the study show that an instructional practice based on metacognition affected the development of the teacher trainees positively. However, the instruction period should be extended for more efficient results.

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6th ICCE 2016 Conference Book/ Book of Abstracts/ Program Outline



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- Hana Cervinkova
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- Rebecca Clare
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- George Grollios
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- Gianna Katsiampoura
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10-13 AUGUST 2016
**VI. INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON
CRITICAL EDUCATION**

Middlesex University, Hendon campus, north London, England

**Dialogue, Solidarity and Resistance
against Neo-liberalism and Neo-
conservatism in Education**

**<http://icce-2016.weebly.com> for more
information, registration, submission of
abstracts, speakers, registration fees**

Compiled by Polina Chrysochou, Daniel Carr, Sandip Gill, Dave Hill,
Kristina Repova and Alina Ursuleanu

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THE 6th ICCE CONFERENCE

Dialogue, Solidarity and Resistance against Neo-liberalism and Neo-conservatism in Education

The **International Conference on Critical Education (ICCE)**, previously held in Athens (2011, 2012), Ankara (2013), Thessaloniki (2014) and Wroclaw, Poland (2015), is a forum for scholars, educators and activists committed to social and economic justice. The 6th ICCE: *Dialogue, Solidarity and Resistance against Neo-liberalism and Neo-conservatism in Education* will take place in London at Middlesex University, 10 - 13 August 2016.

At a time of economic crisis, when education is under siege by neoliberal capitalism and by neo-conservatism and aggressive nationalism, when teachers and academics are being proletarianised, youth criminalized, civilised and caring societies being stripped of welfare and benefits and rights, schools and universities turned into commodities, at such a time, critical education, as a theory and as a movement, as praxis, is clearly relevant. International communities of critical educators and activists are working together, and with other movements, to build active resistance to these processes and are engaged in fostering educational and social change leading to a more just, equal and fair society.

The current economic, social, and political crisis, that has been ongoing for 30 years, is manifesting more deeply in education on a global scale. The crisis- part of, and resulting from, dominant neoliberal and neoconservative politics that are implemented and promoted internationally as 'the only solution', under the slogan 'there is no alternative' (TINA), have substantially redefined the socio-political and ideological roles of education. Public education is shrinking. It loses its status as a social right. It is projected as a mere commodity for sale while it becomes less democratic, de-theorised, de-critiqued.

Understanding the causes of the crisis, the particular forms it takes in different countries and the multiple ways in which it influences education, constitute important questions for all those who do not limit their perspectives to the horizon of neoconservative, neoliberal and technocratic dogmas. Moreover, the critical education movement has the responsibility to rethink its views and practices in light of the crisis, and in the light of social, political and educational resistance in different countries- the paths that this crisis opens for challenging and overthrowing capitalist domination worldwide.

The International Conference on Critical Education (ICCE) -regularly attended by between 300 and 400 participants, provides a vibrant and egalitarian, non-elitist, platform for scholars, educators, activists, students and others interested in critical education and in contesting the current neo-liberal/ neo-conservative/ nationalist hegemony, to come together and engage in a free, democratic and productive dialogue. At this time of crisis when public education is under siege by neoliberalism, neo-conservatism and nationalism, we invite you to submit a proposal and to attend the Conference. We especially welcome new and emerging scholars/ scholar-activists.

CONFERENCE ORGANISING COMMITTEE

Main Organising Committee

Chair: Leena Helavaara Robertson (Middlesex University, London, UK)

Polina Chrysochou (Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, UK)

Dave Hill (Institute for Education Policy Studies & Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, England)

Kostas Skordoulis (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Athens Greece)

Konstantinos Kontotheodorou (Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, UK)

Naomi Hill (Institute for Education Policy Studies, UK)

George Kasolas (Freelance Photographer, UK)

Graduate Academic Assistants

Sandip Gill (Middlesex University, London, UK)

Kristina Repova (Middlesex University, London, UK)

Alina Ursuleanu (Middlesex University, London, UK)

Student Ambassadors

Khuluud Ali (University of East London, London, UK)

Jonathan Lofulo (University of East London, London, UK)

Panagiotis Pertou (University of East London, London, UK)

Lisa Taylor (University of East London, London, UK)

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE

Chair: Dave Hill (Institute for Education Policy Studies & Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, England)

Co-Chairs: Kostas Skordoulis (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece)
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Hasan Hüseyin Aksoy (Ankara University, Ankara, Turkey)

Helen Drenoyianni (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki, Greece)

Juha Suoranta (Tampere University, Tampere, Finland)

Kemal İnal (Gazi University, Ankara, Turkey)

Lotar Rasiński (University of Lower Silesia, Wrocław, Poland)

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Ramin Farahmandpur (Portland State University, Oregon, USA)
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Spyros Krivas (University of Patras, Patra, Greece)
Spyros Sakellariopoulos (Panteon University, Athens, Greece)
Spyros Themelis (University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK)
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Takis Politis (University of Thessalia, Volos, Greece)
Tasos Liambas (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki, Greece)
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VI. International Conference on Critical Education

<http://icce-2016.weebly.com/>

Dialogue, Solidarity and Resistance against Neo-liberalism and Neo-conservatism in Education

10-13 August 2016, Middlesex University London, UK 22 April 2016

Official Notification of Acceptance of Your Abstract Submitted for presentation at the VI International Conference on Critical Education

Dear Burcu DUMAN and Çetin SEMERCI

The organising committees of this conference are delighted to accept your Abstract for the VI International Conference on Critical Education, entitled:

THE EFFECT OF AN INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE BASED ON METACOGNITION UPON SCIENCE TEACHER TRAINEES' CRITICAL THINKING AND METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS

The conference details are on the Website at <http://icce-2016.weebly.com/>. The conference will be held at Middlesex University, Hendon Campus, London, close to Hendon Central Tube Station, which is five tube stops away (on the Northern Line) from Chalk Farm Tube, where the main conference hotel is situated.

Don't forget to Register for the conference, via <http://icce-2016.weebly.com/conference-registration.html>.

We look forward to seeing you- and to a great conference! Many Thanks.



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