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Epistemological process towards decolonial praxis and epistemic inequality of an international student

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the epistemic inequality of international students as a “new” inequality that is under-represented in the current debates about decolonisation (albeit shaped by colonial discourses depicting international students as in deficit and incapable of meeting the standards of (colonial) universities). In this theoretical context, the paper reflects on a multi-modal digital methodology used in a research project that aimed to understand how international students deploy their epistemological resources to learn the curriculum. The paper describes selected artefacts submitted by the students around which their epistemic frames were expressed, suggesting where these may be concealed by epistemological situatedness of the lecturers. Based on the analysis of these artefacts, the paper develops and interrogates an epistemology for support towards interrogating the role of our own epistemological binaries in adversely affecting students’ epistemic frames in the curriculum. As such, it contributes to a gap in the literature around decolonial pedagogy, and its role in tackling educational inequalities.

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Epistemic inequality; international students; meta-reflexivity; decolonising higher education; decolonial praxis

Introduction

We frame this paper in debates around decolonising higher education, particularly focusing on the question of why educational inequalities, understood in the paper as epistemic inequalities, continue to exist despite the general (global) agreement that we need to decolonise higher education. Epistemic inequalities are defined in the paper as situations whereby the concepts and categories by which people understand themselves in the curriculum, teaching and assessment are replaced or adversely affected by the concepts and categories of the colonisers (Bhargava, 2013, p. 414). When referring to epistemic inequalities in the paper, we, therefore, mean silencing, rejecting, distorting or “wronging” of the fundamental ways and intellectual traditions in which individuals frame their experiences (of learning in this case) – something Bhargava (2013, p. 414) refers to as epistemological

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frames. Over the years, epistemic inequalities have come to be understood through socio-political, ethical and psychological lenses (e.g. see the Routledge Handbook of Epistemic Injustice edited by Kidd et al., 2019).

We focus specifically on epistemic inequality of an international student as a new inequality. We locate our argument in decolonial literature, which we think we largely understand; yet international students are not sufficiently included in the present discussions around decolonisation, at least not in countries such as the UK (although their depictions as being in deficit and incapable of meeting the “standards” of the white universities are shaped, as we show below, by colonial discourses). Decolonial literature emphasises the importance of epistemic equality, yet this is more commonly emphasised in contexts where marginalised students are positioned as “indigenous”. International students, by definition not indigenous, are therefore often not tackled in the decolonial literature.

Critical work on internationalisation has already developed our understanding of the deep connection between coloniality¹ and the inferior epistemic position of international students (for example by Stein, 2017; Stein et al., 2016). This deficit position is intersectional, mediated and reinforced by racism (Madriaga & McCaig, 2019), colourism, xenophobia, and linguistic prejudice (Sah, 2019), such that a white student with a less detectable accent would be considered more knowledgeable and authoritative than a racialised student with an observable English as a second language accent. It is these biases that are shaped by coloniality (Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Mignolo, 2011), the attitudes of intellectual superiority that outlast material empires and extend into our minds.

Despite the availability of this theoretical understanding, higher education teachers still lack in ability to make the link between critical decolonial theory and our pedagogic attempts to defy, in practice, epistemic inequalities. Finding epistemological means to make that link is described in decolonial literature as a gap in decolonial praxis, perpetuated by a lack of reflexivity among managers and university teachers on their own epistemological situatedness (see for instance, special issue edited by Hayes et al., 2021). Making that link is also what we understand, following Freire’s (1996) original work, as decolonial praxis, and a critical reflection “on self” that underpins is positioned in this context as an instrument for social action (Gadotti, 1996).²

We report in the paper on a project in which we wanted to discover and elaborate on such an instrument for social action – i.e. to find ways, following Archer (2012) and de Sousa Santos (2018), of developing a process for deep, responsible and ethical reflection through which we could understand students’ epistemic frames and how they are concealed in the curriculum by our own positionalities. Two of the authors of this paper are white cis women, one author is a Muslim, queer, light skinned woman of colour. We all work as academics in hegemonic roles and contexts of universities in metropolises. While racialised differently, we have all been positioned as “international students” at various times in our educations. We are aware our positionalities shape a specific location from which we “speak” and how they may be preventing us from decentring our curricula (Bhambra et al., 2018). We thus wanted to develop a project that would help us interrogate how the position from which we are sharing knowledge, and its associated power structures, may prevent us, and other scholars in the subfield of research with international students, from seeing where and how in our pedagogical encounters with the students we may delegitimise and misinterpret their epistemic frames.

We argue that conceptualising philosophical principles in this paper of the *ongoing process* for interrogating our own epistemological situatedness, to bring students as equal epistemic partners to the learning act, is novel. It speaks to the gap noted in critical studies of decolonial praxis in countries around the world (e.g. South Africa, Canada, the US, Australia, New Zealand, Cyprus and Latin America – see Guzmán Valenzuela, 2021; Motala et al., 2021; Zembylas, 2021). These studies emphasise creating curricular resources through deep and responsible identity conscientizations that do not merely provide anti-hegemonic academic and intellectual exercise but constitute resources for “doing” critical pedagogy (e.g. work originally developed by Freire and Gadotti, and most recently conceptualised by, for instance, Garza et al., 2022 or in the special issue edited by Jupp et al., 2018). Through this, the paper contributes knowledge beyond the context of international students involved in the research and the UK to literature on decolonial praxis and wider critiques around the impossibility of critical pedagogy (we analyse this contribution in more detail in the conclusion).

Additionally, in our attempt in this paper to conceptualise the *process* for interrogating the role of our own epistemological frames in adversely affecting students’ epistemic frames in the curriculum (and emphasising the ongoing nature of this process with relevance across places and times), we direct attention to how this provides ongoing means for our own self-critique around struggles with decolonisation and for decentring knowledges in the curriculum. In that sense the project methodology that we conceptualise in this paper is meant to serve as a form of epistemological frame providing support towards our own “learning to unlearn” how we perpetuate knowledge dualism through epistemological blindness (Paraskeva, 2022). As an epistemological frame, it is therefore long-lasting, rather than being a “framework for single use”.

The project was set in the March 2021 lockdown in the UK and involved international students at two UK universities trapped both literally and metaphorically (constricting their agency) in university accommodation. Following our earlier work on international students as agents of knowledge (Lomer, 2017; Hayes, 2018), through this new project, we wished to gain additional insights into how international students’ agentic ability to rethink their position to teaching and learning in a host country changes in lockdown conditions (where they cannot access some of the epistemic frames that they would normally have access to, such as friends from the same course). In the sections that follow, we offer more details about the project’s methodology and develop a discussion on how from that we have developed the theoretical and pedagogical elements of our epistemology. We frame this discussion in decolonial scholarship that we think we largely understand, what new inequalities are there and how our proposed epistemology may help to address them.

To what extent is our view of (“old”) epistemic inequalities still applicable in the present juncture

It was Southern decolonial theorists (wa Thiong’o, 1992), and from Latin America in particular (e.g. Mignolo & Escobar, 2010), who stretched the concept of decolonisation from post-colonial theorists and activists to apply it to epistemic inequalities beyond its original meaning of political and cultural emancipation from colonial domination. In 2015, Black

South African students protested against such inequalities, triggering a renewed wave of decolonial scholarship and activism across the globe (resulting in campaigns such as RhodesMustFall, FeesMustFall, Why is my Curriculum White?, etc). Scholarship around the world has responded, calling universities “knowledge prisons”, emphasising constraints to epistemic agency via didactic methods of teaching (Leenen-Young et al., 2021), and criticising higher education for centring Whiteness in the curriculum, reinforcing it through pedagogic and assessment practices (Arday et al., 2021), legitimising it through deficit discourses around, for instance international students (Lomer & Mittelmeier, 2021) and assessments of teaching excellence (Hayes, 2019).

With respect to international students specifically, despite national policies and discourses that position international HE as economically essential, politically beneficial, culturally enriching, and academically prestigious, the lived experience of many international students is one of marginalisation and epistemic inequality (Yao et al., 2019). Explanations of such experiences can be found, for instance, in scholarship spanning decades to explain other “old” epistemic inequalities – i.e. that individuals or groups of people may be wronged as knowers because of prejudice and stereotype that does not afford them agentic credibility (for summary of key theories, see e.g. Pohlhaus, 2019). We suggest an explanation of epistemic inequalities that international students experience can be sought in similar theoretical lenses, leading to the “same old” conclusion – that the current juncture around their educational inequalities is that the demand to change their lived experience of epistemic oppression is still largely an intellectual and abstract exercise. The reasons being: (a) that academics work in the paradox of the modern university whose decolonial ambitions cannot be fully realised because of the coloniality within (for UK analysis, see for example, Hall et al, 2021), (b) that, relatedly, we have not sufficiently worked with our own epistemological situatedness and how this may cause epistemicide (for instance, Mathews, 2021), and (c) that we have not reached out beyond shallow engagement with terminology and abstraction about decolonisation (de Sousa Santos, 1998) to connect our decolonial work with social action, so it can become decolonial praxis (Freire, 1996).

Often when “decolonising” praxis is done wrong, we see white spaces in education rush to “create” knowledge rather than acknowledging the work already there, that has been silenced or erased. There is a need for genuine engagement, not appropriation and to acknowledge that to decolonise a university, beyond a buzzword or tick box is to engage both with the quotidian changes an individual can make, and work needed towards major shifts in power. The project we describe in this paper, for instance, works as a step towards undoing, it advocates that an individual uses tools of self-reflection when teaching and researching to deconstruct and redress power imbalances in their classroom or department. When we worked in the project to show the knowledge that was always there with international students, we deliberately worked to destabilise the structures in the university.

Decolonising higher education is not just about changing the lived experience, in the context of this paper, of the international student. It is also to the “benefit” of “home” students and lecturers, to have a critical understanding so that there can be a re-addressing of the missing knowledge from curriculums. To decolonise the curriculum is to realise that the western canon is but one part of the available and necessary global knowledge systems, to embed a commitment, across all places and all times, to epistemological

pluralism that values alternative ways of knowing (Paraskeva, 2022). But decolonial praxis requires embedding this value system in more than reading lists and lecture slides: it requires transforming practices of assessment, teaching, and student support in line with these intellectual commitments. It is important that the decolonial praxis acknowledges and works with international students as agents of knowledge and not stereotyped as deficient (Heng, 2020) and unable to adapt, not just for their own learning but also for their peers' and lecturers' learning.

No single step achieves this, a researcher or lecturer cannot achieve this alone, but by using their mind spaces to redress the power imbalance, to value their students as creators and owners of knowledge means that the mundane parts of internal self-critique (which we argue is a precondition for decolonial praxis) can be achieved. This argument can be supported by looking back at the failed promises to address some of the "old" inequalities in education, even beyond the specific context of decolonising, which despite being conceived of over two decades ago (e.g. Apple et al., 2009; Castells et al., 1999;) still links back to the same problem – that those occupying positions of power do not sufficiently reflect on their contribution to knowledge essentialism, making these promises a "non-event" (Mbembe, 2021).

What "new" educational inequalities are now here, and how do they relate to those that we know and think we largely understand?

We now largely understand more about the need for the link alluded to above between the intellectual anti-hegemonic work and social action towards change. But, as pointed out by de Sousa Santos (2018), this link cannot be made by merely a "self-contained intellectual exercise" (i.e. through abstract engagement with decolonial theory), but rather it needs to be carried out in light of the context of the struggle that "provides noncognitive dimensions that condition the ways in which absent social groups and knowledges become present" (de Sousa Santos, 2018, p. 27). Archer (2012), although not herself working specifically with decolonisation albeit in the broader context of modernity, suggests that this requires a "meta-reflexive disposition" which makes it possible to connect intellectual questions and abstractions (that theorise intellectual oppression, for example) with specific resources, services and capabilities needed to address them.

In the paper, we look at the decolonial praxis gap through the lens of the "new" epistemic inequality – i.e. that of an international student. International students are frequently represented as the embodiment, not the agent, of internationalisation of the curriculum or the global ambassador who brings the richness of a world beyond the national container into dialogue with home students. Yet, and often in the same piece, students are understood as vulnerable, in cultural and academic deficit, being "shy" and unwilling to "mix" with home students, experiencing a range of challenges of "acclimatisation" or "adaptation" or worse still "assimilation" (Lomer & Mittelmeier, 2021). These narratives, while often well-intentioned and seeking to remedy problems to the eventual benefit of international students, nevertheless evoke colonial discourses that depict subaltern populations as in deficit, incapable of meeting the "standards" of their universities. Once present – whether physically or as in COVID-19 times, virtually – in the classroom, subtle and not so subtle processes of exclusion operate to exclude international students from being epistemically equal.

What new approaches might tackle these persistent inequalities?

We theorise in this paper, following Archer (2012), an epistemology to support academics working with international students to decolonise their mind, to defy the colonial structures that exclude these students in ways mentioned above. We see the added value of our theory in that it invites internal deliberation for questioning the epistemological positionality, binaries, norms and intellectual values that prevent people in universities from “making sense” of ideas and experiences that lie beyond the imaginary of their own group. This was additionally reflected in the mundane processes of our research, for instance, we tried to rebalance hierarchy between participant and researcher before even starting the data collection process, by making sure that participants were comfortable, could choose their mediums of response and were valued for their time with a choice of voucher. In that sense, our epistemology is not a finished product, or an abstract “framework” that can be “used”, but rather its philosophical underpinnings (described in the conclusion) provide a basis for an on-going exercise for the mind that informs the formation of the type of sociality with the students in our classrooms and curriculum that acknowledges the “co-existence of varying epistemological forms of knowledge around the world” (Paraskeva, 2022, p. 354).

In order to do that, lecturers first need to exercise their mind into thinking that students’ epistemological frames are valid and legitimate and to learn from them, by letting them speak up for what best identifies them. Below we offer specific examples of artefacts through which students in the research have spoken up about the epistemological frames that identified them in learning and accessing the curriculum.

The research process

The project was small in scale, involving six postgraduate international students across two UK universities (three from each) representing disciplines such as education, political science and physiotherapy. An open invitation to recruit students was sent at both universities to which the six students responded. We were not seeking representation in the project and the analysis in this paper; rather we were interested in deep, contextual data that could suggest wider implications.

We asked the students to submit multimedia diaries (of their choice, which could be videos, paintings, soundscapes, anything they wanted) over the period of approximately 5 weeks, expressing their epistemological orientations to the curriculum. Alongside the artefacts, the students were asked to submit narratives explaining how what they submitted was expressing those orientations.

We first undertook content analysis, to “map out” our data under the following categories: type of data (i.e. visual, textual, etc), description of the artefact (e.g. “image shows table”) and accompanying description from the narrative explaining the significance of the artefact (e.g. “the most difficult thing about being in that space is the seat itself, in the library or specific space designed for studying”). This generated 69 “data points”. Then, to each of the “data points”, we intended to apply a critical analysis of representation (Hall, 1997), focusing on how the students themselves interpreted the artefacts and how they explained the artefacts enabled them to access and learn the curriculum. The student descriptions highlighted the symbolism of the artefacts and

how by submitting them, the students wanted to “fix us” in a specific understanding of how their epistemological frames were deployed (Hall, 1997). Selected examples representing this are presented below.

The first two examples that we analyse focus on how the students accessed the content of the curriculum. One diary entry included a video of a saxophone player in an empty street. The participant wrote that despite seeing the player on most of their shopping trips, it suddenly reminded them of Amartya Sen’s capability approach (Sen, 1999, p. 19) which they had been learning about that week.

They said that the saxophonist is the ...

live example of wonderful combination of three aspects of capability approach that I come across. He wants to play saxophone every day in the city centre; He did learn and practice playing saxophone to make himself capable of doing that; And more importantly, he insists on playing saxophone everyday out of his own values and objectives in such a difficult time and less vibrant city, regardless of external judgement and opinions. At that moment, I was really touched by his agency and overwhelmingly happy about having learned and understood that knowledge deeper. And when I went back to watch that video again and I could not help weeping for a while. Now I think it’s a really amazing experience of my learning and living here. (Participant 1)

Another submission from a different participant showed the way that they processed a difficult topic, using an artistic response and more “traditional” work of reading and reflective writing.



My assessment is about sexual violence during wartime, and the topic is really sensitive, and I have to discuss it with paying close attention to each aspect of the topic since I really care about the humanitarian act, and I detest seeing anyone suffers. This week, I have started doing the reading online, and doing an outline about the main ideas that I want to search about more. The second step is about reading quotes from the war victims, and try to put myself in their position, how had they felt, how they had encountered this issue, and how the international organization, and the courts solved this crime. Thus, I decided to paint, to use acrylic colours, and my imagination. When I see the colours of the paint, the feeling that I am trying to express, it eases the process for me, and it makes me more aware of the situation, and how are those women feeling during this rape crime, or the sexual violence.

I have at first sketched, then tried to use the war colours, green, red, and black since those colours are symbolic of aggression, and pain. . . . It's my first time to use this technique, and honestly it really helped, it expanded my thinking, and it is more colourful, and creative, and it gives me a break that is also related to my topic and my studies. (Participant 6)

The other two examples presented here focus on how the students saw themselves in the process of learning. The first one depicts a “study space in the kitchen” submitted to us with the following accompanying comment:



Sometimes, when the weather is really nice outside, I will move my study place to the kitchen and make myself a cup of tea and some desserts. Because the kitchen, facing the west, brings much sunshine in the afternoon warming the space. And the broad and beautiful view outside the large five windows will be really enlightening and make me in good mood. (Participant 3)

There was a clear attempt here by the student to curate and construct the image. The perspective in the picture excludes anything “ugly” and foregrounds the “pretty” elements which are lined up. The accompanying description from the student suggests that there was a clear effort to make study enjoyable and the image was constructed to signify “study” which could be read as a process of self-formation (Marginson, 2014). Rather than claiming that the “staging” of the picture compromises its authenticity, we argue that it reflects students’ agency as socially constructed (i.e. informed by epistemic frames). We found that, as shown in this example, students were drawing on their epistemic repertoires more than in “normal times” (before the pandemic), to help themselves feel like “real students” and recreate their “normal” processes of learning by rereferring to epistemic frames that are socially and culturally informed. This was also evident, for example, in a recorded reflection from a student who sent us a video of her and her sister talking in their native language to access the curriculum. That video was accompanied by this comment (in the context, as explained in the recording, of finding group work epistemically oppressive).

When we have a lot of reading, I discuss this with my sister, coz we have the same classes and the same material in everything, so we divide the reading between us, she reads the first page

and I read the second, and we finish the reading and we discuss, trying to figure out another thoughts, and we elaborate. I don't communicate with my professors, and they know that (...) the only person I communicate with is my sister.

As the sisters study in two different countries, our participant continued:

After each class, we have like a Zoom meeting and we discuss everything, and like in the lecture, if we didn't understand anything, we try to help each other. And we have a What's App group, because as I mentioned, I do not communicate with my professors and Faculty and staff, so the only conversations that I have is with my sister, so what I did today, I recorded the conversation, it's both in [participant native language] and English, as sometimes I don't feel comfortable in explaining my ideas and what it's about in English, so I was discussing ideas with my sister and she understands what I want. (Participant 6)

Engaging with this process of legitimization can teach university teachers to make sense of ideas beyond their own group, as it can help them understand how their approaches to learning were grounded in alternative world views and value systems and how they connect them to the curriculum and assessment, between the past and the present. Understanding this connection should prompt the reflection on when and where in the curriculum the epistemic frames of international students are silenced and misinterpreted and how what we are asking the international students to do to learn the curriculum, and how we then assess it, may create oppression. Studying the artefacts with these goals in mind requires a specific philosophical approach to meta-reflection which we summarise in the sections that follow.

Epistemological process towards decolonial praxis

The philosophy of our methodology is based around pedagogical emancipation of international students and is located within wider discourses about the reasons behind the "old" and new epistemic inequalities. Theoretically, these reasons are tied to, as some would argue, the "failings" of critical pedagogy and its emancipatory goals. For example, see debate about Ellsworth and Giroux³ or Biesta's argument about the impossibility of critical pedagogy.⁴ Other critiques also posit that critical pedagogy represents merely "harm reduction strategies".⁵ We hope, we have however shown in this paper that the epistemology behind our methodology can support individuals to work towards operationalising praxis that challenges these critiques.

The epistemological process behind our research challenges superficial understandings of decolonisation – that epistemic oppression has universal characteristics and can therefore be solved by best practice or a single methodology (see for example special issue edited by Jupp et al., 2018). We have already emphasised above that the philosophy behind our methodology is not meant to be a "fix" or something that can be "applied"; rather it offers a means for ongoing training for the mind, to recognise how our own epistemic frames conceal those of the students. This recognition needs to be performed in relation to specific epistemic contexts of the students, as otherwise, it can cause a "foreclosure of the complexities and complicities" of decolonisation (Andreotti et al., 2015). It is however underpinned by struggle and inconsistencies associated with the "collective identity conscientization process" (Garza et al., 2022) with the students that our methodology encouraged, which can arise everywhere and at any time.

Thus, in the context of this paper, to decolonise means to reflect on our binaries, relationships, norms, positionalities and appropriations that stop us from seeing how students deploy their epistemic frames to access and learn the curriculum content. Our methodology offers a modality through which these epistemic frames can be brought to life. We encourage anyone attempting decolonial practice to engage their students to “speak up” for themselves in the same way, in order to first understand the unique positions from which they speak and subsequently how our own positionalities may conceal them. When that kind of meta-reflection takes place, the institutional habitus of essentialism, pedagogical inertia, appropriation and co-option that, as argued above, sustain the colonial norm “are no longer reliable guides” (Archer, 2012, p. 1). The significance of the continuity of the effects of such habits is lost when these habits are “lived out” in practice through the reflection that we propose here by individuals in ways different to those that the habits may dictate. This in decolonisation literature is, for instance, shown in work that questions the ability of white academics to decolonise. When white academics stop for long enough to reflect on how their white habitus may be a problem, they can push back against their own whiteness and “live out” its effects differently in the classroom (see for example, the Special Issue in *Whiteness and Education – White scholars working against whiteness*, edited by Locke, 2017). But that requires a specific epistemology, which we propose is guided by the philosophical principles summarised in the conclusion.

Conclusion

We conceive of the philosophical underpinnings of meta-reflection towards decolonial praxis as:

- a) being about international students’ epistemological frames
- b) taking it for granted that these frames are valid and legitimate
- c) highlighting the subjectivities of students’ ways of seeing themselves in and experiencing the curriculum
- d) being concerned with international students’ agency over our own assumptions about them shaped by the colonial norm.

Points a) and d) mean that international students are given access to their own systems of meanings and interpretations to assert themselves in the curriculum. People reflecting on their own positionalities through points a) and d) have potential to change “old” and new epistemic inequalities by destabilising knowledge essentialism. One of the biggest problems with epistemic inequalities is performative inclusivity and diversification, which carries assumptions about adaptation and assimilation, rather than being built on epistemic pluralism. What we need are approaches that draw attention to how the limits of people’s own meta-reflexive position may feed those assumptions. Starting with the mundane research processes, the nature and scope of diary-entries and their analysis presented in the sections above, through to then theorising them here in the conclusion, we offered epistemological support for starting a critical conversation with oneself about that.

Notes

1. We used Maldonado-Torres's definition which conceptualises coloniality as: long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, inter-subjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limit of colonial administrations. Thus, coloniality survives colonialism. It is maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and many other aspects of our modern experience. In a way, as modern subjects we breathe coloniality all the time and everyday (Maldonado-Torres, 2007, p. 243).
2. Paulo Freire (1996), the father of critical pedagogy, had this to say about *praxis*: that its complexities would only be resolved through "true commitment to the people, involving the transformation of the reality by which they are oppressed" (Paulo Freire, 1996, p 126). There are three dimensions to transformative *praxis*: theory, values and practice, which means that "discovery cannot be purely intellectual but must involve action; nor can it be limited to mere activism but must include serious reflection: only then will it be a *praxis*" (Paulo Freire, 1996, p. 133).
3. Many of the basic assumptions of critical pedagogy were questioned by Ellsworth in her paper "Why doesn't it feel empowering: working through the repressive myths of critical pedagogy" (1989). This provoked a response from Giroux.
4. Biesta's (1998) argument is that critical pedagogy is impossible because it cannot be conceived as a technique and its outcomes cannot be predicted because human interactions and justice (key aspects of critical pedagogy) are boundless, unpredictable and incalculable.
5. Some of the recent problematisations of critical pedagogy in education (e.g. Ruiz & Fernandez-Balboa, 2005; Breuing, 2011; Kuntz & Petrovic, 2018), especially the notion that Friere's characterisation about the paralysis of the oppressed stands in contrast to the autonomy, agency and competition required from the students nowadays (De Lissovoy, 2018).

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